



## Making face-to-face matter again: The LAVIDA Teaching and Learning Framework

Jade Palmer, University of Derby

### ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted established pedagogic routines and challenged assumptions about the purpose of face-to-face learning in higher education. As teaching moved online, notions of engagement, belonging, and attendance were re-examined. When universities reopened, students' expectations of flexibility persisted, requiring educators to reconsider how classroom participation could remain meaningful. This reflective paper introduces the LAVIDA Teaching and Learning Framework (LAVIDA TLF), a structured yet adaptable model developed to support autonomy, belonging, and purposeful participation in post-pandemic teaching. The framework comprises five iterative stages - LAV (Literature, Audio, Visual), followed by the in-class stages; Introduce, Deepen, Apply, and Create & Capture.

Drawing on Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory (SDT), aligning with principles associated with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (CAST, 2018), and informed by Biesta's (2013) conception of teaching as relational and intentional, LAVIDA positions educator expertise and learner autonomy in dynamic balance through deliberate shifts in pedagogic control across a structured learning cycle. Early reflections suggest that providing students with choice in preparation, structured dialogue, applied learning activities, and planned consolidation enhances engagement and belonging while maintaining academic rigour. The framework demonstrates how post-pandemic pedagogy can preserve flexibility and inclusion without diminishing the central role of teaching. Designed for adaptation across disciplines and wider educational or professional learning contexts, LAVIDA TLF offers a conceptual model and practical guide for educators seeking to sustain motivation and participation in face-to-face, blended, or online learning environments.

**Keywords:** face-to-face teaching, flexible learning, Universal Design for Learning, student engagement, pedagogic design

### Context and Rationale

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped how higher education defined teaching and learning. Students were told that online delivery could offer the same quality and outcomes as face-to-face teaching, and that paying unchanged tuition fees was justified because 'remote' learning remained 'effective'. Many adapted, studying from bedrooms and kitchen tables while universities redesigned courses at pace. When campuses reopened in 2021, educators faced a new challenge. Students were encouraged to return without always a clear explanation of what participation in shared learning environments offered beyond access to content alone. Having grown accustomed to studying on their own terms, some students welcomed the return, while others questioned why engagement could not continue online. Attendance could no longer be assumed; students needed to experience something within classroom interaction that differed from

independent online study. The challenge therefore became not simply encouraging physical attendance, but articulating the pedagogic value created through intentional interaction between educators and students.

Pre-pandemic, my approach to teaching followed a fairly consistent pattern. I set a pre-lecture task for each session centered around one text, usually a journal article or book chapter, occasionally a video, supported by guiding questions intended to focus students' thinking. We would then share and discuss responses in class. The structure provided clarity and routine, and many students valued the preparation because we 'did something with it', which was not always their experience elsewhere. However, over time I became aware that this consistency could also make sessions feel predictable. Students often arrived with similar answers shaped by my prompts, and some admitted they preferred to rely on discussion rather than completing the preparation themselves. Reflecting on this practice prompted me to reconsider how learning design might better account for variation in how students engaged with shared concepts. While I was already familiar with inclusive approaches such as UDL (CAST, 2018), this reflection deepened my understanding of how proactive curriculum design could move beyond preparation alone to structure engagement, dialogue, application, and consolidation within the taught session itself.

Post-pandemic, I began to reconsider how I could preserve the clarity of structure that students valued while introducing greater variation and genuine ownership within taught sessions. The challenge was not simply to encourage attendance, but to design learning experiences that made participation educationally meaningful. I wanted an approach that retained academic focus while supporting autonomy, dialogue, and shared responsibility for learning. These reflections became the starting point for what I would later title the LAVIDA Teaching and Learning Framework (LAVIDA TLF), developed as a structured yet adaptable approach to organising interaction, engagement, and consolidation within the classroom. The following section outlines the five stages of the LAVIDA TLF, followed by a discussion of the theoretical principles informing its development.

### The LAVIDA Teaching and Learning Framework (LAVIDA TLF)

The LAVIDA TLF combines disciplinary knowledge with intentional learning design, balancing educator-led structure with participant engagement and dialogue through deliberate shifts in pedagogic control.

The framework follows five interconnected stages: Stage 1: Pre-lecture (LAV), Stage 2: Introduce, Stage 3: Deepen, Stage 4: Apply, and Stage 5: Create and Capture.

#### **Stage 1: Pre-lecture Literature, Audio, Visual (LAV)**

Mode of control: Facilitator-designed / Participant-led

Pre-lecture materials are intentionally curated by the educator to provide multiple entry points into a shared concept. Students are offered at least three forms of engagement with the same core idea: a literature-based source (such as a journal article, chapter, or lyrics), an audio source (for example a podcast or interview), and a visual source (such as a video or recorded explanation).

Materials vary in length and are clearly structured and identify number of pages or timestamps, enabling students to plan engagement in relation to the time available to them while remaining connected to the shared conceptual focus of the session. Guided questions are provided as a light structure for preparation and discussion. This approach avoids directing students toward identical responses and instead keeps

discussion fresh, enabling students to share diverse interpretations shaped by their chosen entry points into the learning. This stage establishes structured discovery by combining clear academic parameters with participant choice.

### **Stage 2: Introduce (I)**

Mode of control: Facilitator-led

The educator provides conceptual grounding that anchors the session following the varied entry points established during the LAV stage. Drawing on disciplinary and professional knowledge, key ideas are clarified and connected to the broader focus of learning. This facilitator-led introduction establishes shared understanding and direction, ensuring that subsequent dialogue and exploration take place within clear academic parameters.

### **Stage 3: Deepen (D)**

Mode of control: Facilitator-designed / Participant-led

Participants extend their understanding through structured dialogue and collaborative inquiry. Discussion begins by inviting participants to reflect on the pre-lecture materials they engaged with and the perspectives these generated. Where particular materials have not been selected, the facilitator provides a brief synthesis to ensure shared conceptual access before dialogue develops further.

Participants then work in small groups organised to encourage comparison, challenge, and exchange of interpretation. Groupings may bring together participants who explored similar materials or intentionally combine different entry points, enabling ideas to be examined from multiple perspectives. While the structure of interaction is designed by the facilitator, meaning-making emerges through participant discussion as individuals articulate, question, and refine understanding collectively. The emphasis is therefore on collaborative discovery, allowing participants to encounter alternative interpretations and extend their thinking through interaction with others.

### **Stage 4: Apply (A)**

Mode of control: Facilitator-designed / Participant-led

Participants work with theory or concepts through tasks designed to support application and transfer. Participants may work individually or collaboratively to apply learning to real-world contexts, prior concepts, or professional experiences, linking theory to practice and consolidating understanding. Activities may include policy analysis, creative design, or professional problem-solving, emphasising relevance and practical interpretation.

### **Stage 5: Create & Capture**

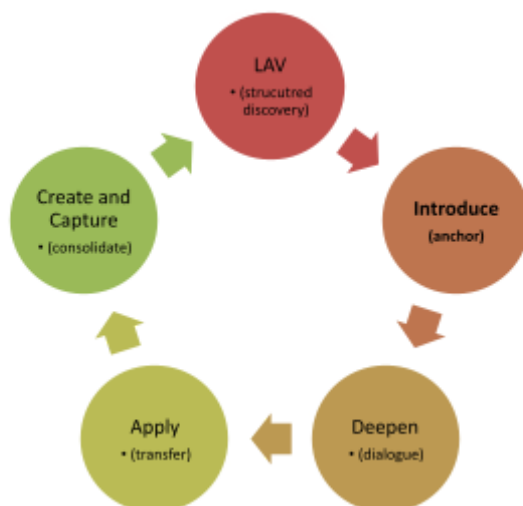
Mode of control: Participant-led → Facilitator-led close

Participants are given time to capture what has been learned through formats such as written reflection, note organisation, visual representation, concept mapping, or short collaborative outputs. This stage consolidates understanding, promotes ownership, and makes learning visible.

The session concludes with a facilitator-led synthesis that draws together participant contributions, clarifies key concepts, and addresses misconceptions where necessary. Insights gained at this stage inform planning for subsequent sessions.

Together, these five stages form a coherent and adaptable learning cycle that supports interaction, autonomy, and visible learning while maintaining clear academic focus.

**Figure 1** LAVIDA Teaching and Learning Framework Representation



#### Discussion: Theoretical Foundations of the LAVIDA TLF

Although developed within a higher education context, the framework described here uses the term ‘participants’ to reflect its adaptability across educational and professional learning environments. LAVIDA TLF was designed around the principle that engagement begins with choice. Rather than proposing a radically new pedagogy, LAVIDA TLF builds on established principles associated with inclusive and active learning design (CAST, 2018; Biggs & Tang, 2011) by making their structure explicit within a repeatable teaching cycle. Within this framework, fluctuation in participation is expected and allows for the same participant to engage differently from week to week depending on workload, energy, or wider life circumstances.

The framework assumes that when students have genuine options in how they approach learning, they are more likely to take ownership of it. This reflects Ryan and Deci’s (2000) self-determination theory (SDT), which identifies autonomy, competence and relatedness as key conditions for intrinsic motivation. The pre-lecture stage (LAV) was created to provide that sense of autonomy. Students select a text that matched their learning preference that week, literature, audio, or visual. Flexibility here was not about lowering expectations around access to different media but about enabling sustained participation. Research on flexible learning (Jimola & Ofodu, 2021) suggests that students value environments where engagement can adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining academic standards. Time markers and page numbers were deliberately provided to enable realistic planning and to support continued connection to learning during periods of increased pressure. In this respect, the design aligns with principles associated with Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2018), which emphasise proactive structuring of learning environments to accommodate variability in participation rather than attributing differences to learner deficit.

The second stage, Introduce, reinforces the centrality of teaching within the learning process. According to Biesta (2013), education does not simply happen; it involves learning with a specific focus on something (content), it must be for a reason (purpose), and it always involves others (relationships). This stage positions the educator as the organiser of these three dimensions. The educator draws on professional and

disciplinary knowledge to connect ideas, establish conceptual focus, and make explicit the purpose of the session. In doing so, the educator transforms the diversity generated through the LAV stage into a shared starting point for collective learning. This stage therefore asserts that active learning does not diminish the role of the educator; rather, it depends upon the educator's ability to structure, connect, and make learning purposeful.

The third stage, Deepen, moves from introduction to exploration. Here, participants begin to work together to connect ideas, compare interpretations, and test understanding through discussion and application. Deepen aligns with the need for "relatedness" or connection in SDT and exemplifies the constructive alignment that Biggs and Tang (2011) argue is essential for learning to move beyond surface recall toward "deep learning", where understanding develops through active engagement rather than passive reception. Dialogue plays a critical role at this stage and the educator's role shifts from explaining to facilitating, guiding discussion, posing questions, and connecting contributions back to the session's conceptual focus. While interactional structures are intentionally designed by the educator, the direction of discussion emerges through participant interpretation and exchange. The Deepen stage therefore represents the point at which knowledge becomes dynamic, with understanding co-constructed through structured dialogue and reflection rather than transmitted through explanation alone.

The fourth stage, Apply, focuses on the transfer of understanding to real-world or disciplinary contexts. Learning moves from exploration toward application as theoretical ideas take form in practice. By working on a shared task set by the educator, participants are encouraged to use conceptual tools to analyse, interpret, or solve problems, thereby reinforcing understanding through use rather than recall. This approach aligns with problem-based learning (PBL), which has a long history and philosophical links to John Dewey (Servant-Miklos, Norman, & Schmidt, 2019). While the task structure is established by the educator, participants determine how ideas are interpreted and applied within their own contexts.

The final stage, Create and Capture, is designed to make consolidation and reflection a planned and structured part of each session. Marshall et al. (2022) emphasise that reflection is most impactful when intentionally embedded into practice and supported by structures that foster psychological safety, curiosity, and learner engagement, which are central to the LAVIDA TLF. The Create and Capture stages allow participants to consolidate understanding through flexible individual or collaborative outputs that make learning visible. The session concludes with an educator-led close in which key ideas are clarified and misconceptions addressed. As Biesta (2013) argues, teaching involves making professional judgements about what knowledge is educationally desirable. This final stage mirrors the first, repositioning academic expertise as an anchoring point that provides coherence and conceptual security while maintaining flexible participation.

The five stages of LAVIDA TLF form a coherent cycle that balances flexibility with structure and positions teaching as both facilitative and authoritative. Participant autonomy is supported through deliberate design and professional guidance; choice encourages ownership while structure ensures purpose. In this way, LAVIDA TLF aligns with literature that values active, participatory learning while retaining the educator's central role in shaping educational direction. The framework demonstrates that flexibility and academic rigour can coexist when learning is structured through intentional teaching. LAVIDA TLF also responds to questions of belonging, attendance, and participation within the post-pandemic classroom by rebuilding connection through design rather than intervention, making voice and choice integral to participation rather than optional acts of confidence. Attendance becomes linked to involvement, and dialogue emerges through preparation and shared activity. Although developed in response to face-to-face teaching contexts,

the staged design of LAVIDA TLF can be adapted to blended or fully online environments where intentional interaction remains central to participation. Thoughtful learning design can therefore contribute to belonging in higher education by recognising that participation takes place within changing environments and the complexities of learners' lived realities. In this sense, teaching does not seek to eliminate uncertainty but to work productively within it, reaffirming that education remains, as Biesta (2013) argues, a beautiful risk.

### Biography

*Jade Palmer* is a Senior Lecturer in Education and educational researcher whose work explores flexible pedagogy, belonging, and alternative education. Her current work focuses on engagement and the development of the LAVIDA Teaching and Learning Framework (LAVIDA TLF) to support visible, relational, and autonomous learning across education.

### References

- Biesta, G. (2013). *The beautiful risk of education*. Routledge.
- Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2011). *Teaching for quality learning at university: What the student does* (4th ed.). Open University Press / McGraw-Hill Education.
- CAST. (2018). Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.2. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
- Herrington, J., Oliver, R., & Reeves, T. C. (2003). Patterns of engagement in authentic online learning environments. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 19(1), 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.1701>
- Jimola, F. E., & Ofodu, G. O. (2021). Sustaining learning during COVID-19 seismic shift: The need to develop flexible pedagogy. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Education Research*, 3(1), 14–26. <https://doi.org/10.51986/ijer-2021.vol3.01.02>
- Marshall, T., Keville, S., Cain, A., & Adler, J. R. (2022). Facilitating reflection: A review and synthesis of the factors enabling effective facilitation of reflective practice. *Reflective Practice*, 23(1), 76–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2021.2017275>
- Moallem, M., Hung, W., & Duffy, T. M. (Eds.). (2019). *The Wiley handbook of problem-based learning*. John Wiley & Sons. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/derby/detail.action?docID=5660370>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Servant-Miklos, V. F. C., Norman, G. R., & Schmidt, H. G. (2019). A short intellectual history of problem-based learning. In M. Moallem, W. Hung, & N. Dabbagh (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of problem-based learning* (pp. 3–24). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119173243.ch1>