

AI-Supported Inclusion for Learners with Special Educational Needs

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Learning objective

Adapting materials and activities for learners with different support needs is one of the most time-consuming tasks in teaching. The aim of this material is to show how AI can help teachers with this work: simplifying texts, creating differentiated activities, providing step-by-step guidance, supporting reading and writing, and improving accessibility. By the end of the material, teachers will be able to use AI as an assistant for adaptation, formulate needs in a functional and anonymous way, check adapted materials for accuracy and appropriateness, and respect clear boundaries. Let us be clear: AI must not be used to diagnose, label or automatically assess learners.

Introduction: the teacher adapts, AI assists

Inclusive education means that every learner can participate meaningfully and make progress. In a class, learners with special learning needs, attention difficulties, autism, sensory or physical impairments, or lower reading literacy may learn side by side. Each of them may need a slightly different route to the same professional competence.

Preparing several versions of a text, a task or an instruction used to take hours. Generative AI can produce drafts of such adaptations in minutes. The pedagogical decisions, however, remain with the teacher and the support team: what the learner needs, which goal must stay the same, and whether the adapted material is correct, respectful and useful.

What AI can help with

Simplifying texts

A language model can rewrite a dense technical text in plain, easy-to-understand language: short sentences, one idea per sentence, active voice, clear structure and an explanation of every technical term. Easy-to-read principles (such as the European standards of Inclusion Europe) provide a useful checklist (see the links).



A dense text becomes a structured, simplified version – with the key content kept

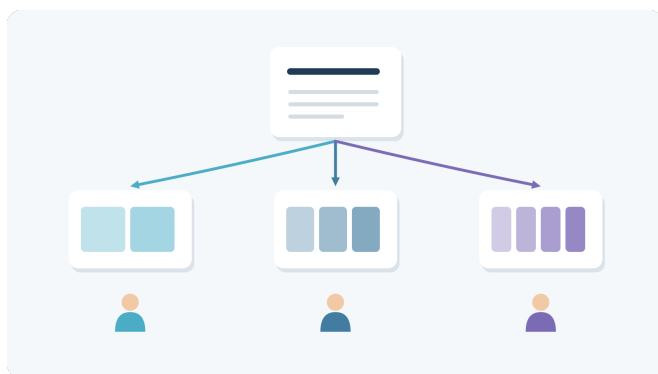
Example prompt for simplification

Rewrite the attached text about safe use of an angle grinder for 17-year-old vocational learners who need simpler language. Use short sentences, one idea per sentence and numbered steps. Keep all safety rules and technical terms, and explain each term in brackets the first time it appears. Do not use a childish tone. Add a 3-point summary at the end.

Note what the prompt does *not* contain: no name, no diagnosis, no personal data – only a functional description of what the text should be like.

Differentiated activities

Differentiation means offering different routes to the **same learning goal**, not lowering expectations. AI can quickly draft task variants with different amounts of support: a version with worked examples and hints, a standard version, and an extension task.

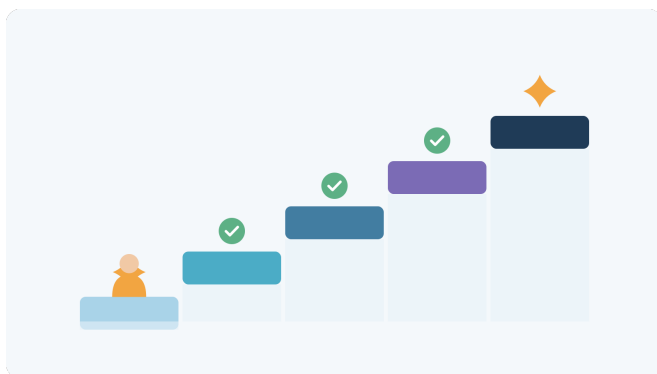


One learning goal, several routes: task variants with different levels of support

Step-by-step guidance

Many learners – especially those with attention difficulties or autism – benefit from breaking complex tasks into small, predictable steps. AI can turn a workshop task into a checklist, a visual schedule or a sequence of short instructions; tools such as [goblin.tools](#) specialise in splitting a task into smaller steps.

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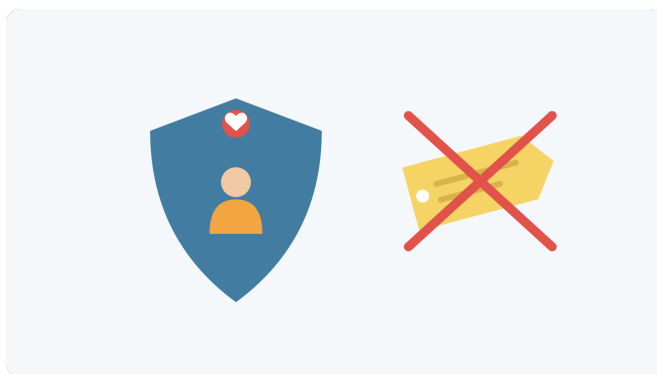
Small, clear steps make progress visible and reduce overload

Supporting reading, writing and accessibility

- **Reading:** audio versions, reading modes, glossaries with pictures, questions that guide attention while reading.
- **Writing:** sentence starters, word banks, structure templates for reports, and dictation instead of handwriting.
- **Accessibility of materials:** clear headings, sufficient contrast, alternative text for images, consistent layout – AI can check a document against such criteria and suggest improvements.

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Boundaries: dignity, privacy and professional roles



Support without labelling: learners' dignity and privacy come first

- **No diagnosis:** AI must not be used to decide or suggest whether a learner "has" a condition. Identifying special educational needs is the task of qualified professionals.

- **No labelling:** describe *needs* (“needs shorter instructions and visual support”), not *categories of people*. Offer adapted materials to everyone who may benefit.
- **No automatic assessment:** decisions about grades, progression or support must remain human. Under the EU AI Act, emotion recognition in education is prohibited (since February 2025), and AI systems that assess learners’ results are classified as high-risk, including when those results are used to decide how a learner’s education continues (for example, which tasks, level or learning path they get next). Strict obligations for such systems are scheduled to apply from December 2027.
- **Privacy:** information about a learner’s special needs usually reveals health data, which is a special category of personal data under the GDPR. Never enter names, diagnoses, expert opinions or individual development plans into general AI tools.
- **Professional cooperation:** adaptations should be aligned with special education teachers, the learner’s individual plan, parents – and, above all, with the learner.

Checking the result

After every adaptation, check three things.

Accuracy: did simplification change or remove essential content, especially safety rules?

Appropriateness: is the tone respectful and age-appropriate for the given age group?

Usefulness: does it work for the learner? Ask the learner for feedback and adjust accordingly.

Takeaways for teachers

- AI can draft simplified texts, differentiated tasks and step-by-step guidance in minutes – the teacher decides and checks.
- Keep the learning goal the same; vary the route and the support.
- Describe needs functionally and anonymously; never enter personal or health data.
- Do not use AI to diagnose, label or automatically assess learners.
- Work together with the support team and listen to the learner.

References

- UNESCO (2023): Guidance for generative AI in education and research. Paris: UNESCO.
- Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (Artificial Intelligence Act), Article 5(1)(f) and Annex III.
- Inclusion Europe (2009): Information for all – European standards for making information easy to read and understand.
- CAST (2024): Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 3.0.

Links

- UNESCO guidance on generative AI: unesco.org
- Easy-to-read standards: inclusion-europe.eu

- goblin.tools: goblin.tools

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