

# Universal Design and Review Process for Adult Education

## *Step 1: Assess for qualified individual*

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discriminating against a “qualified individual with a disability,” or “QID.” In order to ensure your activity/course/program does not discriminate against a QID, it’s important to ascertain who is qualified to take part in your activity/course/program. To do this, work through the following questions:

1. Is there a fee or other cost for this specific activity/course/program?
  - a. Is it possible for a qualified individual to be accompanied by another person who is not asked to pay a fee but who is invited to participate in the activity/course/program anyway?
  - b. Will your activity/course/program be archived and made available to people who will not be asked to pay a fee?
2. Are there admission standards individuals must meet to qualify for this specific activity/course/program?
  - a. Is it possible for your qualified individual to be accompanied by another person who is not asked to meet admission standards but who is invited to participate in the activity/course/program anyway?
  - b. Will your activity/course/program be archived and made available to people who will not be asked to meet these admission standards?
3. Are the participants for your activity/course/program limited to a set of known individuals AND you will not reuse your activity/course/program in the future?

Once you have answered these questions, define what it means to be a qualified individual at the **lowest possible standard** for your activity/course/program. For example:

- If there are admissions standards for most participants but some participants are not asked to meet these standards, then your qualified individual is the person who is not asked to meet admissions standards.
  - Example: You have admissions standards for people who will receive a credential from your program, but anyone from the community may participate in your program in a no-credential track.
- If there is a fee for most participants but some participants have the fee waived, then your qualified individual is anyone who can pay the fee or who qualifies for the waived fee.
  - Example: You charge \$10 for tickets to your play but allow anyone who comes within 10 minutes of the opening curtain to watch the play for free if there are empty seats.
- If all participants must meet admissions standards and/or must pay a fee for the initial use of the activity/course/program but at a later date the same activity/course/program is made available without admissions standards and/or fee to any interested party, then

your qualified individual is the person who is not asked to meet admissions standards and/ or pay a fee and who can access the archived materials.

- Example: You have admissions standards for the classes you offer at your college, but lectures are videotaped and archived in YouTube with the “public” setting.
- If all participants for your activity/course/program limited to a set of known individuals AND you will not reuse your activity/course/program in the future, then your qualified individuals are that set of known individuals.
  - Example: You have been working with your class of students for several weeks and you will be designing an activity for that group of people only, and it will not be reused.

Define your qualified individual by completing this sentence:

The qualified individual for this program must meet the following admissions standards: XXXXX; and pay a fee of: XXXXX; and have access to XXXXX [necessary resources or other skills].

Examples of qualified individual definitions:

- The qualified individual for this activity/course/program must meet the following admissions standards: 1) they must have an ACT score of 24 or higher 2) they must have a high school GPA of 2.5 or higher; and they must pay a fee of \$5,000 a semester; and be able to travel to Lawrence as needed for class.
- The qualified individual for this activity/course/program must meet the following admissions standards: none; and they must pay a fee of \$10; and they must be able to travel to the theater.
- The qualified individual for this activity/course/program must meet the following admissions standards: none; and they must pay a fee of \$0; and they must have Internet access.
- The qualified individual for this program must meet the following admissions standards: they must be admitted to my class; and pay a fee of \$0; and have access to my instruction.

### *Step 2: Create goals/outcomes for you activity/course/program*

Defining activity/course/program goals/outcomes requires designers to “begin at the end” by reflecting upon what the qualified individual will be able to do once they complete the experience. In general, it is useful to create goals that are affirmative statements with measurable action verbs. Examples of activity/course/program goals/outcomes include:

- Upon graduation, students will be able to recognize features of a successful business.
- Students who successfully complete this course will be able to list five causes of the Civil War.
- After this activity, students will be able to identify a qualified individual.

- Students who complete orientation will be able to locate the administrative building on campus.

Useful resources for this step include Bloom's Taxonomy and Bloom's Taxonomy of Measurable Verbs. Once you have defined the goals of your activity/course/program choose supportive steps/activities that will move qualified individuals toward your goals in as clear and direct route as possible given the nature of the goal itself. Not all learning activities are necessarily clear or direct, but strive to eliminate all unnecessary complexity. **Keep in mind that all goals should have corresponding activities and all activities should have goals.**

### *Step 3: Plan how you will assess participant mastery of goals*

Assessment is a key component of any educational activity. As you create assessments, keep in mind that the best assessments measure the following:

- Participant learning that takes place as a consequence of the activity/course/program
- Only the participant learning that takes place as a consequence of the activity/course/program

Assessments can be either formative or summative. Formative assessments assist the participant by giving them feedback on their learning while also providing them an opportunity for additional learning. Summative assessments are final measurements of the "high water mark" of a participant's learning. Your activity/course/program assessments may be formative, summative, or a mixture of both. Where possible, use formative assessments as they have the opportunity to support participant learning. Use summative assessments only when necessary.

Examples of assessments include:

- A reading quiz that can be re-taken until the participant achieves a particular score (formative assessment)
- A reading quiz that the participant takes once and submits (summative assessment)
- A presentation that a participant gives to a group of other participants (summative assessment)
- An essay the participant writes with the option to submit assessed rewrites after receiving feedback (formative)
- A test for professional licensure (summative)
- A self-check quiz (formative)

### *Step 4: Apply the Universal Design Review*

Once you have identified your qualified individuals, your educational goals for them, and the way they will be assessed, it's time to review your plan to ensure you are maximizing the accessibility of the overall experience. This review process based in the principles of Universal Design created by Ronald Mace and his team (1997) provides program designers a systematic

way to assess each component of your adult education experience regardless of its type or scope.

To apply the Universal Design Review, work through the following outline or the accompanying flowchart.

#### Universal Design Review Outline

1. Can all qualified individuals complete activity/course/program in an equally effective way?
  - a. If no: STOP. Revise activities and begin again.
  - b. If yes: go to 2.
2. Can all qualified individuals complete activities independently?
  - a. If no: STOP. Revise activities for maximum independence and go to 3.
  - b. If yes: go to 3.
3. Can presenter(s) respond to qualified individual differences immediately?
  - a. If no: STOP. Develop new/additional resources and return to 1.
    - i. If no in reevaluation, STOP. Solve barrier issue and go to 4.
  - b. If yes: go to 4.
4. Is all activity/course/program complexity necessary to support activity/course/program goals?
  - a. If no: STOP. Simplify unnecessary complexity and go to 5.
  - b. If yes: go to 5.
5. Does the program provide qualified individuals with all necessary information to complete required and optional activity/course/program activities?
  - a. If no: Is this necessary information fundamental to being qualified for the program?
    - i. If yes: go to 6.
    - ii. If no: STOP. Add necessary information to content and go to 6.
6. Do all activities support learning through discovery?
  - a. If no: Can learning through discovery reasonably be added?
    - i. If no: go to 7.
    - ii. If yes: STOP. Add learning through discovery and reevaluate by returning to 2.
7. Does assessment of program activity/course/program support qualified individual goal mastery?
  - a. If yes: go to 8.
  - b. If no: Are all assessments appropriately fitted to the goals?
    - i. If no: STOP. Revise and go to 8.
    - ii. If yes: Create a recommended remediation step for qualified individuals and then go to 8.
8. Are activities and assessments designed for varied delivery modes?
  - a. If yes: go to 9.

- b. If no: Consider developing activities and/or assessments for other delivery modes and evaluate them separately. Go to 9 for activities and assessments for original delivery modes.
- 9. Are physical and digital resources appropriate for all qualified individuals (eg: are they “accessible”)?
  - a. If yes: go to 10.
  - b. If no: Remediate physical space and/or digital resources for accessibility and go to 10.
- 10. Yay! You are finished with your UD Review and have done what you can, at this time, to reach all qualified individuals. Schedule a future full revision and review of this activity/course/program per your institution’s review schedule.

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