

# Helping life-long learners

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Joondalup Campus of North Metropolitan College of TAFE was set up as an open learning/flexible delivery campus in July 1992. Joondalup TAFE embraces the concept of a learner-centred approach and aims to provide a flexible learning environment that produces self-directed, life-long learners. In order to achieve this, Joondalup offers all its courses in flexible delivery mode. It operates on a 52-week year, enrolment is continuous and exams are available twice weekly. Support structures such as induction, program advising, facilitation and the Library Resource Centre are available to help the learner keep their studies on track. A summary of the Joondalup Model is available on the Internet at: <http://www.devetwa.edu.au/tafe/nmc/jmodfram.htm>.

The learning resource centre has five staff and is open sixty hours a week, including Saturday morning. It is also responsible for managing the Campus Bookshop. Essentially, the centre looks and functions like other traditional TAFE libraries. We are fortunate in that we do not have to devote exclusive areas to support flexible delivery as the entire campus has adopted that approach. However, we do have different concerns that should be highlighted.

## Access and types of resources

All learners need to access the centre in order to complete their studies. The learning resource centre makes available all the equipment and resources needed to complete a subject. Our loan arrangements are flexible, as learners may be studying anywhere on campus. Everything in the centre, including closed reserve, reference, videos, video players, dictaphones, mice, even extension cords and double adaptors, may be borrowed.

## Learners' need for information and advice

Once learners have enrolled they are directed to the learning resource centre and, since there is no formal class structure, the centre staff provide a familiar and stable presence for the learners to interact with. Learners are provided with a learning guide for each module they enrol in, which outlines the required resources, assessment de-

tails, and how to work through the module. Centre staff spend considerable time with new learners explaining how to start their studies and how the learning guides are structured, in addition to providing learning resource centre information. As the staff quickly become familiar to the learners we continue to provide information and advice on many other aspects of campus operations such as where to find a facilitator, recognition of prior learning, network problems, and so on. In effect, we have become the *de facto* campus 'traffic guide'.

## Modularisation of subjects

Learning guides direct the learners to the resources they need in order to complete the subject. An average of three items per module are used, but some (like the child care modules) can suggest as many as thirty items. In some subjects the resources needed are only available from the learning resource centre.

Problems arise in ensuring that everyone can access the resources cited in the learning guides. Currently, they are available from closed reserve, which is a two-hour loan. This means that from a collection of 14 000 items, 1500 are on closed reserve. Our current policy is to buy two copies of required resources: one for closed reserve and one for the general collection. There is rising pressure both from learners and lecturers to provide more copies, but how many copies would be enough? Usage of these items is always high, due to year-round enrolments (closed reserve loans make up one-third of our yearly loans) and if the trend towards prescriptive learning continues we may need to re-evaluate what we buy.

## Courseware development

The position of librarian, courseware development, is another unique characteristic of Joondalup. This position is located in Intermedia, the College's production unit, and is responsible for areas such as initial research for resources for new modules, copyright clearance and queries, and editing and checking of all resources in learning guides. There is close liaison between this position and the learning resource centre in relation to all aspects of resource provision. ■

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## STUDY GRANT AWARD 1997

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The number of awards in any year will depend upon the funds available and the estimated costs of proposals received.

Nomination forms are available from ALIA National Office  
PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2600  
ph 06 285 1877, fax 06 282 2249  
e-mail [awards@alia.org.au](mailto:awards@alia.org.au)  
URL <http://www.alia.org.au/awards.html>

Applications close  
1 September 1997

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*Contact numbers:*  
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NZ Tollfree: 1800 44 1001  
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