



## Differentiation through Universal Design for Learning

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Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an inclusive learning framework that breaks down barriers to learning for all students through differentiation. Teachers are encouraged to ask themselves three questions: (1) Am I representing information to my students in multiple ways? (2) Am I providing my students with multiple ways of demonstrating their knowledge and understanding? (3) Am I providing my students with multiple ways of engaging in the learning process? The first principle underlying UDL is the belief that there are multiple ways of representing knowledge. Courey et al. (2013) define representation as designing instructional materials that make content accessible to the greatest number of diverse learners. The second underlying principle is the belief that students can demonstrate their action and expression in many ways. Students are provided with alternative communication methods to demonstrate their learning. A universally designed task includes a range of options for engaging students as no single option will work for all students (Barteaux, 2014). Creating multiple opportunities for students to showcase their understanding overcomes barriers to learning (Katz, 2012). By providing students with more accessible learning opportunities, they become more engaged in the learning process. The final principle underlying the UDL framework is the belief that there are multiple ways of engaging students. Within the UDL framework, providing multiple means of representation and expression leads to increased student engagement (Tzivinkov, 2014). Technology provides both the teacher a means of representing knowledge in multiple ways, and students a means of demonstrating their understanding in multiple ways. Coyne et al. (2010) and Spencer (2011) claim that technology is a key aspect of UDL. Within the contemporary classroom, use of technology can engage students and accommodate students' needs. During this workshop participants will engage in practical activities to embed the UDL framework within the Australian Curriculum to differentiate and personalise learning for all students, which will lead to improved educational outcomes (Hitchcock et al., 2016; Mavrou et al., 2013) and student engagement (Halat & Karakus, 2014; He, 2014; Katz, 2015, 2015; Van Laarhoven-Myer et al. 2016).