

ALIA's role in the education of library and information professionals

The phrase 'library and information professional' refers to those members of the profession who have successfully completed an entry-level qualification in library and information science at either Associate or Library Technician level.

Purpose

To describe and promote the Association's role in the education of library and information professionals.

ALIA Constitution Objects addressed:

- To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy, environment and democracy.
- To promote and improve the services provided by all kinds of library and information agencies.
- To ensure the high standard of personnel engaged in information provision and foster their professional interests and aspirations.
- To endorse the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 19 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in response to the many challenges faced by the world today and into the future.

Principle

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) sets and maintains education standards for entry into the library and information professions in Australia and it plays a vital role in ensuring library and information science professionals are supported in their continuing professional development.

Statement

Library and information professionals need to be aware of the context of their profession and the impact of their role. They have a responsibility to adhere to ethical standards and to utilise their specialist knowledge and skills in library and information science to enable their clients and communities to effectively seek, use and create information in the context of cultural and social inclusion, supporting equity of access and respect. They should work to achieve best practice in privacy, confidentiality and intellectual freedom with the aim of enhancing community aspirations and individual wellbeing.

To fulfill this important role, library and information education must equip graduates and life-long learners with:

- the core knowledge, skills and generic attributes to deliver the highest-quality library and information services;
- current digital and technical skills;
- evidence-based practitioner research that underpins knowledge development;
- an understanding of the importance of advocacy, information and digital literacies;
- an understanding of management competencies;
- the skills to promote and defend the ethical values and importance of library and information services to the community;
- an understanding and appreciation of the information and learning needs of community members of library and information services;
- an understanding of the characteristics of the dynamic environment in which they and their community members participate;
- an understanding of the sector and its importance to the nation so they can contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of the profession;
- an appreciation of the historical and cultural background which has formed the current information environment;
- an understanding of the unique role and cultural knowledge of the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognition of their continuing connection to lands, waters, cultures and communities;
- an understanding of the importance of research activities within the profession to encourage the expansion and diversification of its knowledge base; and
- a commitment to lifelong learning and professional development undertaken in partnership with employers, educators and training providers;

ALIA has a responsibility as a standards and compliance body to ensure the available education courses are high-quality accredited programs, both as a basis for professional practice and as a means of ongoing professional development, and to foster forward looking and dynamic educational opportunities for library and information professionals. To this end, ALIA works collaboratively with educators, students, employers and training providers to promote and encourage continuous improvement in the education of library and information professionals, institutional support for library and information courses and the contribution of practitioner expertise to courses and for ongoing professional development.

ALIA recognises the leadership role that the Association plays amongst its regional neighbours, and to this end ALIA supports regional, Asia, Pacific and Oceania information and library science education.

Reviewed 2009, 2019.