

LINKING INDUSTRY SKILLS AND EDUCATION

JO-ANN BATHURST and JULIE BARKMAN tell us more about a new LIS training package that has been updated to meet new standards.

Library and Information Services at Sydney Institute Ultimo (LIS Ultimo) has been conducting a vibrant and successful industry placement program, as part of the delivery of the Diploma of Library and Information Services, for over two decades.

This has been beneficial for both students and industry, as evidenced by the large number of our students who have secured part-time, casual and permanent positions in the library sector as a direct result of their participation in the program. LIS Ultimo believes that work experience for students at diploma level provides a vital insight into the industry and is essential in preparing students for the workplace.

Each year, LIS hosts an industry placement meeting and workshop for industry representatives and staff from libraries that host students on work placement. These annual meetings are used to provide feedback about our program as well as other industry issues and trends.

The focus of the last meeting was on the new training package BSB52115 Diploma of Library and Information Services, which has been updated to meet the Standards for Training Packages. Following a presentation on the content of this package, small workshop groups, consisting of a cross-section from the library industry, were asked to identify core skills, knowledge and attributes they required from new graduates. They then attempted to align these with relevant units of study. This proved to be a valuable



Reporting back after small group sessions

exercise and an excellent basis for the development and implementation of the new training package for delivery in 2017.

The skills identified are:

- customer service skills, to respond to customer needs, offer assistance, engage and empower customers. This skill set to be built into all units as a focus area.
- information technology skills, including the use of social media, Microsoft programs, various hand-held devices, printing, wi-fi and troubleshooting problems.
- digital literacy skills, including an understanding of copyright.
- information literacy skills and the ability to train others in information seeking and searching, e.g. the use of the catalogue, databases, internet and so on.
- effective written and verbal communication skills, to facilitate information sharing between clients, staff and other stakeholders.
- high-level interpersonal skills, including the ability to deal with difficult clients and diverse client groups.
- library promotion skills, to ensure the effective marketing of library services and resources, including making displays, outreach programs and the organising of events.
- technical skills, including knowledge of collection formats, e-resources and licencing, fundamentals of selection, the organisation and access of information, the application of metadata, and webpage design and maintenance.

The skills and focus areas identified will be used by the Sydney TAFE LIS section as a basis for the selection of units from the new training package. Once they have been selected, we will seek further industry endorsement for the units of study chosen as part of our diploma curriculum. 🌐

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