Leeds Trinity University

Inclusive Curriculum Design

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Identify aspects of UK regulation that impact TNE

- Identify a variety of methods for improving student learning through curriculum design

- Identify and reflect on aspects of curriculum design that can redress existing inequalities

- Apply the principles of UDL to your own programmes

UK regulatory landscape

Office for Students (OfS) – independent regulator of higher education in England

- B conditions (ongoing conditions of registration)

- Ensure institutions deliver high-quality education

- Monitor and ensure compliance with TEF

- Oversee student protection and support

- Collect and publish data on student outcomes to assess quality

QAA – Independent body providing guidance on quality assurance

- Provides frameworks and guidelines including the UK Quality Code for Higher Education

- Conducts quality reviews for Scotland, Wales and NI

Why is this relevant to curriculum design?

- Regulatory landscape demands students receive a **high quality**, **equitable** student experience that delivers **positive student outcomes**

- Programmes should be sufficiently challenging so that students are able to succeed in and beyond higher education

- There has been a '*move in HE from teacher-centred conceptions towards more student-centred models of the learning process*' (Belluigi and Cundill, 2017, p. 955)

- Recognition there is no single learner type

- Focus on developing employable graduates 'capable of responding to the complex global environmental challenges' (ibid, p. 966)

- Progression and retention coupled with decreasing award gaps are fundamental policy foci

- How can curriculum design respond?

Diversity, inclusion and equity

Teaching methods and classroom environments shape students' experiences and perceptions of inclusion, value, and connection within the learning community

What do we mean by diversity and inclusion?

Diversity includes nationality, gender, age, ethnicity, language, education background/experience, disability

Diversity can be invigorating and provide opportunities for deeper learning for all – but can be a barrier?

Inclusion involves actively addressing and removing barriers to participation, learning, and success

Inclusive pedagogy promotes teaching practices that recognise and embrace diversity, ensuring all students feel respected, supported, and able to thrive, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities

Critiques the 'deficit approach' - promotes equitable access

What is the difference between equality and equity?

Would you describe your own teaching as 'inclusive'? Why/why not?

Links between inclusive pedagogy, engagement and belonging

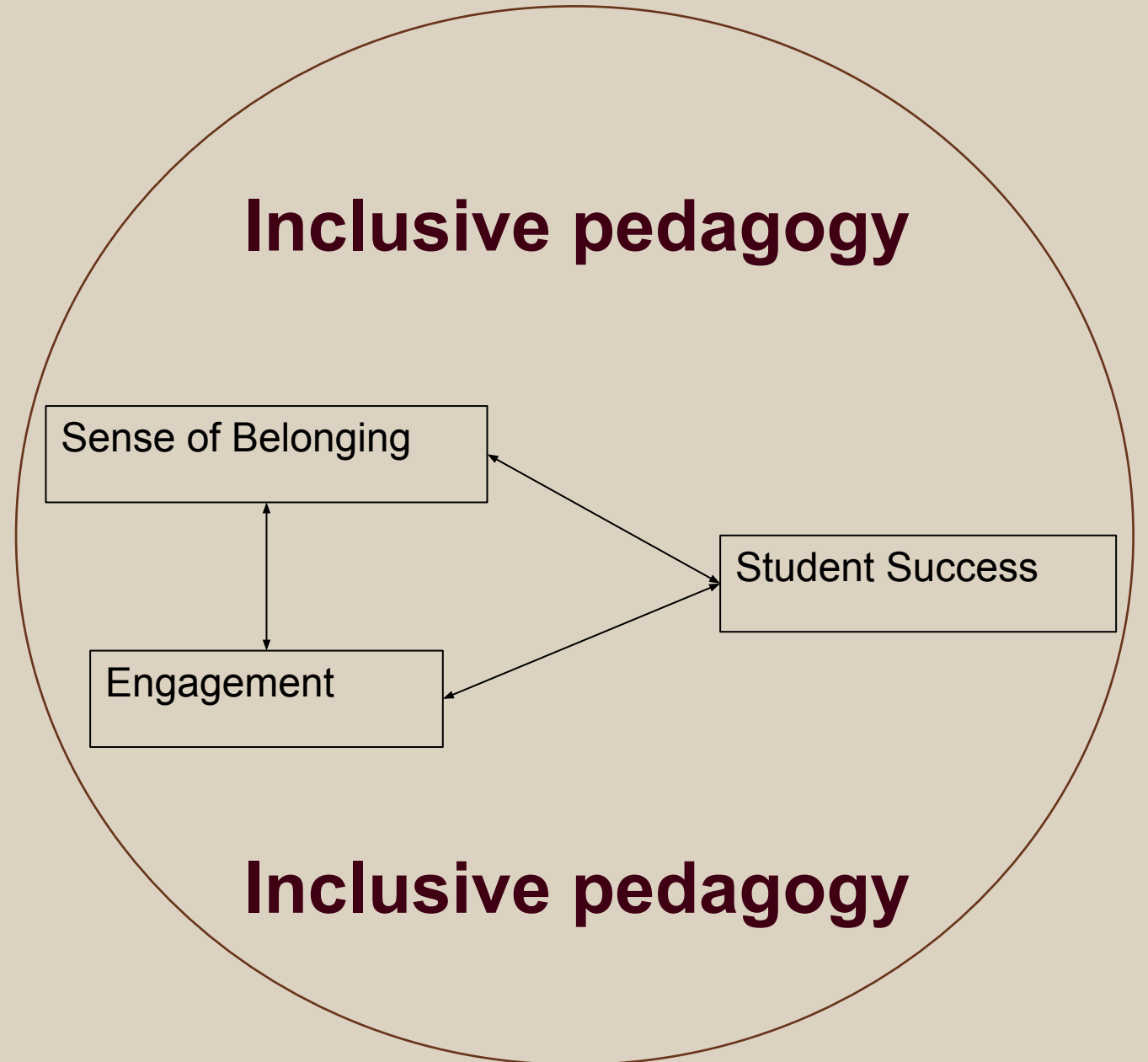Scan the QR code to contribute to Padlet

Inclusive pedagogy

Inclusive Pedagogy is '*an approach that aims to make learning as accessible and welcoming to all students as possible*.'
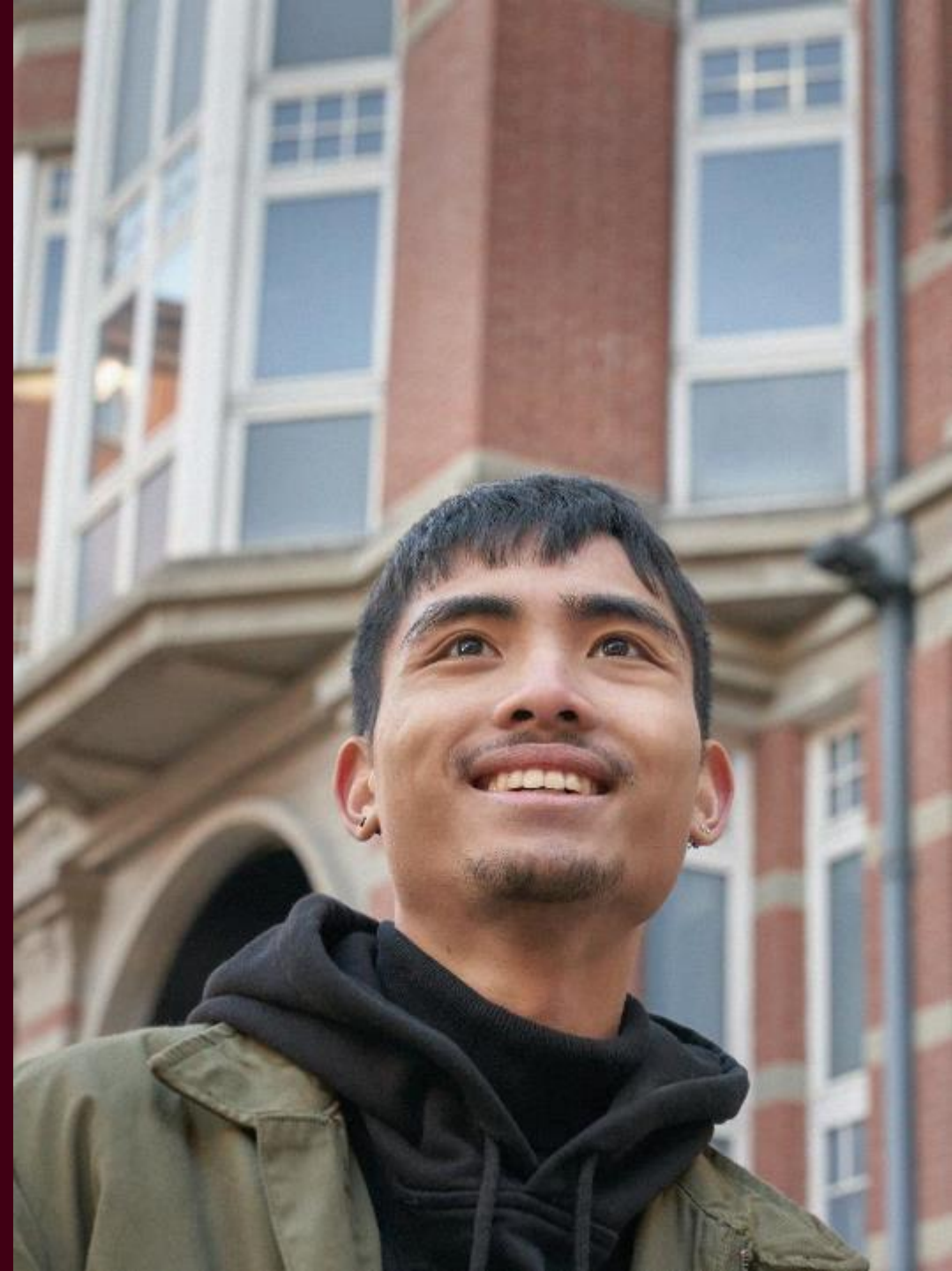
(Sangar, 2020, p. 32)

Inclusive pedagogy fosters a sense of belonging and engagement which is linked to student success.

- Sense of Belonging Fosters Engagement
- Engagement Enhances Sense of Belonging
- Engagement and Belonging Lead to Success
- Success Reinforces Belonging and Engagement

Inclusive pedagogy

| Sense of Belonging |
| Engagement |
| Student Success |

Inclusive pedagogy

Developing inclusive practice

- Proactively learn about your environment with particular attention to student's prior education background/context

- Signal your confidence in the potential of each student

- Be transparent: Be explicit about expectations and strategies for success

- Use varied teaching techniques and formats – verbal, visual and textual representations; mix up learning activities; encourage peer-peer learning

- Vary assessment format; offer direct, constructive feedback; recognise possible barriers to intercultural communication and understanding; untimed exams; allow resits; blind grading (anonymity); grade new rather than prior knowledge (i.e. don't expect students to understand a good presentation if you haven't talked them through it)

- Avoid projecting your own learning preferences on students

- Represent diversity in syllabus and content

Fundamental to curriculum design in the UK

What do we mean by curriculum?

What are the main considerations when designing curriculum?

What do we want students to know?

- Factual knowledge
- Conceptual knowledge
- Procedural knowledge
- Metacognitive knowledge
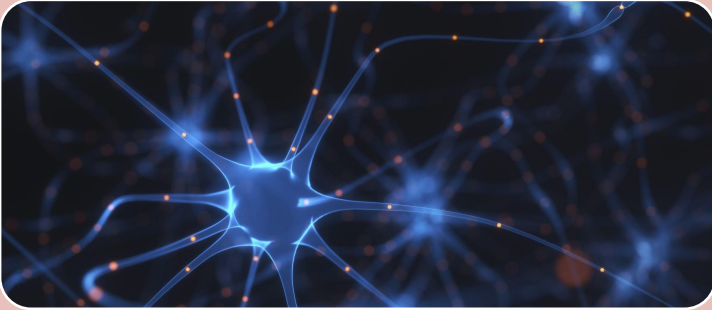
What do we want students to be able to do?

- Critically analyse/reflect/design/create/define…

What do we want students to be?
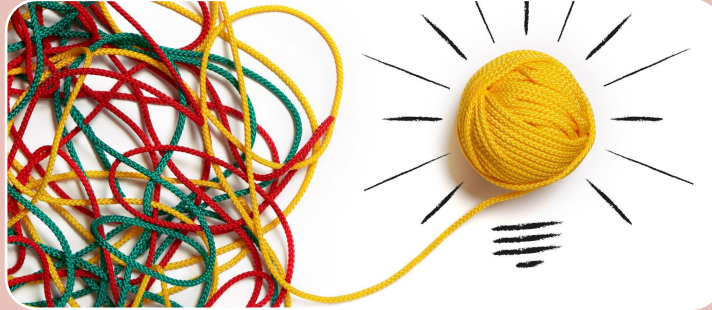
- Attributes/ responsible citizens/ confident/ digitally capable…

Getting started

QAA benchmark statements

Lecturer expertise

Employers

Industry practice

Students

QAA benchmark statements

Blooms Taxonomy

Employers

Students

QAA benchmark statements

Employers

Student feedback

Political strategy and policy

Universal Design for Learning

Centred around the understanding students learn in different ways

Based on three core principles:

- **Engagement:** How to stimulate interest and motivation

- **Representation:** How to present information in multiple formats

- **Action and Expression:** How to allow students to express their learning in different ways

UDL 'integrates broader structural changes that make our classes more engaging and accessible for all, regardless of specific student needs or required accommodations'

(Sangar, 2020, p.35)

Benefits of UDL

Equity and Access

Personalized Learning

Increased Engagement and Motivation

Improved Learning Outcomes

Promotes Active Participation

With UDL 'all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities' (CAST, 2024)

Principle 1: Engagement

- Welcome interests and identities
  - Allow for choice and autonomy
  - Connect learning to meaningful and valuable experiences
  - Build joy and play into the learning process
  - Address biases, threats and distractions
- Sustain effort and determination
  - Emphasise objectives and why they are important
  - Provide challenge alongside support
  - Encourage collaboration and peer-peer learning
  - Offer action-oriented feedback
- Foster student's emotional capacity
  - Promote individual and collective reflection
  - Cultivate empathy in practice
  - Set goals that inspire confidence and ownership of learning

- Provide strategies for capturing student interest, keeping them motivated, and offering choices

Principle 2: Representation

- Consider perception
  - Represent a spectrum of perspectives
  - Use a variety of accessible materials that can be easily adjusted for particular needs
  - Share information in more than one way
- Think about the use of language and symbols
  - Clarify vocabulary, symbols and language structure
  - Support decoding of text
  - Cultivate understanding and respect across languages
  - Address biases in the use of language
- Enable students to build knowledge
  - Connect prior knowledge to new knowledge
  - Respect multiple and diverse ways of developing understandings of the world
  - Apply learning to new contexts

- Offer multiple ways to present the content, ensuring accessibility for all learners

Principle 3: Action and Expression

- Design options for interaction
  - Allow for various methods of response
  - Use accessible tools and technologies
- Allow for varied means of expression and communication
  - Use multiple media for communication
  - Apply and gradually release scaffolds to support learner agency
- Encourage strategy development
  - Set meaningful goals
  - Organise information and resources
  - Anticipate and plan for challenges
  - Encourage students to self-reflect and minimise distraction

- Enable students to express what they've learned in various ways and provide different levels of support as needed

Apply UDL principles

Topic	Learning Goal	UDL P1	UDL P2	UDL P3	Resources

Principle 1: Engagement
- E.g.: Connect lesson content to real-world applications - Use game-based learning for increased motivation

Principle 2: Representation:
- E.g.: Provide audio and video clips alongside text

Principle 3: Action/Expression
- E.g.: Allow students to show understanding through creative projects (e.g., models, art, digital tools)

Activity: In groups, use the template opposite to map a module of your own that incorporates the UDL principles

To finish….

Reflect on the session and write down one or two concrete **actions** you will take to implement UDL in your own programme

- How can I increase **student engagement** in my course?

- What **varied forms of content** can I offer to meet the diverse learning needs of my students?

- How can I allow students to **demonstrate their learning** in multiple ways?

Have I designed learning experiences that are meaningful and challenging for all learners?

References

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