

Semester I, 2009. This 'Smart Study' program offered intensive information literacy training combined with a broad range of tips of how to get to know the university culture and what is required to study successfully. Numbers of students participating in this program were strong and a modified version was on offer for the beginning of Semester II. The library customised and integrated existing components of the library orientation program and learning support units to improve students' chances of academic success.

Our increasing numbers of students taking online courses and units will continue to prove challenging for library staff, as they ensure that these students find out about the resources available and how to gain access to them. In 2010 the university will move from a traditional two-semester program to include a winter term, a seven-week intensive study period that will allow students to fast-track the completion of their degrees. This will be an exciting time for the university and the library, as the library continues to focus on meeting the needs of students on campus, offshore, online, and mixing online with some on-campus delivery.

Bringing together library resources and students, educating students on the best and most effective use of the resources, and using the skills of experienced staff to fulfil these goals will continue to evolve as the university itself moves into a new and challenging era of education delivery. The library's priority is to ensure that the important link between the library and students – academic staff – are as keen as we are to promote access to valuable information resources and learning support services offered by the library. Our Academic Planning Librarians play an important role in this area, liaising between the library and academic staff and providing a strong flow of information to both areas.

As with service delivery in all libraries, we face many changes in our organisation that demand of us a high level of awareness of our clients' needs, and the ability to adapt to the evolving strategic and operational context of the university sector.

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## Preparing for a career change

### Changing career focus?

Gaining employment as a Liaison Librarian at Southern Cross University has meant an exciting and challenging learning curve for me. My previous work as a teacher librarian and as a special librarian gave me many skills that I have been able to apply in new ways. The ideas below are offered for librarians who are thinking about moving to a reference or liaison role in the university sector, based on my first year in my new role.

### Use what you already know

Research skills from business can be transferred to the academic world, it's just that now you are sharing and demonstrating the knowledge on how to do the search. As a librarian in a university, you may conduct many classes on information literacy skills, reference manager software, and introductory library sessions to first year students. Teaching or training experience can be of great value: though the students are taller (I was used to primary school children)!

Experience with different computer applications such as Microsoft Office, email, and browser software will be appreciated by students who come to the desk seeking advice.

### Use databases

If it has been a while since you have accessed databases, brush up on searching skills by using your National Library of Australia or your State Library membership card. This can give you access from home to database platforms such as EBSCO.

### Be ready to learn new skills

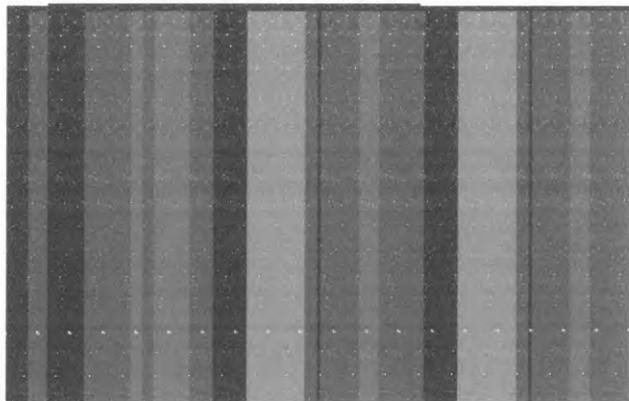
Read the guides that many universities supply on searching particular databases. Practise searching for resources on their catalogue. Find out what reference manager software (such as EndNote or RefWorks) is supported by the university where you would like to be employed. Download a trial version to work on. Become familiar with different reference styles used by different faculty areas by checking the university's website for guides. Keep up to date with information trends such as web 2.0 by reading journals and subscribing to RSS feeds or listservs.

### Give yourself time

If you have succeeded in obtaining your new role at a university, give yourself time to learn the culture and procedures. For those, like me, making their first venture into higher education libraries, there is a whole new world of acronyms, job titles, roles, and policies to learn.

### You are not the only one now!

It can be hard to let go of your past role ("we used to do it this way..."). You may not be the only 'expert' anymore; there will be other people you can call on. This can take some adjusting to if you're used to doing the whole range of library functions. Sometimes I have needed to remind myself to step back and not jump in to client-librarian conversations, simply because I know the answer. Guess what, so does my colleague!



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