Inclusive Education

Partner with ākonga

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Reduce barriers for year 9–13 students' from the Guide: Curriculum accessibility

Includes:

Build whanaungatanga

Consider potential barriers

Plan using Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Strengthen student agency

Reflective questions

Useful resources

Build whanaungatanga

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Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

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Consider potential barriers

Barriers to learning are where students "get stuck" in a lesson or activity. For each learner, barriers can differ from subject to subject and from activity to activity.

Barriers are often created when we offer single, inflexible approaches.

In partnership with ākonga identify what gets in the way and together build in useful supports and flexible learning options.

Examples of potential barriers:

- time pressures
- unfamiliar language
- assessment formats e.g. NCEA exams, PAT tests
- barriers hidden in the resources and materials, for example, cluttered presentation, hard-to read diagrams, unclear layout, hard-copy only
- instructions only given in one way
- barriers hidden in the physical environment, for example, unfamiliar layout of room, lighting, temperature
- limited access to technologies such as text to speech or closed caption
- no access to quiet working spaces
- lots of written instructions
- talking in front of the class
- sitting for long periods of time.

For more information on barriers explore **Identify potential barriers**.

Plan using Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

UDL is an approach to designing learning that is accessible for all learners. It helps to create barrier-free learning environments.

UDL enables learners to access the curriculum in a way that best works for them.

Video hosted on Vimeo http://vimeo.com/220717678

Closed Captions

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Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
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Strengthen student agency

When it comes to supporting students to take ownership of their learning, they will require multiple and different supports.

Create environments that foster and value ākonga voice.

Recognise the expertise of your young people.

Consider how you can:

- support students to understand how they learn, encouraging positive learning habits
- match teaching methods to student preferences
- provide flexibility in topic and content choices
- encourage students to develop their own learner profile
- provide a range of tools and materials so that learners can share and create in ways that works for them
- be open to and seek out regular feedback
- encourage student input across planning spaces
- ask learners to share what strategies or resources they find useful or not useful
- encourage the diversity of voice through student-led groups e.g. diversity groups, lunch forums and discussion groups.

Reflective questions

In what ways do you intentionally get to know learners and what's important to them?

How do you work with ākonga to develop the skills and agency to advocate for and personalise their learning?

In what ways do you ensure that all ākonga can participate and communicate their views in ways that work for them?

How do you create opportunities for students to connect to their culture, interests, and things that matter to them?

Discuss some examples of how your knowledge of learners has influenced the design of teaching and learning.

Useful resources

Orientation and whakawhanaungatanga: Building positive student relationships

Read time: 5 min

This resources includes activities and ideas to support building positive relationships.

Publisher: Ako Aotearoa

Visit website

How to break down barriers to learning with UDL

This article unpacks what are barriers to learning and how teachers can identify and reduce these.

Publisher: Understood

Visit website

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