

# On-going professional development for teacher-librarians

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**A** teacher-librarian holds recognised teaching qualifications and qualifications in librarianship, defined as eligibility for Associate (ie, professional) membership of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). Australian Library and Information Association/Australian School Library Association, *Learning for the future: developing information services in schools, 2001, 2nd ed, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton South.*

While teacher-librarians have professional knowledge, practice and commitment in common with librarians in other sectors, they are unique in that their role demands direct involvement with the core function of their educational organisation: teaching. In partnership with other members of the teaching profession, teacher-librarians deliver the curriculum with a strong emphasis on the development of information literacy. Curriculum knowledge and pedagogy are combined with library and information management knowledge and skills. *Learning for the Future: developing information services in schools*, a joint publication from ALIA and the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) provides a framework for everything that happens in school libraries.

The *Standards of professional excellence for teacher-librarians* are an essential point of reference for teacher-librarians when planning their ongoing professional development. The Standards were developed by the ALIA /ASLA Policy Advisory Group as one of several important projects. This group has a brief to foster regular consultation between the two peak national bodies concerned with school libraries, ALIA and ASLA. Their current focus is on the education, both pre-service and post-graduate, of teacher-librarians.

## Informal post-graduate professional development

There are several avenues for professional development available to teacher-librarians that do not attract a formal qualification.

### 1. ALIA Schools Victoria

ALIA Schools Victoria is the only ALIA group that is specifically for schools and one of its goals is to provide professional development for teacher-librarians. For many years, the committee has offered sessions that have a hands-on practical emphasis. These have covered all the five domains in *Learning for the Future*: learners and learning, teachers and teaching, re-

sourcing the curriculum, facilitating access to information and developing the physical environment. The wide range of topics reflects the dual role of the teacher-librarian and has been responsive to the requests of members. Sessions have included: Evidence-based practice, Notemaking, Plagiarism, Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and curriculum documentation/ Professional Portfolios, Effective literature promotion, Making the *Standards of professional excellence for teacher-librarians* work for you, Designing the do-able assignment, and Collection development.

In order to provide a service to the many school members who do not live in Victoria, the group has a commitment to developing their website and using electronic seminars. There have been three online forums; the most recent was on Copyright. The role and use of the group's e-list as a vehicle for collegial discussion is a priority for 2006.

### 2. Professional development within the library sector

Several other organisations provide seminars and workshops for teacher-librarians so that they can maintain best practice. These include the state affiliates of ASLA and SLAV (School Library Association of Victoria). There are many conferences organised by library associations that are held either annually or biennially: ALIA, ASLA, International Association of School Librarians (IASL) and the NSW Catholic Teachers Network, to name a few.

Professional networks also provide opportunities for professional development. Often these are affiliated with an umbrella organisation such as ASLA, or they could be regional or sector-based. In some cases the network has been formed to support users of specific library software packages and the membership is wider than teacher-librarians. Increasingly electronic communication such as OZTLnet is being used.

### 3. Professional development within the education sector

Sessions offered have a focus on state level curriculum initiatives and ICTS. The Teacher Learning Network (TLN), an affiliate of the Australian Education Union (AEU), subject associations such as the Australian Association of Teachers of English (AATE) and its state affiliates, overseas providers, school and sector-based professional development: all provide opportunities for teacher-librarians to maintain current knowledge of curriculum initiatives.

With the current emphasis on computer literacy, teacher-librarians have access

to a wide range of professional development to hone their ICT skills. Once again conferences, seminars and networks are available.

### 4. Professional reading

Professional journals fall into three main categories: publications written specifically for teacher-librarians, for instance *Scan*, *Access*, *FYI* and *Synergy*, those about children's and adolescent literature such as *Viewpoint* and *Magpies* and those from the education sector.

## Formal post-graduate professional development

Many teacher-librarians have formal post-graduate qualifications, which may be in the fields of librarianship, children's literature, business, information studies, information technology, education or student welfare.

## Where to go

### Teacher-librarian standards

*Standards of professional excellence for teacher-librarians* (ALIA and ASLA), [http://alia.org.au/policies/teacher-librarian\\_standards.html](http://alia.org.au/policies/teacher-librarian_standards.html) or <http://www.asla.org.au/policy/standards.htm>

### Associations

Australian School Library Association (ASLA), <http://www.asla.org.au>

School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV), <http://www.slav.schools.net.au>

International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), <http://www.iasl-slo.org>

### Learning for the future

ASLA, Framework: <http://www.asla.org.au/frame/>

Five domains of the LRC (Education Department WA), <http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/cmisis/eval/library/domains/index.htm>

### Online Communities

EdNA: Teacher librarians, <http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/pid/975/>

OZTL\_NET, Online community for information professionals in Australian schools, [http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/sciagr/sis/cstl/oztl\\_net/](http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/sciagr/sis/cstl/oztl_net/) – general information and Archives

### Journals

*FYI*, SLAV quarterly journal/newsletter, <http://www.slav.schools.net.au/fyi.html>

*Synergy*, SLAV journal, <http://www.slav.schools.net.au/synergy.html>

*Scan*, Quarterly journal produced by the NSW Department of Education and Training, <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/schoollibraries/scan/index.htm> ■