



# HEA Teaching and Learning Conference December 2024

Driving Changes in Teaching and Learning through Policy and Innovation

**HEA** AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS  
HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY



## ALTITUDE - The National Charter for Universal Design in Tertiary Education

<b>Name of Institution/Organisation</b>	<b>Aims/Objectives</b>
Atlantic Technological University (ATU)	<p>The ALTITUDE project set forth three key outputs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of the ALTITUDE Charter to initiate a national discussion on its adoption and support.</li> <li>2. Production of a Position Paper outlining charter development and proposing how it may be adopted and utilized in the system.</li> <li>3. Adaptation and update of the Toolkit for Inclusive Higher Education Institutions (Kelly and Padden, 2018) to support self-assessment and practical implementation of the ALTITUDE Charter by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Education and Training Boards (ETBs) across the tertiary sector.</li> </ol> <p>The ALTITUDE Charter aims to provide a systemic implementation roadmap for UD and related frameworks in tertiary education, acting as a commitment vehicle for institutions.</p>
<b>Who led the initiative?</b>	<b>Rationale and Identified Needs</b>
ATU UDL Centre of Excellence – supported by ATUs Teaching & Learning Department led the initiative, AHEAD were Lead Collaborators.	<p>Despite a robust national policy commitment to a UD approach, evidence suggests that this commitment is not always consistently reflected in the institutional strategies and or practices in tertiary education sector. This discrepancy raises concerns about the sustainability of the UD approach within tertiary education sector.</p> <p>In response to the need for a more inclusive tertiary education system, calls for the development of a National Charter for Universal Design in Tertiary Education emerged.</p>
<b>Date and timeframe of the initiative</b>	
December 2022- June 2024	
<b>What was the reach of the initiative?</b>	
Consultation has been a crucial aspect of the development, involving internal consultation with a 50+ member expert group, a national consultation event, 30+ staff and learner focus groups, 1300+ learner survey responses and a stakeholder dialogue process.	



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<b>Frameworks, Policies, or Strategies Aligned (internal, local or national)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UNCRPD Article 24: Emphasizes the significance of Universal Design (UD), UDL, and inclusion in achieving the right to education.</li> <li>2. UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goals 4 and 10 aim to ensure inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.</li> <li>3. National Access Plan: Ambition Statement: Advocates for higher education institutions to be inclusive and universally designed to support student success, equity, and diversity. Objective 1.3: Focuses on embedding universal design across institutions to foster student success.</li> <li>4. Progressing a Unified Tertiary System for Learning, Skills, and Knowledge: Supports the integration of UDL in tertiary education.</li> <li>5. Irish Legislation (EPSEN, Equal Status Acts, Disability Act 2005): Provides a legal framework supporting the initiative's goals.</li> <li>6. ATU – AQAE004 – Programme Design Policy, Universal Design 4.7.7, 4.8.1</li> <li>7. ATU Strategic Plan - Enabling Education for Student Success, Vision 2040 (2024-2028)</li> </ol>

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
Commit	Leadership, Strategy & Governance		Students Staff
Consult	Personal & Professional Development	Mental Health & Wellbeing	
Create		Artificial Intelligence	