

Title: Training TAFE teachers in universal design for education

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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on an Educational Management Action Research (EMAR) (Coghlan, 2001) project. In the EMAR model, the teacher-researcher systematically addresses an issue using a cyclical process of generating research and developing actions to try out (University of Bristol, 2021).

In 2020, the Teaching and Learning Enhancement (TLE) team at Box Hill Institute (BHI) responded to recommendations in *Improving access and achievement for students with a disability - final report* (Nous Group, 2019) by developing *Universal Design for VET Teachers*, a microcredential short course available to all BHI teachers. Successful completion awards a digital badge on the Credly platform.

Universal design in education means ‘developing course content, teaching materials and delivery methods to be accessible to and usable by students across the broadest diversity ranges’ (ADCET, 2021). This project analyses and attempts to identify the effectiveness of the *Universal Design for VET Teachers* microcredential implementation at BHI.

Furthermore, this report will discuss barriers to teacher participation identified by the EMAR process. Is this an argument for making the training compulsory (Pitman, 2021) or do we need to implement communication strategies to inspire teacher motivation (Rickson, et al., 2020)? As reported by the OECD, ‘Some professional development may be deemed compulsory because the skills and knowledge the development activities aim to enhance are considered important for teacher quality’ (OECD, 2009).

The research is still in progress. This mixed-method applied research project will analyse low-risk sources of information/data (Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association, 2021) such as literature, BHI and industry documents, and the following BHI data:

- net promoter score
- student satisfaction survey
- unit evaluations
- Moodle (learning management system) learning analytics.

The EMAR model will be used to determine critical decision points, inform continuous improvement, and determine research outcomes.

The report concludes that there is scope to consider making participation compulsory in Universal design in education professional development at BHI to build teacher capability to support our learners of all abilities.

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