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Universal Design in Education:
Universal design is when "all products, environments and communications ... [are] designed to consider the needs of the widest possible array of users". The concept of universal design is equally applicable to the design and delivery of services such as education. In these terms, universal design means the development of curriculum, instructional materials and instruction to be accessible to and useable by students with different backgrounds and abilities. The key aspect of a universally designed curriculum is its in-built flexibility.

The seven principles of product and environmental universal design are here applied to education, with adjusted wording. (From **http://www.adcet.edu.au/Cats/View.aspx?id=3960**)

1. Equitable educational experience
    *   Instruction is understandable and relevant to all students, and accessible to students with a diverse range of abilities
    *   The same material is available to all students in the same way (i.e. lecture recordings are available to all students, not just those who have a learning disability or limited note-taking ability)
    *   Information is available in various formats at the same time and same cost (i.e. workbooks are available on disk, in print form and on the internet)
    *   Assessment is carried out in a flexible manner

2. Flexible material and instruction
    *   Students can choose how they access material (i.e. formal lectures are supported by on-line material, labs and tutorials are available at different times of the day and week)
    *   Material is designed to accommodate the widest range of users
    *   Material is adapted to suit all learning paces (i.e. lecturers pause after key points)
    *   Completion schedules are flexible

3. Predictable structure and instruction
    *   Material is easy to understand and logically sequenced, according to importance
    *   Instruction occurs in a predictable manner and format
    *   Material such as notices and websites are offered in a clear, easy-to-read format
    *   Feedback is adequate and timely

4. Perceptible information
    *   Information is communicated in multiple ways (i.e. visual and auditory)
    *   Websites follow World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) guidelines
    *   Information is compatible with assistive technology

5. Mistakes are tolerated
    *   Learning hazards are minimized (i.e. a home page link on all web pages allows the user to return to home if they make a mistake)
    *   Instruction anticipates variation of skill and ability
    *   Notice about important tutorials and lectures is offered
    *   Students are allowed to re-write papers
    *   Students are encouraged to get help for proof-reading documents

6. Eliminate unnecessary physical effort
    *   Non-essential physical effort is minimized (i.e. repetition of keyboard strokes)
    *   Students have the opportunity during class to change their posture or position (i.e. rest breaks are provided for longer sessions)

7. Physical accessibility
    *   Instruction is equally available to people with different physical characteristics and communication needs
    *   Learning environments cater for assistive technology

Curricula and course material is universally designed if:
*   Students can interact with and response to curricula and materials in multiple ways
*   Students can find meaning in material (and thus motivate themselves) in different ways
*   Web-based course material is accessible to all
*   Information is presented in multiple ways

Adapted by Jaye Jonson (RDLO WA) from the **original paper** published by University of Washington (**http://www.adcet.edu.au/Cats/View.aspx?id=3960**)