

# Refine and support goal setting

A suggestion for implementing the strategy  
'Design considerations in secondary settings'  
from the Guide: [Universal Design for Learning](#)

- 
- Includes:**
- Increase relevance and authenticity
  - Check for hidden barriers
  - Support individual goal setting
  - Reflection questions
  - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Universal Design for Learning](#)

Strategy: [Design considerations in secondary settings](#)

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Date

29 August 2025

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/refine-and-support-goal-setting](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/refine-and-support-goal-setting)

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## Increase relevance and authenticity

Wayne Robinson outlines how he ensures students understand the purpose of a task and how it connects to real life.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/225192768>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education inclusive education \(NZ\)](#)

<https://vimeo.com/album/2950799>

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## Check for hidden barriers

Barriers to achievement 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 what 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.

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## Support individual goal setting

Give students consistent, meaningful reminders to help them set goals, organise themselves, and make a plan.

Explore more suggestions on [Goalbook Toolkit](#).

- ✓ Provide models or examples of the planning process.
- ✓ Provide guides and checklists for scaffolding goal-setting.
- ✓ Post goals, objectives, and schedules in an obvious place.
- ✓ Involve students in creating what the outcome might look like.
- ✓ Break the process up into small steps with visual, video, and verbal supports.
- ✓ Offer problem solving checklists.

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## Reflection questions

Consider these questions for your own context.

How do I present learning goals and objectives in varied and flexible ways to support engagement and understanding?

How do I ensure students understand the purpose AND value of an activity?

How do I make sure students don't confuse the goal with the means of achieving it?

How do I offer varied and flexible pathways to success?

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## 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

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