



each have our own collection, but there are frequent exchanges between the campuses depending on staff and student requests.

I work with the teacher librarian to provide library services to our campus of approximately 400 students. We provide resources for the study and recreational needs of the students as well as a teacher resource collection for the staff. We also have a number of ESL students to consider.

As a library technician I undertake many tasks within the library, and this gives me a lot of variety in my day-to-day work. We don't have a circulation desk roster, as there are only two of us, so we each keep an eye on the desk while attending to other tasks. This is all part of the multi-tasking that goes on in school libraries.

The day starts with me opening up at 8am. Once workstations are up and running, the first task is usually checking any digital recordings from the night before. We record free-to-air programs using the ClickView video delivery platform. As each program that is recorded has to be edited and converted before any metadata can be added, I try and start this in the morning and work on it throughout the day as time allows.

Once that is underway there are usually some students who may want to borrow items or need assistance with finding required resources. I am always amazed at the amount of students who claim to not know what an OPAC is! Especially as I know that the feeder schools educate their users to be self-seeking in their information needs.

Returns are usually beginning to come in and need to be processed and ordered ready for shelving. Shelving is usually done throughout the day as the need arises. The school day begins with a morning tutor group which is then followed by a morning session, middle of the day session, and an afternoon session. After morning tutor group, any students who are on a study line come in as well as any class group bookings that we may have. This is when we get quite busy with students looking for resources and us helping to locate them.

While this is happening I try and keep an eye on how the program editing is going and also start to catalogue new items. We get our catalogue records from SCIS (Schools Catalogue Information Service); if they don't have a record of the item in hand we will try the State Library of Tasmania, the NLA, or Library of Congress for records. If a record still can't be located, I will then create an original catalogue record. I enjoy original cataloguing but it is time consuming, so these items often have to wait until quiet times to complete them.

Once items are catalogued and checked by the teacher librarian, they can then be end processed. Not very exciting but it gives me a chance to sit at my desk and is a good task as interruptions don't affect the quality of the outcome.

Sometimes we record old tapes to DVD (within the constraints of copyright) – this then means that discs have to be printed, covers made, and the item copy catalogued and made shelf ready.

Student computer use needs to be monitored from time to time, and this is done randomly throughout the day. Monitoring of computers is done by means of software that enables us to see what is on each screen in the library. We have many students studying pre-tertiary subjects and never enough PC's to go around, so computers are only for study purposes.

When time allows I start on the journals. I usually try and do these once a week, otherwise they become unmanageable. Journals are first accessioned, then copy catalogued, and end processed. As we get a number of journals each week it is important to keep them up to date.

Throughout the day I will look for metadata for the recorded free-to-air programs. I usually go to SCIS for this or to the appropriate TV station, and then enter it onto our ClickView holding so that staff can have an indication of what a program is about.

Displays are done regularly, usually on a two-week rotation. They are usually based around a theme or a particular subject area which helps to create awareness of the resources available. We also display new items, which is popular with the keen readers.

Squeezed into this are a break for morning tea and a lunch break. My days always pass quickly and sometimes I feel like I am running from task to task, never quite finishing what I started. Would I change it? No! I love what I do and enjoy helping students reach their learning goals.

Jennifer Johnson
Library Technician, Guilford Young College
jenniferj@gyc.tas.edu.au

A day in the life...

I am the Acquisitions Officer at the Lenton Parr Music, Visual and Performing Arts Library located at the Southbank Campus of the University of Melbourne. This library supports the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts and Music, so the majority of the collection is creative arts-based and includes art, music, dance, drama, theatre production, and film and television resources. It is a small, but very busy library with three full-time, three part-time, and casual staff. Three of us are library technicians and three are librarians, one the cataloguer. Although we all have specific roles, we all work on the loans desk and are able to assist with some other jobs as required, such as basic reference requests.

My role as Acquisitions Officer includes responsibility for ordering and processing items requested by academics and the librarians. Formats required are varied – books, music scores, sound recordings, DVDs, and CD-ROMs – and sources are not always through suppliers. Therefore a fair bit of detective work is sometimes required to source the requested items. Films that are requested are often hard to source and may not have English subtitles, so you have to check for all these sorts of details! One of the art lecturers requested a catalogue from an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This was not available through any suppliers so I emailed the museum and received a reply that there had been no catalogues printed for that particular exhibition. This is just one example of trying to source items.

I enjoy working with academic staff to ensure we are getting what they need and to liaise with them when items are ready for use. I also work closely with the cataloguer and interact with colleagues located at the Parkville campus where I attend training and meetings as part of a larger acquisitions team. I also enjoy the varied work and interacting with students and academic staff.

Jane Cousens
Acquisitions Officer, University of Melbourne
cousensj@unimelb.edu.au

Variety adds spice to work life for Curtin University library technicians

Oscar processes material submitted by staff and postgraduate students for the university's institutional repository; Jo works primarily with clients helping them use library resources, contributing to some of the information literacy classes, and coordinating the library's orientation program for new students

each semester; and Adele mixes her document processing tasks such as managing the library's reserve and e-reserve collections with client interaction as enquiries desk supervisor.

While their responsibilities may be varied, with tasks ranging from liaising with publishers to provide assistance for clients with disabilities to managing online enquiries, from conducting library tours and demonstrations to managing library facilities, each of Curtin University Library's 26 library technicians is a valued member of our staff, contributing a significant skills base that is fully utilised by library managers.

Curtin Library strongly supports library technicians within the organisation and also within the profession. For instance, library assistants wishing to take out technician qualifications are assisted financially and given time off for study, and the library participates in an Industry Advisory Panel for Central TAFE which makes recommendations on course requirements to ensure future graduates have the skills necessary to fulfil employers' expectations. Corporate Services Manager Lynn Davis also recently took part in ALIA's accreditation of Central TAFE's library technician courses.



Some of Curtin's enthusiastic and skilled library technicians:(from left to right): Rayfel Murray, Adele Howells, Jenny Lee, Kylie Isaia, Oscar Gomez-Badillo, and Jo Comerford

Our technicians feel strongly about working in the library as well. Kylie, who has been a technician for eight years and has worked at Curtin for nearly 18 months, says of the library, "Being a technician in the academic environment has lived up to my expectations with more responsibility and greater appreciation of my skills. I find my managers encouraging of my initiative and open to exploring new ideas."

Our library technicians are motivated by the challenges offered in the job, the desire to help clients, the opportunities they see for career development, and the ongoing variety of work with every day being different and stimulating. They also know they can rely on the support of their professional colleagues in carrying out more complex tasks. In return, the library knows it can rely on an enthusiastic, dedicated, and skilled group of workers who can meet the library's expectations, providing a win-win situation for all concerned.

Lesley Budrovich
Communications Officer, Curtin University Library
l.budrovich@curtin.edu.au

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