Design Playbook

for Accessible Learning

Blank Workbook

The workbook is based off of the 2U/edX Design Playbook for Accessible Learning. This workbook draws from the guiding questions highlighted in the playbook to support you in designing your next online course, training, or other learning experience.

The workbook is organized into the following sections. We recommend completing this workbook in order. If you have a specific step you would like to focus on, you can also navigate to that directly using the links below.

Step 0: Checking Your Assumptions about Learners

Key Takeaways:

- Begin the design process by addressing contextual assumptions about learners and the constraints of the learning environment.
- Investigate who the learners are, what brings them to this experience, their skills, and differences from the designer.
- Consider accessibility from the start to accommodate a diverse learner base effectively.

Notes about your course:

Guiding Question	Case Study Application
What assumptions about the course's learners might be influencing the design process?	
What templates or mental shortcuts are being applied to the format or context of this learning experience?	
What barriers might be present for learners in the "typical" or traditional ways that this subject has been taught?	

Step 1: Goals and Learning Objectives

Key Takeaways:

- Objectives should be relevant, learner-centered, and based on observable behavior.
- Avoid biases and hidden curricula that might exclude some learners.
- Design learning objectives that include flexibility, allowing for diverse student needs and backgrounds.

Notes about your course:

Guiding Question	Case Study Application
What essential knowledge does the instructor want students to leave with? In this approach, how has the designer avoided weaving in assumed norms, policies, and expectations into that knowledge?	
How should the designer require students to showcase their learning? In this approach are they using clearly defined and observable behaviors? Do their methods allow for flexibility, adaptation, and reasonably account for the variability of the learner population?	
In what ways can the learning experience be designed to encourage students to connect content to their reality?	

Step 2: Assessment

Key Takeaways:

- Emphasize authentic assessments that reflect real-world applications.
- Consider multiple methods of assessment to accommodate diverse learning styles and needs.
- Reflect on and possibly reimagine traditional grading systems to support a growth-oriented learning environment. This might include things like clearly defined standards, helpful feedback, marks indicating progress, and reattempts without penalty.

Notes about your course:

Guiding Question	Case Study Application
How does my assessment mirror a real-world application, critical thinking and problem solving?	
How does my assessment allow for multiple pathways to success?	
Are there opportunities to foster a growth-oriented environment? This might include opportunities for reasonable flexibility in the assessment to accommodate diverse learning needs and promote individual progress.	

Step 3: Learning Experiences & Instructional Content

Key Takeaways:

- Employ a variety of instructional methods (e.g., videos, readings, interactive simulations) to address different learning preferences and ensure that all students can access and engage with the material effectively.
- Strive for all instructional content to be accessible by following an accessibility guide aligned to WCAG standards like this one from the Stanford Office of Digital Accessibility.
- Encourage interaction among learners through discussions, group projects, and peer feedback, which can help reinforce learning and build community.

Notes about your course:

Guiding Question	Case Study Application
What modalities does this case rely on to deliver content to learners? How does this potentially limit access to certain populations?	
What opportunities are there to add more multiple modalities and pathways to the learning experience? How can this benefit more learners?	
Based on the modalities outlined in the case and proposed in the question above, what accessibility checks might the designer consider?	