

# Adaptable ABC: Learning design for all

Clare Gormley, Rob Lowney, & Suzanne Stone

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Higher Education

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Universal Design For Learning

UDL

Curriculum Design

abc Learning Design

Student Partnership

Part-Time Staff

## Chapter in brief

*ABC Learning Design (ABC LD) was devised to offer educators an accessible and re-usable mechanism to plan blended and online learning experiences. ABC LD is fundamentally a framework and a curriculum development workshop to enable collaborative learning design. In approximately 90 minutes teaching teams work together to create a visual 'storyboard' of the various learning activities and assessments required to meet module or programme learning outcomes. This chapter was co-authored by teaching support professional staff who are deeply involved with the use, promotion, and adaptation of the ABC LD framework at Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland. They first share their individual reflections on how their philosophy of learning has evolved. The three authors will then describe how that thinking has influenced their institution's adaptations of ABC LD by: harmonising Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and ABC, enabling meaningful student partnership in the design process, and empowering sometimes marginalised or isolated academics in course design decisions. Finally, the chapter collates local and international ABC resources that can be used – and indeed further adapted – by those who may think along similar lines.*

## Introduction

This chapter, co-authored by two learning technologists and an academic developer, captures our reflections on voices who we believe are either silenced or downplayed within “traditional” learning design processes. Despite Ireland being a relatively developed country, inequities still exist and there are people whose value and potential contribution to society is being ignored. This is no less true of higher education (HE), where a dominant discourse sometimes takes precedence in subtle but powerful ways. This discourse may emanate from bureaucracy, rigid systems or processes,

and familiarity with the status quo – and it usually leads to reinforcing traditional approaches in which a certain kind of learning is continually designed in a certain kind of way.

Under current HE structures, it seems that the power to influence the design of learning is seldom available to those outside of traditional curriculum design processes. The needs and aspirations of those with disabilities and additional requirements are too frequently an afterthought. Students are still rarely given the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the design of their own and others' learning experiences. Academic staff, particularly those who are new or part-time, may find they have limited, if any, opportunities to have a say in curriculum or learning design. All of this strikes us as unfair, unbalanced and unnecessary.

All three of us work at the same Irish university, Dublin City University (DCU), within a centralised teaching and learning unit with a remit to support teaching staff. DCU is a research-intensive university on the outskirts of Dublin city with a mission to transform lives and societies. Relatively young as a university, DCU was founded in 1980 and has grown to 18 500 students with five faculties. Recognised for its diverse intake of students, one in five students in Ireland going to university via an Access Route (an admission scheme for students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds) are studying at DCU (DCU News, 2021). The number of students registering with the Disability Service continues to grow year on year. The University has a vibrant LGBTQ+ community and an increasing population of black students and students of colour (DCU Students Union, 2021). In 2016, DCU was the first Irish university designated a “[University of Sanctuary](#)”, recognising a commitment to welcome students seeking asylum and refugees. As the student body has grown and become more diverse, so too has the academic staff population with more new staff joining, many from other countries and many who are teaching part-time.

Working in the DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit (TEU), all three of us have a common interest in [ABC Learning Design](#) (ABC LD), as we believe that this learning design method offers an opportunity to remove or at least reduce barriers to inclusion within our increasingly diverse university community. ABC LD was devised to offer educators a usable process to plan blended and online learning experiences to meet the needs of students and society today (Young & Perović, 2016). Based on Diana Laurillard's Conversational Framework (Laurillard, 2012), ABC LD is fundamentally a framework and workshop to enable collaborative learning design.

Perhaps the strongest selling point of ABC is the structure and clarity the [timeline of an ABC workshop](#) offers. It offers an approachable but tightly timed mechanism for staff to discuss and agree on a range of potential learning activities, technologies and assessments. The workshop starts by asking attendees to articulate the essence of a course in Tweet form. From there, the process invites consideration of six key learning types and the exploration of a range of possible learning activities. It culminates in an output where participants storyboard (i.e. map out) an intended learning journey through a module or course, indicating key assessment points. In the [original in-person version](#), no technical materials are required; instead printed materials, pens and stickers are employed.

Notably, the language of the process is highly accessible and does not require knowledge of learning theory or potentially obscure concepts. This makes participation much less threatening and more inviting to those on the margins. Essentially, its egalitarian ethos ensures that anyone can contribute to the discussion and the ultimate design in a meaningful way. Increasingly diverse students, librarians, technical staff, established and emerging researchers, full- and part-time academic staff – all can sit around the table, select activities, storyboard ideas and influence a proposed student learning experience if they have the opportunity to get involved.

Over the years, we have leveraged this well known approach and adapted it to be as inclusive as possible within our context. In our roles as learning design facilitators, we are trying to listen to the quieter voices, raise the volume and articulate a philosophy of learning design that will not only amplify these frequently overlooked audiences - but will ultimately lead to student learning experiences that are better and fairer for all. In this chapter, we will firstly share our personal reflections on how our philosophy of learning design has evolved. We will then describe how that thinking has influenced our institution's adaptations of ABC LD by: harmonising [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL) and ABC; bringing students to the table; embracing the student voice; and empowering the isolated academic. Finally, we will

collate local and international ABC resources (Appendix A) that can be used – and indeed further adapted – by anyone who might think along similar lines.

## Reflections

In the following section, each of us reflects on how ABC surfaced key concepts or challenges for each author. We believe that our use, promotion, and adaptation of the ABC framework is a tacit reflection of our values as educators. The adaptations we made and our encouragement of different audiences to engage with ABC were, in effect, tangible manifestations of our teaching philosophies in practice. But more importantly, the framework offers a means of putting institutional policy into practice in a visible, useful, and accessible way. We believe that ABC offers a practical mechanism to raise awareness of the principles of UDL and inclusivity, support students as partners in learning, and bring sometimes marginalised staff members into the course design process. Our reasoning and reflections are described below.

### Adding inclusivity to the conversation: Harmonising UDL and ABC (Suzanne Stone)

As educators, we are occasionally asked to reflect on our educational values, either for self-reflexive purposes or through processes such as fellowship applications. Having arrived in the education sector tangentially via an early career in the media, my first opportunity to reflect on my educational values was as a student on a Master's in Education programme just over a decade ago. The three words I settled on were: inclusivity, creativity and collaboration. My understanding of these terms as an educator has deepened over the last decade, but these three words still capture my approach to education and remain the key influences on my work as a learning technologist today.

In this reflection, I will focus on the value of inclusivity in relation to ABC LD. My understanding of inclusive education has been heavily influenced by colleagues at DCU. I can trace my introduction to inclusive education to my first job in HE at the Educational Disadvantage Centre. The Centre's remit is the inclusion of students experiencing educational disadvantage and my role involved developing resources for student teachers and establishing an after-school mentoring programme for pupils in areas of social disadvantage. My approach to this work was influenced by the founder of the Centre, Dr Ann Louise Gilligan, who held a strong commitment to inclusion and social justice. My understanding of the value of inclusive education has been further advanced through collaboration with colleagues in the DCU School of Inclusive & Special Education over several years (Farrell et al., 2021; Logan & Stone, 2016; Stone & Logan, 2018) and through work with staff and students in developing awareness around accessibility and inclusion (O'Reilly & Stone, 2021).

The UDL framework has also been a key influence on my understanding of inclusive education. Drawing on research in the fields of education, cognitive psychology and neuroscience, the UDL framework offers a structure for educators to remove barriers to learning when designing teaching, learning and assessment for all students. The framework presents three key principles to guide curriculum design: Multiple Means of Engagement; Multiple Means of Representation; and Multiple Means of Action and Expression (Figure 1). Within these three key principles, nine guidelines are offered, and comprehensive checkpoints support the design of learning activities (CAST, 2018).

#### Figure 1

*Overview of UDL key principles for curriculum design (CAST, 2018)*

Provide multiple means of <b>Engagement</b>	Provide multiple means of <b>Representation</b>	Provide multiple means of <b>Action &amp; Expression</b>
Affective Networks The <b>WHY</b> of learning	Recognition Networks The <b>WHAT</b> of learning	Strategic Networks The <b>HOW</b> of learning

While the UDL framework is widely adopted in the education sector, more recently some criticism has emerged. Murphy (2021) suggests that there is limited research in relation to how the framework is applied in practice in educational settings. Such critique is a natural evolution given the widespread adoption of the framework and offers an opportunity for practitioners to reflect upon and improve our use. In fact, research is already emerging in relation to the framework in practice (Kimberly et al., 2021). At DCU, the team draws on the UDL framework to guide the design of professional learning, foster conversations around inclusive educational practices and accessibility and support others in their journey towards inclusive education (Buckley et al., 2018; Stone & Lowney, 2020). One example is our [Universal Design for Learning Toolkit](#) for the Moodle virtual learning environment. Research on the application of this toolkit is ongoing and we hope to add to the evidence base for UDL in practice in the near future.

Defining and reflecting on educational values in itself is a challenging process, but translating values into practice is where the work really begins. The struggle for those of us working as learning technologists and academic developers is to reach those across the university who are unaware of the principles of UDL and to support staff to understand and apply the principles in practice. The DCU Strategic Plan (2017–2022), specifically references UDL, providing a rationale for embedding the principles in all our professional development, including ABC.

## Implications for ABC

The ABC LD process offers a practical opportunity to advance an inclusive education philosophy as staff collaborate on curriculum design and redesign across modules and programmes. The process also provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the UDL framework by embedding its principles within ABC. A certain natural “harmony” exists between UDL and ABC, as both frameworks involve increasing variability for learners. ABC draws on Laurillard’s (2012) Conversational Framework to encourage use of a range of learning activities across six identified Learning Types: Acquisition, Discussion, Collaboration, Investigation, Practice and Production. UDL supports variability through three key principles which can be summarised as follows:

- Choice in why to learn and engage with learning (multiple means of engagement).
- Choice in what to learn (multiple means of representation).
- Choice in how to learn and express learning (multiple means of action and expression).

In addition to variability and choice for learners, UDL also speaks to the responsibility of educators in relation to inclusive educational practices. Given that UDL principles are explicitly highlighted in the university strategy as a guideline for inclusive practice, any opportunity to remind staff of these responsibilities is to be welcomed. The local DCU version of the classic ABC Learning Types cards were adapted to include what we describe as UDL “prompts”. These cards and prompts, which are reviewed by participants at the storyboarding stage, serve to remind those involved in curriculum design of the need to remove barriers to learning for all learners. The prompts also make the principles of UDL more visible, placing them at the centre of learning design rather than being a bolt-on or afterthought, as is often the case. By way of example, Figure 2 presents the UDL prompts for the Acquisition learning type. Tailored prompts have been developed for each of the six types. A list of potential learning activities is presented on the left of the card, while relevant UDL prompts appear to the right.

**Figure 2**

*Acquisition card with an adapted list of possible learning activities and tailored UDL prompts (Clare Gormley and Mark Glynn, CC BY-NC-SA). See the full set of localised [Learning Types cards](#).*

# Acquisition

- ☐ Books (including Loop Books)
- ☐ Journal Articles
- ☐ Websites
- ☐ Lectures/Slides (online or in-person)
- ☐ Interactive learning materials/objects (e.g. H5P)
- ☐ Demonstrations
- ☐ Podcasts/Audio Files
- ☐ Videos (e.g. recorded interviews or intro videos, YouTube clips)
- ☐ Web conferencing/Virtual Classrooms (e.g. Zoom, Adobe Connect)
- ☐ Glossaries (including Loop Glossary)
- ☐ Database (including Loop Database)



## Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Prompts:

Will materials be available before/after class?

Are a variety of formats available (not only text)?

Will videos be captioned and transcripts provided?



See the DCU 'ABC to VLE+ App Wheel' (<http://dcuh5p.com/abc>) for further guidance on **Acquisition** activities.

In drawing UDL into the centre of the ABC storyboarding process, the principles of accessibility and inclusion are made explicit to those engaged in learning (re)design. This approach represents a practical example of values in practice. The inclusion of the UDL prompts reflects my own personal educational value of inclusivity, the values of the TEU team and the commitment of the university towards inclusive education.

## Bringing students to the table: Learning (co-)design (Rob Lowney)

As a learning technologist, my primary goal is to help educators in our university enhance their practice through the effective use of appropriate digital technologies. What led me to this role? I strongly believe in the capacity of technology to connect people. In education, technology can help support better communication between educators and students, enable better dialogue and help students amplify their voices. Why is this important to me? As an undergraduate student myself, I was involved in student journalism and the student union. I was (and still am) a passionate believer in student voice, in students advocating for their own needs and in students being part of decision-making in education. This belief has stayed with me as I became an education professional and has grown stronger over time.

If learning design is a decision-making process to design learning experiences for students (Conole, 2012), it is no major leap to say that students themselves should be part of that process. There has been a growing trend in recent years in HE towards “student partnership”, which is commonly defined as:

*A collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualization, decision-making, implementation, investigation, or analysis (Cook-Sather et al., 2014, pp. 6–7)*

The growing trend implies that it has not always been the case that student voices were part of shaping education.

In our own context in Ireland, the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) was established in 2016 to support and empower students to become more active in decision-making processes in their institutions (Higher Education Authority Working Group, 2016). Their Steps to Partnership framework offers guidance to institutions and students as to where and how they can partner with one another. Aligning with the language of the UDL framework to reduce

barriers to participating in education, the philosophy of partnership and this partnership framework offer opportunities for students to participate in teaching and learning decisions that affect them.

The framework lists four “domains of student partnership” (NStEP, 2021, p. 6):

- Governance and management
- Teaching and learning
- Quality assurance and enhancement
- Student representation and organisation

Some partnership practices are well established in some of these domains. Forms of student representation are plentiful in most HE institutions, some of which are rooted in the large-scale student protests of the late 1960s. Elected student officers often sit on important institutional committees. In the Irish context, the primary piece of legislation underpinning our public universities, the [Universities Act, 1997](#), explicitly states that elected student representatives should sit on governing authorities. Within our own university, a student partnership framework supports internal quality review

The domain of teaching and learning is the one that interests me the most, as it is primarily the space I inhabit as a learning technologist and it is the dominant space our students inhabit. While some students in our institutions may be involved in governance or quality processes as representatives, all of them are involved in learning. Partnership in teaching and learning can be very broad and various pockets of partnership in this domain can be seen in HE. I am, for example, involved in an initiative to support student partnership in assessment. A literature review (Ní Bheoláin et al., 2020) and findings from [pilot initiatives](#) showed partnership can improve students’ sense of involvement and their performance in learning.

Learning design would appear to be an area within the teaching and learning domain in which academic staff and students could partner more often. Traditional curriculum design often keeps students at the edge, with educators primarily making design decisions. Moving towards a model of both parties making decisions around what the intended learning experience should be in a curriculum or module can be beneficial because it allows for different perspectives to inform decision-making.

This is easier said than done, however. Having students as co-creators of curriculum (Lubicz-Nawrocka, 2018) requires academic staff to rethink their roles and to acknowledge and address power dynamics between them and the students; and students must be supported in becoming familiar with pedagogical processes (Bovill, 2014; Bergmark & Westman, 2015).

## Implications for ABC

The ABC LD framework could prove to be a useful vehicle to support student partnership in learning design and tackle the challenges of co-creation. Although built on solid theoretical foundations, one does not need to be a pedagogue to engage with it. The various stages and tools of the framework are intended to facilitate those with no prior experience of learning design or theory, which likely includes students. The highly structured nature provides opportunities for participants to get involved, share opinions and make decisions at different stages. For example, the Learning Types cards provide suggestions for different learning activities that can be incorporated into the programme or module. This gives participants something to work with; they are not presented with a blank canvas and expected to voice their opinions and suggestions immediately. Doing so runs the risk of dominant voices consuming the space. Instead, all participants are scaffolded through the decision-making process using the cards and prompts. Similarly, the “tweet” activity can be a way for students and staff to connect and work together through a light, fun task, which is part of a wider design process. These provide opportunities for students to contribute equally, which is core to the concept of student partnership.

Students can be whole participants in the ABC LD process, contributing as equal partners with academic staff. At DCU, several of the ABC workshops we facilitated had students participate in this way. Student expertise complemented that

of the academics and thus enriched the decision-making process. One student participant remarked:

*I was made to feel welcome and that my opinion was valid ... it was a fantastic insight into how to implement ideas and strategies into developing the course design ... it was engaging and enjoyable, and I didn't realise that time had passed so quickly.*

University College London has trialled different ways of partnering with students in ABC LD: as full participants, designing a course for external audiences or reverse designing a course (Perović & Young, 2019).

I do not wish to simplify things, however. Merely inviting students to take part in an ABC workshop could be seen as a “tick box exercise” rather than meaningful partnership. Academics should consider how students can be partners in the entire learning design (and development) process, including pre- and post-ABC discussions and decisions. For example, the ABC action plan is generally completed toward the end of a workshop, detailing next steps. In the spirit of partnership, students as well as academics could be assigned actions. It is also worthwhile to explore student partnership in the longer term, with students involved in creating course materials through approaches such as those taken by [Carleton University](#). As with any other student partnership initiative, there are practical factors to consider, such as when to schedule the work and in what mode in order to best accommodate students. Should past, current or future students be involved? Should students be paid? (Bovill, 2014).

Facilitation is key to every ABC workshop; a facilitator should ensure all voices have an opportunity to participate meaningfully and equally. This is even more pertinent when students are at the table. Cultivating a safe environment in which they are comfortable voicing their opinions will prove a fertile breeding ground for rich learning (co-)designs.

## Not invited to the party?: Empowering the isolated academic in learning design (Clare Gormley)

I have been an academic developer at DCU since 2014. My role is to support staff who wish to develop their teaching practice in some way with the goal of ultimately enhancing the student learning experience. In my own case, this involves activities such as facilitating learning design workshops, running practice-sharing events and peer observations across the university and supporting staff in researching their teaching and learning practice. It is interesting and highly collaborative work which has hugely benefited from a strong team ethos and generous sharing of expertise.

However, it is this very collaborative culture which now strikes me as an under-appreciated privilege. For several years, I operated as a freelance instructional designer, working largely solo with occasional meetings with a project lead and occasionally other colleagues. This was well before web conferencing had become a mainstream feature of professional life and it meant that much of the work was done quietly on my own. While this scenario initially suited, it wasn't long before the attractions of somewhat solitary remote working diminished and I missed the camaraderie and opportunities for spontaneous, implicit learning (Eraut, 2000) from colleagues – getting the inside track on new technologies and terminologies, hearing a quick piece of advice that helps you save time, receiving a reference to a paper or website that exactly addresses the issue I was looking to explore, and so on. This, and much more, is the unspoken stuff of collaboration and conversation that seems so small, but can make an enormous difference to professional learning and growth.

A good deal has already been written on the challenges faced by academics who are tasked with performing their work largely alone. Gourlay (2011) talks about the “myth” of communities of practice, arguing that early career researchers are typically left to their own devices to navigate new and challenging roles:

*This experience of physical and professional isolation and a lack of team ethos and collaboration arose several times in the data, with several comments about being alone in rooms all day, colleagues working from home, lack of shared diaries and accountability. For many of the research participants, this was described in powerful contrast to their previous experience in the professional setting. (Gourlay, 2011, p. 73)*

This is not just a problem for new staff. As a recent literature review on peer observation of teaching highlighted, “teaching at university is often conducted behind closed doors and can as such be an isolating experience” (Lincoln et al., 2021, p.9). Indeed, because of the constraints of modularisation, many academic staff “write” or design modules alone, with little input or discussion with others. The systems and structures of academia are typically not set up to support collaboration and ongoing discussion about learning design. This has led to problems with over-assessment of students (Tomas & Jessop, 2019) and a lack of connected thinking in programme design, much of which could be attributed to an ethos of working alone.

Add to this the specific challenges faced by part-time lecturers who have in the past been largely ignored and/or marginalised in professional development opportunities.

*It has been recognised that the use of part-time educators in higher education is on the increase and that they are not always adequately supported with professional development opportunities (Ní Shé et al., 2019, p.19).*

Because part-time or sessional staff are generally juggling more than one job at the same time, the likelihood of being able to participate in in-person sessions has been slim. These sessions are usually on campus and within the 9-to-5 working day, such that external participation may not be an option. Additionally, because many of these staff are on part-time contracts, they are not always paid to participate, so in some cases attendance would actually cost the individuals involved in terms of lost earnings.

## Implications for ABC

For all of these reasons, the core characteristic of ABC LD – the fact that it brings participants of all types together in a collaborative space for learning design – holds powerful appeal. The approach has the potential to stimulate the sparking of ideas, debates and new thinking that are the hallmarks of creative design. The value of collaboration with others was one of the most frequently cited benefits of ABC in a major transnational survey (ABC Learning Design, 2020). According to the evaluation report, 74% of respondents (n = 254) said the method enabled them to discuss course design with colleagues to a great or very great extent.

However, up until relatively recently, the reality was that the original in-person version could not be easily accessed by those who were not full-time, permanent, campus-based staff. ABC sessions were run on campus, meaning that staff working outside the university would rarely be able to join. There were also times when staff based on another (geographically distant) campus may have had to spend considerable time commuting.

When the pandemic forced the movement of so much activity online, the approach had to change radically and all the “traditional” elements of ABC needed to be reconsidered. We strongly felt that collaboration with others should be protected in the re-imagined online approach. In the spirit of UDL, we hoped that moving the entire process online would have the potential to optimise inclusivity and remove (at least some) barriers to the participation of marginalised staff. Our revised online ABC workshop approach can be summarised in this [infographic](#). All the resources associated with it are openly available in the [DCU Online ABC Toolkit](#).

To date, our online version of ABC has had some interesting and positive results, namely:

It has opened doors for colleagues of all disciplines to have discussions about online learning design and the use of new technologies at a time when such conversations are sorely needed. The online format and use of breakout sessions seemed to foster discussion and the use of polls enabled shyer voices to contribute to the conversation. The following comments were received in post-workshop feedback:

*[It was] good to create a space to meet with other colleagues and to discuss some of the issues relevant for all of us. This is in particular with our modules going online.*

*I think that the small groups worked. Having multiple opinions definitely helped.*

*Loved the discussion in breakout room after the polls.*

It has allowed part-time staff to participate more easily, helping to promote a sense of belonging to the academic community as this feedback comment illustrates:

*I really enjoyed it and have had great feedback from the team on it. All found it really valuable and felt inspired to tackle the work needed for this semester. Part-time lecturers enjoyed the chance to discuss approaches with the team and I think full-time lecturers found something new to reinvigorate them!*

It has allowed geographically dispersed staff to participate when distance (and public health restrictions) were a barrier.

The immediate reaction to the online sessions has generally been very positive. However, recognising that time is needed to evidence longer-term effects, more in-depth evaluation of our online version of ABC is currently underway.

It is also important to acknowledge that despite so many positives, there are clearly some difficulties that an ABC workshop in any guise can never overcome. Some collaborations and conversations are less successful than others and staff might not “click” with colleagues they are grouped with. Short sprints of collaborative design will not resolve all the problems of siloed thinking. Furthermore, simply offering such workshops online does not ensure that part-time participants will be able to attend or will be paid for their efforts. It is, however, a promising start, as there are inclusive benefits, and the potential for using and/or adapting ABC for various contexts and scenarios is worth exploring. A summary of adapted ABC resources and when to use them is listed in the Appendix.

## Conclusion

The idea of one’s teaching philosophy strongly influencing one’s teaching practice is not a new concept in the educational realm. Jääskelä et al. (2017) describe how strong the influence of educator’s beliefs and values may be in learning, pedagogy and use of technology in HE. There has been much less attention paid to how learning designers’ beliefs – particularly those designers with a remit to support others’ teaching practice – might affect the design process. In this chapter, we have tried to show how our philosophies – advancing the principles of UDL, promoting students as partners and enabling academic colleagues of all types to collaborate – can complement ABC in practice to support inclusive learning for all.

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## Appendix A: Adapted ABC resources

There are multiple toolkits, resources, and case histories to support the use of ABC LD on the [ABC Learning Design](#) website. The following table links to multiple permutations of ABC that can be picked and mixed for a range of different scenarios:

Scenario	Relevant ABC resource	Facilitator notes and suggestions
I've just heard about ABC and I would like to know more.	ABC encourages educators to consider six learning types. To start, it is recommended that you watch this short <a href="#">video</a> introducing the six learning types of ABC.	For more examples, listen to this <a href="#">TEU podcast introducing and explaining ABC</a> (plus some other well known Learning Design models). When time allows, explore the huge range of toolkits, case studies and other resources at the central ABC website ( <a href="#">abc-ld.org</a> ).
Great. I'd like to learn how to apply it now.	To learn how to apply ABC yourself, take this <a href="#">self-paced course on ABC</a> developed by Moodle Academy. It includes quizzes, videos, webinars and a Google Jamboard storyboard template for you to start creating a proposed course design.	Allow 2–3 hours to take this course and start work on a storyboard.
All of my colleagues are based physically on the same site. I would like to run a team-based ABC workshop in a physical space - where can I find the resources I need to get started? And do I need to print everything?	The original 'classic' ABC resources were recently updated as part of the ABC to VLE Erasmus+ project. The downloadable classic ABC to VLE Toolkit <a href="#">Resource Pack</a> contains the digital resources you will need to run this type of workshop. There is also a version of these materials <a href="#">localised for the DCU context</a> .	If running a traditional ABC workshop face-to-face, you will need a physical space (a room with a sufficient number of tables and chairs) and a toolkit that contains a variety of digital and printable resources that you need to run a session. With the classic ABC, a variety of printed materials are required and these can be laminated to facilitate re-use, if necessary. However if printing is not available or print materials are challenging to access, these materials can be replaced by the use of whiteboards/chalkboards and the use of smartphones.
My colleagues are geographically dispersed and can't attend a physical location. So I need to run the workshop online - where do I start?	If running an ABC workshop online, you could use a web conferencing platform (ideally) and a toolkit that offers a series of activities for participants to engage with. DCU have created an open <a href="#">DCU Online ABC Toolkit</a> Other crowdsourced approaches to online ABC can be explored on the <a href="#">ABC project hub</a> .)	Top Online Facilitation Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that (in so far as possible!) participants are invited into the process</li> <li>• Ensure that participants consider their learning outcomes in advance</li> <li>• Try to keep to max of 12 participants per session with ideally 3 facilitators (one per breakout room)</li> <li>• Pitch this as a design workshop - it's not training!</li> <li>• Potentially discuss and share experiences in the future.</li> </ul>
We operate in a very low bandwidth context so can't use a web conferencing platform. Is there any way of doing low bandwidth asynchronous ABC design?	You could potentially use the workshop materials as a basis for asynchronous discussions e.g. Employ a simple combination of email/shared documents so people can engage in the various stages of the workshop their own time over email.	While there is undoubtedly a valuable energy with simultaneous participation in the live/synchronous session, this may not always be an option. Trial and error may be needed to find an approach that works for you.
English is not our first language.	ABC has been translated into multiple languages. Explore the <a href="#">list of translated and adapted</a> versions.	If your language is not here, consider localising it yourself. The ABC community would welcome it.

Scenario	Relevant ABC resource	Facilitator notes and suggestions
I work alone! Does ABC only apply to teams? Can I use it for something I am working on by myself?	While originally designed for use by teams, it is also possible to use ABC LD on your own. You could start with the <a href="#">self-paced course</a> . Alternatively, or in combination with this, you could use the <a href="#">Learning Designer</a> tool, developed by UCL Institute of Education.	If you find yourself on your own using ABC, consider joining a local <a href="#">ABC LD community</a> and ask around for opportunities to sit in on workshops.
I would like to include UDL prompts for users when facilitating an ABC workshop.	The <a href="#">DCU localised version of the ABC learning activity cards</a> include Universal Design for Learning prompts to remind those engaged in learning design to address issues relating to accessibility and inclusion.	You may need to introduce the UDL framework and principles very briefly to participants unfamiliar with the framework. A <a href="#">brief introductory video</a> may help.
I want to partner with students in learning design.	Think about the extent to which you want to partner students in learning design. The ' <a href="#">ladder of student participation</a> ' (see p.49) offers some suggestions. Explore <a href="#">AdvanceHE's nine partnership values</a> and think about how you can infuse these in your ABC LD work - doing so will help make the partnership a success!	When partnering with students in learning design, put yourself in their shoes and think of logistical issues (e.g. time, location, etc.) that might impact on their active participation.



### Clare Gormley

Dublin City University

Clare Gormley is an academic developer with DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit who has worked in digital education since 1996. She is a Senior Fellow of Advance HE (SFHEA) and a Fellow of the Staff and Educational Development Association (FSEDA). Clare has an MSc in Applied eLearning and has worked with faculty from multiple disciplines to collaboratively design online and blended learning experiences. An advocate of ABC Learning Design, she co-led the influential Erasmus+ ABC to VLE project at DCU. She has also published in a range of peer-reviewed journals on professional learning in higher education and is currently undertaking an EdD in Digital Learning.



### Rob Lowney

Dublin City University

"Rob Lowney is a Learning Technologist in the DCU Teaching Enhancement Unit. He works with academic staff to enhance their teaching, learning and assessment practices with digital technologies. He has a particular interest in empowering academic staff to implement technology-enhanced assessment strategies. Other areas of interest include flipped learning, mobile devices in education, learning analytics, student partnership and digital learning policy. He holds a BA and MA from University College Dublin and an MSc in Applied eLearning from Dublin Institute of Technology. He is currently pursuing doctoral studies in digital learning."



## Suzanne Stone

Dublin City University

Suzanne works as a Learning Technologist at Dublin City University (DCU) supporting staff to integrate digital technologies in their teaching and learning. Suzanne has used the ABC learning design process for several years, with expertise in both face-to-face and online delivery modes. Accessibility and inclusion inform Suzanne's work, and a key influence is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework. Recent projects include the development of a UDL toolkit for Moodle; and the inaugural Accessibility Awareness Week at DCU. Suzanne is currently engaged in research on digital wellbeing for staff in higher education as part of a Doctorate in Education programme.



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