

Information Literacy Strategy

Summary

Background

In 2008, the Library created its current Information Literacy Policy and Framework. The recently revised Policy explains why information literacy skills are crucial to independent learning and outlines the Library's objectives and responsibilities in contributing to the development of information literate graduates and staff.

The accompanying Framework offers a guide to the sequential development of Information Literacy skills, matching desired attributes with specific competencies. The first four attributes align closely with competency in inquiry/research, which is one of the University's graduate capabilities (Curriculum White Paper: Design for Learning, 2009).

The draft Information Literacy Strategy acknowledges that student development takes place in a whole of university context through activities that are integrated into the curriculum and those that supplement the curriculum. It complements the existing Policy and Framework by outlining an action plan for using the Information Literacy Framework as the basis for developing inquiry/research capabilities.

Principles

The draft Information Literacy Strategy is based on the following key principles:

- Inquiry/research skills are developed most effectively in students when that skill development is embedded in the curriculum and reflected in assessment tasks.
- Library staff work in partnership with other University staff involved in teaching and learning to develop programs which contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes related to the graduate capability of inquiry/research.
- The approach outlined is systematic and sustainable, within the current Library staffing and funding levels, aiming for consistent outcomes across the University.
- The Strategy builds on the Library's established reputation for customer service and responsive programs, while embracing new technologies and University initiatives.
- The Library will periodically review and evaluate the Strategy to reflect the changing University, educational and technological environment.
- Effectiveness of the Library's information literacy programs will be evaluated in conjunction with teaching staff and will use meaningful, measureable and transparent key indicators of student learning as an integrated part of the normal curriculum assessment process. In addition, the Library will assess client satisfaction and/or usability of programs.

Key features

Strategy for undergraduates

- A diagnostic tool for all students that both assesses student entry-level skills and makes explicit skills that are expected in terms of University graduate capabilities.
- Set of online foundation skills tutorials embedded in the first year curricula structure. Ideally these will be incorporated in cornerstone units to acknowledge their importance and to emphasise a university-wide approach to building these skills. Assessment of the skills will check competence and progress against graduate capabilities.
- Further development of skills embedded in curriculum where appropriate and reinforced and supported by librarian assistance, in person and online, and discipline-specific online resources.
- Once capstone subjects are developed, undergraduates will complete a final assessment to measure and certify their acquisition of a set of discipline-specific information literacy skills.

Strategy for postgraduates

- A checklist rather than compulsory diagnostic tool - to identify possible gaps in existing knowledge and to provide links to resources to develop these skills.
- Depending on the gaps in existing knowledge, postgraduates may access any of the tutorials already created for undergraduate students and/or link to further information on building more advanced skills, embedded into a University endorsed postgraduate support program.
- Continuation of the successful discipline-specific programs and advice offered by Faculty Librarians.

Strategy for staff

- Improved communication and promotion of existing resources and services.
- Regular resource familiarisation and skills enhancement programs.
- Continued collaboration with Faculty Librarian to embed inquiry/research skills in the curricula.

Outcomes

If successfully implemented, the outcome will be;

- Graduates who can recognise the need for, and find credible information and then use that information to develop new skills and knowledge.
- A University that feels confident that all graduates have been given the opportunity to develop this capability.
- Librarians and academics who understand how each contributes to this process and work together to build capability in students.
- A comprehensive program for the Library that is sustainable and measurable, allowing Librarians time to keep abreast of new developments and respond accordingly.

To read the draft Information Literacy Strategy or the Discussion Paper which provides background and context, please visit www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/building-blocks/