

Implementing the Library competency standards

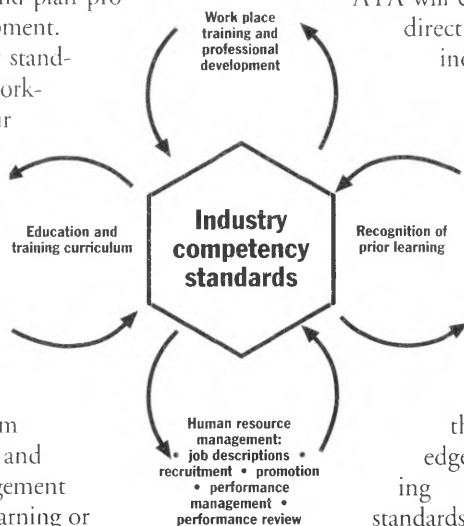
The library competency standards, developed by Arts Training Australia (ATA) under the direction of an industry committee comprising key industry representatives, are the result of detailed consultation with practitioners, industry bodies and educators. There has been an enormous amount of debate and discussion throughout the development of the standards, and there is now widespread agreement inside and outside the library industry about the high quality of the standards. The test is now to check their effectiveness in the workplace.

Using the competency standards

Competency standards are a tool that can be used in a variety of ways.

Competency standards can help employers to: measure skill levels; appraise and review work performance; develop job descriptions; and identify training needs and plan professional development.

Competency standards can help workers to: plan their careers; make more informed decisions about training goals; move more easily between work roles and industries, helping to ensure their long term employability; and gain acknowledgement for on the job learning or life experience



Competency standards can help educators and trainers to: match education and training to industry needs; provide better career advice to individuals; and identify gaps in existing education and training and show industry and learners the benefits of providing and undertaking training.

The standards are being used to inform national curriculum for library workers up to technician level. This curriculum will be available nationally at the beginning of 1996.

Individual libraries are considering how effective use of the standards can be made at the organisational level, for example, in staff development and the generation of competency based position descriptors. Documented examples of how libraries are using the standards will be available by the end of 1995.

Arts training Australia's role

ATA will continue under the direction of the library industry committee to provide support and information about uses of the standards.

As part of its research into competency based assessment in complex work, ATA is examining further the issue of knowledge and understanding in competency standards, and how these are assessed in the workplace. The

results of this work will be available later this year.

ATA is also working with libraries in several sectors regarding the use of the standards in the workplace. This work is only just beginning and updates, will be available as the work progresses. A final report will be available at the end of the year.

Another important role that ATA assumes is information dissemination, such as speaking at conferences and workshops about the standards. For example, ATA will speak at the ELISS conference in December about the competency standards and their uses, and will report on how organisations are using the standards. This information collection and dissemination role is very important, and is an essential part of the ongoing review of the standards that will culminate in the first formal review in June 1997. This review will report on activities that have occurred since libraries first used the standards.

The standards belong to all those involved in libraries. Without their interest, support and commitment the standards could not have been developed, ongoing support will be essential as the standards are implemented.

The Library competency standards are available from Arts Training Australia for a cost of \$70, including electronic copy (Word for Windows 2). Contact Arts Training Australia, PO Box 138, Kings Cross NSW 2011, phone (02) 356 4797, fax (02) 356 4736 or e-mail 100243.1336@compuserve.com.

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CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY



Contacting alumni and former staff with whom we may have lost contact. *20th Anniversary of commencement of teaching in 1975, library and information science courses* Charles Sturt University-Riverina and its predecessors.

20th Anniversary Dinner

Friday 22 September 1995, Wagga Wagga

Followed by Wagga Wagga World Wide Web '95 conference on Saturday 23 September 1995.

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