

Access to Materials

Access to materials, technology, and reliable internet services are ongoing barriers for remote and rural learners, students from low socioeconomic status, and equity-seeking students.

Barriers



Socioeconomic status
(inability to pay for internet and hardware/software)



Remote/rural access
(learners often travel long distances to use a computer/connection)



Poverty
(negative impact on motivation)



Access to reliable internet
(especially within remote and Indigenous communities)



Access to equipment
(webcams, mics, software, etc.)



Materials that don't meet accessibility standards

Evidence-Based Strategies

- Provide hardware, tech support, and hardware/software guidance and troubleshooting
- Support for under-served populations on the use of hardware/software
- Communicate with students about access and availability of supports and resources
 - Provide online tutors
- Offer free and library supports to access course materials (screen readers, talking books, etc.)
- Ensure materials are easy to download and have small file sizes; use cloud-based services to share documents (Google Docs, Dropbox, OneDrive, etc.)
- Offer alternative connection channels (some students can't or won't meet via webcam)
- Design materials with mobile-only users in mind
- Provide a range of resources (downloadable PDF or Word documents, articles, videos, podcasts, URLs to relevant sites)
- Consider a mobile library to go to the different communities and provide access to the materials

[For more data and context, read the full report from ABLE Research Consultants](#)