

QUT Library Policy on Information Literacy

Identification block

QUT Library Policy on Information Literacy	
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Overview and context

Policy overview

Information literacy is an ongoing strategic focus for QUT Library. In support of the goals and objectives relating to this focus, the Library undertakes a leading role in the development and implementation of systemic, systematic and sustainable initiatives which:

- promote information literacy as a key competency for lifelong learning, fundamental to the teaching, learning and research focus of the QUT community;
- enable and empower students as critical and independent users of information by embedding information literacy skills, as an “emerging skill” and key generic capability, into the whole learning experience; and
- achieve and promulgate models of effective practice for the implementation and evaluation of information literacy in terms of students' learning outcomes, curriculum structure and assessment.

This policy outlines the range of strategic central and branch-based services, systems and strategies which the Library develops, supports and or maintains to achieve these goals.

Definitions

Information literacy

Information literacy (IL) is an intellectual framework for recognising the need for, understanding, finding, evaluating, and using information - activities which may be supported in part by fluency with information technology, in part by sound investigative methods, but most importantly, through critical discernment & reasoning¹.

IL encompasses a wide range of lifelong enabling concepts and competencies which lead to good information practice and which contribute to the development of graduate capabilities at QUT and supports the Teaching and Learning goals as set by QUT's Learning and Teaching Plan.

IL Standards

The *Australian/New Zealand Information Literacy Standards* provides a framework for embedding information literacy into the design and teaching of educational courses and programs, and for assessing the information literate individual. The Standards extend and support the information literacy developmental strategies and initiatives of educators, teacher librarians and academic librarians in the school, tertiary and TAFE sectors.

¹ *Australian Information Literacy Standards, 2000*

QUT's information literacy initiatives and activities are based upon the 1st edition Standards, as endorsed by the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL), Canberra, 2001. Due to the close correlation to the Australian Information Literacy Standards, QUT's information literacy policy and practice also stand strongly aligned with global initiatives and perspectives².

Graduate Capabilities

Graduate Capabilities are a set of important values, attitudes, knowledge and skills which QUT expects that graduates should develop as part of their learning experience. These skills will equip them as independent, lifelong learners and assist them to contribute effectively as citizens, leaders in the wider community, and competent professionals within their chosen discipline.

Related documents

[QUT Library Strategic Plan 2003-2006: Objective C2 & Strategy C2a:](http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/quality/documents/StratPlan_KPIs_Wallchart_2003_2006.pdf)

http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/quality/documents/StratPlan_KPIs_Wallchart_2003_2006.pdf

[Division of Technology, Information & Learning Support \(TILS\): Support for Research Staff and Students 3 year plan 2003-2006: Objective 3 / Strategy 15 & Strategy 16.:](http://www.library.qut.edu.au/pubspolicies/Research_Support_Plan_2003-06.pdf)

http://www.library.qut.edu.au/pubspolicies/Research_Support_Plan_2003-06.pdf

[QUT Library's Vision 2004-2007](#)

[QUT Blueprint, Ambitions and Priorities: Priority 2 & 4](#)

[QUT's Mission and Goals](#)

[MOPP C/1.3: QUT Graduate Capabilities Policy:](#)

[MOPP C/9.1: QUT Assessment Policy](#)

[MOPP Policy C/7.8: QUT Teaching Capabilities Framework:](#)

[QUT Learning & Teaching Plan 2005-2010: Objective 2/ Knowledge and Skills for Graduates](#)

[Research & Innovation Plan 2005-2009: Objective 2/ Excellence](#)

[Research & Innovation Plan 2003-2007: Objective 2/ Strategy 2.3](#)

[QUT Library Information Literacy Procedures Manual](#)

Policy statement

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1. Statement of purpose

QUT Library provides leadership in developing and fostering the essential information literacy knowledge, skills and understanding of the QUT community. The university-wide information literacy program promotes critical thinking and equips individuals for lifelong learning. In partnership with academic colleagues, QUT Library enhances curricula and creates learning environments which support QUT's teaching and learning goals.

² From 2005, QUT Library will lead a systematic migration to the 2nd edition Standards, as outlined in the new Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework (2004). This Framework incorporates standards and learning outcomes that consist of the characteristics, attributes, processes, knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and aspirations associated with the information literate person. The standards are grounded in generic skills, information skills and values and beliefs.

2. Mission, goals and aims

QUT Library leads the University towards developing and implementing a strategic, systematic and sustainable model of information literacy teaching and learning focused on: raising the awareness of students and staff to the notion of information literacy as a lifelong learning attribute;
developing a mutual understanding of the inherent principles and practices of information literacy;
affecting attitudinal and cultural change pertaining to the learning and teaching of information literacy;
leading change in learning and teaching practice to ensure that information literacy is a pervasive and enduring part of the learning environment³; and
raising levels of student competence with respect to information knowledge, concepts and skills.

QUT Library emphasises that information literacy knowledge and skills are most effectively learned when developed, recursively, within the context of a discipline-related need - ie: when it is embedded within the curriculum content, assessment and learning experiences for each student.

To this end, the Library undertakes a leading role in developing, promoting and implementing a variety of strategies and initiatives targeting curricula reform. Through collaborative planning, development and delivery of information concepts and skills, the Library contributes to the design and development of discipline-based curricula which incorporates information literacy as an enabling generic capability. It also provides advice and assistance on the formulation of authentic assessment tasks which address information literacy learning outcomes.

The Library also provides information literacy educational programs, services and resources which acknowledge and cater for:

level, timeliness and mode of study (including flexible delivery and distance learning modes);
specific discipline requirements and/or boundaries;
different learning styles;
diverse needs and backgrounds of students and staff, including:

- levels of dis/ability;
- cultural and indigenous perspectives;
- social disadvantage; and
- gender.

3. Information Literacy Framework & Syllabus

Learning for Life: the Information Literacy Framework & Syllabus (ILF&S) provides the theoretical base and practical direction for implementation of the information literacy learning and teaching goals and objectives of QUT and the Library. The *ILF&S* serves as a guide for QUT administrators, teaching faculty, library teaching staff and QUT professional support staff by promulgating models and strategies for developing and evaluating information literacy in terms of student learning outcomes, curriculum structure and assessment. The *Framework (Principles and Plans)*, presents policy as a longitudinal plan and is available in print and PDF, while the *Syllabus (Practices)* forms a practical companion resource.

The ILF&S is available electronically through the Library's web site:

<http://www.library.qut.edu.au/ilfs/>

4. Curriculum strategies

The Library is committed to three learning and teaching strategies related to information literacy development at QUT. While necessarily combined to achieve a common goal, each strategy independently relies upon a different pedagogical approach. Each strategy outlines roles, responsibilities and resources associated with achieving desired outcomes.

³ Carpenter, K. 1996, *A Library Historian Looks at Librarianship*, *Daedalus* 125.4, p. 77.

4.1 Extracurricula (supplemental): Strategy 1

Extracurricula information literacy learning activities develop generic enabling skills and are supplemental to the core curriculum of students.

Typically, these activities take the form of lectures, workshops and short courses on basic information skills which are designed & delivered by library teaching staff and attended at the discretion of each individual student. Information literacy content is generic (ie: discipline-neutral) and non-targeted (i.e not aligned with any unit and/or course). Workshops and short courses are usually conducted in the Library's teaching labs. If applicable, assessment is formative only and designed to provide immediate feedback to students for their own learning. The outcome is short-term functional application of basic information skills.

The Extracurricula Information Literacy Plan is available on the Library's website:

<http://www.library.qut.edu.au/academics/strategies/strategiesextra.jsp>

4.2 Intercurricula (integrated): Strategy 2

Intercurricula information literacy learning activities develop specific enabling skills linked to the core curriculum of students.

These activities generally take the form of lectures, workshops and/or short courses on basic information skills which are designed and delivered by library teaching staff in consultation with, or at the request of, the individual teaching academic. These activities are typically attended by groups of students as a unit requirement and may be scheduled into a unit timetable. Sessions or classes may be conducted in faculty lecture theatres or labs as well as Library teaching spaces. Information literacy content is generally contextualised within a unit curriculum or discipline and timetable (i.e: discipline-related), and targeted to the broad but immediate needs of students in a single unit. Where required, assessment is generally summative in nature, supplemental to primary assessable requirements and may be assigned a nominal to moderate weighting. The outcome is task-specific application of basic information skills.

The Intercurricula Information Literacy Plan is available on the Library's website:

<http://www.library.qut.edu.au/academics/strategies/strategiesinter.jsp>

4.3 Intracurricula (embedded): Strategy 3

Intracurricula information literacy learning opportunities develop transferable skills embedded within the core curriculum of students.

Activities address the learning and application of information skills and practice via varied formats (eg lectures, workshops, short courses, online or independent study). These learning opportunities and experiences are designed, delivered, assessed & evaluated via collaborative partnerships between academic and library teaching staff.

Conceptual knowledge and skills development is addressed within the full curricula of a course, in each associated unit of study within that course and across all year levels. Information literacy content is always contextualised within the content and assessment of a single unit as connected to multiple units within a course (i.e: discipline-driven), and targeted to the specific and immediate to long-term needs of students in each unit/course. Assessment elements of the unit are a combination of formative and summative mandatory requirements of the unit and/or course, and are weighted accordingly (eg: essays, reports, projects, etc). Through recursive and iterative learning opportunities, the outcome is deep, durable learning and transferable understanding and application of complex information literacy concepts and skills.

The Intracurricula Information Literacy Plan is available on the Library's website:

<http://www.library.qut.edu.au/academics/strategies/strategiesintra.jsp>

5. Implementation of strategies

5.1. Learning and teaching services

The learning and teaching strategies outlined in the above section apply to different client groups in different ways:

Extracurricula (supplemental): Strategy 1 applies to all QUT Library client groups including:

Undergraduates
Postgraduates (coursework)
Postgraduates (research)
Specific demographic groups (eg international students)
Academic and general staff

Intercurricula (integrated): Strategy 2 applies to:

Undergraduates
Postgraduates (coursework)

Intracurricula (embedded): Strategy 3 applies to:

Undergraduates
Postgraduates (coursework)

[See [Information Literacy Procedures Manual](#) for a detailed description of how each of the learning and teaching strategies are implemented at QUT].

5.2. Learning and teaching resources

The Library provides a range of resources which promote and facilitate learning, including:

Online tutorials (PILOT, EndNote Online, AIRS Online);
Library pages on QUT's Online Learning and Teaching system;
Subject and Help Guides;
Print resources; and
Reuseable multimedia learning objects.

[See [Information Literacy Procedures Manual](#) for further details about these resources.]

6. Governance

The Library provides a comprehensive infrastructure to guide and manage information literacy planning, initiatives and services. Library staff also advocate and lead the learning and teaching of information literacy via a wide range of institutional, state, national and international committees and working parties.

Updated lists are maintained at:

<http://www.library.qut.edu.au/infoliteracy/governance/infoliteracygovernance.jsp>
<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/infolit/Governance/ILgovernance.jsp>

6.1 Library

The development, provision, implementation and evaluation of all information literacy strategies, initiatives, resources and services is directed or overseen by the following positions and/or groups:

Associate Director, Library Services (Development)

The Associate Director, Library Services (Development) is responsible for the overall management of the Library's information literacy portfolio.

Information Literacy Coordinator

The Information Literacy Coordinator (ILC) provides advice and recommendations on policies and procedures for the provision of, and client access to, information literacy programs, products and services across QUT Library and the University.

Liaison Librarians

The Liaison Librarians implement the information literacy goals and objectives of the Library as they pertain directly to each faculty.

Liaison Librarians constitute the primary teaching and learning interface for the Library, and in this capacity work in partnership with designated Faculties and Divisions as educational practitioners and advisors in all areas directly relating to the Library policies and activities which address the information literacy learning needs of students and staff.

AIRS Librarian

The AIRS Librarian is responsible for the teaching, assessment, evaluation and administration of the Advanced Information Retrieval Skills (AIRS) course for postgraduate research students. The AIRS Librarian reports directly to the ILC.

Information Literacy Branch Coordinators (ILBCs)

ILBCs are Liaison Librarians from each Branch, nominated on a 2 year basis. The ILBCs form a critical line of communication between Branch-based information literacy staff and the ILC. They guide and support strategic and operational information literacy initiatives and planning for the Library.

Reference Services Managers (RSMs) and Branch Library Managers (BLMs)

The RSMs and BLMs facilitate the achievement of the information literacy goals and objectives of the Library via the direct line management of the Liaison Librarians, and by working in partnership with the ILC. They also contribute to strategic and operational decision-making and promotional processes governing the Library's information literacy activities.

Committees and working groups

Library staff advocate and lead the learning and teaching of information literacy via engagement in a variety of internal committees and working parties. These include:

- Information Literacy Advisory Group (ILAT)
<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/committees/ILAT/index.jsp>
- EndNote Advisory Group (ENAG)
<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/committees/ENAG>
- Client Services Group (CSG)
<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/committees/CSG>

6.2 Institutional

QUT Library participates in a wide range of Faculty, Divisional and University committees and working parties in order to ensure that information literacy is addressed in the broader strategic planning and development activities of the university, and specifically in the design, planning, delivery and evaluation of course curricula. These include:

- TILS Events Services Coordination Team;
- Teaching & Learning Large and Small Grants Support Network;
- University Teaching & Learning Committee;
- QUT Staff Development Network;
- Academic Boards;
- Faculty/School Teaching & Learning Committees (or equivalent Education Committees); and
- Divisional Information Exchange Teams.

7. Quality assurance, forward planning and reporting

The Library networks and liaises across the Division and the University to ensure continual improvement of information literacy learning and teaching.

7.1 Evaluation and assessment

The Library develops, monitors and improves quality assurance and evaluation processes regarding information literacy programs, resources and services. These processes include evaluation and continuous improvement of information skills development activities that reference best practice across the national and international higher education sector.

Using a variety of methods and instruments, QUT Library leads systematic appraisal of strategies and initiatives to ensure quality learning and to inform future planning and decision-making processes. Regular evaluation of generic undergraduate and postgraduate information literacy classes and courses focus on content and outcomes alignment, relevance and teacher performance.

These methods include:

student peer and self-assessment;
surveys and focus groups;
traditional tests and informal quizzes;
standardised and/or informal university procedures (eg: SET/SEU and WOLF⁴); and
other formative and summative assessment methods where applicable.

While a rigorous process of evaluation informs the continuous improvement of the Library's own courses, successful embedding into the curriculum ensures that levels of student satisfaction reflect, but are difficult to extract from, whole-of-course approval.

The Library also participates in ATN, CAUL and other benchmarking processes as required.

7.2 Planning, reporting & review

The ILC has lead responsibility for collating, coordinating and/or delivering reports on information literacy activities and initiatives.

Ongoing strategic planning and review is conducted via Information Literacy Planning Retreats, held every two-three years. The Retreats provide an opportunity for QUT Library's learning and teaching team to review and reflect on progress and plan future initiatives and strategies. Information literacy initiatives align closely with Library, Divisional and University strategic planning cycles.

To inform planning, the Library uses data drawn from focus groups and surveys to gain specific insight into information-seeking behaviour, satisfaction with the Library's learning and teaching services and resources, and potentially unmet needs for information literacy education.

Appendices to policy

Information Literacy Procedures Manual: <http://www.library.qut.edu.au/pubspolicies/>

Modification history

Date	Sections	Source	Details
[date of changes]	[policy section]	[position title responsible for changes]	

⁴ *Web Online Feedback*

