Inclusive Education

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

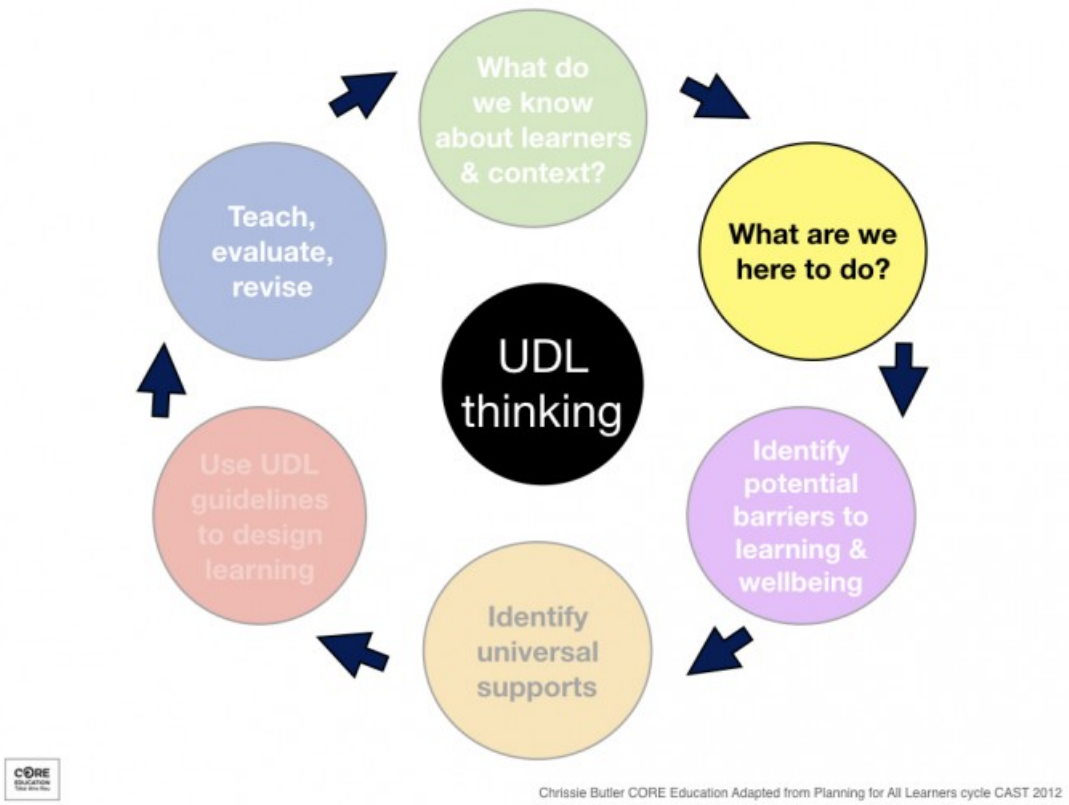
Create barrier-free goals and objectives

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'How to plan using UDL' from the Guide:
Universal Design for Learning

Includes:

- Clarify learning intentions
- Check for hidden barriers
- Share goals in multiple ways
- Co-design authentic goals
- Reflection questions
- Useful resources

Clarify learning intentions



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Chrissie Butler CORE Education
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From
Guide: Universal Design for Learning
Strategy: How to plan using UDL
Suggestion: Create barrier-free goals and objectives
Date
29 August 2025
Link
inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/create-barrier-free-goals-and-objectives

Check for hidden barriers

Barriers to achivement can be hidden in the way we communicate goals or learning intentions.

Example of an assignment:

Students will be able to write a report about how ways to increase birdlife at school.

This is two tasks in one: **write** a report and **demonstrate** understanding about birdlife in the local area.

When setting goals (intentions):

- identify the purpose and make explicit will be assessed
- check for hidden barriers to achievement
- if possible offer students flexible ways to demonstrate understanding
- if a skill such as “write” is included in the goal, ensure supports such as text-to-speech, graphic organisers, word prediction are offered to all students.

Share goals in multiple ways

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Co-design authentic goals

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Whenever possible, design learning intentions and flexible pathways to achievement with students.

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Reflection questions

Consider the following in your own context.

How can I present learning goals and intentions in varied and flexible ways to support engagement and understanding?

How can I make sure students don't confuse the purpose of an activty with the means of achieving it?

Do I offer varied, flexible, and supported pathways to success? Give examples.

Useful resources

Top 10 UDL tips for developing learning goals

A downloadable PDF from CAST with ten tips about learning goals from a UDL perspective

Download PDF

Goals are separate from the means when possible

Barriers to participation and success can be hidden in the way we write or express goals, learning outcomes and success criteria. This step-by-step guide can help teachers design and express barrier-free goals.

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