

Implementing the Universal Design for Learning framework at De Montfort University



Carol Keddie
cakeddie@dmu.ac.uk

What we'll be doing...

- Overview of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Institutional context at DMU
- Focus on the three key principles
- Exploring their application in Library and Learning Services

UDL at DMU

UDL is an innovative framework for teaching, learning and assessment at DMU which aims to provide an inclusive learning experience for every DMU student.

DMU is taking an institution-wide approach to delivering enhanced services that will benefit all students, providing an even better student experience for all

UDL began as a strand in the university-wide Disability Enhancement Programme (DEP) in 2015

It is also a central element of our Teaching and Learning Strategy for the next five years

Inclusivity at DMU

- Traditionally a high percentage of students with declared disability
- International students – Leicester International Pathway College on campus
- Widening participation
- Range of delivery modes
- Strategic priority of institution

DMUfreedom Equality and Diversity Charter 2016-2020

The screenshot shows the DMUfreedom website. At the top left is the De Montfort University Leicester logo. To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and SoundCloud, along with a search bar. Below the navigation bar is a menu with links for STUDY, RESEARCH, INTERNATIONAL, BUSINESS, ABOUT DMU, and MORE. The main content area is titled 'DMUfreedom' and includes a description of the charter, a list of 'Freedom to be...' points, and two images: a person in a wheelchair on a bicycle and a woman with purple dreadlocks. The footer contains a download link for the charter and an accessibility statement.

About DMU

- Equality and Diversity Charter
- Anti-Bystanders
- A proud declaration
- DMUfreedom**
- Gene-changers
- Equality objectives

DMUfreedom

DMUfreedom is our new equality and diversity charter, built on our strong reputation for positive action and with our conviction we can and should lead in fairness and inclusion in the higher education sector.

It is a commitment to continue cultivating an environment in which staff, students and partners have freedom: freedom to be, freedom to inspire and freedom to succeed.

Freedom to be...

- **Diverse** in a supportive environment that allows us space to explore our personal identity
- **Proud** of our achievements, and to have the time to learn from them
- **Confident** that our diversity embraced in a thoughtful consideration of our systems.

Freedom to inspire...

- **Creativity**, unbound by convention, that increases knowledge

DMUfreedom

Download the Equality and Diversity Charter 2016-2020

Accessible version of the Equality and Diversity Charter 2016-2020

De Montfort University (2016) DMUfreedom
<http://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/professional-services/equality-and-diversity/dmufreedom-equality-and-diversity-charter/dmufreedom.aspx>

[Accessed 11/01/17]

De Montfort University Student Experience Strategy

The screenshot shows the De Montfort University website. At the top left is the DMU logo. To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. A search bar is on the far right. Below the navigation bar, the main headline reads "DMU is launching its first Student Experience Strategy". The sub-headline says "On Wednesday 16 November we are launching our new Student Experience Strategy". The article text states: "The Student Experience Strategy is DMU's strongest, clearest statement of our fundamental commitment to our students. This is a chance for students to work with the university to create their own student experience." A large graphic with the text "THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGY" is featured. To the right of the graphic is a "SEARCH NEWS ARCHIVE" section with filters for "From: Select", "To: Select", "Year: Select", and "Enter keywords". Below the graphic is a "VISIT US OR CHAT TO US ONLINE" button. At the bottom of the article, it says "Posted on Thursday 3rd November 2016" and includes social media share buttons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

De Montfort University (2016) Student Experience Strategy 2016-2020
<http://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/dmu-students/your-dmu-experience/student-experience-strategy.pdf>
[Accessed 22/11/16]

Universal Design for Learning at De Montfort University

The screenshot shows the De Montfort University website. At the top left is the DMU logo. To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and SoundCloud, along with a search bar. Below these are navigation links: STUDY, RESEARCH, INTERNATIONAL, BUSINESS, ABOUT DMU, and MORE +. A left-hand navigation menu lists: DMU staff, How to travel, UDL, Hot topics, Career development, Case Studies/Materials, People and Organisational Development, Strategic Framework 2015-2020, Your staff experience, Staff development, Staff resources, Publications, and Staff portal. The main content area features a large blue graphic with the text 'UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING' and 'An innovative framework for teaching, learning and assessment at DMU'. Below this are two sections: 'What is UDL?' and 'UDL Staff Training Sessions'. The 'What is UDL?' section defines UDL as an innovative framework for teaching, learning, and assessment at DMU, aimed at providing an equal learning experience for every student. It mentions the Strategic Framework 2015-2020 and lists principles of UDL based on research about how people learn. The 'UDL Staff Training Sessions' section states that there is plenty of UDL support at DMU and offers training sessions. It lists two sessions: 'UDL and DMU Ready to Practice' and 'UDL: The course replaces UDL in Practice and UDL Workshop sessions'. A small video player at the bottom shows a person's face with the caption 'Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at DMU'.

De Montfort University (2016) Universal Design for Learning
<http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-staff/udl/universal-design-for-learning.aspx>
[Accessed 22/11/16]

Library and Learning Services UDL Champion

- Participates in the university-wide project group and works with other champions in the faculties – recognises and aligns our teaching practice
- Work with LLS colleagues to identify inclusive teaching and support practices that are effective in achieving the aims of the UDL project.
- Disseminating our ideas within the university and more widely through workshops and presentations at conferences and other events
- Role continuing during 2016/17 academic year

Library-wide application of UDL

- Relevant and effective conceptual framework to use in the wider context of library services and facilities, not just teaching
- Applicable to all our channels of communication with students

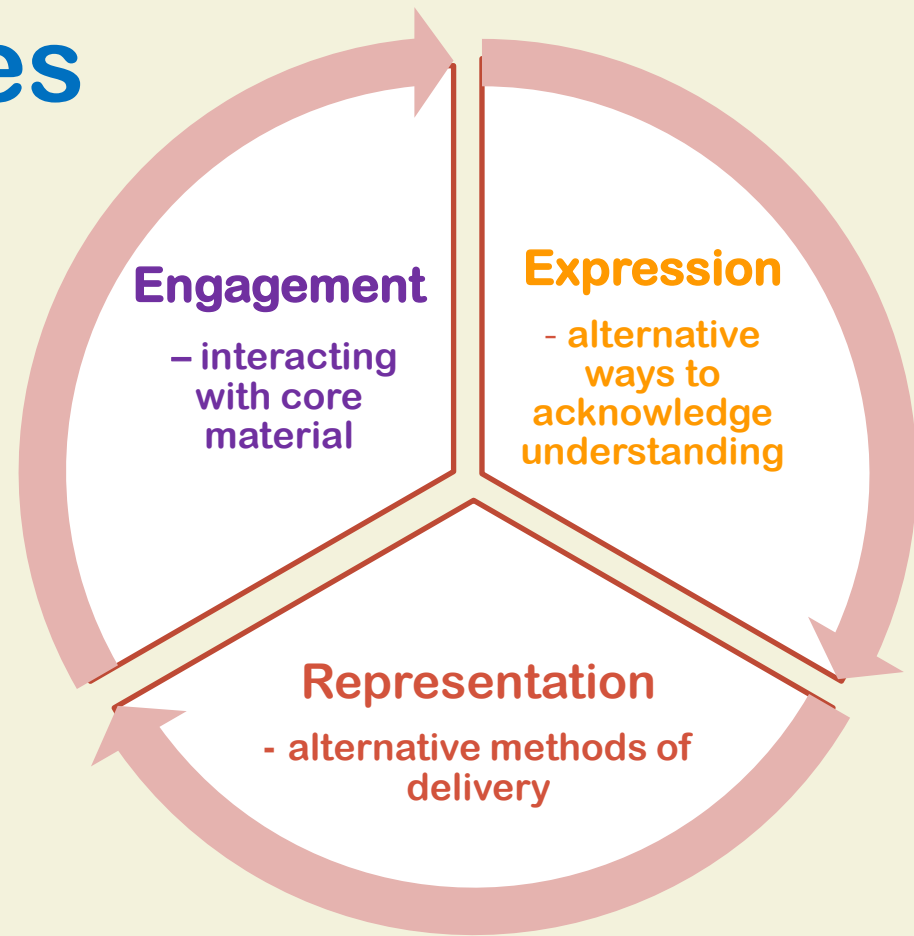
Engaging all library staff with UDL

- Way in which the framework has been communicated to staff:
 - Staff training sessions in May, part of themed staff development week on equality and diversity
 - Update sessions for all staff in September
 - Term-time only staff training day

UDL endorsed by DMU library staff

- “Why should we create "exceptions" for people when those exceptions could help many others who would not be able to access them or even know that there are other ways of learning. It makes perfect sense to me to broaden our approaches to helping everyone get the most out of their time at DMU by producing as much variation to learning as possible.” (**Manager of the shelving team**)
- “Although I’d previously heard about UDL in various guises across the university this training session was the first time that I’d been able to understand that relationship and where I as an individual fit in to that equation. I definitely feel more confident with my understanding of UDL and look forward to carrying the message forward into the next academic year.” (**Information assistant**)
- “I was very happy to learn how the university is striving to put in place an all encompassing teaching/assessment strategy as it feels our work with the disability team fits in with it/compliments it. It truly feels like DMU is a sector leader in this crucial re-assessment of how higher education is delivered - it's great to be a part of that.”
(**Senior information assistant**)
- “What struck me most of all was how much of UDL we’re already doing – although there’s still much to be done of course. Overall, a great opportunity to think about the services we deliver and ask what we can improve, innovate or change in order to engage with, and provide services to, every DMU student.” (**Project manager**)

The three principles of UDL: using multiple means of...



www.cast.org

www.udlcenter.org

CAST (2011) *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.0*. Wakefield, MA: Author.

http://www.udlcenter.org/sites/udlcenter.org/files/updatesguidelines2_0.pdf

[Accessed 21/11/16]

Over to you...

- Working in groups:
 - Reflect on the ways in which you may already be incorporating aspects of the UDL framework in your service
 - Think about how the framework might be used to enhance and develop services and resources

Representation:

- Alternative methods of delivery
- Flexible ways of presenting

For example:

Providing library guides in printed and online format

Providing multiple channels for enquiries including face-to-face, telephone, email

Providing textual and visual signage

Engagement:

- Interacting with core materials
- Motivating students to learn

For example:

- online reading lists
- displays in libraries highlighting areas of collection
- Guides facilitating access to online resources

Expression:

- Alternative ways of acknowledging learning and understanding
- Build in ways of assessing learning

For example:

Providing a range of study spaces

Checking understanding when responding to enquiries