

Session 1

Introduction to EDI: Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Classroom

By the end of this session, you will:

- Understand the fundamental principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the classroom.
 - Recognise how the teacher's role and behaviour influence the creation of an inclusive learning environment.
 - Identify practical strategies that support diverse learners, including elements of Universal Design for Learning and differentiated instruction.
 - Reflect on your own practice and pinpoint actions to strengthen inclusivity in your teaching.
1. Study the quote on slide 3, think about the meaning behind the quote and answer the questions.
 2. Read the key definitions on slides 4-5. Would you like to add anything to these definitions? Can you think of the examples in your own context? If you need to read more about each concept, please follow the link: <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/what-is-edi-and-why-does-it-matter>
 3. Read the list of key EDI principles on slide 6. Can you add to the list? Do you understand the meaning of each point? If you need any of these points clarified, read the information on the following website: [Equality, diversity and inclusion statement for teaching | British Council](#)
 4. See the instructions below on slide 7 and do the task. Take your time and try to be as critical of the described practice as possible. You will see the list of possible answers after the task to compare your thoughts.

Activity 1: Classroom Cases

Read the short classroom cases where EDI is not followed. Think about what is happening in each situation and which learners might be disadvantaged or excluded. Propose a positive, inclusive alternative for each case.



- a) The teacher always calls on the same confident students to answer questions, leaving quieter ones ignored.
- b) Instructions are given only in English, even though many learners do not yet understand basic classroom language.
- c) All examples in the textbook reflect Western names and contexts, with no mention of local cultures or traditions.
- d) The teacher laughs when a student mispronounces a word, making others afraid to speak.
- e) Students with weaker English skills are seated at the back and rarely asked to participate.
- f) The teacher penalises students for using their first language during pair work, even when they are trying to understand the task.
- g) A visually impaired student is given the same small-print worksheet as everyone else, without adaptation.
- h) Group work is always arranged by ability, and lower-level students never mix with stronger peers.

Possible answers:

- a) The teacher rotates participation opportunities so that quieter students are encouraged and supported to share their ideas.
 - b) The teacher provides instructions using clear English supported by visuals, gestures, and learners' home languages to ensure understanding.
 - c) The teacher incorporates names, stories, and examples from local cultures alongside global contexts to reflect all learners' identities.
 - d) The teacher responds to pronunciation attempts with encouragement and gentle guidance, creating a safe space for speaking.
 - e) The teacher arranges seating to ensure all students, including those with weaker English skills, are fully engaged and invited to participate.
 - f) The teacher allows learners to use their first language strategically during pair work to support comprehension and confidence.
 - g) The teacher provides accessible, large-print or digital versions of materials to meet the visually impaired student's needs.
 - h) The teacher mixes students of different abilities during group work so everyone can contribute and learn from one another.
5. Read the list of teachers' goals on slides 8-9. Do you agree with the ideas? Would you like to add anything to the list?
6. Read the core principles for inclusivity and diversity in ELT. If the concepts are new to you, check the links to additional readings provided.



Task 1: 10 Core Concepts for Inclusivity and Diversity in ELT

1. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (<https://www.cast.org/what-we-do/universal-design-for-learning/>)

Designing lessons that are accessible to all learners from the outset. Multiple ways to access content, engage with it, and demonstrate learning.

2. Differentiated Instruction (DI) ([How to differentiate in the language classroom](#))

Adapting teaching methods, materials, and tasks for diverse learners within the same class.

3. Culturally Responsive Teaching ([4.pdf](#))

Recognising learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds as resources, not barriers. Incorporating students' cultures, experiences, and prior knowledge into lessons.

4. Multilingual Awareness / Translanguaging (https://jasonanderson.org.uk/downloads/Anderson_2024_Translanguaging_A_paradigm_shift_for_ELT_theory_and_practice.pdf)

Understanding that students' first languages are valuable learning tools. Encouraging the use of multiple languages strategically rather than banning L1.

5. Equity vs Equality

Equality: everyone gets the same. Equity: learners get what they need to succeed (scaffolds, supports, flexibility).

6. Neurodiversity and Learning Differences ([teacher guide final.pdf](#))

Awareness of dyslexia, ADHD, autism spectrum, and other differences.

7. Inclusive Language and Representation ([Using inclusive language in education | Teaching & Learning - UCL – University College London](#))

Avoiding stereotypes in teaching materials. Using gender-neutral, respectful, and globally relevant examples.

8. Accessibility in Teaching

Designing tasks, materials, and assessments with accessibility in mind (e.g. captioned videos, large print, varied media).

9. Critical Pedagogy and Social Justice in ELT ([Critical language pedagogy: an introduction to principles and values | ELT Journal | Oxford Academic](#))

Encouraging learners to think critically about language, power, and representation. Promoting fairness, inclusion, and awareness of global perspectives.

10. Classroom Management for Diversity ([Classroom Management Techniques for Diverse Learners: Ensuring Inclusive Education - LearningMole](#))



Creating spaces where all voices are heard. Handling bias, discrimination, or exclusion sensitively and fairly.

7. This session will mainly focus on the first two core concepts from the list. Open slide 10 and follow the link to the UDL website. Spend some time exploring the website and reading about UDL.
8. When ready, click the link to the YouTube video on slide 11 (or below) and take brief notes to answer the five questions about UDL, its purpose, barriers, and core principles.

Activity 2: Video

Watch the [video](#) and take brief notes to answer the five questions about UDL, its purpose, barriers, and core principles.

What is the main purpose of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?

How does UDL relate to the concept of universal design in architecture?

What types of barriers might students face in the classroom?

Does implementing UDL mean lowering academic standards? Explain.

What are the three core principles of UDL, and how do they help students learn?



9. Study slides 12-20 that take you through the three core principles of UDL. Take your time and read more information on each principle on the official website link provided above.
10. When you are ready, open slide 21 and watch the video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYN-qrKIIYI>. Answer the following questions:
 - How does planning for everyone from the start in UDL differ from changing lessons for certain groups in DI?
 - How is offering choices to all learners in UDL different from creating separate tasks for different learners in DI?
11. To solidify the difference between UDL and Differentiated instruction, study the table below (and slide 22).

UDL vs UD

Study the comparative table below.

Aspect	Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	Differentiated Instruction (DI)
Approach	Proactive – planned at the design stage	Reactive – adapted during instruction
Focus	Designing curriculum to be flexible for all learners	Adjusting teaching for specific learners/groups
Goal	Remove barriers and increase access from the start	Meet individual needs once they are identified
Philosophy	One design for all → built-in flexibility	Different paths for different learners
Example in ELT	Offering a story in text, audio, and video so all learners can access it in different ways	Giving stronger learners an extended reading, while supporting others with vocabulary scaffolds
Strength	Inclusive from the beginning, reduces need for retroactive accommodations	Personalised and responsive to learner diversity in real time



Limitation	Requires strong planning and resources upfront	Can be time-consuming and harder to manage in large classes
Approach	Proactive – planned at the design stage	Reactive – adapted during instruction

12. On slide 23, read the list of practical strategies that summarise today's session. Do you agree with the list? Would you like to add anything to it?
13. Slide 24 shows the recent UK statistics on the diversity in the country. Do you know the current statistics in your own context? If not, you may want to research.
14. Now, let's take a look at how the EDI strategy is being applied at the University of Westminster (slide 25-26). You may read the whole document here:
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/sites/default/public-files/general-documents/EDI-strategy-2025-2030.pdf>
15. Slide 27 wraps the session up with the encouragement to bring more awareness about EDI in the classroom to start implementing this knowledge in our daily choices and practices.

Reflection on the Website (Individual):

Choose one case from Activity 1 that feels most relevant to your own classroom experience. Write a short reflection (3 to 5 sentences) on:

- Why is this issue important in your context?
- What could you do differently in your own teaching to promote EDI?

Post your reflections on the website under the CPD Forum>>> EDI Training Tasks (<https://blog.westminster.ac.uk/englishincentralasia/edi-training-tasks/>).



Further Suggested Reading and Watching:

Ainscow, M. (2020). Promoting inclusion and equity in education: lessons from international experiences. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 6(1), 7–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2020.1729587>

British Council's EDI Statement for Teaching: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/english-assessment/learning/how-teach/EDI-statement>

British Council's Teaching English Webinar:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQBRW57DW4>

IncludED: A guide to inclusive teaching by the University of Oxford:
<https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/included-a-guide-to-inclusive-teaching>

Promoting Equality and Diversity in the classroom: <https://cpdonline.co.uk/knowledge-base/safeguarding/promoting-equality-and-diversity-in-the-classroom/>

Rapp, A. C., & Corral-Granados, A. (2021). Understanding inclusive education – a theoretical contribution from system theory and the constructionist perspective. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 28(4), 423–439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1946725>

TEDx Talks. The Power of Inclusive Education:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIPsPRaZP6M>

TEDx Talks. Universal Design for Learning-A Paradigm for Maximum Inclusion:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRZWjCaXtQo>

UDL website: <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>

