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The history and development of the education and training of library technicians in Australia

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THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF LIBRARY TECHNICIANS IN AUSTRALIA

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

The history and development of the education and training of library technicians in Australia is currently recorded in the literature in a piecemeal and uncoordinated manner. The aim of this research is to provide a current and coherent account of the history and development of courses, examine the role of major stakeholders and identify the major issues that have accompanied the evolution of education and training for paraprofessional library staff. A comprehensive chronicle of the education and training of library technicians will contribute to the research and literature of library and information science in Australia.

The research will examine:

- why formal education and training courses for library technicians were introduced in Australia;
- how education and training courses have developed and evolved in response to library industry workplace changes from 1970 to 2000;
- what role the professional organisation, the Library Association of Australia, and its successor, the Australian Library and Information Association, has played in the education and training of library technicians; and
- what impact government policy on vocational education and training has had, and continues to have, on the training of library technicians.

An extensive examination and analysis of existing primary and secondary information sources, including books, journal articles, conference proceedings, government

publications, online and Internet documents and TAFE course documentation was conducted in the course of this study. While the methodology was generally restricted to an examination of documentation available in published sources, it was supplemented with personal communication with relevant individuals and institutions where necessary.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

(iii) contain any defamatory material.

Signature _

Date 5th January 2001

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The history and development of the education and training of library technicians in Australia is currently recorded in the literature in a piecemeal and uncoordinated manner. The purpose of this study is to provide a current and coherent account of the history and development of courses, examine the role of major stakeholders and identify the major issues that have accompanied the evolution of education and training for paraprofessional library staff over the last three decades.

The research will examine:

- why formal education and training courses for library technicians were introduced in Australia;
- how education and training courses have developed and evolved in response to library industry workplace changes from 1970 to 2000;
- what role the professional organisation, the Library Association of Australia (LAA), and its successor, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), has played in the education and training of library technicians; and
- what impact government policy on vocational education and training has had, and continues to have, on the training of library technicians.

Significance of the Study

A comprehensive chronicle of the education and training of library technicians will contribute to the research and literature of library and information science in Australia. In the investigation of the role of the professional association in the education and training of library technicians the study reveals that the ALIA Board of Education's influence in

setting education and training standards has diminished with institutional and industry control becoming increasingly important. ALIA is currently undergoing a major structural reform and revitalisation process and it may be an ideal time for the association to reexamine its role in the education and training of its constituents.

Methodology

An extensive examination and analysis of existing primary and secondary information sources, including books, journal articles, conference proceedings, government publications, online and Internet sources and TAFE course documentation, was conducted in the course of the research. While the methodology was principally restricted to an examination of documentation available in published or official sources, it was supplemented with personal communication with relevant individuals and institutions where necessary. Oral evidence was collected to augment discussion of recent key issues, such as the implementation of the national Library Industry Training Package.

Library Staff in Australia in 2000

The Australian library and information industry currently operates with three distinct levels of staff: professional librarians who have a degree or graduate diploma in library and information studies, paraprofessional library technicians with a diploma in library and information studies and unqualified support staff.

Librarians manage and provide library and information services by analysing, evaluating, organising and synthesising information to meet client needs. Their role focuses on the design, management, direction, policy formulation and application of services which meet the information needs of clients. Graduates of recognised

professional courses are eligible for associate membership of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA).

ALIA (1998, p. 21) defines library technicians as "paraprofessionals who have a distinct operational role in the provision of library and information services". Their role focuses on the operational and technical aspects of library and information services and can involve the operation and maintenance of systems which support the acquisition, organisation and management of resources and client access to information. They may supervise other staff and at senior levels manage a small library or head a section in a large library. Graduates of recognised library technician courses are eligible for ALIA technician membership.

Library Education in Australia in 2000

Courses in library and information studies are offered at a number of levels in all States and Territories of Australia. Professional librarianship courses are available at Degree, Graduate Diploma and Masters levels. Library technician training is currently offered at Diploma level by Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions in all States and Territories and as an Associate Degree and Bachelor of Science (Library Technology) by Edith Cowan University in Western Australia. From 2001, all TAFE institutions are required to introduce the Library and Information Services Training Package, with qualifications available at Certificate II, Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma levels.

ALIA recognises first-award professional and library technician qualifications in library and information studies. Courses to be recognised are assessed against the criteria set out in the Association's education policy statements and the course recognition procedures. Courses are assessed at intervals of not more than seven years, and may be

recognised for a period of less than seven years for a variety of reasons (Australian Library and Information Association, 1999, p. 3).

Terminology

Before the formal division between professional and non-professional roles and education and training was introduced in Australia in the 1970s, library technicians were referred to as sub-professionals, library assistants, library aides and non-professionals. There has been, and continues to be debate about the appropriate term for this class of library workers, which has been compounded by different official industrial award definitions and the decentralisation of wage fixing throughout the States and Territories. The ALIA publication, *Salary scales 1997/98,* indicates the great diversity of award designations and salary levels that are applied to library technicians, including administrative services officers, administrative officers, technical officers, municipal officers, library officers, library assistants as well as library technicians and senior library technicians. The designations of library technician and paraprofessional are commonly accepted by the Australian library industry.

The problem of the appropriate terminology for paraprofessional staff is not confined to Australia. A statement of policy from the American Library Association in 1970, *Library education and personnel utilization,* attempted to introduce the term, 'library technical assistant' to define trained paraprofessionals. However, the term was not readily adopted, and American paraprofessionals are generally referred to as library support staff (American Library Association, 1991, p. 1). The United Kingdom has never adopted the term library technician and paraprofessionals are consistently referred to as library assistants (Library Association, 2000, p. 1). Canada most resembles Australia, with general acceptance of the term 'library technician' for graduates of library Diploma programs and

the Canadian Library Association's definition of the role of the library technician corresponds very closely to the Australian definition.

Background

Library Education and Training in Australia before 1940

Before 1940 education and training for staff working in libraries was conducted through an informal in-service and apprenticeship system. The first professional Australian library association, The Library Association of Australasia, was formed in 1896 to "unite all persons engaged or interested in library work, in order to obtain their co-operation in all matters connected with library management, legislation and improvement" (LAA, 1896, p. 11, cited in Keane, 1982, p. 12). While the Association provided informal educational opportunities and published a professional journal and LAA conference proceedings, it did not require educational qualifications for full membership or advocate the formal education of library personnel. The Association ceased in 1902 and although it reappeared in various guises in the following years, it did not constitute a national or formally recognised professional body until the formation of the Australian Institute of Librarians (AIL) in 1943.

The first major survey into Australian libraries, which resulted in the *Munn-Pitt report* (1935), noted that: "there are no library schools in Australia, nor is there any general scheme of examination, certification, or grading of library personnel" (p. 112) and concluded that by general consensus:

> A trained librarian (in Australia) is one who has had varied and comprehensive experience in a library which uses the generally approved bibliographical methods, and which is administered by a librarian who has himself had the type of experience here defined. (p. 112)

While Munn and Pitt suggested that the establishment of library schools should be postponed until there improved opportunities for graduates, they did recommend better and more uniform methods of training to secure proper recognition for librarianship as a profession (p. 115).

Membership of the Australian Institute of Librarians (AIL) was open only to professional librarians; those with matriculation qualifications and experience in an 'approved library' (Rochester, 1997, p. 13). The main objective of AIL was to "unite persons engaged in library work, and to improve the standards of librarianship and the status of the library professional in Australia" (Bryan, 1989, p. 75). Biskup (1994, p. 387) has stated that the AIL's greatest achievement was the introduction of a national system of examining and certifying librarians which was inaugurated in 1943, and primarily intended to establish librarianship as a profession. A standing committee, the Board of Examination and Certification, was set up in 1941 to administer formal educational activities, conduct examinations and set accreditation standards and procedures.

The initial examination system, introduced in 1944, comprised three levels; the Preliminary Examination, the Qualifying Examination and the Diploma Examination. The Preliminary Examination was open to candidates with matriculation, with a certificate issued after the candidate had been engaged in library work for at least twelve months. The Qualifying Examination, renamed the Registration Examination in 1955, was open to candidates with a degree or those who had passed the Preliminary Examination. The Registration Certificate was only issued after candidates had completed at least three years library experience. The Diploma Examination was open to professional members of two or more years standing.

In 1949 AIL was re-constituted as the Library Association of Australia (LAA) and, after considerable debate, the Preliminary Examination was phased out in 1961 and the

association decided to support a graduate qualification for librarianship. This decision had been proposed by Metcalfe in 1959, "we will not raise or maintain the status of librarianship, and all that goes with status, without both general and technical studies at tertiary or university level" (p. 175). Metcalfe's statement was endorsed by the LAA in their recognition that there was "a strong and growing tendency in Australia to regard as fully professional only those occupations which require university qualification" (Library Association of Australia, 1962, p. 66).

In 1960 the University of New South Wales created a School of Librarianship which offered a one year postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship. The LAA Board of Examiner's *Minimum standards for the recognition of courses in librarianship* (1964) assumed that all future qualifications in librarianship would be at the postgraduate level and encouraged other universities to set up library schools. This assumption, however, was challenged by the introduction of the system of Colleges of Advanced Education and Institutes of Technology instigated by the Martin Report, *Tertiary education in Australia*, in 1964. In 1968 the LAA, again after much debate, decided to recognise both undergraduate college-based courses and postgraduate university courses as entry level qualifications in librarianship. The 1964 *Minimum standards* were replaced by the 1968 *Statement on the recognition of courses in librarianship* and the LAA Committee on Education for Librarianship recommended that the last Registration Examination be held in 1980. As Keane (1982, p. 20) has noted, the association gradually transformed itself from an examining body into an accrediting association.

Role of Professional and Non-Professional Staff in Libraries

While setting standards for formal education for professional librarians was the major preoccupation of the professional association and library practitioners during the

first half of the 20th century, there was increasing discussion about the role of professional and non-professional staff. The call for tertiary education for librarians was accompanied by a discussion about the role of librarians, an admission that librarians were engaging in non-professional duties and the need for a clearer distinction to be made between professional and non-professional work. For many commentators this distinction was considered essential in raising the status of librarianship to a "recognised and established profession" (Slight, 1965, p. 618). Slight (1962 and 1964) was a consistent critic of the emphasis on the technical issues involved in library work at the expense of the intellectual management of information services. He considered that the library profession needed to clearly define professional and technical activities and that technical activities should be transferred to trained sub-professional workers.

A corollary of this growing concern with the need for clearer distinctions between professional and non-professional work was the level of training required by the non-professional staff. While the tasks they would be engaged in were considered non-professional, it was acknowledged that they still required knowledge and skills that should be imparted by some level of formal or in-service training. The discussion of roles and appropriate training became closely aligned from this point and has remained a major issue for the library profession.

Metcalfe (1959, p. 172) acknowledged that librarians were employed in unchanging routine work which could be performed by non-professional staff and suggested that non-professional staff could have a place in the Library Association of Australia and be offered some training and certification as routine workers (p. 175). He also discussed a Victorian State Library short course for assistants in public libraries which was opposed by the LAA because it had issued a completion certificate to successful participants which the association believed could be interpreted as a professional qualification.

Metcalfe's statements were the impetus for considerable debate on the benefits and problems associated with introducing two levels of staffing, training and certification in the library sector. A number of senior library practitioners and educators supported Metcalfe's stance. Ramsay (1963) called for "the creation of more clearly defined professional and non-professional positions in libraries, the assignment of more responsible duties to non-professionals, and the introduction of courses of training for non-professionals, at least on a trial basis" (p. 20).

Flowers (1963) argued that libraries required large numbers of sub-professional staff to operate effectively and that these staff should have access to formal education and training for individual and organisational benefit. He advocated "a two-level staff, each section with its own objectives of training for library service, each section with its own training scheme" (p. 10). Flowers cited comparable international trends in Germany, Russia and the USA to support his argument.

In his review of the LAA Registration Certificate, Horner (1963) stated that the requirements of part-time study and work experience meant that "many members will be pre-occupied with part-time study for some 12 years seeking full professional standing" (p. 12). He estimated that only "7% of people starting the Registration can hope to complete it [and] ... the 93% or more of student assistants who are doomed to failure are unlikely to continue their support of an association which is interested only in professional librarians" (p. 11). He suggested that unless the LAA coordinated library assistants' qualifications, as was occurring in Britain, individual libraries would introduce their own solutions and library assistants would create their own association (p. 12). A discussion by participants at the 12th LAA Biennial Conference, focusing on Horner's presentation, "agreed that there was a need for library training on two levels, possibly through technical colleges and

universities, neither of which would replace in-service training within libraries" (Library Association of Australia, 1963, p. 13).

Australian librarians and educators were aware of, and influenced by overseas developments. In her review of librarianship in the United Kingdom, Hagger (1964, p. 128) pointed out that the UK Library Association was investigating methods of examining and certifying non-professional staff and several formal courses were being introduced to cater for junior assistants.

Other commentators, while generally supportive of two levels of training and certification for library staff, warned of dangers inherent in the proposal. Radford (1963) referred to a study on the New York Experimental Library Technician Program which concluded that "there is no place for a proposed Library Technician training program ... there is no economic justification for the course because its graduates could do as well economically without it" (p. 13) and suggested that Australia's industrial awards, governmental regulations and state certification would hinder recognition of sub-professional formal training. Miller (1963) was concerned with the scarcity of professional staff, both in Australia and overseas, noting the high rate of staff turnover and the large proportion of young women employed in libraries, particularly at lower levels. She argued that many young women were seeking a sufficiently stimulating position for a short time before marriage, and with a careful demarcation of duties, could remain useful employees without being pressed towards a qualification unless they sought one (p. 11). Miller, however, maintained that the introduction of a minor qualification would inevitably create pressures towards using it as progression towards a major award, that it would not be distinguishable from a full qualification in the eyes of the public and could too easily be accepted as a final requirement whenever there was a disposition to accept it

as such (p. 12). She concluded that in-service training for library non-professionals by employing institutions was the most appropriate solution.

Reasons for the Introduction of Courses for Non-Professional Library Staff

While the previous discussion has noted that the need to differentiate between professional and non-professional roles and duties in libraries inevitably led to a discussion on the need for training for support staff, a number of other national and international developments contributed to the introduction of courses for library technicians. As Biskup (1994, p. 14) has stated, the large scale immigration, economic expansion, scientific and technological advancement and growth in the tertiary education sector that occurred in post-war Australia had a profound influence on Australian library development. The increasing demand for and resulting expansion of library services lead to a serious shortage of qualified librarians which was noted by McColvin in his 1947 report, *Public libraries in Australia.* Overseas trends in the development of library education, particularly in the United Kingdom and USA, were closely monitored by Australian commentators such as Hall and Radford (1952). Reviews indicated an international movement towards tertiary education for librarians, attempts to raise the professional standing of librarianship, an increasing need to differentiate library work into professional and non-professional duties and a corresponding need to introduce different levels of library education and training. Hall and Radford (1952) noted that both the USA and Canada had introduced training courses for library paraprofessionals and the UK was investigating appropriate methods of examining and certifying library assistants.

Flowers (1979) considered that "the elimination of the LAA Registration Certificate and the emergence of library education in the colleges and universities clearly meant the

disappearance of our middle staffing, standby professional librarians in training" (p. 371). This gap could be filled by trained library paraprofessionals.

The initial interest in the proposal for two levels of staff and training for library workers evidenced in the literature of the late 1950s and early 1960s was not sustained in the late 1960s. The reasons for this are not clear, although a general easing in the employment shortage could have been a contributing factor. It was not until the introduction of the first training course for library technicians in 1970 that the issue aroused further interest and discussion.

Stages in the Development of Courses for Library Technicians

Examination of the literature indicates that the three decades of education and training for library technicians can be described in terms of four chronological stages that are characterised by a number of continuing concerns and some specific issues.

Stage 1 from 1970 to 1982 saw the introduction of library technician training courses in all States and Territories. The literature of this period describes, justifies and defends the role and training of the paraprofessional in the library and information industry and calls for standardisation of library technician training courses, involvement of LAA in recognition of courses and the development of work level guidelines for librarians and library technicians.

Stage 2 from 1983 to 1989 was the period of consolidation of courses with some standardisation of course curricula, revision of course content and upgrading of courses from Certificate to Associate Diploma level to reflect industry developments and the changing role of library technicians.

Stage 3 from 1990-1996 witnessed major reform of the national vocational education and training sector by the federal government including the creation of the Australian

National Training Authority (ANTA), the development of the *Library industry competency standards* and the introduction of a national competency based training curriculum at Certificate III and Diploma levels aligned with the library competency standards.

Stage 4 from 1997 to the present has been a period of further reform with the revision of competency standards, introduction of the National Training Framework and Australian Recognition Framework and development and endorsement of National Training Packages to replace current courses and the national curriculum.

The following chapters examine the introduction of education and training courses for library technicians throughout Australia from the introduction of the first course in 1970 to the present, highlight the major issues accompanying the introduction of courses and discuss the responses and roles of major stakeholders.

The introduction of the first course for library technicians in 1970 at Box Hill Girls' Technical School in Victoria paved the way for the development of similar courses in all States and Territories between 1970 and 1982.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION OF TRAINING FOR LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1970-1982

Introduction

Education and training courses for library technicians were introduced in all States and Territories between 1970 and 1983. The need to ensure that all courses offered portable, quality education and training with a common core content of knowledge and skills encouraged the major stakeholders, particularly industry, educators and the professional association, to formulate lists of roles and responsibilities appropriate to library technicians and guidelines for the education and training for paraprofessionals.

Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in Victoria, 1970-1982

Library Technician Certificate, Box Hill Girls' Technical School, 1970

In 1967 a Sub-Committee of the Victorian Branch of the LAA recommended that a course for the training of library support staff should be established to improve the division of labour and service levels in all types of libraries. Negotiations with the Department of Education's Technical Schools Branch in 1969 resulted in an agreement that the Department would support a course recruiting persons who had completed fifth year high school. The Department specified that it would be willing to establish courses at a number of Technical Schools subject to the satisfactory performance of a pilot course in 1970, that it did not support in-service training courses or support 'terminal' courses and that it wanted the course to fit within the existing vocational education course framework (Brown, 1970).

The pilot course was introduced at the Box Hill Girls' Technical School (later Whitehorse Technical College) and in his 1970 journal article Brown detailed the course requirements and structure. Entry to the course required completion of 5th year at High

School or mature age admission, and concurrent employment in a library. The course was available on a 2 year full-time or equivalent part-time basis.

Table 1: Library Technician Certificate, Box Hill Girls' Technical College, 1970.

Course Structure		
Group	Stage I	Stage II
General	Communications II	English literature
	Australian social structure	Introduction to sociology
	Libraries and library service	Supervision I
Library Technical	Library procedures I	Library procedures II
Processes	Acquisitions I	Acquisitions II
	Searching I	Searching II
Library Business	Business procedures I	Business procedures II
Methods	Library layout and equipment I	Library layout and equipment II
	Machine operating I	Machine operating II
Library	Data processing I	Data processing II
Information	Systems appreciation I	Systems appreciation II
	Library records management I	Library records management II
Library Media	Art and Display I or	Art and display II
	Display techniques	
	Audio visual techniques I	Audio visual techniques II
	Reprography I	Reprography II

(Brown, 1970, p. 109)

Successful completion of the course and work experience component would result in the issue of a Library Technician Certificate. The course was designed to "provide training for sub-professional library staff whose work requires a practical knowledge of library functions and services and an ability to apply standard library tools, methods and procedures to the service needs of the library" (Brown, 1970, p. 109). Brown also emphasised the intention of the Course Advisory Committee to preserve a clear distinction between the course and professional courses by focusing on practical rather than theoretical knowledge, although he conceded the difficulty of explaining the 'how' without the 'why' (Brown, 1970, p. 111).

In his analysis of the course, Young (1972) provided further justification for the introduction of formal training for library technicians. He stated that planning for the course assumed that the restructuring of library duties would enable non-professional staff to undertake some components of professional tasks and assist in relieving staff shortages (Young, 1972, p. 382). Young defined a library technician as a highly trained, though non-professional middle level library worker and stressed that "he is an assistant to, and not a cheap substitute for, the librarian" (p. 383). He also emphasised that "this is not a pre-professional course, library technicians are employed to perform duties requiring a combination of skills of the clerical worker and certain skills of the librarian" (p. 384).

Response to the Introduction of the First Course

In a 1971 journal article, Hagger restated her commitment to education for different levels of library workers by noting the popularity of the Victorian course and the favourable employer and student response to the quality of the course. She noted, however, that the apathy of many employers and inadequate salary scales and promotional opportunities were barriers to the recognition of technicians as significant and trained library workers.

Flowers (1978) believed that the library profession owed a debt of gratitude to the Victorians who initiated the first course and suggested that the "Victorian initiative came at the right time, preceding nicely the ready acceptance by the booming TAFE system in the mid-70s of responsibility for these middle-level courses" (p. 371). Flowers also recognised and endorsed the need for the restructuring of library staffing structures and training for support staff.

The LAA endorsed the provision of "proper vocational training for middle level library workers" and noted that "library associations all over the world in conjunction with

the educational institutions have taken the lead in organising and promoting similar short term courses" (Editorial, 1975, p. 43). The editorial did not, however, call upon the LAA to emulate its overseas counterparts or play a more significant role in the provision of training for library technicians.

In response to the introduction of the first training course in Australia and the proliferation of library technician courses overseas a major comparative two part study was undertaken by Swinburne College of Technology in 1973. The study analysed the literature relating to paraprofessional roles and training in the United States and Canada, and observed that technical assistants had not been fully accepted in the library workplace. It concluded that some librarians viewed technicians as a threat to their own positions or feared that technicians would be considered as a "cheap substitute for librarians" and that the "professional and status of librarianship would be lowered accordingly" (Mattsson, 1974, p. 83). The second part of the study involved the circulation of a questionnaire to Victorian chief librarians, library technicians and trainees to ascertain the effect of the introduction of technician training in the State. Respondents confirmed that the course was fulfilling its objectives and indicated that there was potential for job satisfaction and promotion opportunities for trained technicians if a satisfactory classification and salary scale could be incorporated into existing library staff schedules. However, the study also revealed some concern about an overlap of technician responsibilities with the lower levels of professional staff and misconceptions about the role and place of the technician in the library staffing structure (Mattsson, 1974, p. 87). Mattsson suggested that "a certain negative reaction is to be expected for any new category of workers entering the labour market until they become firmly established and accepted as playing an important and integral role in the relevant staff structure" (p. 87). She concluded that the recent formation of the Library Technicians Association of Victoria would enable graduate library

technicians to lobby for satisfactory salary schedules, ensure appropriate career status and identity and provide enhanced communication between sub-professional and professional bodies.

Christine (1974) responded to Mattsson's article and strongly argued that librarians who feared the introduction of paraprofessional staff were unsure about their own professionalism. She observed that this fear was exacerbated by American Boards of Trustees who "are too prone to see the difference in the price tag of paraprofessional and qualified librarian and opt for the former, with little or no regard for the scope of services that might result" (p. 201). She also claimed that "cloudy job descriptions" (p. 202) and the overlap of responsibilities of library technicians with the lower level of professional staff contributed to the confusion and resistance displayed by librarians in both Australia and the United States. Although Christine does not indicate the source of her information, she compares the content and philosophical bases of the Victorian course and similar courses in the United States. While United States courses were similar in content to the Whitehorse College course, they aimed to attract students into "the rapidly expanding field of library paraprofessional occupations" (p. 202) and did not stipulate employment in a library as an entry requirement.

Library Technician Certificate, Whitehorse, Prahan and Footscray Technical Colleges, 1974

In 1975 Pivec reviewed the progress of the Victorian course and observed that 146 library technicians had qualified and entered the library workforce, that there was increasing demand for the course and that salary awards by the Municipal Officers Association, Victorian Public Service Board and Victorian Institute of Colleges had recognised the special skills of graduates with appropriate salary determinations. She restated the objectives of the course, outlined changes in the curriculum and noted that,

following the success of the Whitehorse Technical College course, the course had also been established at Prahan and Footscray in 1974.

Table 2: Library Technician Certificate, Whitehorse, Prahan, Footscray Technical Colleges, 1974.

Course Structure		
Group	Stage I	Stage II
General	English 1A and 1B	
	Literature and the Arts 1A and 1B	
	Behavioural Science 1A and 1 B	
	Australian Social Structure	
Basic Library Practices	Acquisition/Searching 1A and 1B	Acquisitions/Searching 2A and 2B
	Libraries and Library Service 1A and IB	
	Library Procedures 1A and 1B	Library Procedures 2A and 2B
	Government Publications 1A and 1B	
Related Library Practices	Art and Display 1A and 1B	
	Audio/Visual Techniques 1A and 1B	Audio/Visual Techniques 2A and 2B
	Machine Operating 1A and 1B	
	Data Processing 1A and 1B	

(Pivec, 1975, p. 49)

Pivec also commented on the positive reaction from the library industry to the recent report on Technical and Further Education (The Kangan Report) which supported increased funding for libraries and library education and training and a new approach to technical education (p. 52).

The Kangan Report, 1974-1975

"The Kangan Committee report, *TAFE in Australia*, was a milestone of great and enduring significance in the development of technical and further education in Australia" (Kearns & Hall, 1994, p. 1). The Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education, chaired by Myer Kangan, was established by the Whitlam Government in 1973 to "furnish information and advice to the Minister for Education on matters relating to the development of technical and further education in Australia including financial assistance

to the States in relation to institutions in the States" (Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education, 1975, p. v). Johnson (1994, p. 128) has suggested that there were enduring themes from the Kangan Committee report which are still relevant, including the importance of vocational education and training to the national economy, to enterprises and to the individual, the need for a broad concept of and vision for technical and further education, the need for a balanced perspective on the roles of the sectors of education and training and the need to adopt a life-long perspective through a concept of recurrent education.

The Committee enunciated a policy for the development of library resource centres (LRCs) in all technical colleges as an essential tool in the fulfilment of TAFE objectives. Recognising that staffing was the most immediate need in the development of LRCs, and aware of the serious nationwide shortage of qualified staff, the Committee urged an increase in training of professional library staff and the inauguration or augmentation of library technician courses. The Committee recommended "that special purpose recurrent funds for the training of library technicians be made available to State TAFE Departments or TAFE Divisions of Education Departments" (Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education, 1975, p. 176).

Certificate of Applied Social Science (Library Technicians), Whitehorse, Prahan and Footscray Technical Colleges, 1978

In 1978 Pivec instituted another review of the Victorian technician courses and noted that over 350 technicians had qualified in the period from 1970 to 1977. She (1978, p. 6) outlined changes to the syllabi, including the introduction of two new core units, classification and subject headings, and reference work. The changes conformed to the LAA guidelines for the education and training of library technicians. For the first time in

the literature, Pivec (1978) discussed teaching methods and staffing, and argued that the diverse student population and variety of experience at entry level presented challenges to teaching staff and difficulties in attracting and retaining staff with the right mix of library and teaching experience and qualifications.

Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in New South Wales, 1973-1982

New South Wales Library Practice Certificate, Sydney Technical College, 1973

From 1966 to 1974 the Sydney Technical College had offered a Librarianship Certificate course for qualification as a professional librarian. The course was discontinued following the introduction of the degree requirement by the LAA. Teachers in the course and the Library Course Advisory Committee "perceived the opportunity and the need to provide a course which would train library assistants to fill the numerous positions in libraries which did not require staffing at professional levels, but did require knowledge of library objectives and techniques" (Harnett, 1976, p. 111). In 1973 a Library Practice Certificate course was introduced at Sydney Technical College and later at Newcastle Technical College. Harnett (1976, p. 111) has stated that the Library Practice Certificate course was modelled on American and Canadian courses for library technical assistants, but incorporated differences to meet local requirements. The aims of the course were to develop a knowledgeable and practically oriented assistant capable of working up to the middle ranges of various library operations in various library contexts, to provide technical instruction in a wide range of library materials and operations, to reinforce instruction with a variety and number of practical approaches and to induce appreciation of the nature and functions of libraries and library services to lead to intelligent and appropriately motivated application of practical knowledge and skills (Harnett, 1976, p. 111).

Admission to the course required a stipulated aggregate of marks in best four subjects in the NSW Higher School Certificate or equivalent, a higher level than required for the Victorian course. The course was available on a 2 year full-time basis of 16 hours a week, or a 4 year part-time, eight hour per week basis. Work experience was not a required component of the course.

Table 3: Library Practice Certificate, Sydney Technical College, 1973

Course Structure		Hours per week
Stage 1	Libraries and library services	2
	Library materials I	2
	Organisation of collections I	2
	Communication	1.5
Stage 2	Library materials II	2
	Organisation of collections II	2
	Library procedures I	2
	Book production and care	2
Stage 3	Library materials III	2
	Organisation of collections	2
	Library procedures II	2
	Services to readers II	2
Stage 4	Library materials IV	2
	Organisation of collections IV	2
	Services to readers II	2
	Data processing fundamentals	2

(Harnett, 1976, p. 111)

Harnett compared the NSW course with the existing Australian courses in Victoria and Tasmania (which was introduced in 1975), the proposed Canberra course, the US criteria for library technical courses and the Canadian guidelines for library technician courses. She suggested that the NSW course was the longest and most solid, with "more time devoted to the fundamentals of library work, very little to general education, and none to clerical subjects or operation of equipment" (p. 112). She justified the course content by stating that general education subjects were considered unnecessary because it would be difficult to add more subjects; staff were not trained to teach general education and the

Higher School Certificate entry requirement meant that students possessed sufficient general knowledge. Audio-visual operating and production techniques, which were required by school libraries, were not considered relevant to a general course. The reason for the exclusion of a compulsory work experience component, which was a notable feature of every other course, was not discussed by Harnett. She did note, however, that the course recognised the unavoidability of some overlap of professional and paraprofessional duties in libraries. Harnett concluded that the course should result in "an improvement in the standards and status of the professional librarian ... the availability of trained para-professionals means lower staff turnover, less need for expensive and time-consuming in-service training, and much more career motivation and job commitment" (p. 115).

Harnett's claim that the NSW course "stands out from others by its level of entry, content, and intended competencies of its students" (p. 111) is an unusual statement in the literature on the development of courses for library technicians. No other educator or commentator made direct public comparative remarks, although Flowers (1978), in an later appeal for uniformity between courses, suggested that "the NSW course, currently two-years full-time, with no practical experience requirement, no general studies component and entry after six years' high school, is firmly entrenched in the NSW TAFE system and, hopefully, will be changed to the Victorian pattern" (p. 7). Harnett's claim brought an immediate response from an anonymous Stage IV part-time Library Practice Certificate course student (1976, p. 170), who suggested that the course stood out as the only course which, on completion, did not offer recognition or significant financial benefit to graduates. The student argued that the course was largely theoretical with distinct professional leanings in several subjects.

The student's comments were largely vindicated by a 1977/78 *Library practice review report* conducted by the New South Wales Department of Technical and Further Education.

New South Wales Department of Technical and Further Education Library Practice Review, 1978

A major review of the Library Practice Certificate course was undertaken by the Curriculum Research Branch of the New South Wales Department of TAFE between April 1977 and October 1978. The aims of the review were to gather information to determine the continuing need for the course, to determine the sufficiency of demand for persons with library technician/assistant training, to evaluate the existing course offered by the Department, to analyse the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to perform adequately the job of library technician/assistant, and to study library technician programs offered throughout Australia and programs in the United Kingdom and United States (New South Wales Department of Technical and Further Education, 1978, p. 6).

The review panel consulted widely with employers, employees, students and course graduates and systematically compared existing courses in Australia; New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, Western Australia and Canberra and the United States course criteria and Canadian course guidelines. The comparison of Australian courses revealed major differences in entry requirements, length of courses, work experience requirements and course content and identified significant variations in the general approach toward the education and training of library technicians. These variations included the amount and degree of theory content and practical orientation, proportion of structural learning in "real" libraries as distinguished from "simulated" learning activities, ratios of general library knowledge to skills development and identification of job tasks and job skills (p. 14).

The review concluded with ten recommendations for substantial NSW course reorganisation and curriculum revision: a task oriented approach, concurrent work experience component, introduction of general electives, lowering of admission requirements to School Certificate level, introduction of mature age admission and a new title for the course, Library Technician Certificate course. Although not directly stated in the review report, these changes would result in aligning the New South Wales course more closely with existing courses in other States and in conforming with the guidelines contained in the recent release of a LAA Board of Education policy, the *Statement on the recognition of library technician courses.*

The revised Library Technician Certificate course was introduced in 1980 with a School Certificate entry level requirement.

Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in South Australia, 1974-1982

Library Resource Centre Procedures Course, Kilkenny Technical College, 1974

In 1974 a 100 hour Library Resource Centre Procedures course was established at Kilkenny Technical College to cater for the large number of ancillary staff being appointed to school libraries (Naylor, 1988). The course was subsequently offered at Brighton, Gilles Plains, Murray Bridge and Port Adelaide Colleges.

In 1976 the course was developed to Library Technician Certificate level, with reference to the 1976 *Guidelines for the education of library technicians* and in consultation with the South Australian Branch of the LAA. The Library Technician Certificate course was available at the Kilkenny campus of the Open College of Further Education and consisted of nine compulsory theory units, four compulsory work experience units and seven elective theory units, making a total of 20 units, or 1000 hours of contact time.

Table 4: Library Technician Certificate, Kilkenny Technical College, 1976.

Course Structure	
Compulsory theory units	**Elective theory units**
Library routines 1	Photography
Audio visual techniques 1	Projection 1/2
Communication	Reprographics 1/2
History and development of libraries and materials 1	Micrographics 1/2
Library routines 1	Television techniques for resource centre staff 1/2
Audio visual techniques 2	Graphics and display techniques
Cataloguing and classification 1	Book care and repair 1/2
Bibliography	Australian social structure
Automatic data processing applications 1	Bookkeeping
	Reference materials and techniques
	Cataloguing and classification 2
	History and development of libraries and materials 2
	Library extension services
	Maps
	Audio techniques
	Library services in a multi-cultural society
	Community language studies
	Supervision

(Williams, 1979, p. 19).

In his outline of the course, Williams (1974, p. 19) suggested that it was possible for a library technician, once they had completed the compulsory units, to specialise to some degree depending upon their own interests and the needs of the library employing them. The course structure, particularly the elective offerings, certainly differed from the Victorian and NSW courses in its emphasis on technical and specialist skills. Williams (1974) concluded his outline by suggesting that library technicians would fill a very useful role in libraries, "I don't see them as being a threat to librarians in any way, rather I see them complementing the work done by the professionally trained staff" (p. 19).

Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in Tasmania, 1975-1982

Library Technician Certificate, Tasmanian Technical Colleges, 1975

Blain (1975) outlined the convergence of three important factors which had led to the introduction of library technician training courses in Tasmanian Technical Colleges. In 1974 the Tasmanian Branch Council of the LAA, in response to requests, conducted a survey to identify and quantify the need for trained sub-professional library staff. The survey endorsed the need for formal technician training, identified the range of skills required and suggested an adequate demand for a suitable course. At the same time, Laurie Brown, the newly appointed State Librarian, identified the need for trained technicians within the State Library, and lobbied for formal technician training. Tasmanian Technical Colleges had traditionally offered lectures for LAA Registration candidates and were consequently considered capable of providing technician training.

The Tasmanian Technical and Further Education Branch invited critical contributions to the proposed syllabus from the Head of the Victorian Whitehorse College to ensure that the course was in line with other existing courses. A higher level pass in School Certificate English and passes in social sciences and mathematics were requirements for entry to the two year part-time course. Students were also required to have concurrent practical library experience of at least 18 weeks. Courses commenced at the Burnie, Devonport, Hobart and Launceston Technical Colleges in 1975.

Table 5: Library Technician Certificate, Tasmanian Technical Colleges, 1975.

Course Structure		Hours per week
Stage 1	Library procedures 1A	2
1st Semester	Library procedures 1B	2
	Library procedures 1C	2
	Australian social structure A	2
	Business English A	2

Stage 2	Library procedures 2A	2
2nd Semester	Library procedures 2B	2
	Library procedures 2C	2
	Australian social structure B	2
	Business English B	2
Stage 3	Library procedures 3A	2
3rd Semester	Library procedures 3B	2
	Library procedures 3C	2
	General science A	2
Stage 4	Library procedures 4A	2
4th Semester	Library procedures 4B	2
	General science B	2
2 electives from	Audio-visual 4C	2
	Cataloguing 4D	2
	Bibliographic searching 4E	2
	Data processing 4F	2
	Government publications 4G	2
	Conservation of library materials 4H	2

(Blain, 1974, p. 47)

In 1980 Burnie Technical College had insufficient new enrolments to continue offering the course and existing students completed units at Devonport Technical College.

GUIDELINES FOR THE EDUCATION OF LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1976

National Workshop, 24-27th May, 1976

In May 1976, the Library Courses (Vocational) Standing Committee of the Victorian Technical Division of the Education Department decided to organise a National Workshop to discuss current library technician training and develop guidelines to assist in the future development of courses. It had become obvious to all stakeholders, including employers, educators and students, that the "divergences between library technician courses established in Australia would make it very difficult to secure comparable salary scales and working conditions for library technicians throughout Australia and ensure their mobility from one State to another" (Ramsay, 1976, p. 1). Fifty-three participants from library technician courses, TAFE, advisory committees, the LAA, the School Library

Association of Australia (SLANT), library technician associations and library employees were invited to attend the Workshop.

The specific objectives of the Workshop were to develop a rationale to the nature of the work performed by library technicians, identify and classify the tasks to be performed by technicians, and develop guidelines for the educational preparation of technicians (Ramsay, 1976, p. 1).

In his keynote address to the Workshop, the Assistant Director of the Victorian Technical Education Division, Noel Watkins outlined the four major concepts of TAFE, as detailed by the Kangan Report. "TAFE should be concerned to educate the individual, not overly concerned to meet the manpower needs of industry, ... TAFE should be available to all ... TAFE education should be flexible; flexible entry requirements, alternative modes of study, etc. ... TAFE modes of learning should concentrate on the individual" (Watkins, 1976, p. 4). Watkins (1976) suggested that library technician courses should be developed on a set of objectives derived from identified library technician tasks to ensure that they were not confused with professional courses or became diluted professional courses, "the sub-professional should be accorded a status of his own" (p. 6). He stressed the importance of the library technician being recognised as a library worker with specialist skills and expertise separate from the capacity of the professional librarian. Watkins also considered that application of the Kangan Report recommendations would enable all potential students to have access to courses, ensure accreditation based on certification that courses achieve stated objectives and include concurrent work experience as an essential component of courses.

The Workshop defined the library technician as "a person who possesses specific library-oriented skills and general background knowledge necessary to enable him to

perform satisfactorily tasks agreed on as appropriate for library technicians" (*Guidelines*, 1976, p. 10) and clearly outlined the nature of library technicians' work.

The *Guidelines* stated that courses should be based on "clearly defined objectives derived from the tasks which have been determined as appropriate for library technicians to perform or supervise" (p. 11). A list of tasks which library technicians should be able to perform and a list of tasks which library technicians should be able to supervise were identified (Appendix A). As well as library subjects, the *Guidelines* suggested that study in supervision, human relations, communication and society were essential and a wide range of library and non-library subjects should be provided as electives to allow students the opportunity to develop personal interests.

The *Guidelines* acknowledged that entry levels and length of courses could vary between institutions but stated that exit levels and performance should be established to ensure that "all library technicians are adequately trained for the tasks they have to undertake, and library technician qualifications are comparable and portable and meet industrial requirements throughout Australia" (p. 13). To meet these requirements, an exit level at least equivalent to that of a final year exit-level high school student was recommended. Concurrent work experience or field work was considered an integral part of the course curriculum. The Workshop concluded that TAFE institutions were the appropriate bodies to provide library technician courses and that representative advisory committees should be involved in the planning, content and design of courses.

The National Workshop was a major development in the education and training of library technicians in Australia. Although it may be argued that the Workshop was six years too late, it must be acknowledged that it was a genuine attempt to bring together all stakeholders and seek a consensus on the role of the library technician in the workplace and on the educational requirements needed to equip technicians for this role. The

Workshop was not organised by the professional association but it did result in forcing the association to examine the role of library technicians in the workplace and their position in the LAA.

Response to the *Guidelines*

Ramsay (1978) provided a detailed analysis of the Workshop and remarked that an interesting aspect of the work on developing the list of tasks was "the extent to which the library technicians' role was upgraded in the course of the discussion" (p. 136). She noted that controversial tasks, such as cataloguing and reference work, were accepted as appropriate, while basic clerical tasks were eliminated. Ramsay (1978) considered that this upgrading was a natural and positive result of a new group of workers being gradually accepted in the workplace by the existing occupational group. Ramsay (1978) concluded that there were important aspects of library technician education and employment that could not be adequately addressed by the Workshop but needed to be further investigated. These included the composition and role of advisory committees, accreditation of courses and the articulation of library technician and librarianship courses.

The impact of the National Workshop and the resulting *Guidelines* was discussed by a number of participants at the 19th Biennial Conference of the LAA in 1977. Radford (1977) redefined the LAA role's in education, noting that the Board of Education had resolved to accept the list of tasks identified by the Workshop and was preparing library technician course recognition criteria (p. 146). He also outlined the Board's view that technician courses should be terminal in nature, to prevent them from being regarded as inferior stepping-stones to a higher qualification (p. 147).

Simkin (1977) provided an employer's viewpoint, albeit a more radical perspective than may have been held by many employers. He suggested that the traditional view, that

categorised librarians as working from principles to practice and requiring formal education to achieve this outcome and library technicians as working from practice to principles which necessitated a shorter form of training, was at variance with his recruiting practices. He further suggested that:

> It seems that library technician courses are treated as terminal courses so as to discourage technicians from progressing towards a greater identification with the goals of libraries since those who come through this stream from sound practice to broad understanding of principles pose a serious threat to librarians who have come the other way and who frequently have a very tenuous grasp of practice. (p. 188)

Simkin recommended that library technician courses should be developed to allow those who wished to continue with further education to do so without impediment and that library employers should recruit on the basis of talent rather than label (p. 189). This recommendation was certainly contra to the prevailing employer and association positions which insisted that library technician courses should be terminal in nature to clearly distinguish between paraprofessional and professional qualifications.

In her discussion of the education of library technicians, Naylor (1977) also pointed to problems associated with the terminal nature of courses, the need for formal recognition of courses and restrictions in the mobility of competent teaching staff because of State variations in recruiting practices.

Flowers (1978) believed the *Guidelines* "have already proved to be one of the most important documents in library developments in this country" (p. 372) but urged the LAA to prepare a similar list of professional tasks to provide a clear statement on both categories for all employers and all educators.

The response to the *Guidelines* was indicative of a general attitude by many major stakeholders who considered that a definition of the role and responsibilities of the library technician and clear objectives for education and training would solve professional and

nonprofessional workplace demarcation issues. However, as the history of library technicians in the workplace illustrates, the *Guidelines* and their subsequently revised versions have only offered a partial solution to this continuing and contentious issue.

The Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in Western Australia, 1975-1982

Associate Diploma in Library Media, Western Australian Secondary Teachers' College, 1975 (later Nedlands College of Advanced Education).

As was the case in other States, Western Australia had offered informal library education through staff development activities in individual libraries and more formal education through the Perth Technical College's tutorial classes for students of the LAA Registration Examinations (Ward, Dziggel and Clyde, 1990, p. 265).

In 1975 a pilot course, the Associate Diploma in Library Media, was offered at the Western Australian Secondary Teachers' College on a part-time basis. In 1976 the course was offered for 2 years full-time, 4 years part-time study with entry requirements of successful completion of 5 years of secondary school or acceptable achievement in a mature age test.

The aim of the Associate Diploma course was to prepare students in further general education and specialist knowledge and skills to enable them to provide effective paraprofessional support services in libraries, resource centres and organisations using media (Cook, 1975, p. 2). Experience in a supervised library or resource centre, equivalent to at least 4 weeks each year, was compulsory.

Table 6: Associate Diploma in Library Media, Western Australian Secondary Teachers' College, 1975-1981

Course Structure		Hours per week
Semester 1	Communications	2
	Audio-visual	2
	Library practices	2
	Library resources	2
	Speech	2
	General studies elective	2
	Media studies	3
Semester 2	Communications	2
	Audiovisual	2
	Library practices	2
	Library resources	2
	English usage	2
	General studies elective	2
	Media studies	3
Semester 3	Communications	3
	Audio-visual	2
	Library resources	3
	Reader education & assistance	2
	Display	2
	General studies elective	2
	Media studies	3
Semester 4	Communications	3
	Audio-visual	2
	Library resources	3
	Reader education & assistance	2
	Business procedures	2
	General studies elective	2
	Media studies	3

(Cook, 1975, p. 3)

In 1978 and 1979, the Associate Diploma was also taught part-time in Bunbury, "with lecturers travelling down each week from Nedlands by car" (Clyde, 1985, p. 8).

During 1981 extensive curriculum revision was undertaken in response to deficiencies, particularly in the area of technical skills, identified by an LAA accreditation team (Nedlands College of Advanced Education, 1981). The previous four work experience components were reduced to two to ensure that students had sufficient skills and competencies to perform workplace tasks.

Certificate in Library Practice, Perth Technical College, 1976

In 1976 a pilot Certificate in Library Practice was offered at the Perth Technical College and the approved course was offered in 1977 for part-time study. In response to an enquiry from the WA Branch of the LAA about the course, V.M. Hall, Assistant Director of Technical Education, acknowledged that the proposed certificate did not meet all the guidelines laid down by the LAA for library technician courses (1977, p. 4). He pointed out that the Division only required qualifications at Diploma level to comply with national guidelines.

The aims of the course were "to enable students to gain the skills and education required to operate effectively as library technicians in the workforce, and at the same time, to provide a qualification which has portability within Australia" (Dziggel, 1979, p. 330). Dziggel also noted that the LAA Board of Education had reviewed the course with a view to accreditation.

Table 7: Certificate in Library Practice, Perth Technical College, 1977

Course Structure		Hours per week
Stage I	Communication 1	2
	Library and library services	2
	Library procedures 1A	2
	Audio-visual design	2
Stage II	Library procedures 1B	2
	Office machines and procedures	2
	Elective	3-4
Stage III	Library procedures 2	3
	Audio-visual techniques	2
	Reader services	3

(New South Wales Department of Technical and Further Education, 1978, p. 52)

The Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in Queensland, 1976-1982

Library Assistant's Certificate, Seven Hills College of Technical and Further Education, 1976

In 1975 the Queensland Branch of the LAA drew up a comprehensive list of tasks which it considered appropriate to middle-level library support staff and proposed to conduct a survey to ascertain the need for training opportunities for paraprofessional staff (*Desirable developments in library education in Queensland*, 1979, p. 38). The Technical Education Branch of the Department of Education carried out the survey and established a need for such a course in Queensland.

The Library Assistant's Certificate course was introduced at the Seven Hills TAFE College in 1976 on a 4 year part-time basis. The aims of the course were

> to equip students with the necessary knowledge and practical skills to act effectively under broad supervision in any type of library, to promote attitudes which will encourage students to view their work as a service to users, to further the personal growth of students. (*Desirable developments in library education in Queensland*, 1979, p. 98)

Entry to the course was available to applicants with at least grade 10 of secondary school and an achievement in the Junior School certificate of not fewer than three points in an English subject, or to appropriate mature age applicants. Students had to complete 36 units of compulsory core units, three elective units and 36 units of field work to qualify for the certificate.

Table 8: Library Assistant's Certificate, Seven Hills College of TAFE, 1976.

Course Structure		Hours/units per semester
Core Subjects I	Library organisation I	3
	Library organisation II	3
	Library organisation III	3
	Basic media	3
	Business communication I	3
	Arts in Australia	3

Core Subjects II	Australian society	3
	Science and technology in society	3
	Creative communication	3
	Bibliographic practices	3
	Data processing	3
	Advanced media	3
Electives	Book repair and maintenance	3
1 of the following	Typewriting	3

(*Desirable developments in library education in Queensland*, 1979, p. 100)

Desirable developments in library education in Queensland

A major review of the prevailing status and future needs of education and training for librarians, teacher-librarians and library technicians was conducted in 1977 and 1978 by a Committee of the Queensland Board of Advanced Education, under the chairmanship of Edward Flowers. The Committee examined factors affecting the future need for library staff in Queensland, considered existing national and overseas practices and made a number of recommendations on future education for professionals and paraprofessionals and for continuing education. The Committee drew on the criteria established by the LAA to assess library technician courses which had been published in the 1978 Handbook. It recommended that the Queensland Certificate course be offered in future at Associate Diploma level on a full-time and part-time basis, both internally and externally (*Desirable developments in library education in Queensland*, 1979, p. 47).

The Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in the Australian Capital Territory, 1978-1982

Library Technician Certificate, Canberra College of Technical and Further Education, 1978

In 1973 the President of the ACT Branch of the LAA asked the Canberra Technical College to "consider the introduction of an alternative course to train people needed in the

para-professional and technical support areas of library work" (Hart & Rochester, 1975, p. 54). A skills analysis survey was carried out by a management consultant to determine the range of tasks undertaken by support staff in a variety of libraries in the ACT. The skills analysis "allowed the curriculum sub-committee to determine specific course objectives, depth, breadth and length of the course" (Hart & Rochester, 1975, p. 58). The curriculum included a significant 'life oriented studies' program which Hart and Rochester suggested reflected the philosophy of the Kangan Report:

> it is important that general education should be seen as relevant to vocational purpose and that vocational education in turn becomes more general in its content and methods so that people can be better prepared to adapt themselves to changing conditions and retraining if necessary, at any time of their working lives. (p. 58)

Although the curriculum was given final approval in November 1975, public service cutbacks intervened and resulted in a delay in implementing the course until July 1978. At a Library Technician in the Work Force seminar in Canberra in 1978, Milne (1978) provided a detailed outline of the history and content of the course and stated that the original curriculum had been revised to conform to the LAA *Guidelines* which had been published in the intervening period. Milne (1978) highlighted four significant facts which had determined the content and structure of the course: it was based on a survey which identified the needs of Canberra libraries and current training activities, its length was determined by the need to adequately train staff for tasks identified in the survey, the course was subject to critical examination by both the curriculum experts and the employer and the course was prepared at the request of the library profession (p. 2). The course offered six hours per week in general studies and Milne anticipated that students would question the relevance of these studies. She argued, however that library technicians would benefit from a sound general educational background, and as the course

could provide articulation into undergraduate librarianship studies it must offer general studies at the Higher School Certificate level (p. 6).

The general level of entry to the course was the School Certificate, although mature age applicants could apply for admission. The course was initially offered on a full-time basis, although provision was made for part-time study. Library work experience (library orientation) was a compulsory component of the course.

Table 9: Library Technician Certificate, Canberra College of TAFE, 1978

Course Structure		Hours per week
Semester 1	Introduction to library and information services and resources	3
	Communication I	3
	Machine operating	4
	Art and display	3
	General studies	6
	Book repair and maintenance	3
Semester 2	Library processes I	4
	Reader services I	6
	Communications II	2
	Machine operating	5
	General studies	6
Semester 3	Library processes II	4
	Readers services II	6
	Audio visual A	3
	Computers in the library	2
	Library orientation I	10
Semester 4	Library processes III	4
	Personnel supervision human relations	3
	Audio visual B	3
	Special library study	5
	Library orientation II	10

(Milne, 1978, p. 3)

Milne (1978) concluded her review of the course by discussing the role of the library technician in the workplace, "the technician is a new category of library staff needed to cope with the changed circumstances of library and information services and

technological change" and argued that "the technician should be seen to have a career structure with its own integrity - they are not to be second class citizens to the librarian under whose direction they will work" (p. 10).

Role of Professional Associations

Australian Library Technicians Association (ALTA)

In 1972 the Library Technicians Association of Australia was established to promote the interests of paraprofessional staff and to liaise with appropriate unions concerned with library employment (Biskup, 1994). The association changed its name to the Australian Library Technicians Association (ALTA) in 1976. As both Biskup (1978) and McLean (1993) have noted, ALTA was formed at a time when library technicians did not have a recognised status within the library profession and, although the association was most active in Victoria, it played a significant role in promoting the interests and activities of library technicians in Australia.

Library Association of Australia (LAA)

The LAA, as the national professional body, had monitored the development of library technician courses since their introduction in 1970 and State Branches of the association had been active participants in developing courses in several States. It was not until the 1976 National Workshop and resulting *Guidelines*, however, that the association became interested in playing a more active role in the development of courses or considered the acceptance of technicians into the professional association and the promotion of employment opportunities for graduates of courses. Although many commentators had been urging the association to take this sector of the library workforce into serious consideration for some time, it can be argued that it was not until trained

technicians emerged as a viable independent force, that the association took action. As McLean (1993) has noted, there was "no conscious deliberation given to the representation of this new breed of paraprofessionals within the LAA during the formative years" (p. 116). Equally, it was not until the Second National Workshop in 1979 endorsed a resolution to form a national steering group to determine the needs of library technicians around Australia and to decide ways in which they could best be met, that the association offered to create a Library Technicians Section within the LAA. The Library Technician's Section was formed in 1979, with 42 members (Nicholson, 1997, p. 2) and the first Library Technician's Conference was held in Adelaide in 1980.

The LAA Board of Education accepted, with some minor amendments, the list of tasks determined by the 1976 National Workshop. The Board also appointed a subcommittee to recommend a method of accrediting library technician courses. Miller (1979), a member of the Board of Education, suggested that teaching institutions, library technicians, employers and the LAA would all benefit from the recognition that a national accreditation process would provide to individual courses. While the term "accreditation" was, and still is used in the literature to describe the LAA course assessment process, TAFE courses have always been accredited by individual educational institutions and State and Territory Training Boards and the LAA process should be more accurately defined as course recognition.

In a summary of the association's commitment to library technicians, the LAA President, John Brudenall, suggested that "the LAA will be the richer having technician members and libraries will be the stronger with library technicians filling middle-level positions (1979, p. 166). Brudenall (1979, p. 166) urged libraries to restructure staffing arrangements to avoid the confusion, demarcation disputes and ineffective use of skills which would inevitably arise if technicians were fitted into existing structures.

The 1978 *Statement* and the creation of the Library Technicians Section of the LAA were significant developments in the recognition of the role of the library technician in the library workforce and in the standardisation of education and training for library technicians.

Statement on the Recognition of Library Technician Courses

In 1978 the LAA Board of Education published the *Statement on the recognition of library technician courses* in its handbook. The Board of Education had recognised courses in professional librarianship since it had ceased to examine and certify individual members through its Registration Certificate in 1964.

The essential features of the library technician recognition criteria were:

1. The course should be generalist in nature to prepare library technicians for a wide range of activities in all types of libraries.
2. The course is most appropriately conducted in a TAFE college.
3. The institution should possess a library sufficient to support the teaching program.
4. Teaching staff are expected to be of a high calibre, well qualified by education and experience to teach library technician courses.
5. The Association believed that library technician certificate courses should be of 2 years duration with concurrent work experience or field work of about 50%.

The full *Statement* is included as Appendix B. The 1978 LAA Handbook also included a *Note for employing authorities* (Appendix C) which defined the role of the library technician, outlined the tasks that the library technician should be competent to perform and/or supervise and advised employers that a process of assessing and recognising library technician courses would be established by the LAA.

The Course Recognition Process

As previously noted, in the mid 1960s the LAA ceased to examine and certify individual professional members through its Registration Certificate, and chose to rely instead upon the recognition of courses. Graduates of recognised courses were eligible for membership to the association without further examination and industry adopted the practice of listing eligibility for membership as a selection criterion for employment.

The association developed minimum standards for the recognition of first-award courses at both the professional and paraprofessional level. The recognition process, for both professional and paraprofessional courses, is based on the assessment of courses through site visits by a Board of Education panel, generally comprising two or three qualified educators/practitioners. "Documentation outlining course objectives, teaching and learning strategies, assessment procedures and a range of organisational variables such as faculty, teaching resources, facilities and library resources, are required prior to the visit" (Parr, 1991, p. 105). The site visit is undertaken over two to three days and involves consultation with institution management, teaching staff, past and present students, course advisory committees and relevant support personnel and further examination of course documentation, including examples of student work and assessment. The recognition panel presents a report, recommending recognition or alternative arrangements, to the Board of Education for consideration and action. The recognition panel report may include recommendations for improvements or revision to courses for consideration by teaching institutions and provisional recognition until recommendations are implemented.

The recognition process, as an effective means for ensuring professional competence and educational standards, has been questioned by a number of commentators. In 1985 Whyte provided a detailed history of the course recognition

process and queried the association's decision to try to control the education of library technicians. MacKinnon (1985) noted that although employers frequently stipulated eligibility for membership of the association, there was no evidence that employers would check that a course was one recognised by the association (p. 7). She also wondered to what extent the Board of Education was able to control standards through the recognition process. This theme was expanded by Parr (1991) who suggested that the association's influence was weakened as "schools, in order to survive in a period of declining resources, increasingly react to their educational milieu rather than the professional body" (p. 98). In his major review of the recognition process, Parr (1991) made a number of recommendations which he hoped would result in increasing ALIA's responsibility for determining standards for entry to the profession. Parr (1991, 108) suggested that the association should abandon course content criteria and rate courses in terms of how relevant they were in preparing students for professional practice. Graduates of courses would then be required to undertake a period of assessable experience in the field and provide a professional statement before they were admitted as members of the association. While Parr's recommendations were aimed at the professional level, they have implications for the paraprofessional level as well.

Second National Workshop, 1979

Library Technicians in Australia: Second National Workshop, 1979

In 1979 the New South Wales Branch of the LAA organised a second National Workshop as a follow-up to the 1976 National Workshop. The objectives of the Workshop were to:

a. assess the extent to which the *Guidelines* had been implemented and to appraise developments in the education of library technicians in Australia;

b. review the responsibilities of the LAA Board of Education in the accreditation of courses and the provision of the new category of library technician membership;

c. examine the attitudes and expectations of employers in regard to library technicians;

d. give an overview of current awards and industrial developments as they affect library technicians;

e. provide an opportunity for library technicians to identify areas of concern and possible solutions (*Library Technicians in Australia*, 1979, p. ix).

The wide-ranging objectives were addressed through a series of presentations, discussion groups and two post-Workshop meetings.

A review of the various awards and agreements under which library technicians were employed identified a number of major concerns including the many different classifications under which library technicians were employed, variations between employer's perceptions about the responsibilities and duties of library technicians and significant disparities in overall salary and career ranges (Henderson, 1979, p. 16). Henderson (1979, p. 28) believed that these conditions would prevail unless technicians could establish a "national identity". The "national identity" could be achieved through the adoption of a simple and workable definition, for award purposes, of a library technician and through a concerted effort by library technician groups and the LAA to promote the role of the technician in the library industry.

A number of employers and library technicians from a wide range of libraries presented case studies of the employment of library technicians at the Workshop. While there was a general consensus that the introduction of the library technician into the workforce was a positive development, many presenters noted that there were still problems in the acceptance of technicians by some professional staff and that libraries

needed to undertaken a major review of their staffing structures to ensure the most effective use of all staff.

D'Sylva (1979) suggested that the LAA's attempt to deal with three major issues; status, salary and education of technicians, with a single strategy was a wasted effort. He claimed that "status issues such as job description and salary levels fleshed out in industrial awards depend to a large extent on the way in which the LAA sorts out the educational issues in technician courses" (p. 59). D'Sylva (1979) considered that the LAA should concentrate on providing appropriate accreditation to technician courses which would ensure employer confidence in the status of technicians.

The Workshop produced a 'program of action' which defined the "library technician as a person eligible for technician membership of the LAA" (Brudenall, 1979, p. 67). It also called for a national consensus on the composition of core units in the education of technicians and a review of the 50% work experience requirement in the course recognition criteria. Course recognition and the portability of qualifications were also considered essential for library technicians and employers. A post Workshop meeting of library educators supported the outcomes of the 'program of action' and also agreed that, while work experience was an integral part of technician courses, the 50% work experience component was too high and impractical to implement.

LAA response to the Second National Workshop.

The LAA responded to the Second National Workshop by revising the *Statement on the recognition of library technician courses* to reduce the 50% work experience component to "concurrent work experience or field work amounting to the equivalent of 24 weeks" (Library Association of Australia, 1980, p. 79). In recognition of the increasing role that

automation was playing in libraries, the list of tasks was also amended to include data processing and related computer operations (Appendix D).

In 1979 the LAA Board of Education began a major review of all Association policies relating to education and prepared a range of statements, which were adopted in 1982. The statements were:

1. Education for library and information science.
2. Role and responsibilities of the Board of Education.
3. Roles of librarians and library technicians.
4. Recognition of first award courses: professional level.
5. Recognition of first award courses: technician level.
6. Courses in teacher-librarianship.
7. Advanced awards.

The statement on *The roles of librarians and library technicians* recognised the need for different levels of staff in libraries: "as libraries have become more complex organisations using advanced technologies in the application of which a wide variety of specialist skills is required" (Library Association of Australia, 1982, p. 101). The statement defined the library technician as "working in support of the librarian, principally in operating and supervising routine procedures which control systems for handling materials and files" (Library Association of Australia, 1982, p. 102). The statement also acknowledged the difficulty of providing a precise list of tasks performed by librarians and library technicians because of the wide variety of library workplace environments, but emphasised the management expertise which differentiated the professional from the paraprofessional. The full statement is included as Appendix E.

Statement 5, *Recognition of first award courses: technician level* was a revision of the *Statement on the recognition of library technician courses* and is included as Appendix F.

The Introduction of Training for Library Technicians in the Northern Territory, 1982

Certificate in Library Practice, Darwin Community College, 1982

From 1973 to 1979 the Darwin Community College had offered tutorial assistance to students studying for the LAA Registration Certificate. The Northern Territory Branch of the LAA was particularly active in promoting education and training opportunities for library technicians (Young, 1988). Early in 1980 the Branch and the senior staff of the Darwin Community College Learning Resources Centre (LRC) discussed the need to provide education and training for local library staff. A survey conducted by Margaret Clinch, Associate Head of the LRC, identified the need for trained library paraprofessional staff.

In its submission to the Academic Board, the Darwin Community College School of General Studies outlined the developments in library staff education, training and employment that had taken place in other States and the ACT. The submission noted that the LAA had formally recognised the library technician category and that employers had taken steps to vary industrial determinations to demarcate professional employees from paraprofessional employees (School of General Studies, 1980, p. 3). The Certificate in Library Practice course had been "developed with the requirements of the LAA *Statement on recognition of library technician courses* in mind" (Darwin Community College, 1981, p. 1).

Successful completion of Year 11 or evidence of potential to complete the course and a satisfactory level of English expression were required for entry to the course. The course was of 2 years full-time duration or part-time equivalent and required 2.5 contact hours per week a semester and work experience of 36.75 hours per week for 3 weeks of each of the 4 semesters.

Table 10: Certificate in Library Practice, Darwin Community College, 1982

Course Structure	
Compulsory library studies units 9 full units and 2 half units	Audio visual materials I Audio visual materials II Library and library services Library display work (1/2 unit) Basic service to users Advanced service to users (1/2 unit) Acquisitions and bibliographic searching Typing and office machines Handling of library materials Computers in libraries Cataloguing
Elective library studies units 3 full units	Advanced audio visual materials Library services in a multi-cultural society Working with children in libraries Libraries in the Northern Territory Government publications
General studies units 3 full units	Languages other than English Studies in English Humanities and behavioural science Business and commercial practice Fine arts Natural sciences and mathematic sciences

(Darwin Community College, 1981, p. 5)

The Certificate in Library Practice Course Advisory Committee was also active in promoting the employment opportunities for library technicians, preparing a major *Submission to the Public Service Commissioner regarding the inclusion of the classification of library technician in the NT Public Service staffing schedules* supported by a *Report of survey of staffing in N.T. libraries* (Certificate in Library Practice Course Advisory Committee, 1982).

Response to the Introduction of Library Technician Courses

Introduction

By 1982 library technician courses were in operation in all States and Territories of Australia. Participants at the First National Workshop, Second National Workshop and other commentators, from both the industrial and educational sectors, were concerned

about the diversity in entry requirements, length of courses, core units and work experience requirements between library technician courses. These concerns resulted in the *Guidelines* and the *Statement of recognition of library technician courses.* There was, however, a range of other issues which were raised by individual commentators, educators and employer representatives during this period.

Issues of Concern

Wesley Young had played a significant role in the development of the original Victorian course and was a vocal critic of the terminal nature and narrow technical focus of most library technician courses. He advocated the introduction of a 50% broad based general education component which would "provide a more adequate background upon which the technician could adapt to change, and would allow for greater mobility to other programs and to tertiary institutions; moreover it would enhance the performance of higher level technician tasks" (1979, p. 444). Young (1979) believed that TAFE had succumbed to pressures applied by business, industry and government to link education directly to vocational needs rather than prepare people for a changing workplace.

Another prominent educator, Milne, (1980) discussed the difficulties of providing appropriate practical, "hands on" experience to library technician students in TAFE institutions which were "starved for funds and resources to facilitate an ideal learning environment" (p. 17). She indicated that large class sizes, inappropriately scheduled classes inadequate equipment and resources, lack of staff development opportunities for educators and the essentially varied nature of the library workplace posed problems for the success of training for library technicians and contributed to the disparity between courses. Milne (1980, p. 18) questioned how realistic the LAA accreditation criteria could

be, given the divergence in philosophical and practical approaches of many of the existing courses.

Thompson (1978) discussed the positive impact of the employment of library technicians and trainee technicians in the State Library of Victoria. He stated that the introduction of technicians enabled the library to undertake a careful review and examination of its methods and procedures and that:

> the addition of technicians to the workforce made it necessary for the professional staff to consider the kinds of duties which should be allocated, the measure of responsibility which should be extended to technicians and finally, to develop and refine their own supervisory skills. (p. 4)

Thompson (1978) considered that the requirement of tertiary qualifications for professional staff and the introduction of trained library technicians had resulted in a new professionalism and commitment by library staff.

In 1979, a Seminar was jointly organised by the Queensland Branch of the LAA and the Queensland Association of Library Assistants to address "the basic lack of information relating to the prospects for library technicians in Australia" (*Let's talk about library technicians*, 1979, Introduction). Representatives from a wide range of library employer bodies discussed the lack of a library technician classification in their workplaces and difficulties in "identifying a substantial core of expertise relating to library technicians" (Ryan, 1979, p. 15) despite the LAA's *Statement on recognition of library technician courses*. A number of speakers also expressed some dissatisfaction with the introduction of the Queensland Library Technician's Certificate: "the University Library did not instigate the training of library technicians. I think we would have continued on reasonably efficiently without them" (Fielding, 1979, p. 12); "I have expressed my own reservations about the general way in which the library technicians course has been designed" (Ryan, 1979, p. 15). These views were not typical of employers throughout the rest of Australia at this time

and tends to suggest that the development of the library technician's course at Seven Hills College in Queensland may not have had adequate employer endorsement or involvement.

In 1981, Levett reported on a comparative study of paraprofessional workers in four fields: social work, medicine, architecture and librarianship. Levett (1981, p. 48) noted that there existed in all groups a blurring of the boundaries of activities between professional and paraprofessionals, although it was more apparent in librarianship and social work than in the other two groups. He attributed this mainly to the lack of "specialisms" (sic) but also to questions of legal responsibilities, licenses to practice and the statutory definition of roles. In his examination of courses at the paraprofessional level, Levett observed that "the professional aspects and nature of librarianship are obscured by the fact that it is taught across the academic spectrum" (p. 51), at Certificate, Diploma and professional levels, in contrast to more distinct course content in the other fields. Levett predicted an increase in the proportion of paraprofessionals in all studied fields, but concluded that it was in librarianship that the redistribution of tasks between professionals and paraprofessionals would be the most marked, despite the LAA attempt to head off demarcation problems (p. 53).

Library and Information Work: The Employment Market

In 1979-1980 a major study of the employment market in the library industry was commissioned by the Victorian Branch of the LAA and the results published in 1982 (Bourne, Hill & Mitcheson, 1982). The impact of technological developments in libraries, increasing utilisation of library technicians and the increased supply of professional staff were advanced as the major reasons for the study. In his analysis of the results, Mitcheson (1983, p. 183) noted that the 35 schools offering library technician courses in 1981

accounted for 28% of courses and 1,486 students and observed the sharp increase in library technician graduates; from 72 in 1975 to 279 in 1980. While the results indicated that professional librarians had been freed from many unskilled duties by the introduction of library technicians, there were concerns that the increasing use of paraprofessionals in a tightening labour market could have a negative impact. It was suggested that the substitution of less expensive library technicians by employers could lead to a decrease in demand for professional staff, and conversely, that librarians could begin to compete for paraprofessional positions which would lead to a deterioration in the employment prospects for library technicians (Bourne, Hill & Mitcheson, 1982, p. 4).

At a National Conference in Melbourne in 1982, library educators, employers and employees discussed the implications of the study and examined trends and issues in library employment. Horton (1982) argued that library staff were still not being properly utilised, that there was little attempt to accommodate the technician stream and that "managerial ignorance in relation to library technicians could also manifest itself in economic misuse" (p. 7).

Horses for Courses: The Design of Jobs for Library Technicians

On the 15th October 1982, a one-day seminar on employment issues for library technicians was held at Canberra College of Technical College of Technical and Further Education. Topics included the "employment patterns of graduate library technicians, job design, and issues facing individual library sectors, with most discussion taking place in panels and workshops" (Ennever, 1988, p. 19). Although the papers from this seminar were not published, the workshop had a significant impact and resulted in the publication of the *Work-level guidelines for librarians and library technicians* by the LAA in 1985.

Education and training for library technicians was developed and established in all States and Territories during the period from 1970 to 1982. The work of major stakeholders resulted in a definition of the role of the library technician and provided guidelines and standards for education and training to prepare library technicians for this role. The guidelines and standards assisted library technician educators to effectively review and upgrade courses to reflect library industry developments during the period from 1983 to 1989.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY TECHNICIAN TRAINING COURSES, 1983-1989

Introduction

The period 1983 to 1989 was characterised by the consolidation of library technician training courses, review of course content and upgrading of courses to reflect workplace developments and changes. The major preoccupations of commentators, representing both library employers and library educators, were the effect of technology and automated systems on the role and education of library workers and the continuing examination of the appropriate roles for professional and paraprofessional staff. The issue of articulation between TAFE and higher level courses, with some recognition of technician qualifications, was also raised during this period. The LAA Board of Education continued to examine its role in the education of library technicians, revising policy statements, developing work level guidelines and implementing course recognition processes.

Library Technician Courses, 1983

A brief examination of library technician courses in 1983 reveals variations in course names, course length and entry levels, although entry levels were consistently below Year 12 High School level. All courses, except in Western Australia, were conducted in TAFE colleges. Western Australia also offered an Associate Diploma course at a College of Advanced Education.

Table 11: Library Technician Courses, 1983

Location	Course title	Length	Entry requirements
ACT School of Information Studies Canberra College of TAFE	Course in Library Studies	2 years full-time Part-time for library employees	ACT Year 10 NSW School Certificate Mature age
NSW School of General Studies NSW Department of TAFE Sydney Technical College Newcastle Technical College Wollongong Technical College	Library Technician Certificate	2 years full-time 3 years part-time	NSW School Certificate with level 3 English Mature age
Northern Territory School of General Studies Darwin Community College	Certificate in Library Practice	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 11 High School Mature age
Queensland Seven Hills College of TAFE	Library Technicians Certificate	4 years part-time	Grade 10 High School
South Australia Kilkenny Branch Open College of Further Education	Library Technician Certificate	4 years part-time	No formal entry requirements Subject to counselling
Tasmania Division of Further Education Tasmanian Department of Education Devonport Technical College Hobart Technical College Launceston Community College	Library Technician Certificate	2 years full-time Part-time	4th year High School
Victoria Department of Library Studies Footscray Technical College Prahan College of TAFE Whitehorse College of TAFE	Certificate of Applied Science (Library Technician)	2 years full-time Part-time Mixed mode	5th year High School Mature age
Western Australia Department of Library Studies Western Australian College of Advanced Education - Nedlands Campus	Associate Diploma in Library Media	2 years full-time Part-time	5th High School Mature age
Department of Social Sciences Perth Technical College	Certificate in Library Practice	3 years part-time	3rd Year High School Mature age

(Library Association of Australia, 1983)

Effects of Developments in Technology on the Role and Training of Library Technicians

In a major examination of the effect of automation of the catalogue on library technician employment and training, Parker (1982) observed that technicians were assuming an increasing and changing role in cataloguing work which required new approaches to training and employment. She advocated the design of cataloguing training for library technicians which incorporated a "substantial theoretical and conceptual content to aid technicians in the operation of the new cataloguing systems and the technician's knowledge will need to be updated for particular library systems" (p. 54). Parker also noted that course reviews in several States had proposed training which incorporated the new technology, the introduction of computerised cataloguing training, an increased emphasis on cataloguing theories and underlying rules as well as tasks and less emphasis on some traditional manual tasks (p. 63).

Smeaton (1983) also discussed the difficulties for "technician educators in deciding on levels of complexity taught in areas like classification and cataloguing" (p. 1) and suggested that the divergence of opinion was a reflection of the lack of sharp definition of professional and paraprofessional areas of responsibility in work. She observed that there were two conflicting schools of thought about the effect of technological change in libraries on the technician role: one that saw the upgrading of technician courses and an increased role for technicians in the workplace, the other that forecast the gradual phasing out of the technician level of work, and she concluded that it was difficult to make any prediction without further research (p. 2).

In 1983 Smeaton began work on a review of the library technician course in Victoria and participated in a major study to "investigate the effects of the introduction of automated procedures on the skills required of library technicians" (p. 307). It was proposed that the results of the study would be incorporated into revised curricula. The

study recommended changes to syllabus design to accommodate current developments, such as computer applications and supervisory and interpersonal skills. The study indicated that library technicians were an accepted part of the library workforce with increasing responsibilities and expanding skills. Smeaton (1984) considered that the major difficulty in role differentiation between librarians and library technicians lay in the definition of the base-grade librarian and urged librarians, the LAA and schools of professional librarianship to address this issue. She rejected a proposed solution of a single credential for all library personnel on the grounds that technicians should be viewed as a separate category of library workers with their own career paths, objectives and job satisfaction and that technician training was designed for job-specific tasks and intended to be terminal (p. 312). Discussing training for library technicians, Smeaton noted that although there were differences in entry and work experience requirements between the national technician courses, there were similarities in course content, aims and objectives which had been assisted by an informal exchange of information and syllabus content between educators. Smeaton reported that a meeting of educators to examine the possibility of a national core curriculum for library technicians had been inconclusive but had noted the various syllabus reviews which were proceeding around the country. (p. 315).

Broadbent (1984) highlighted the major changes in libraries which had occurred in libraries during the past decade and examined their implications on the role and training of technicians. She noted that changes in the nature of library collections, from print to multimedia, increased emphasis on de-acquisition, effective storage processes, and preservation and conservation of materials had created new roles for library technicians (p. 94). The introduction of integrated library automated systems and access to national networks and databases had resulted in an increased use of technicians in circulation and

technical services. While the reference and user education service areas had resisted the employment of technicians, Broadbent suggested that a "two tier model of reference assistance which would roster technicians to the information desk but make provision for professional backup as needed" (p. 96) would provide a more efficient service while making appropriate use of library technicians' skills.

Broadbent also surveyed changes in library staffing structures, with library technicians representing 22% of all employees with library qualifications in 1980, and concluded that if an increase in the employment of library technician resulted in fewer librarians, these librarians "would be more appropriately employed, and working at a truly professional level" (p. 98).

Rogers (1987) observed that developments in information technology created a demand for workers with generic skills: computer literacy, data manipulation and interpretation and noted that a diverse range of TAFE, colleges and private providers were offering courses with information processing and computer education courses. Rogers made a number of recommendations to assist library technician programs and courses to remain relevant and viable in an increasingly competitive information environment. He suggested that library education programs should include the word 'information' in their titles, to present a current, up-to-date image (p. 15), should "widen the scope of our employment prerequisites into various information use sectors, and "servicing" other courses in TAFE" (p. 16). He considered that library technician educators should engage in more effective marketing of their skills and services to establish their legitimacy in the training environment. To ensure the relevancy of training he recommended an increase in the amount and type of automation in library technician courses, including the use of word processing packages, office technology and business skills.

In her 1988 article, Hyland provided a comprehensive national overview of changes made by library technician educators to include automated components in library related units such as cataloguing, acquisitions, circulation and serials control. She concluded that "technicians graduating from these courses will be well equipped to deal with technology available in the library and information environments" (p. 62).

Library Technician Courses, 1984-1987

As noted by several commentators, reviews of library technician training courses were undertaken throughout Australia during the period 1984 to 1989. Curricula incorporated technological changes and skills in communication and supervision based on skills surveys and analysis. Most courses sought industry input for curriculum revision through Course Advisory Committees composed of local library industry, technician, student and institution representatives. From 1987 upgrading of library technician courses from the Certificate level to new Associate Diploma awards occurred in most States and Territories, with a revision of entry requirements to Year 12 of secondary schooling or mature age application.

The following table outlines the location, title, length and entry requirements of courses in 1987.

Table 12: Library Technician Courses, 1987

Location	Course title	Length	Entry levels
ACT School of Information Studies Canberra College of TAFE	Associate Diploma of Arts in Library Studies	2 years full-time Part-time for library employees	Year 12 Mature age

NSW School of General Studies NSW Department of TAFE Sydney Technical College Newcastle Technical College Wollongong Technical College Mt Druitt Technical College	Library Practice Associate Diploma	2 years full-time 3 years part-time	Year 12 Mature age
Northern Territory Department of Media and Performance, Faculty of Arts Darwin Institute of Technology	Associate Diploma of Arts (Library Practice)	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age
Queensland Seven Hills College of TAFE Gold Coast College of TAFE	Associate Diploma in Applied Science (Library Technician)	4 years part-time	Year 12 Mature age
South Australia Library Studies Unit Adelaide College of TAFE	Associate Diploma - Library Technician	4 years part-time Some external units	Year 12
Tasmania Division of Further Education Tasmanian Department of Education Devonport Technical College Hobart Technical College Launceston College of TAFE	Library Technician Certificate	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age
Victoria Department of Library Studies Footscray Technical College Prahan College of TAFE Box Hill College of TAFE	Certificate of Applied Social Science (Library Technician)	2 years full-time Part-time Mixed mode	Year 11 Mature age
Western Australia Department of Library and Information Studies Western Australian College of Advanced Education - Nedlands Campus	Associate Diploma in Library Media	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age
Department of English, Languages and Social Studies Perth Technical College	Certificate in Library Practice Diploma in Library Practice	1.5 years full-time Part-time 1.5 years full-time Part-time	3rd Year High School Mature age

(Library Association of Australia, 1987/88)

The diversity in location of courses, in various Departments and Schools, reflects continuing institutional attempts to fit the discipline of library studies with an appropriate body of learning. This has always been, and remains a problematic issue for most professional and paraprofessional courses in Australia.

The following more detailed description and examination of courses for library technicians in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and South Australia illustrates the similarities and differences in course content at this time.

Associate Diploma in Library Media, WA College of Advanced Education, 1986

In 1985, Debowski provided an account of a major redesign of the library technician course at the Western Australian College of Advanced Education. She stated that the new Associate Diploma in Library Media had been designed to reflect changing employment conditions and formal recognition requirements, including revised automation and media studies, a stronger competency/skills base and an increase in work experience requirements.

Table 13: Associate Diploma in Library Media, WA College of Advanced Education, 1986.

Course Structure	
Semester 1	Library systems 1
	Library resources 1
	Introduction to libraries
	Personal typing
	Graphics and reprographics
Semester 2	Library systems 2
	Library resources 2
	Introduction to libraries 2
	Library display
	Office procedures
	Resources photography
Semester 3	Library systems 3
	Library resources 3
	Library administrative practices
	Introduction to computing

	Resource design and production	
Semester 4	Library systems 4	
	Library resources 4	
	The technician and the workforce	
	Media equipment and materials	

(Debowski, 1985, p. 57)

Associate Diploma in Library Practice, Darwin Institute of Technology, 1987

In 1987 the Darwin Institute of Technology upgraded its Certificate qualification to an Associate Diploma in Library Practice. Changes to the course included the addition of a second computers in libraries unit and a core library study component to reflect more accurately the grouping of tasks outlined in the LAA guidelines. A range of elective study units and general elective study units enabled students to pursue more specialised interests in both library and general education. Students were required to complete four work experience placements in four different types of libraries.

Table 14: Associate Diploma in Library Practice, Darwin Institute of Technology, 1987.

Course Structure		Hours	Credit Points
Year 1			
Semester 1	Audio-visual 1	54	8
	Libraries & library services	54	8
	Handling library materials	54	8
	Library technician practice 1	110	8
	Elective library study unit	54	8
Semester 2	Audio-visual 2	54	8
	Services to users 1	54	8
	Acquisitions and bibliographic searching	54	8
	Library technician practice 2	110	8
	Elective library study unit	54	8
Year 2			
Semester 3	Services to users 2	54	8
	Computers in libraries 1	54	8
	Library technician practice 3	110	8
	Elective library study unit	54	8
	Elective general study unit	54-72	8-10
Semester 4	Computers in libraries 2	54	8
	Cataloguing	54	8

	Library technician practice 4	110	8
	Elective general study unit	54-72	8-10
	Elective general study unit	54-72	8-10

(Darwin Institute of Technology, 1986, p. 14)

Associate Diploma in Library Studies, Adelaide College of TAFE, 1989

In 1989 the Adelaide College of TAFE updated its Certificate in Library Studies (Library Technician) course to an Associate Diploma in Library Studies. Students who completed the Associate Diploma could obtain status for some subjects in the South Australian Institute of Technology Bachelor of Arts course in Librarianship.

Both the Northern Territory and South Australian courses offered a wide range of library and general electives which aimed to encourage students to either develop skills in specialist areas and pursue personal interests.

Table 15: Associate Diploma in Library Studies, Adelaide College of TAFE, 1989.

Course Structure		Hours
Core Subjects	Library computing 1	60
630 hours	Audiovisual techniques 1	60
	Audiovisual techniques 2	60
	Bibliographic searching	60
	Cataloguing and classification	60
	Communication (library technician)	60
	Library history, development and practice 1	60
	Library routines 1	60
	Library routines 2	60
	Reference materials and techniques	60
	Libraries and the law	30
Elective Subjects	Audio techniques	30
330 hours	Australian bibliographic network	60
	Australian social and cultural history	60
	Library computing 2	60
	Bibliographic organisation of library materials	60
	Book care and repair	30
	Children's services	60
	Community language studies	60
	Film projection	30
	Display techniques	30
	Library extension services	60

	Library history, development and practice 2	60
	Human resource management (library technician)	60
	Micrographics	60
	Multiculturalism in libraries	60
	Photography	60
	Reprographics	30
	Serial publications	60
	Video techniques	30
	Video production	30
Work Practice		240
Field Work		720

(Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education, South Australia, 1990, p. 10)

Summary of the Developments in Library Technician Education and Training

In her major review of education for library staff, Hannaker (1985) noted that the issue of librarianship and library technician courses and appropriate work levels for the base grade librarian and the library technician remained contentious and the "most important and potentially divisive issue facing the LAA at the moment" (p. 26). She reported that the Victorian LAA Branch Council had recommended that the Board of Education examine the potential for demarcation disputes between librarians and library technicians and review the comparative content of courses for both groups. Hannaker (1985) considered the differing opinions amongst technicians, employers and educators on the appropriate role for the technician could only be resolved by work level standards, more effective communication between educators and practitioners and formal mechanisms for discussing course levels.

A 1988 review of education for library technicians noted that attempts to establish a common core curriculum had been unsuccessful (Naylor, Barrett, Williams, Talbot, & Reid, 1988). Contributing educators to the review commented on the incorporation of automated applications in core subjects and the teaching and resource implications of this change. They also outlined future directions and concerns in local courses including

alternative methods of course provision to cater for country and remote students and the need for articulation processes for library technicians to access higher level education.

At the 5th National Library Technicians Conference in 1989, Eric Wainwright, the Deputy Director-General of the National Library and Chairman of the ALIA Board of Education, summarised the history and development of library technician education and outlined continuing issues. He noted that the distinct role of the library technician had been firmly established in Australia, with adequate, if not necessarily ideal structures for library technicians in the public service areas, public libraries, colleges and universities in all States and Territories, except Tasmania (p.7). Wainwright discussed the need to attract the best potential technicians into training courses and to ensure the best possible training through course recognition processes, continual updating of education policy statements, regular revision of courses to reflect workplace developments and the provision of adequate equipment and computer resources for training courses. Wainwright suggested that the introduction of Associate Diploma level courses and agreement on a core curriculum would confer higher status for library technicians and greater reliability for employers.

Wainwright was also concerned to ensure equity of access to technician training opportunities and qualified technician access to higher level education. He advocated the development of appropriate external programs and effective credit arrangements for technicians wishing to undertake study at the professional level.

Role of the Library Association of Australia (LAA), 1983-1989.

By 1983 the LAA Board of Education had visited and recognised all library technician courses, except the newest course in the Northern Territory. During the period,

1983 to 1989 the LAA continued to review and revise its education policies and develop comprehensive guidelines on the roles of librarians and library technicians.

The 1982 Horses for Courses workshop had requested that the LAA develop a set of work level standards for library staff and this, combined with pressures from employers and educators, resulted in the 1986 *Work level guidelines for librarians and library technicians* (Appendix G.) The guidelines comprehensively outlined the role and responsibilities of librarians and library technicians at different levels of experience and updated the tasks of library technicians to include technological developments such as automated databases, computerised cataloguing and networks.

In her review of the development of the guidelines, Edwards (1985, p. 6) discussed the problems of defining the boundaries between professional and paraprofessional tasks and considered that this was inevitable given the recent emergence of library technicians in the workplace, the overlap in duties and the variations in sizes and types of libraries. Edwards' statement echoed that of Mattsson's 1974 conclusions, highlighting the fact that the problem of defining the role of the professional and paraprofessional in the library industry remained a continuing and contentious issue. Edwards concluded that the guidelines "provide a general statement of the desirable situation - the fact that its delineations are not always achieved is not a matter for flat panic but rather for commonsense and the institution of a mechanism for regular reviews of the work level guidelines" (p. 7).

Schmidmaier (1987) also discussed the impact of the guidelines on library workplaces and education, and identified a range of issues which she considered required further discussion. She argued that the lack of job satisfaction and identity experienced by technicians could be overcome by developing the depth and not the breadth of the role of the technician. The curricula of library technician programs could be revised to provide

more detailed study in areas of specialisation, such as audiovisual equipment, data entry and editing, files and records procedures, displays and publicity (Schmidmaier, 1987, p. 16). Schmidmaier argued that the development of a specialist library technician would overcome the potential role conflict between the base grade librarian and the senior library technician.

In 1988 the LAA changed its name to the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and relocated from Sydney to Canberra.

Nicholson (1990), Chairperson of the ALIA Board of Education, reviewed a range of important current issues in library and information studies education. She listed changes in the profession internationally and nationally, amalgamations of institutions, TAFE reorganisation, and restructuring of technician awards to Associate Diploma, challenges of information technology, lack of access to external courses, course development and recognition of initial awards as major challenges addressed by the Board of Education. The Board issued a draft statement (Appendix I) which identified agreed basic principles. Nicholson (1990, p. 22) stated that the major thrust of the principles was the emphasis on quality library and information studies education and outlined the Board's commitment to equity of access, articulation, industry involvement in the development of courses, quality teaching staff and professional development. The Board stressed the need for library studies education schools to maintain their distinct identities in the face of institutional and departmental amalgamations.

Articulation between TAFE and Higher Education

Library technician courses had originally been designed as terminal in nature to emphasise and justify the different educational pathways and roles of the professional and paraprofessional. Recognition of the technician's skills as a natural progression towards a

higher level qualification was generally viewed unfavourably by many early commentators and this view was endorsed by the LAA. However, there were some early dissenters who advocated the development of articulation pathways between library technician and librarianship courses to enable those who wished to continue with further education to do so without unnecessary impedients.

In her review of the work level guidelines Schmidmaier (1987) discussed the movement, within the TAFE sector, towards broadening students' educational opportunities by seeking articulation between vocational courses and courses offered in other tertiary institutions (p. 15). She considered that a library technician qualification should not be a basic component of a professional qualification, and articulation should only be contemplated after a review of both library technician and professional librarianship curricula and discussion with all stakeholders.

At the 1987 Fourth National Conference of Library Technicians, O'Brien presented a paper on a proposal for a TAFE to College of Advanced Education (CAE) progression program in the ACT. O'Brien (1987, p. 20) suggested that the acknowledged blurring between base level and paraprofessional skills in the library workplace was based on the transfer of tasks from the professional to the paraprofessional, rather than the clear skill differentiation which operated in other professional/paraprofessional relationships, such as medicine or science. She noted that skills acquisition was considered an essential part of professional programs and that "these skills were used to build up the higher level abilities of conceptualisation, analysis and synthesis" (p. 20). An analysis of TAFE and CAE students indicated that both groups acquired library skills, albeit for varying purposes, but TAFE students were not able to gain recognition for these skills and continue their studies at an undergraduate level. The Canberra CAE/TAFE proposal sought to eliminate disadvantage and replication of previous studies by recognising

common elements of the skills base, rather than providing "automatic equation of the technician certificate with the early stages of a professional degree or diploma" (p. 22). O'Brien reported that the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Department of Information Services granted technician graduates exemption from the first year of the library and information degree course. However, O'Brien was concerned to stress that articulation procedures did not imply that a technicians course was equivalent to the first year of a Bachelor's course, but due "to a combination of factors such as work experience and maturity" (p. 22).

External pressures, such as Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission's objective to decrease barriers between post-secondary educational institutions and provide equity in access to career path progression, were to play a significant role in developing credit transfer arrangements between TAFE colleges and universities and in encouraging the library industry to recognise the value of technician training.

The issue of articulation had rapidly moved from rejection to general acceptance to active endorsement within the library industry during the period 1986 to 1989. This change can be interpreted as recognition of the need for education for library technicians, of the relevance of existing courses and of the desire by some library technicians to continue onto professional qualifications as well as a response to national developments in other courses.

The impact of technological developments on the role and training of library technicians was the major issue during the period 1983 to 1989. Courses for library technicians were revised and upgraded to ensure that graduates would possess the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively operate in an automated library environment. A number of commentators were also concerned about improving access to

higher education opportunities for those technicians wishing to undertake professional studies.

The primary instigators of library technician education and training during this period were industry, the professional association and educators. However, major reform to the technical and further education (TAFE) sector from 1989 heralded the introduction of Commonwealth and State government policy which has had a significant impact on library technician education and training.

CHAPTER FOUR

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE) IN AUSTRALIA, 1975-1996

Introduction

To effectively examine the development of training for library technicians from 1989 it is necessary to provide a summary of the major changes to vocational educational and training instigated by the Commonwealth Government in response to threats to the Australian economy from a competitive global environment. Since 1989 both Labor and Liberal/Coalition Commonwealth Governments have introduced labour market and training reforms, including restructuring of awards, removal of obsolete job classifications and establishment of skill-related career paths linking training skills and wages, aimed at increasing Australia's industry competitiveness.

Historical Overview

Technical education began in Australia in 1889 and developed, in most States, from Mechanics Institutes and Scho ls of Arts, with an emphasis on trade training. Goozee (1995) has stated that, "although State technical education institutions had common origins, they all developed their own individual structures as a result of different social, economic, demographic, geographic and political differences" (p. 3). The Kangan Report of 1974 resulted in the establishment of the Technical and Further Education Commission and the provision of Commonwealth funding. Technical education adopted the name, TAFE, to provide a distinct national identity within the total education framework and the Commonwealth increasingly attempted to influence TAFE policy and practice and raise the quality and quantity of TAFE provision.

From 1975 to 1987 TAFE developed as an important sector of education, with an increase in funding and "a growing awareness of TAFE as a vehicle for implementing

Commonwealth economic and social policies" (Goozee, 1995, p. 46). During this period TAFE enrolments dramatically increased, there were changes in student characteristics, improvements in student support systems and restructuring of TAFE institutions at the State and Territory level.

Reform of Vocational Education and Training (VET), 1987-1996

Two major reports of 1987, *Australia reconstructed* and *Skills for Australia* provided evidence that Australia was not producing enough skilled people, or enough trained people with the right skills. The foreword to *Skills for Australia* (Dawkins, 1987) indicated the Commonwealth Government's new agenda: "the Government is determined that our education and training systems should play an active role in responding to the major economic challenges now facing Australia". The report detailed the need to increase participation levels in education and training, improve the quality and flexibility of education and training systems and improve the distribution and balance of the national education and training effort to better meet the long-term needs of the economy and labour markets. The report also announced major changes in funding for TAFE, an increase in industry's role in training and the introduction of an 'open training market'.

A National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) was established in 1988 and a specialist council, the Employment and Skills Formation Council, was responsible for advising the Board on matters relating to employment, TAFE and skills formation policies. In 1988, Dawkins issued a further paper, *A Changing workforce,* which outlined the implications of award restructuring for education and training. The paper proposed several initiatives that would have a major impact on the TAFE sector: the introduction of competency based training, the diversification of the provision of training with a greater emphasis on industry based formal training and the standardisation of the

separate training systems of the States and Territories. A special conference of relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers with responsibility for vocational education and training was convened in 1989 and representatives agreed upon a National Training Reform Agenda which would set national skills standards, reform entry level training arrangements and implement competency based training. The National Training Board (NBT) was established in 1990 to assist industry to develop and endorse national competency standards for occupations and classifications in industry to form the Australian Standards Framework.

A second Ministerial Conference in 1990 resolved to implement competency based training, develop integrated curricula for on- and off-the-job training and establish a national framework for the recognition of training. A new advisory committee, the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC) was established to develop a national framework for the accreditation of vocational education and training courses, credit transfer arrangements between training programs and award courses, registration of training providers, recognition of prior learning and assessment of competencies. This framework, the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) was to be aligned with the NTB's Australian Standards Framework.

Competencies

A national review of the future development of post-compulsory education and training in Australia resulted in the Finn Report, *Young people's participation in post-compulsory education and training*, of 1991. The Report suggested that initial vocational courses must be concerned with general competencies that were needed by all young people to effectively participate in the workforce. A committee of experts, chaired by Eric Mayer, further investigated the essential skills and knowledge identified in the Finn

Report and in 1992 issued their report, *Putting general education to work: The key competencies report* (referred to as the Mayer Report). The Mayer Report proposed a set of seven generic competencies for effective participation in emerging forms of work and work organisation:

- Collecting, analysing and organising information
- Communicating ideas and information
- Planning and organising activities
- Working with others and in teams
- Using mathematical ideas and techniques
- Solving problems
- Using technology

The National Training Board (NTB) defined the concept of competency as a focus on what is expected of an employee in the workplace, rather than on the learning process, and the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments. The NTB's statement identified three levels of competency: generic, industry and enterprise. Industry competency standards were to reflect acceptable performance standards in specific occupations while enterprise standards were to relate to performance standards required by particular organisations.

Australian Standards Framework (ASF)

The Australian Standards Framework incorporated the set of eight competency levels (Table 18) as benchmarks for the development and recognition of competency standards in relation to work classifications and occupations across the Australian economy. Industries and enterprises could determine their own competency levels based on the ASF. The ASF was designed to provide comparability and consistency of level, enable competencies to be grouped in ways relevant to work organisation in industry,

assist articulation and movement between education and employment and provide a basis for the linking of industry requirements to vocational education and training qualifications through a process of credentials reform (Hazell, 1994, p. 115).

Reform of TAFE

While all TAFE systems underwent significant review and restructuring during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the States and Territories did not enthusiastically embrace all aspects of the Commonwealth's reform policies. A Commonwealth proposal to assume full financial responsibility and policy control for TAFE and other post-secondary education and training in 1991 was opposed by State and Territory Ministers, who argued that if the Commonwealth had available money, it should be allocated to the States (Goozee, 1995, p. 158). This response was countered by a initial Commonwealth proposal to set up its own vocational and training system, but finally resolved through agreement on the establishment of a tripartite body of industry and State and Commonwealth representatives to run to national TAFE system. The main aim of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) was to promote:

- a national vocational education and training system;
- close interaction between industry and vocational education and training providers to ensure that training met industry's needs;
- an effective training market with public and private providers;
- an efficient and productive network of publicly funded providers that can compete in the training market;
- increased opportunities for individuals and groups who had been disadvantaged in training and employment in the past; and

- improved cross sectoral links between schools, higher education and vocational education and training. (*Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 12).

The new national system comprises four distinct operational levels:

1. a Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) composed of one minister responsible for vocational education and training from the Commonwealth and each State and Territory. MCEETYA replaced the Vocational Educational, Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC). The Council oversees ANTA and decides on strategic policy, national objectives, priorities and funding;
2. ANTA, comprising a Ministerial Council (MINCO) and a Board of five acknowledged independent experts;
3. State/Territory Training Authorities which are accountable to their ministers and responsible for their own systems;
4. Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABS) which exist at the National, State and Territory level and represent industry interests in vocational education and training.

These arrangements were incorporated in the *Australian National Training Act 1992* and in accordance with the Act, ANTA became operational in January 1994. Significantly, the ANTA Board did not, and still does not, include any education or training provider representative, a decision questioned by both the recent House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training inquiry and the Senate inquiry into the quality of VET in Australia.

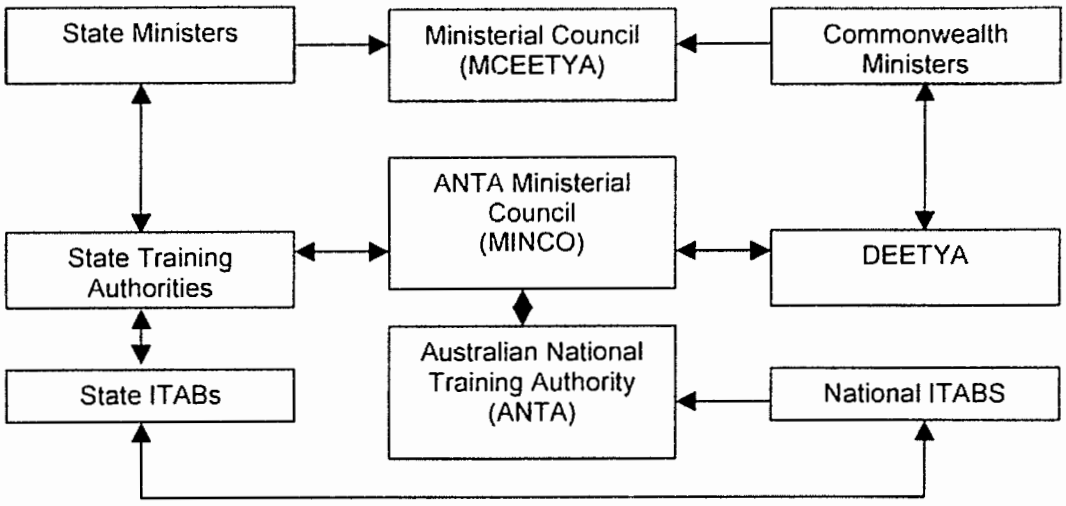

Figure 1: Structure of Australian vocational education and training

Review of National Training Reform, 1994

A review of the implementation of training reforms, undertaken by the Allen Consulting Group in 1994, resulted in a report, *Successful reform: Competitive skills for Australians and Australian enterprises.* The report found support for many elements of the national training reforms, particularly for competency based training, national recognition arrangements and the national qualifications framework, but noted that some elements were viewed as overly regulated, prescriptive and cumbersome (Goozee, 1995, p. 179). The report recommended the abandonment of the term 'Training Reform Agenda' for a more inclusive 'National Training Framework', the amalgamation of several bodies into a National Training Framework Committee and the establishment of the Standards and Curriculum Committee (SCC) to incorporate the functions of the NTB, ACTRAC and NFROT (Misko, 1999, p. 11). The National Training Framework was initiated in 1996.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

In 1993, the ministers endorsed the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) as a comprehensive, nationally consistent framework for all qualifications in post-compulsory education and training. The AQF was introduced on the first of January, 1995 to be phased in over 5 years.

Table 16: Australian Qualifications Framework

Secondary school sector	VET sector	Higher education sector
		Doctoral Degree Masters Degree Graduate Diploma Graduate Certificate Bachelor Degree
	Advanced Diploma Diploma Certificate IV	Advanced Diploma Diploma
Senior Secondary Certificates	Certificate III Certificate II Certificate I Statement of Attainment (part-qualification)	

(Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board, 1996, p. 3)

From TAFE to VET

Prior to 1990, TAFE had a virtual monopoly on the provision of vocational education and training in Australia. A significant component of the National Training Reform Agenda, instituted in the ANTA objectives, was the development of a competitive training market to overcome the perceived disadvantages of TAFE's monopoly. These disadvantages were identified as a lack of responsiveness to industry needs and lack of open and flexible training options for students. The term 'VET' was introduced in the early 1990's to define the total vocational education and training sector which included TAFE and a growing number of private, industry and community providers.

The National Training Reform Agenda implemented by the Commonwealth government during the period from 1989 to 1996 was to have a major impact on the provision of vocational education and training, including education and training for library technicians. In response to the government reform policies the library industry developed a set of competency standards and a national curriculum, based on the standards, for library technician training.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY TECHNICIAN TRAINING COURSES, 1990-2000 AND INTRODUCTION OF A NATIONAL CURRICULUM, 1996

Introduction

Library technician training courses remained relatively stable during the period from 1990 to 1996. However, major stakeholders were aware that government reform in the vocational education and training sector would impact on the library and information industry and participated in the development of the Library Industry Competency Standards and the design of a national curriculum for library technicians. The national curriculum incorporated the competency standards and provided for competency based training and assessment in both the workplace and formal educational settings. The national curriculum was implemented by all States and Territories during 1996/97.

While competency based training and education has gained increasing acceptance in Australia it has been a contentious issue and the subject of considerable debate by a wide range of commentators.

Library Technician Education and Training, 1990-1995

Consolidation and stability characterised library technician training courses during the period from 1990 to 1995. There was still, however, considerable discussion in the literature on the role of the library technician in the workplace and the effectiveness of technician education and training courses to reflect and enhance this role. A major publication, *Sharing the challenges: Library technicians in the 1990s*, written almost entirely by technicians about technicians, was interpreted as evidence that "library technicians have come a long way in a relatively short time, establishing themselves within all types of libraries and steadily gaining recognition for the skills they can bring to the shared task of

meeting client needs" (Crook, 1993, p. 1). Many of the contributors to the publication discussed the growing and increasingly accepted role of the library technician in the workplace but also highlighted continuing frustration with uncertain career paths and underutilised knowledge and skills. In her introduction, Bailey (1993, p. 3), suggested that the recognition of the complementary, rather than support, status of library technician education and practice was still a current and contentious issue which needed to be addressed.

In their contribution to the publication, Hyland and Naylor (1993) provided a comprehensive overview of the historical and current status of education for library technicians. They noted general conformity in the entrance requirements and length of courses, the introduction of external modes of delivery in some States and core study in library based skills with a movement away from general studies units towards computing, supervisory and work practice skills. Hyland and Naylor (1993, p. 66) also examined the challenges which faced library technician educators. They noted that educators were responsible to both their institutions and to prospective employers of their students but lacked independence and involvement in the decision making processes of TAFE colleges which were responsible to a central authority, the State Department of Education or Training Authority. TAFE courses had to be accredited by the state body as meeting the needs of industry to gain funding, and major changes to courses required re-accreditation, a process which Hyland and Naylor (1993, p. 67) concluded was very time consuming and not required for professional courses. The need for vocational courses to be continually updated to ensure workplace relevance was hindered by the bureaucratic accreditation processes and annual submissions for funding were required to obtain essential equipment and resources for teaching. Hyland and Naylor (1993, p. 68) also highlighted the difficulty for educators in remaining up-to-date with technological changes and

workplace practices when funding was not available to send staff back to industry on professional development programs.

In the same publication, Paul (1993) identified the formal and informal mechanisms used to maintain the quality of first award technician courses. Paul considered that accreditation by TAFE Boards, course recognition by ALIA, compulsory work experience and industry advisory committees operated as critical quality control measures. Industrial release for teachers, attendance at, and participation in relevant conferences, committees and workshops by lecturers, class discussion and the characteristics of the student population: generally mature age, articulate and with library experience, were all perceived by Paul (1993, p. 72) as ensuring skills currency and relevance in technicians courses. She admitted, however, that the industrial release program at Box Hill College had been discontinued due to timetabling difficulties and financial restraints (p. 73). A skills survey conducted by Paul in 1991 through analysis of job advertisements and examination of the resumes of library technicians was compared with the skills training offered by technicians courses throughout Australia. Paul concluded that library technician courses were offering a wide range of training in skills required to satisfy the diverse needs of the library sector and that "colleges can be said to be proactive in that they teach new technical skills before the majority of libraries have implemented the necessary technology" (p. 74). Paul suggested, however, that although students learnt interpersonal, supervision and teamworking skills there was little emphasis on teaching customer service skills.

The results of a 1993 national survey of paraprofessionals and managers in reference sections of Australian academic and state libraries were analysed by Martyn (1997). Martyn uncovered differences in perceptions about the range and level of tasks performed by library technicians between technicians and managers. She concluded that

"managers need to accurately identify the level of work reference paraprofessionals are performing and ensure that paraprofessionals have the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out the tasks actually performed in the workplace" (p. 15). She also noted that the results highlighted a lack of sufficient and/or appropriate training in reference work for paraprofessionals either through formal education courses or in-house training, and suggested that "it is time to acknowledge that a fundamental shift in reference work roles has occurred and rethink education and training accordingly" (p. 15).

At the 7th National Library Technicians Conference in 1993 participants examined the effects of the growth and development of information technology and the changing nature of the information environment on the role of library technicians in the workplace. Clayden (1994a) briefly discussed the history of education and training for library technicians before examining the prevailing situation. She suggested that a national curriculum would offer course standardisation and portability but argued that diversity of educational opportunity was important. The movement towards articulation of courses, credit transfer and recognition of prior learning was viewed as important in providing greater access to education and responding to industry requirements (Clayden, 1994a, p. 141).

In their major review of library technician courses, Hyland and Rogers (1997, p. 164) identified an aging teaching population, tighter budgets, increased class sizes and mergers with other departments as the major issues facing library technician educators in the early 1990s. They suggested a number of attitudinal changes which TAFE staff could adopt to counter these pressures, including claiming ownership of information to effectively compete with other departments which also dealt with information processing, enhancing the department's value when facing mergers, updating knowledge and teaching to ensure relevancy to industry and exploring alternative sources of funds.

In a 1990 article, Reid discussed the teaching of cataloguing to library technician students in the ACT Associate Diploma of Arts in Library Science course. Reid (1990, p. 119) noted that approximately 506 hours, or 36% of the course, was directly devoted to cataloguing activities which reflected local demand for library technicians with cataloguing skills. Reid suggested that industry restructuring would require individuals to acquire more skills and skills at a higher level to cope with the demands of new technologies. TAFE needed to respond by offering courses that developed an individual's abilities to "adapt to changes in technology, more readily transfer skills to new areas of specialisation, combine skills in two or more disciplines and readily accept and seek retraining at appropriate points throughout working life" (Reid, 1990, p. 120). Reid further suggested that TAFE needed to offer more flexible courses and consider the training needs of information workers at all levels, "if cataloguing skills are relatively specialised, then training in cataloguing may be of most benefit if given when needed, and in a course designed by the trainer/educator working with the employer" (p. 120).

Clayden (1994) discussed the historical development of cataloguing education which had resulted in an increasingly theoretical emphasis in professional courses accompanied by an increase in the amount of cataloguing education and training included in courses for library technicians. She suggested that "the situation thus has arisen where newly graduated technicians are likely to have had a lengthier and more detailed introduction to the practical use of cataloguing tools, databases and networks than newly graduated librarians" (Clayden, 1994, p. 6). Clayden also examined the impact that the movement towards competency based standards could have on cataloguing education and training. She concluded that the current balance of theory and practice could be eroded by the need to concentrate on easily measured competencies or practical skills and result in the production of competent rather than clever cataloguers.

In a general overview of the history, role and education of library technicians, Williamson (1994) outlined her own involvement and experience as a practitioner and educator in Western Australia. She noted that the patchy development of the role of the library technician across Australia was the result of a combination of local factors, including availability of appropriate education and training opportunities, employer support, strength of local library technician groups and support of industrial unions. Williamson also commented on the advent of competency based training and suggested that this should "ensure improved career paths through increased portability and transferability of competencies" (p. 25). Williamson concluded that library technicians were and would remain a significant force in the library and information industry but was less confident about predicting future roles for librarians.

Library Technician Courses, 1995

In 1995 all institutions offered an Associate Diploma qualification with similar entry requirements and course lengths. The course was made more accessible to remote students with New South Wales and Victoria offering courses at a number of new regional centres and Box Hill and Edith Cowan developing external study courses, while South Australia offered external studies within the State.

As noted previously, major changes had occurred to colleges of Technical and Further Education during the early 1990s. Many colleges were renamed Institutes of Technology and library studies were located within a variety of related departments, such as computing, information management and business. Although the Northern Territory Institute of Technology had been upgraded to the Northern Territory University the school of library studies was still located within the TAFE sector of the University. The only

Swinburne University of Technology - Prahan Campus Wimmera Community College of TAFE - Horsham		3 years part-time	
Western Australia Department of Library and Information Science Edith Cowan University Mt Lawley Campus	Associate Diploma of Science (Library Technology)	2 years full-time Part-time External	Tertiary Entrance Examination Mature age
Department of Management and Business Central Metropolitan College of TAFE - Perth	Associate Diploma in Applied Science (Library & Information Studies)	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age

(Australian Library and Information Association, 1995a)

Libraries & Information Services Training in Queensland: What Industry Wants

In October/November 1994, Arts Training Queensland (ATQ), the main adviser to the State government on training needs for the arts, entertainment, media and heritage industries, conducted a survey of the training needs of the library and information services industry. The resulting report (Yore, 1995) identified that there were problems associated with TAFE Queensland's Associate Diploma of Applied Science (Library Technician Studies) with regards to management and inadequate resourcing. These problems included the need for a stronger 'hands-on' approach, especially in computer literacy and systems, the need for the course to be offered at a regional campus or through external study and an ongoing need for continuing education and professional development activities. The report also noted that there was a high unmet demand for library technicians by some university libraries with numbers in training not matching demand (Yore, 1995, p. 6).

Library Industry Competency Standards (LICS)

In 1993 Arts Training Australia (ATA, later CREATE Australia), the industry training advisory body covering the library and information sector, received funding from the Department of Employment, Education and Training to develop library industry competency standards. A Taskforce was established by ATA in early 1993 with employer, union and professional representatives and determined that there would be six industry competency levels A-F aligned to the Australian Standards Framework levels 2-7.

Table 18: ASF Levels and Library Industry Competency Levels

ASF levels	Library industry levels	Qualifications
1		Certificate I
2	Level A	Certificate II
3	Level B	Certificate III
4	Level C	Certificate IV
5	Level D	Diploma
6	Level E	Advanced Diploma
7	Level F	Degree
8		Advanced qualifications

The competency standards were designed to provide industry and enterprises with benchmarks to:

- identify the skills and knowledge of an organisation;
- ensure that workers are able to acquire necessary skills and knowledge;
- measure performance levels within an organisation (Australian Library and Information Association, 1995, p. 19).

Seventy-one competencies were included in the LICS "covering a diverse range of work from creative and professional to technical and support roles at operational through to management levels" (Williams, 1997, p. 30). Three broad streams: working with clients,

working with information and working with others, were identified to represent the main areas of library work and further subdivided into fields representing aspects of library work within the broad streams. The Library Industry Competency Standards (Appendix J) were launched in July 1995.

Mouer (1997, p. 138) has stated that the main objectives of the LICS were to create an efficient, flexible, multi-skilled workforce through the creation of :

(i) a national curriculum that meets the needs of educators, employers, the profession and unions, and is acceptable to all states and territories;

(ii) flexible training paths that accommodate different rates of learning while specifying the required outcomes of the training;

(iii) flexible delivery methods (for example distance education, computers, and videos) that make training and education accessible to isolated rural dwellers and women at home;

(iv) nationally recognised qualification and course accreditation procedures, and articulated pathways between different courses and institutions to aid in the transferability or portability of competencies;

(v) recognition of prior learning (RPL) gained from life or work experience; and

(vi) enhanced career options through the transferability or portability of competencies within and across industries.

Role of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)

As a professional association, with stated objectives of improving the standards of library and information personnel and setting standards for education and training, ALIA responded to the National Training Reform Agenda by becoming the Registered Training Agent for the library and information services industry in 1990 and by contributing to the

various training reviews and the National Training Plan for libraries (Hazell, 1995b, p. 8). However, ALIA's application to become the Competency Standards Body for the industry was thwarted when Arts Training Australia received funding to develop the competency standards. Hazell (1995b) has stressed that ALIA's representation on the Taskforce ensured that it played a significant and pervasive role in developing the competency standards. However, she also acknowledged that the failure by the Board of Education to fully inform the ALIA General Council of the importance of involvement meant that "many Councillors and members considered the competency standards project as linked exclusively to education, rather than to practice" (p. 9).

In May 1996, ALIA received funding from the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs to develop guidelines and a national process for recognising the knowledge and skills of people in the library industry at library assistant and paraprofessional level. Reid (1997) has outlined the development of the project which was based on several key features: assessment against the LICS, management of the recognition process, the use of evidence exemplars and development and presentation of a portfolio for recording and assessing evidence of competencies (p. 7). *A Strategy for the recognition of competence in the library industry at industry levels A-D* was published and circulated by ALIA in 1997.

Response to the Library Industry Competency Standards (LICS)

The development and introduction of the LICS was widely documented in the library literature and communicated and endorsed by ALIA publications. ALIA designed a series of four self-paced workshops with supporting documentation to increase awareness and application of the LICS.

At the 7th National Library Technicians Conference, Hazell (1995a) outlined the training reform agenda, provided definitions of competence, competency standards and competency based training, discussed the initial development of the library competency standards and urged positive participation in the process.

The theme of a conference conducted by the University of South Australia Library and the South Australian Branch of ALIA in 1994 was the impact of the National Training Reform Agenda and the development of the LICS. The proceedings of the conference, *Enterprise, employment, education: The library workforce in the 1990s,* (Hazell, 1995) contained a list of recommendations to ALIA and ATA. These focused on the need for regular monitoring and review of the standards and consideration of the role of ALIA in workplace assessment against competency standards. A number of participants reviewed the role of the government, unions and the professional association in the development of the library competency standards, while others discussed the implications of the standards on the workplace, entry-level education and training and continuing professional development.

A National Library Competency Standards Conference was held in Melbourne in December 1995. The May 1996 issue of *Education for library and information services: Australia* published the proceedings of the conference which included a broad discussion of the application of the standards in the workplace, professional development, education and industrial relations. The majority of the articles outlined the historical basis of the standards and their general acceptance, after initial resistance, in both the public and private sectors. Haynes (1996) discussed the implications of the introduction of standards in the workplace and noted that there was no direct match between the LICS and the classifications structures in the many and varied industrial awards covering library

workers, and highlighted employer fear that competencies would be used to raise general wage levels.

While all competency standards were designed to provide industry with mechanisms to assess competency levels, identify staff training needs, update job descriptions and develop partnerships with training providers in the provision of on and off-the-job training, reviews have indicated "that industry has experienced difficulties in understanding and applying the educational principles underlying competency based vocational training" (Bishop & Manidis, 1994, p. 22). Potential application of the LICS in the library workplace was discussed by several contributors to the *Education for library and information services: Australia* issue on the competency standards. Mouer (1997) detailed the trialling of the competency standards in three Australian libraries, but noted that LICS "have yet to be widely adopted by others in the library sector" (p. 139). She suggested that library industry confusion about the role of the LICS, deteriorating working conditions of staff, staff reductions, time constraints and increasing workloads, the difficulty of assessing knowledge versus competence and the diversity of awards in the library sector inhibited the adoption of the library standards.

Development of the National Curriculum for Library Technicians

As Mouer (1997) has stated, the most visible outcome of the LICS was "the development and implementation in 1996 of a uniform national curriculum for library and information management courses for library technicians conducted at TAFE colleges" (p. 138). She also noted that Australian universities had generally rejected the LICS as inappropriate for tertiary level education.

In 1994 a Library and Information Studies Project was funded by the Australian Committee for Training Curriculum (ACTRAC) to produce an accredited national

competency based curriculum for Library and Information Studies. A Project Steering Group of representatives from employers, library educators, students and accreditation bodies was formed to produce a complete curriculum document by August 1995. Research undertaken in the development of the curriculum highlighted the widening role of the library technician in the provision of client services, in organising information for client access and in maintaining work effectiveness in a changing environment. The research also indicated that substantial technological changes and organisational transformations had generated an increased demand for information. Reid (1996), a member of the Project Steering Group, has described and identified the three major themes which informed the curriculum development:

1. Development of technical skills required of the library paraprofessional, including traditional skills and increased information technology skills.
2. Development of interpersonal skills, with increased emphasis on dealing with clients and their needs and working as part of a team.
3. Development of the learner as a learner; including professional development planning.

The Project developed a national Diploma of Library and Information Studies at ASF5 level, with an exit point at ASF3 level, the Certificate III in Library and Information Studies, to be implemented in 1996.

Table 19: National Curriculum

Stage 1 Certificate III in Library and Information Studies

Module Code	Module Title	Nominal Hours
Core		
LIS001	The information industry	40
LIS002	Information literacy	20
LIS003	Information as a product	30
LIS004	Collection maintenance	30
LIS005	Lending services 1	20

LIS006	Bibliographic control	30
LIS007	Materials receipt	20
LIS008	Library ordering procedures	30
LIS009	Library promotion and display 1	30
LIS010	Multimedia equipment usage	40
LIS011	Introduction to instruction in library use	20
LIS012	Working in the information industry	20
LIS013	Database searching and retrieval	30
LIS014	Industry placement 1	100
NCS004	Work team communication	40
NCS005	Dealing with conflict	20
NCS018	Dealing with customers and clients	20
NGMS106	Managing effective working relations	40
ABD507	Occupational health and safety for the library industry	20
ITF304	Word processing - operations	20
ITF305	Spreadsheet operations	20
ITC301	Computer systems basics	20
Electives		
40 hours		
LIS015	Library promotion and display 2	20
LIS016	Literature and the library user	20
LIS017	Community information and networking	20
LIS018	Client groups and information needs	20
LIS019	Australian political process and information	20
NCS006	Writing workplace documents	20

Stage 2 Diploma of Library and Information Studies

Module Code	Module Title	Nominal Hours
Core		
LIS020	Basic reference skills	30
LIS021	Research sources and strategies	30
LIS022	Lending services 2	20
LIS023	Bibliographic description and access	60
LIS024	Library classification	30
LIS025	Subject access	40
LIS026	Cataloguing procedures	30
LIS027	Library acquisitions	20
LIS028	Collection development	30
LIS029	Managing an information agency	40
LIS030	Information access for client groups	30
LIS031	Client education and training	20
LIS032	Industry placement 2	100
NGMS105	Managing operations - change	40
NGMS209	Managing self	20
NCS011	Client interaction	20
ABD569	OH&S management in the library industry	40
ITG401	Data communications operations	20
Electives		
60 hours		
LIS033	Research project	30
LIS034	Specialist information resource development	30
LIS035	Promoting an information agency	30

LIS037	Indexing and abstracting	30
ITB415	Users needs analysis	20

Entry to the Certificate III and Diploma required successful completion of a year 12 certificate or mature age entry, keyboarding skills, ability to use a word processing package to produce and edit documents, ability to create and use a simple spreadsheet and ability to gather, record and convey simple and routine information.

The national course documentation provided full details of each module, outlining module purpose, pre-requisites, relationship to competency standards, content, assessment strategy, method and conditions, delivery modes and strategies, learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each learning outcome.

The general studies component of previous courses was eliminated in the national curriculum as were many of the locally provided specialisation subjects. The new curriculum incorporated national communication and management modules which had been identified as essential for the effective performance of the library technician in the workplace. Most institutions introduced the national course in 1996/97 and implemented transfer arrangements for students enrolled in the Associate Diploma course.

Courses for Library Technicians, Edith Cowan University, WA

As noted previously, Edith Cowan University is the only institution to offer paraprofessional qualifications within the higher education sector. The Associate Degree of Science (Library Technology) "combines a core program, designed to prepare graduates for a paraprofessional role in the operation, maintenance and utilisation of library systems, with a variety of minor studies and elective units" (Edith Cowan University, 2000). The

two year, sixteen unit course is available for full-time or part-time students and through external study.

Table 20: Associate Degree of Science (Library Technology), Edith Cowan University

Course Structure		Hours per week
Year 1	Communicating in an IT environment	3
Semester 1	Information agencies and environment includes practicum	3
	Library systems 1	3
	Minor study unit	
Semester 2	Display and presentation systems	3
	Introduction to information technology	3
	Information organisation 1	3
	Minor study unit	
Year 2	Client services in libraries 1 includes practicum	3
Semester 1	Information organisation 2	3
	Minor study unit	
	Elective unit	
Semester 2	Library technologies	3
	Technical services in libraries includes practicum	3
	Minor study unit	
	Elective unit	

(Edith Cowan University, 2000)

There is a wide choice of minor study units, including computer science, interactive technologies, media studies and records management, and elective units.

Since 1998 Edith Cowan University has also offered a Bachelor of Science (Library Technology) program as a library technician qualification. The course is available over three years full-time or equivalent part-time and through external study.

Table 21: Bachelor of Science (Library Technology), Edith Cowan University

Course Structure	
Year 1	Communicating in an IT environment
Semester 1	Information agencies and environment includes practicum
	Library systems 1
	Minor study unit 1

Semester 2	Display and presentation systems Introduction to information technology Information organisation 1 Minor study unit 2
Year 2 Semester 1	Client services in libraries 1 includes practicum Information organisation 2 Minor study unit 3 Elective unit 1
Semester 2	Library technologies Technical services in libraries includes practicum Minor study unit 4 Elective unit 2
Year 3 Semester 1	Client services in libraries 2 includes practicum Information organisation 3 Minor study unit 5
Semester 2	Information services management Project in library and information services Minor study unit 6

(Edith Cowan University, 2000a)

Response to the National Curriculum

A number of commentators, particularly library technician educators, have examined the content of the national curriculum and the process of implementing the course. At the 8th National Library Technicians Conference in 1995, Chambers (1996) provided a comprehensive overview of the development of the industry competency standards and the national library technician course. She suggested that "the course is varied and will provide an excellent basic education for library technicians moving into a customer focused and constantly evolving workplace" (p. 49) as it reflected current trends in the library workplace and included management, communication, and computer based subjects. Chambers (1996) observed that Clayden's 1994 assertion, that library technicians were playing an increasingly important role in cataloguing, was confirmed by the number of hours allocated to cataloguing in the new course. Chambers also considered that

upgrading and articulation arrangements would benefit library technicians and that continuing professional development would be made easier for all library workers through the application of the competency standards.

At the same Conference, Williams (1996) identified a range of barriers that hindered potential students from undertaking library technician training. Limited time, lack of confidence in study skills, limited access to facilities, inflexible timetables and high course costs were listed as the most common barriers (Williams, 1996, p. 75). While Williams considered that flexible delivery would make courses more accessible he also insisted that "the provision of an adequately staffed and qualified back up to the teaching staff, including the library and student services section" (p. 78) was essential to assist students to maximise their learning opportunities. He also considered that library educators needed to assist students to become self sufficient autonomous learners, particularly through "changes in personal values, attitudes and the development of new skills, especially in the areas of time management, study skills, critical and lateral thinking, research and library skills" (p. 78).

In her opening address to the Conference, Young (1996) made some interesting distinctions between 'education' and 'training'. She suggested that the separation of education into universities and training into the TAFE sector "ignores the content covered in courses and ignores the relationships between different designations of workers in a particular field. She believed that if the concept of competency based education and training was implemented across both the university and TAFE sectors it would provide a continuum of educational opportunities and create "a learning society where competence really means something" (p. 2). In conclusion, Young posed three future possible scenarios: the first that education and training of library and information workers would align more closely and result in the disappearance of the professional/paraprofessional

distinction; the second that TAFE would be fully acknowledged as the training sector, and university graduates would attend TAFE for the skilling component of their preparation as library and information workers, and the third scenario that creeping credentialism would require library professionals to gain Masters or Doctoral qualifications and library technicians would require Bachelor degrees to be recognised for employment.

Hannan (1996) examined the impact of the new curriculum on educators, students and administrators and identified differences in content between the existing Associate Diploma and new Diploma. She suggested that the Diploma would result in increased administrative procedures, with the recording of smaller modules, recognition of prior learning (RPL) requirements and need for greater flexibility in course delivery. Hannan also noted that the resource implications of action based assessment, which requires students to demonstrate competence, could necessitate more cooperative ventures between trainers and employers. As competency based training was designed to encourage self paced learning and assessment, Hannan (1996, p. 59) suggested that educators would need to develop teaching resources to cater for individual rates of learning. While Hannan (1996, p. 61) acknowledged that the implementation of the Diploma would be demanding, she concluded that library educators' positive response to the need for curriculum change in the past would assist them in coping with the new course. Hannan's discussion preceded the introduction of the national course and has not been followed up in the literature.

Williams (1997) provided a background to the development of the LICS and examined the implications of competency based training on the TAFE library studies curriculum. He noted that "for the first time ever, library educators in the TAFE sector have been provided with quite explicit guidelines about both what is to be taught in courses and the level at which it is to be taught" (p. 30), which would simplify the process

of writing curriculum and developing learning materials. While Williams suggested that the national curriculum encouraged the development of flexible course delivery, including increased on-the-job training, he observed that the industry's slowness in implementing the LICS, identifying staff training needs and planning professional development had inhibited the expansion of cooperative links between training providers and workplaces.

The initial response to the introduction of the national curriculum has not been supplemented by any later discussion or evaluation of the course in the library literature. There has been no published research that competency based training for library technicians is achieving its intended outcomes or that it has been effective in meeting industry goals. There are a number of possible explanations which can be proposed for this lack of further discussion and research. The fact that the course has only been in operation for three to four years, and the first full-time students graduated in 1999, would preclude any extensive research into the impact of the national course on students and the library industry. As a national course, which had to be implemented by TAFE institutions to retain funding, it is possible that library educators and other stakeholders have believed that they can have little influence over course content. Certainly, the role of Library Advisory Course Committees has been reduced as the national curriculum does not encourage local variations. A further explanation may lie in the fact that the library industry competency standards were to be reviewed in 1997 and that the concept of national Training Packages, which would again reform the training agenda, was intimated and endorsed in 1997 under the National Training Reform Agenda. The climate of continual change, to standards and course content and delivery, could discourage stakeholders from engaging in detailed or long-term research.

Response from Library Technicians

An online discussion group, LibTec (later ALIAlibtec), and online newsletter, *NetNexus*, were established by library technicians in 1996 to promote communication between paraprofessionals throughout Australia. Contributors to the discussion group in 1997 expressed some concern and confusion about the range of qualifications which applied to library technicians and provided evidence of employer preference for the latest qualification. They also questioned the necessity for technicians to be continually upgrading their qualifications to maintain workplace recognition while there was no equivalent upgrading requirement for professional librarians and queried the impact of the introduction of higher education qualifications on library technicians.

In response to the LibTec discussion Hawcroft (1997), a librarian and educator, summarised the debate and considered a range of issues which preoccupied the library workforce. He suggested that some professional librarians persisted in holding an elitist view of their role and tended "towards hierarchical operational and decision making structures, restriction of professional development opportunities predominantly to 'professionals', and exclusion of library technicians from 'higher level' activities" (p.1). Hawcroft, however, acknowledged that many library technicians possessed a similar but reversed snobbery that dismissed librarian's work as 'airy-fairy' and unrelated to the practical running of the library. Hawcroft suggested that both separatist views were based on an assumption that library work could be divided into two distinct groups of tasks; the technical, practical and procedural duties, analogous with library technician level and the professional planning, organisational and management duties associated with the professional librarian.

> The ALIA policy regarding education for librarianship reflects this view and indicates a clear demarcation of content within professional level and technician level courses, by definition

> assuming different roles for the different level graduate. This dichotomous view of library practice is unhelpful and anachronistic. It promotes division within the profession, restricts career paths, and promotes incompetence. (Hawcroft, 1997, p.1)

Hawcroft proposed that library education should proceed along one path with exit points at appropriate stages, to ensure a common content, including basic technical duties and processes and ethical and professional issues, in which all library staff should be able to demonstrate competence. Hawcroft concluded that the national Diploma qualification "could provide the foundation for the development of such a single core, multi-level library curriculum" (p. 2).

Case Study: Implementation of the National Curriculum at the Northern Territory University (NTU)

While, as previously noted, there has been little follow-up discussion on the implementation and impact of the national course, and it is beyond the parameters of this research to undertake primary research, a review of the implementation and evolution of the course at the Northern Territory University (NTU) TAFE/VET sector, provides some limited observations.

All TAFE institutions offered the Diploma, and incorporated the Certificate III as an exit level with a Certificate of Attainment. The Diploma is the ALIA recognised first entry level qualification for employment as a library technician. While the Certificate III does enable graduates to work a library assistants or clerks, it is not an industrially or professionally recognised qualification, and as such has offered no incentive for students. NTU incorporated the Certificate III as an exit level in the Diploma but enrolled students at the Diploma level. During the four years of the course at NTU no Certificate III has

been issued. Students transferring to interstate training institutions were able to apply for credit transfer for completed studies at NTU.

NTU required successful completion of year 12 or mature age application for entry to the course, but was less stringent about the computer skills entry requirement. As students were required to undertake four compulsory basic IT modules, and were provided with many opportunities to develop computer skills in other modules, it was not considered essential or practical for students to attain these skills before entry to the course. In fact, it was found that many students possessed effective basic computer skills and could successfully apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) for the IT modules.

While documentation indicates that a number of other TAFE colleges have required students to complete all modules in the Certificate III before undertaking Diploma modules this was not a prerequisite at NTU. To enable full-time students to complete the course in the required two years, ensure effective timetabling for the two full-time teaching staff and provide more effective training, related modules in the Certificate III and Diploma were offered as a block with students advancing from one module to the next. This process was found to provide students with a logical progression through the required competencies and learning outcomes of related modules while maximising timetable and delivery options. Equally a small number of modules, such as Cataloguing Procedures and Bibliographic Description; OH&S for the Library Industry and Multimedia Equipment Use, with interrelated learning outcomes, were offered as a single expanded module for teaching and assessment purposes. Again, this clustering provided students with the opportunity to gain a broader understanding of the relationship between skills and tasks, which were otherwise diluted when offered as single, isolated modules.

Course documentation, available through the World Wide Web, also indicates that some TAFE institutions offered a number of electives outside the national curriculum. For

example, Box Hill TAFE offered History of Books, Libraries and Communication and Services to Children and Young Adults as year two electives, and the Western Australian Central Metropolitan College of TAFE offered two elective modules in Records Management. NTU initially offered all the national curriculum electives, but due to small class sizes and excessive teaching loads, decided to restrict the offering of electives to two per semester.

The national curriculum allocated nominal hours to each module which has provided greater flexibility in teaching and learning practices. For some modules which require extensive hands-on experience, class time is reduced to allow students to complete practical learning and assessment in libraries and information agencies. Anecdotal evidence, supported by formal module evaluations, indicates that allocated time to consolidate classroom theory with practical tasks set in local libraries was a favoured form of assessment with students.

The implementation of the course at NTU has, as predicted by Hannan (1996), increased the administrative processes undertaken by teaching staff. Enrolment, changes to enrolment and timetabling are more complex given the large number of modules and the need to coordinate with other areas of the TAFE institution for the provision of generic modules in communication, management and information technology. The application of recognition of prior learning (RPL) has gradually been accepted and promoted by the TAFE sector and has necessitated the introduction of policies, procedures and documentation to support equitable and quality processes. The additional workload involved in administering RPL has been acknowledged by management with the introduction of costs equivalent to undertaking the module in formal study. RPL is a very pertinent process for library studies students at NTU, who are most typically mature age

with a wide range of life, study and work experiences and are therefore encouraged to apply for recognition of appropriate skills and knowledge.

While a basic tenet of competency based training is ungraded assessment, that is, assessment recorded as competent or not yet competent, the NTU management has introduced graded competency: competent with high merit (CH), competent with merit (CM), competent pass (CP), not competent (NC) and incomplete (I). Course documentation from other TAFE library technician training programs indicates that graded assessment has been partially, if not completely, introduced by a number of other institutions and that there are significant variations in competency grading and recording procedures.

The number of short modules and the necessity to assess students against performance criteria has increased the number of assessment tasks and the administrative process of recording and reporting assessment results. The predominance in the national curriculum on formative assessment has expanded the range of assessment strategies with an emphasis on discussion, practical exercises, oral presentations, log books, self assessment, role plays, etc. To avoid learners demonstrating competence through small, isolated pieces of work, the national curriculum stresses the need for an holistic approach of formative assessment, supplemented, where necessary, by summative assessment in the form of written assignments or reports.

Equally, students involved with CBT are ideally able to resubmit assessment tasks until they can demonstrate competency. However, the practical implications of repeated assessments have forced the need for restrictions being applied to the number of attempts and time period within which a student can complete the assessment requirements.

The Diploma was not initially referred to as an upgrading of the former Associate Diploma course, with ALIA reaffirming that holders of either the Associate Diploma and Diploma would be eligible for library technician membership (Nicholson, 1997, p. 147).

However, industry preference for employing holders of the Diploma qualification and demand from Associate Diploma graduates have forced TAFE institutions to offer conversion programs. As there were no standard guidelines for conversion programs, there have been considerable variations in the number of modules required by students to convert their Associate Diploma to Diploma level between TAFE institutions in the States and Territories.

In response to increased demand for more flexible delivery options by both internal and external students, NTU has embarked on a program of developing and delivering external study packages for the Diploma course. Box Hill Institute has also provided a number of modules for external study. Flexible delivery and external study packages have increased study options for both internal and external/remote students. Internal students have been able accelerate their progress and overcome restrictions imposed by inadequate study leave provisions offered by employers. However, both Box Hill and NTU have experienced difficulties in obtaining institution support and resources to develop external modules as quickly as is needed to enable student progression.

Role of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), 1996 to 1998

ALIA welcomed the introduction of the new competency based national curriculum as "perhaps the most significant change in the delivery of education for library technicians" (Nicholson, 1997, p. 147). Nicholson further stated that although the Association endorsed the curriculum it still believed that the reco nition process was necessary to ensure that standards of delivery were met. The Association planned to undertake recognition processes for all new Diploma courses as well as the new Associate Degree and Bachelor courses at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia. Nicholson (1997, p. 147) noted that "the Bachelor course in particular presents the sector with the

interesting challenge of integrating this new entry level award for library technicians into the workplace". This was an interesting departure from the Association's previous conviction that library technician courses were best located within the TAFE sector because of their historical tradition of vocational training and to avoid any confusion with professional courses.

At the time of endorsing the national curriculum the Association reaffirmed that those members and applicants for membership who held the Associate Diploma and previous Certificate in library and information studies were eligible for library technician membership as these qualifications were recognised for eligibility at the time they were completed. However, in response to a letter expressing concern about the status within the labour market of those library technicians who held an Associate Diploma, ALIA acknowledged there were two issues which needed to be addressed: inclusion of the Diploma in industrial awards, and the upgrading of qualifications (Australian Library and Information Association, 1997c). On the first issue, ALIA proposed to seek formal advice from educational institutions on the equivalence of the Associate Diploma to the Diploma and refer this information to the Industrial Services manager for appropriate action regarding industrial awards and agreements. There has been no published report of the outcome of these discussions. In response to the second issue, ALIA encouraged all members to update their knowledge and skills although it recognised that the process of articulating from an Associate Diploma to a Diploma varied considerably from state and state, and could incur a considerable financial commitment (Australian Library and Information Association, 1997c).

In 1996 the Association revised its policy statement on the role of librarians and library technicians (Appendix K). The definition of the library technician in the revised *Statement on the role of librarians and library technicians* amended the support role to "a

distinct operational role", and emphasised the "complementary roles" performed by librarians and library technician within library and information services. This significant change can be interpreted as professional acceptance and recognition of the distinct role of the library technician.

ALIA also updated its entry-level education policy statement to reflect the new national course for library technicians (Appendix L). The statement provides basic outlines for course design, curriculum content, assessment and resources for course delivery. While course design is considered the responsibility of the provider, the statement asserts that library technician programs should include articulation arrangements which ensure career progression and facilitate transfer of credits into related programs.

ALIA participated in a process, initiated by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC), to develop a national TAFE-University credit transfer scheme. The scheme provides holders of a TAFE Diploma with a 33% credit towards a related three-year undergraduate course or 25% credit towards a related four-year undergraduate course in participating universities (Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, 1999, p. 1).

In October 1997 the ALIA Board of Education convened a Forum, *Leading the profession into the 21st century: library and information services education.* The Forum identified six key areas for strategic focus:

- core knowledge;
- currency of knowledge;
- aligning the learning continuum to workplace needs;
- membership issues;
- collaboration and cooperation; and
- research.

A supplementary Board of Education draft policy statement, *The library and information sector: core knowledge, skills and attitudes,* was developed in response to the first key area. The draft statement is still being discussed by members and has not as yet been endorsed by General Council. The Forum recognised the need for continuing professional development and multi-skilling, and suggested that in a changing environment, distinct roles within the library and information sector were becomingly increasingly blurred or convergent (Australian Library and Information Association, 1997b, p. 1). The Forum "foresaw a future in which articulation from TAFE to universities, and moving through a range of providers, including workplaces accredited for training, to gain the skills and knowledge required would be common" (Australian Library and Information Association, 1997b, p. 1). Continuing education and a deregulated training environment raised questions about the maintenance of educational and training standards. The Forum also discussed the importance of skills versus knowledge, with some participants believing that skills must be gained first, while others contended that skills could only be properly performed if the underpinning knowledge was understood.

A 1997 review, undertaken by ALIA and the Australian Council of Libraries and Information Services (ACLIS), to assess the need for leadership, representation and coordination in the library and information services sector, led to the amalgamation of ALIA and ACLIS to form "a new peak cross-sectoral body to represent both institutions and individuals" (Nicholson, 1997, p. 1). The review also instigated a major process of reform for ALIA which was expressed in a Charter of Renewal, endorsed at an Extraordinary General Meeting in October 1998. The Charter of Renewal proposed that ALIA cease to operate under a Royal Charter and become incorporated under Corporation Law to:

> provide for a more flexible constitution which will facilitate greater responsiveness to members' needs and to changing times; to simplify administrative arrangements with business partners and to bring the organisation into line with accepted business practice such as in the conduct as in the conduct of Annual General Meetings and the responsibilities of directors. (Australian Library and Information Association, 1998, p. 24)

ALIA was incorporated as a public company, with a Board of Directors on 1st March 2000 and is currently engaged in a major revitalisation program.

Competency Based Training (CBT)

A key component of the governmental reforms in vocational education and training was the introduction of a competency based approach to training. ANTA has defined competency as "the specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace" (Misko, 1999, p. 1). CBT is characterised by:

- training programs or courses based on industry competency standards;
- design of courses in modules;
- learning outcomes which link the learning process to the competency standards;
- increased emphasis on on-the-job training to deliver practical competencies;
- delivery methods and resources designed to achieve endorsed competency standards, flexible to industry and individual requirements; and
- assessment against criteria rather than performance of other learners, which requires achieving all the outcomes in a module, not just a 50% pass rate as in a traditional course. (State Training Board of Victoria, 1998).

Apart from a discussion about competency based assessment by Williams (1999) there has been very little assessment of the impact of CBT on the education and training of library technicians since the introduction of the national curriculum. However, there has

been a comprehensive range of research undertaken by a number of VET research organisations and associations, including the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), the Australian Vocational Education and Research Association (AVERA) and State Training Boards. The results of this research can be applied to all national CBT programs, including the national curriculum for library technicians.

While there was widespread agreement to make vocational education and training in Australia more relevant to industry needs, the introduction of competency based training has not been without controversy. One of the most controversial elements has been the shift from curriculum content and standard hours of training towards assessing only the required competencies for the short-term and immediate needs of industry.

> It has been argued that this is leading to a short-term focus on specific skills and tasks related to existing jobs, with insufficient emphasis on broader vocational knowledge and skills that are required in the continuous shift in technological knowledge, particularly in emerging technologically based industries and occupations. (*Australian vocational education and training*, 2000, p. 26)

It has also been argued that the development of competency based training has been overly complex and focused on too much detail prescribed at the national level, with industry bureaucracies replacing the government bureaucracies that once existed.

Mulcahy and James (1999, p. 16) have categorised Australian CBT research into three broad themes: technical research which includes accounts of processes, principles and issues involved in the change to CBT, descriptive and evaluative studies of the degree to which CBT is achieving its stated aims and objectives, and critical analyses of the central ideas and assumptions of CBT and its underlying theories.

From the results of a national survey, Mulcahy and James (1999, p. 6) concluded that CBT contributed most to VET when training was delivered on-site, enterprise and other standards were available, basic levels of skills were required, resources and information

were available, appropriate administrative procedures and processes were in place, procedural knowledge was required and the quality of teaching practice was assured. They also noted that the contribution and acceptance of CBT depended on an existing culture of training. In her address to the 1997 ALIA Board of Education Forum, Bridgland suggested that the library and information industry's high demand for skilled workers who could adapt to rapidly changing conditions of work would ensure that the industry could successfully adjust to the National Training Reform Agenda and its increased emphasis on skills development and training (1997, p. 3). Certainly, as is evident throughout the history and development of courses, training for library technicians has always been responsive to changing workplace developments and demands for relevant knowledge and skills.

Misko (1999) has presented an extensive overview, which incorporates the various research findings, to show how teaching, learning and administration in vocational education and training have been affected by the implementation of CBT. She has documented the deficiencies and concerns identified by CBT researchers, including the National Training Board's narrow concept of standards and CBT, the lack of a scientific research base for CBT, the controlling influence of industry, bureaucracies and political imperatives in the introduction, implementation and monitoring of CBT, the fragmentation of teaching and learning into modules, or series of discrete observable tasks and the difficulties of guaranteeing valid and reliable assessment because of the overemphasis on skill components at the expense of a broader knowledge base. The advantages and benefits of CBT are identified as providing a nationally coordinated approach to training, a client-focused system of training which emphasises the obligation for VET to meet the needs of industry and students and the flexibility allowed by short modules in delivery and assessment for trainers and students.

Research has indicated that despite an increasing acceptance of CBT its implementation in Australia has been slow (Misko, 1999, p. 26). This has been attributed to inadequate staff development, incomplete understanding of the major principles of CBT and "the simultaneous introduction of other aspects of training reform which threatened teachers' sense of employment security" (Misko, 1999, p. 28), including the expansion of the VET training market, restructuring of TAFE systems and the development of networks with business and industry.

Competency Based Assessment (CBA)

A major aspect of concern with CBT is the assessment process. The key principles of CBT assessment were established as validity, reliability, flexibility and fairness, which were applicable to both formal training and assessment or on-the-job assessment (Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority, 1999, p. 1). The establishment of registered training organisations (RTOs) as assessment only centres has raised issues of quality assurance, assessor competence and cost effectiveness (Bateman, 1998, p. 5). The concept of allowing students reassessment on multiple occasions has led some teachers to implement policies which regulate the number of permitted reassessments, although this has led to a lack of uniformity in assessment processes (Billett et al, 1999, p. 97). The non-graded system of assessment implicit in CBT has been a topic of considerable debate among educators, industry and students, with an increasing movement towards graded assessment. Criticism has focused on the de-motivating effect of ungraded assessment, particularly on high-achieving students, the difficulty of interpreting achievement and rewarding effort and the need for strategies to bridge the gap between competence and excellence. A Victorian study has revealed that the key difficulties in implementing CBT assessment have included pressure from higher education, employers and students to

retain graded assessment, developing consistency in assessment judgements between assessors, limited understanding of assessment tools and strategies and problems in establishing record keeping and reporting systems that would cope with the volume of information required (State Training Board of Victoria, 1998, p. 1). The results of a major evaluation of the effectiveness of competency based assessment for a range of users have indicated that consistency of assessment and recognition of student achievement by some form of graded result are two areas requiring further examination and consideration (Booth, 2000, p. 7).

In her overview of vocational training in Australia, Simmons (2000) stated that Swinburne University of Technology has decided to introduce graded assessment in the TAFE Division in response to ongoing feedback from industry, students and tertiary institutions about the limitations of the competent/not yet competent approach to assessment. She noted the necessity for VET programs in secondary schools to retain consistency with academic final year graded assessments and problems with student access to articulation programs unless their relative ability could be readily and reliably identified.

Williams (1999) has been the only library educator and practitioner to evaluate the effect of competency based assessment on library technician courses. He describes a qualitative study undertaken during 1998 at Adelaide Institute of TAFE which found that the implementation of competency based assessment had both positive and negative influences on library technician students' approaches to achieving the required learning outcomes. The most positive influence was reported as the clearly stated learning outcomes and performance criteria for each module, "perhaps because the assessment criteria helped them to determine exactly what was necessary to know" (Williams, 1999, p. 10). Williams noted that this was also viewed as a negative influence by some students

"who claimed that learning under this system was neither interesting nor challenging" (p. 10). The most negative influence reported by students was the decline in motivation to learn, mainly because of the ungraded assessment results.

Library Technician Courses, 1997

The 1997 edition of the ALIA *Handbook* indicates that all TAFE institutions offered the national Diploma course. Some institutions incorporated the Certificate III as an early exit point, others required the completion of the Certificate as a prerequisite for entry to the Diploma. All TAFE courses had similar entry requirements and the majority offered the course as a two year full-time or equivalent part-time program. The WA Central Metropolitan College of TAFE offered the Diploma over 18 months full-time. Some modules of the course were offered for external study by Box Hill Institute of TAFE and the Northern Territory University. Edith Cowan University in Western Australia offered both Associate Degree and Bachelor of Science programs which were outside the national curriculum but recognised by ALIA as first award technician qualifications.

TAFE institutions remained relatively stable during this period, with minor name changes converting TAFE Colleges to Institutes of Technology in some States. Most institutions, however, experienced reductions in budgets and pressure to retain and increase student numbers. A number of institutions introduced short professional development programs in the 1990s on a fee-for-service basis to supplement funding.

Table 22: Library Technician Courses, 1997

Location	Course title	Length	Entry levels
ACT			
Department of Computing and Information Management Canberra Institute of Technology	Diploma in Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Basic keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills

NSW			
TAFE New South Wales	Diploma in Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time 4 years part-time	Year 12 Mature age
Sydney Institute of Technology			
Hunter Institute of Technology			
Western Institute of TAFE			
Illawarra Institute of TAFE		Part-time only	
North Coast Institute of TAFE		Part-time only	
Riverina Institute of TAFE		Part-time only	
Northern Territory			
Faculty of Business Northern Territory University	Diploma in Library and Information Studies (incorporating Certificate III)	2 years full-time Part-time Some external	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Queensland			
Southbank Institute of TAFE	Diploma of Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age
Gold Coast Institute of TAFE		Part-time only	Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
South Australia			
Library Studies Unit Adelaide Institute of TAFE	Certificate III in Library and Information Studies Diploma in Library and Information Studies	4 years part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Tasmania			
North-West Institute of TAFE - Devonport Campus Hobart Institute of TAFE Launceston Institute of TAFE	Certificate III in Library and Information Studies Diploma in Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Victoria			
Information and Library Studies Centre for Information Technologies Box Hill College of TAFE	Diploma in Library and Information Studies (with exit point at Certificate III)	2 years full-time Part-time External studies	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Department of Library Studies Western Metropolitan College of TAFE (Footscray)			

Department of Library and Information Studies Swinburne University of Technology - Prahan Campus		Part-time	
Wimmera Community College of TAFE - Horsham			
Western Australia			
Department of Library and Information Science Edith Cowan University Mt Lawley Campus	Associate Diploma of Science (Library Technology) Bachelor of Science (Library Technology)	2 years full-time Part-time External 3 years full-time Part-time	Tertiary Entrance Examination Mature age
WA School of Management and Business Central Metropolitan College of TAFE - Perth	Diploma of Library and Information Studies	18 months full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills

(Australian Library and Information Association, 1997b).

Library Technician Courses, 1998

Library technician courses remained relatively stable in 1998, with the only changes in Victoria. The Western Melbourne Institute of TAFE became the TAFE Division of the Victoria University of Technology and the Wimmera Community College of Technical and Further Education was amalgamated with the Ballarat University and School of Mines Ballarat.

ALIA Course Recognition Panels visited a number of institutions during the period 1997 to 1998 to assess courses.

Library Technician Courses, 1999-2000

1999 and 2000 were again periods of relative stability for the Library Certificate III and Diploma courses. The only major change was the discontinuation of the course at the Queensland Gold Coast Institute of TAFE.

Table 23: Library Technician courses, 1999-2000

Location	Course title	Length	Entry levels
ACT			
Department of Computing and Information Management Canberra Institute of Technology	Diploma in Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Basic keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills English-language skills
NSW			
TAFE New South Wales Sydney Institute of Technology Hunter Institute of Technology Western Institute of TAFE Illawarra Institute of TAFE North Coast Institute of TAFE Riverina Institute of TAFE	Diploma in Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time 4 years part-time Part-time only Part-time only Part-time only	Year 12 Mature age
Northern Territory			
Faculty of Business Northern Territory University	Diploma in Library and Information Studies (incorporating Certificate III)	2 years full-time Part-time Some external	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Queensland			
Southbank Institute of TAFE	Diploma of Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
South Australia			
Library Studies Unit Adelaide Institute of TAFE	Certificate III in Library and Information Studies Diploma in Library and Information Studies	4 years part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Tasmania			
North-West Institute of TAFE - Devonport Campus Hobart Institute of TAFE Launceston Institute of TAFE	Certificate III in Library and Information Studies Diploma in Library and Information Studies	2 years full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills

Victoria			
Information and Library Studies Centre for Information Technologies Box Hill College of TAFE	Diploma in Library and Information Studies (with exit point at Certificate III)	2 years full-time Part-time External studies	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills
Department of Library Studies Victoria University of Technology - TAFE Division			
Department of Management Studies, Library Studies and records Management Swinburne University of Technology - Prahan Campus			
University of Ballarat TAFE Division		Part-time	
Western Australia			
Department of Library and Information Science Edith Cowan University Mt Lawley Campus	Associate Diploma of Science (Library Technology) Bachelor of Science (Library Technology)	2 years full-time Part-time External 3 years full-time Part-time	Tertiary Entrance Examination Mature age
WA School of Management and Business Central Metropolitan College of TAFE - Perth	Diploma of Library and Information Studies	18 months full-time Part-time	Year 12 Mature age Keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet skills

(Australian Library and Information Association, 1999)

The national curriculum for library technicians was implemented by all States and Territories in 1996/7. As noted in this chapter, there has been little formal discussion or evaluation about the effectiveness of the national curriculum and competency based training and assessment on library technician education and training. While anecdotal evidence indicates that educators have adapted to the new training requirements with comparative ease and that industry, educators and students are satisfied with the portability and flexibility inherent in the national curriculum there is no formal documentation to support this evidence.

As Simmons (2000) has commented, Australia's education system, including the TAFE sector, has been undergoing constant and radical structural change "as part of what appears to be an elusive search for a perfect system" (p.3). The period from 1997 to the present certainly supports Simmons' assertion.

CHAPTER SIX

FURTHER REFORM OF THE VET SECTOR, 1996-2000

Introduction

While library technician educators were implementing and adjusting to the new national curriculum the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments were reviewing their National Training Framework and forecasting more significant changes to ensure compliance with national training and regulatory policies. Government's concern to ensure that vocational education and training meets industry standards has resulted in a major shift in the determination of training policy. Industry was put "in charge of determining the competencies to be acquired, how the competencies translated into qualification levels and the assessment guidelines" (Simmons, 2000, p. 7). In this new arrangement training providers were excluded from the development process but considered instrumental in the delivery of national Training Packages. This shift has resulted in a wide ranging, and at times, very heated debate about the reform process from a broad range of commentators.

National Training Framework

A 1995 review of the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT), which accredited VET courses and registered training providers indicated that:

> In the three years NFROT had operated, twelve significant policy changes had occurred. Communication of these changes was poor and it was more likely that specific policy changes were unknown or misunderstood, than the converse. In particular, it was difficult for practitioners to actually know what the current rules were.
>
> The terms of the NFROT agreement had not been implemented in their entirety by any state or territory, with each taking a different approach to implementation. (Research Centre for Vocational Education and Training, 1996, p. 1)

"Dissatisfaction with the processes of many of the reforms cumulatively described as the National Training Reform Agenda led ANTA in 1996-7 to review many of its structures and processes" (Research Centre for Vocational Education and Training, 1997, p. 1). In November 1996 the NFROT and the Standards and Curriculum Council were replaced with a new policy structure, the National Training Framework. The National Training Framework incorporates the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF) and National Training Packages and was designed to make national training and regulatory arrangements simpler and more flexible.

A policy of User Choice intended to create market-like conditions in the provision of off-the-job training was incorporated into the National Training Framework and implemented in all States and Territories, except NSW, on 1st January 1998 (*Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 16).

The organisational structure of the National Training Framework is detailed in Figure 2.

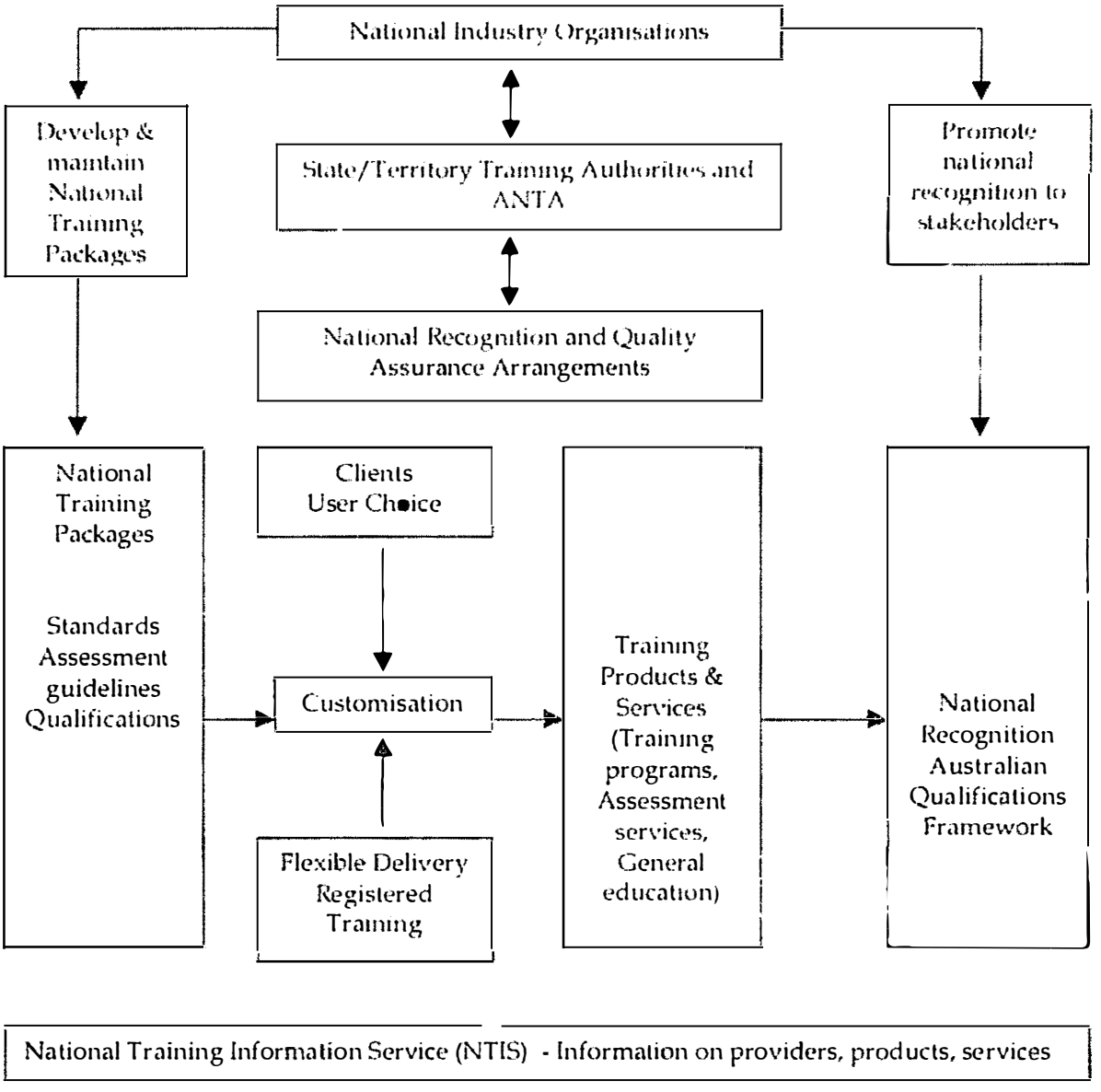

Figure 2: National Training Framework (*Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 15)

Australian Recognition Framework (ARF)

In November 1997 the ANTA Ministerial Council agreed to the arrangements for the Australian Recognition Framework to be implemented from 1 January 1998. The ARF requires that all training organisations, including TAFE, that issue Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications and statements of attainment, must be registered by a State or Territory training authority. Organisations are registered to provide:

- training and assessment products and services or assessment products and services only;
- products and services that are based on Training Packages, and/or other products and services for a general area of vocational education and training if there are no relevant Training Packages for that area; and
- products and services up to a specified qualification level. (Australian National Training Authority, 2000, p. 1)

The ARF means that:

- Training/assessment providers are registered by a State or Territory training authority and can operate nationally, have their qualifications recognised by other registered training organisations (RTOs) through a mutual recognition process, can base courses on Training Packages where they exist and can self manage recognition if they are quality endorsed.
- Enterprises can become RTOs, control their training and award nationally recognised qualifications, use Training Packages, form partnerships with a more diverse range of RTOs and be assured of the quality of the RTO.
- Individuals get qualifications that are recognised nationally, can choose between a more diverse range of RTOs, providing them with more training and assessment options and engage in training and assessment attuned to the workplace. (Australian National Training Authority, 2000, p. 4)

National Industry Training Packages

In November 1996 the Ministerial Council agreed to the establishment of the National Training Framework Committee (NTFC) to oversee the policy framework for the development and endorsement of competency and Training Packages. The Ministerial

Council agreed to replace the Australian Standards Framework (ASF) with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and decided that standards would be linked to the AQF. Under this framework qualifications are determined by direct reference to national competency standards rather than to curriculum. Accreditation of curriculum would be replaced by the endorsement of Training Packages.

Training Packages are sets of national training resources consisting of competency standards and specifications for qualifications based on the standards aligned directly against the Australian Qualifications Framework and assessment guidelines. The Training Packages are designed to enable qualifications to be awarded through the direct assessment of competencies rather than against the learning outcomes of a course, to encourage learning in a work environment and to provide training and assessment to meet individual needs (Australian National Training Authority, 2000a, p. 9).

The mandatory elements of the Training Packages comprise endorsed national competency standards, assessment guidelines and national qualifications. A range of non-endorsed industry relevant training tools and resources may be included as part of a Training Package, depending on industry demand.

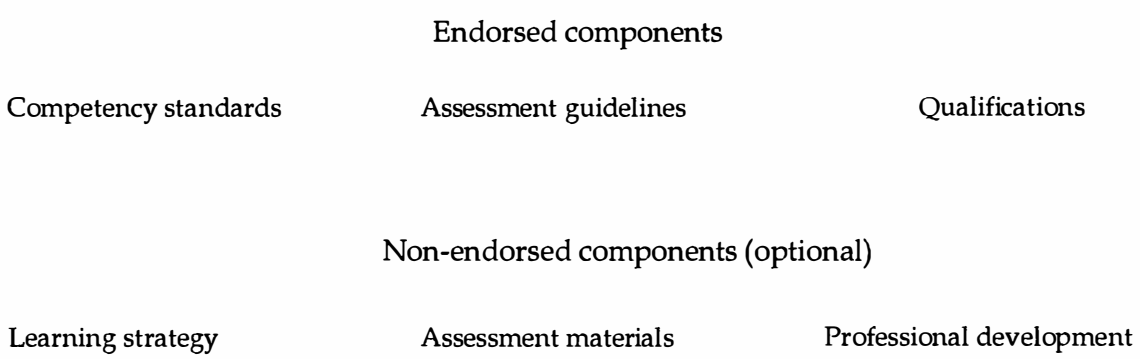

Figure 3: Training Package components

Training Packages are developed for industry by national Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs), recognised bodies or enterprises to meet the identified needs of specific industries or industry sectors. They are then submitted for endorsement, in a common format, to the National Training Framework Committee.

The Training Packages also support two other government initiatives; New Apprenticeships, which replace Traineeships, and User Choice. As previously noted, User Choice is part of a national strategy for developing an open training market by enabling employers and employees to choose which RTO will deliver their training.

The first Training Packages were endorsed by the NTFC in July 1997 and it is estimated that there are currently over 50 endorsed Training Packages covering 80% of the Australian workforce (Stewart, 2000, p. 1). While it was expected that Training Packages would be implemented within one year of national endorsement, the process has been delayed by administrative and funding complexities. In acknowledgment of these complexities, the Commonwealth Minister for Education, David Kemp, has recently announced that the government is providing an additional $8 million to support the implementation process and a further $10.5 million to ANTA to support materials production (Stewart, 2000, p. 1).

In 1997 the ANTA agreement between the Commonwealth and the States was renewed for the period 1998-2000 and ANTA published *Bridge to the future: Australia's national strategy for vocation education and training for 1998-2003.* The national strategy sets out five objectives;

1. equipping Australians for the world of work;
2. enhancing mobility in the labour market;
3. achieving equitable outcomes in vocation education and training;
4. increasing investment in training; and

5. maximising the value of public vocational education and training expenditure.

Today's training. Tomorrow's skills

In September 1997 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training was asked to inquire into and report on the appropriate roles of institutes of technical and further education and the extent to which those roles should overlap with universities. In his preface to the report, *Today's training. Tomorrow's skills* (1998), Nelson questioned whether a healthy balance between necessary training for work and education for life could be achieved in the prevailing education and training environment. "What is the future for understanding of history, language, fine arts and knowledge for its own sake? Is education and training to have a role other than the sole objective of preparation for work?" (Nelson, 1998, p. vii). These are interesting questions from a member of a federal government which has substantially cut funding to tertiary education institutions, forced rationalisation in course offerings and highlighted the need for all education and training to meet industry requirements.

The report stated that about 80 TAFE institutes operate on over 300 campuses around Australia, delivering vocational and personal enrichment programs to more than 1.2 million people. The report discussed the reform of the VET sector, highlighted the special role that TAFE plays in providing equitable access to education and training, particularly in regional Australia, and examined TAFE's emerging roles in distance education, VET in schools and new TAFE enterprises. The Committee also studied arrangements between TAFE and higher education including articulation, credit transfer, dual awards and the movements towards multi-sector institutions, such as dual sector institutions and shared campuses.

The Committee acknowledged that since the early 1990s government policy has been committed to breaking TAFE's monopoly as the only officially recognised VET provider. The objective of this policy was to introduce competition which would encourage greater efficiency and improved responsiveness to VET clients. The Committee, however, admitted it was "favourably disposed towards TAFE" (p. 1) and recognised that TAFE not only offered equitable access to courses but contributed to the educational, social and economic fabric of regional communities in a way which could not be expected of private providers.

A number of issues identified in the report have implications for the provision of library education and training. The Committee argued that VET education should incorporate more elements of general education and noted that the responsibility for training and educating people for professional and paraprofessional occupations had traditionally been split between universities and TAFE respectively. It suggested that more collaboration between the two sectors on the "education and training of people for these occupational groups can achieve resource savings and result in better quality graduates of both TAFE and higher education programs" (*Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 81). Examples of collaboration programs in dentistry and engineering indicated that joint training programs enabled different levels of workers to recognise each other's strengths and train as a team. In its investigation into the movement towards multi-sector institutions, with either dual sector institutions or shared campuses, the Committee recommended that further research could identify the strengths and weakness inherent in each model.

Revision of the Library Industry Competency Standards (LICS)

In 1997 the Cultural Research Education and Training Enterprise Australia (CREATE Australia) received funding from ANTA to develop a national Training Package for the museum and library and information sector. Stage one, which was scheduled for completion in May 1998 involved:

- a review of the existing standards and amendments to meet the more stringent requirements of training packages;
- the packaging and alignment of the competency standards against national qualifications; and
- the development of industry approved assessment guidelines ((CREATE Australia, 1998, p. 1).

A requirement of the National Training Board's competency standards endorsement process was that industry standards would be revised within two years. A review of the LICS commenced in October 1997 under the direction of a National Project Reference Group with one representative from the library industry and representatives from each state and territory training authority, and from ANTA and CREATE.

CREATE conducted preliminary consultations in the ACT, Western Australia and South Australia to identify issues which should be addressed in a review of the standards. These consultations suggested that:

- most of the existing standards should be retained, with some editing and modifications to meet training package requirements;
- evidence guides should give clear and succinct directions for assessment;
- each competency unit should contain a descriptor stating the essential intention of the unit;

- the range of variables should be more specific to indicate the scope of work functions in each unit;
- the following gaps should be addressed:
  - active client service
  - information literacy
  - information/electronic technology
  - evaluation of programs and materials
  - legal knowledge and skills such as copyright, intellectual property, OHS and EEO
  - team skills, team development and management skills
  - commercial and corporate skills (CREATE Australia, 1998, p. 2).

The Reference Group identified six key industry functions which were used as a framework against which the competency standards were mapped and tested. These functions were:

1. Evaluating and selecting information
2. Providing access to information
3. Managing the information environment
4. Interpreting, diagnosing and fulfilling client needs
5. Promoting the organisation
6. Information literacy

During March-April 1998, consultations on proposed amendments to the standards occurred with all states and territories, with Sydney-based specialist groups in acquisitions, cataloguing, information technology, management, information literacy, and with users of the standards.

By 1998 CREATE had developed 62 national library competency standards and aligned the standards to five national qualifications: Certificate II, Certificate III, Certificate

IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma. The standards, qualifications, and assessment guidelines components of the museum and library industry Training Packages were endorsed by the National Training Framework Committee in July 1999.

Stage two of the CREATE Training Package project commenced in February 1998. CREATE employed a consultancy firm, RATIO, to research available resources and develop implementation guidelines, learning resources, assessment materials and professional development materials for the library industry Training Package. While the Training Package was developed and endorsed for both the museum and library industry, the industries were separated for the development of the non-endorsed components. The research revealed that "priority should be given to developing guidelines that would assist teachers, trainers and assessors to adapt the existing curriculum and assessment resources that were developed and adopted in 1995 for the Certificate III and Diploma in Library and Information Studies" (CREATE, personal communication, November 25, 1998). RATIO developed draft learning resource guidelines in the form of seven booklets which were to be validated in consultation with nominated persons from both the library industry sector and providers of library technician training across all states and territories. CREATE invited nominated persons to participate in the validation process in November 1998 and copies of the draft guidelines were forwarded to participants in early 1999.

Endorsement of the Training Package required that implementation should take place with 12 months and the library industry Training Package was scheduled to replace the national Diploma from June 2000. However, delays in the production, publishing and printing of the Package detained its sale to educators and industry until January 2000 and most institutions will introduce qualifications based on the Package in 2001.

Format of the Library Industry Training Package Guidelines

The Library and Information Services Training Package developed by RATIO for CREATE consists of the endorsed industry Training Package and seven booklets covering the non-endorsed components. The endorsed Training Package includes the national competency standards, national qualifications, guidelines for assessing competencies and resources to assist in the transition from the national curriculum for library and information studies.

The five qualifications; Certificate I, Certificate II, Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma, "are based directly on national industry competency standards, can be taught on-the-job, or have a major work-based component, recognise the existing competencies of workers and provide a framework to help identify training needs" (CREATE, 1999, p. 3).

The seven booklets are designed to assist educators use all available resources, including the 1995 national curriculum and accompanying resources for training and assessment and contain:

1. General resource implementation guidelines
2. Guidelines for competency units dealing with the client for Certificate II and Certificate III qualifications
3. Guidelines for competency units dealing with operations for Certificate II and Certificate III qualifications
4. Guidelines for competency units dealing with the collection for Certificate II and Certificate III qualifications
5. Guidelines for competency units dealing with the client for Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications
6. Guidelines for competency units dealing with operations for Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications

7. Guidelines for competency units dealing with the collection for Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications.

Table 24: Training Package Qualifications and Competency Units

Certificate II in Library and Information Services	
Compulsory units	Complete one other unit
• Assist clients to use an information service effectively • Assist with the maintenance of a service area • Develop own information literacy skills • Manage own work performance and learning • Prepare, process and store resources • Assist with circulation services	• Assist with programs, activities and promotion Or one unit from another endorsed training package at Certificate II level
Certificate III in Library and Information Services	
Compulsory units	Complete three other units, at least two from below
• Assist clients to use an information service effectively • Assist with the maintenance of a service area • Develop own information literacy skills • Manage own work performance and learning • Prepare, process and store resources • Participate in a work team • Use bibliographic methods • Use multimedia equipment • Train small groups	• Accession and process resources • Contribute to promotional programs and activities for clients • Process orders • Respond to request from other information providers for materiai And one unit from another endorsed training package at Certificate III level
Certificate IV in Library and Information Services	
Compulsory units	Complete six other units, at least three from below
• Contribute to client access to information • Contribute to effective working relationships • Develop and apply own information literacy skills in working with clients • Contribute to structuring bibliographic and other information systems • Manage own work, development and learning • Organise and coordinate work activities • Use networked services effectively to provide access to information • Use multimedia equipment • Train small groups	• Acquire and process resources for access • Maintain service area environment, resources and equipment • Obtain information resources from remote sources for clients • Provide promotion and programs and activities for clients • Undertake cataloguing activities And three units from another endorsed training package at Certificate IV level

Diploma of Library and Information Services

Compulsory units

- Contribute to client access to information
- Contribute to effective working relationships
- Develop and apply own information literacy skills in working with clients
- Manage own work, development and learning
- Organise and coordinate work activities
- Use networked services effectively to provide access to information
- Contribute to the organisation and coordination of the work of others
- Organise information for client access
- Provide clients with access to required information
- Use multimedia equipment
- Train small groups
- Plan assessment
- Conduct assessment
- Review assessment

Complete eight other units, at least four from below

- Analyse and describe material
- Catalogue and classify material
- Contribute to collection development
- Develop and improve systems and processes to increase access to information
- Coordinate selection and acquisition of information
- Establish and maintain consultation with, and promotion to, client groups
- Lead a team
- Maintain and modify technological applications in the library
- Manage maintenance of physical resources and environment
- Provide assistance for research and projects

And four units from another endorsed training package at Diploma level

Advanced Diploma of Library and Information Services

Compulsory units

- Contribute to the organisation and coordination of the work of others
- Deliver information literacy programs for clients
- Provide clients with access to required information
- Develop and improve systems and process to increase access to information
- Provide assistance for research and projects
- Contribute to the development of the organisation's bibliographic management system
- Evaluate and extend own information literacy skills in working with others
- Manage a major functional area
- Use multimedia equipment
- Train small groups
- Plan assessment
- Conduct assessment
- Review assessment

Complete eight other units, at least four from below. Select at least one unit from Group A. The three remaining units may be selected from A or B.

Group A

- Manage care and maintenance of collection
- Manage collection development
- Provide database development

Group B

- Analyse and describe material
- Catalogue and classify material
- Establish and maintain consultation with client groups
- Maintain and modify technological applications in the library

And four units from another endorsed training package at Diploma level

(CREATE Australia, 1999)

There is a considerable overlap of competency units between Certificate II and Certificate III levels, and Certificate IV and Diploma levels, as indicated in Table 24.

Each competency standard/unit is expressed in a common format:

- Unit code
- Unit title and brief description
- Element and performance criteria (tools of assessment)
- Key competencies, which align the unit to the national generic competencies
- Range of variables, providing guidelines on the different situations and contexts that apply
- Evidence guide, which includes critical aspects of evidence, underpinning knowledge and skills needed for the unit, resource implications, concurrent assessment, method and context of assessment.

The assessment guidelines provide an overview of assessment principles, benchmarks for assessment, the role of registered training organisations and assessor qualifications.

The general resource implementation guidelines summarise the structure of the qualifications, provide a map of the new standards to the 1995 curriculum and a guide to learning and assessment strategies and examples.

The guidance booklets repeat the standard format and include a further mapping guide for each unit to the modules of the national curriculum. The booklets omit a number of units and contain major typographical and mapping errors. The total Training Package was made available in both print and CD-ROM versions at a cost of $370.00.

Implementation of the Training Package

In 1999 Swinburne University of Technology, Victoria, received funding from the Office of Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment and ANTA to develop an

Implementation Guide for the Library and Information Services Training Package which was to set the standards for national implementation. The Implementation Guide provides the maximum nominal hours for each qualification which should be allocated by a training organisation. Although these hours may vary within a qualification depending on the units of competence selected and the delivery strategies used, training delivery will not be funded beyond the maximum nominal hours (*Victorian Implementation Guide*, 1999, p. 8). A table identifies each competency unit and title, nominal hours and the commensurate module from the current Diploma qualification.

The Library Technician Program Manager of Victoria University of Technology, Ian Rogers, commenced an implementation process in March 2000, and supplied details to library technician educators in other States and Territories via email. Rogers (personal communication, 27 March, 2000) has identified a wide range of issues which impact on the implementation process, including a suggestion that ANTA provided money for Industry Advisory Bodies, like CREATE, to write Training Packages to a formula specifically aimed for on-the-job training, not for TAFE training courses. This suggestion is supported by the omission of any work experience/industry placement component in the Package which means that TAFE trainers have to incorporate whole or parts of competency units and their related nominal hours into work experience placements. Rogers also suggests that different agendas, timetabling and staffing restraints in TAFE institutions will result in major variations in the implementation process and the range of qualification levels which will be offered by individual TAFE providers. Rogers has warned, however, against TAFE providers locking themselves into rigid training curricula before they become more familiar and experienced in delivering Training Packages which may lead to the need for future changes.

Personal communication with a range of TAFE library technician educators supports Rogers' assertion that local agendas and issues will influence the interpretation and implementation process. Rogers (personal communication, October 31, 2000) has indicated that the Victoria University of Technology will offer a Diploma incorporating a Certificate III with two additional modules allowing an exit at Certificate II and Certificate IV if required. The fourth draft of the Victoria University mapping guidelines indicates the use of new subject titles to describe competency units and the allocation of a proportion of nominal subject hours to allow for industry placements at both Certificate III (80 hours) and Diploma (160 hours) levels. In a further email, Rogers (personal communication, November 6, 2000) has indicated that he has completed version five of a proposed timetable and expressed concern about the amount of time involved in the process, "the flexibility of ownership comes at a huge price". Rogers has also suggested that considerations of staffing, timetabling and institutions' administrative systems to cope with the competencies will result in a product that is a working compromise.

Swinburne University of Technology and Box Hill Institute of TAFE will also be offering Certificate III and the Diploma and allocating subject hours to two industry placements. Julia Blunden, Acting Program Coordinator at Swinburne, believes that the portability of library technician qualifications will be more difficult with the obvious diversity of qualifications and course content between training institutions (personal communication, October 31, 2000).

Perth Central TAFE has indicated that they will be offering all qualifications to Diploma level, with future introduction of the Advanced Diploma as a continuing professional development options for employed library technicians (Vinciullo, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Vinciullo also confirms that variations in

implementation will have a huge impact on portability of qualifications for library technicians, "a feature of the current Diploma that has worked very well in WA".

Examination of online documentation reveals that Canberra Institute of Technology will offer the Diploma of Library and Information Services, with an early exit point at Certificate IV. Prospective students must have an ACT Year 12 Certificate and preference will be given to applicants with library experience and an approved TAFE certificate which includes some communication and IT modules (Canberra Institute of Technology, 2000). The outline of the course content indicates substantial changes to the Training Package requirements, such as the inclusion of modules in cataloguing and acquisitions as core, not elective, subjects.

The only available information about the New South Wales courses for 2001 is provided by an online description of the Certificate III being offered at Newcastle. The course outline indicates substantial changes to the Training Package requirements, including incorporation of Certificate II level units as both core and elective modules and the addition of six information technology core modules.

The South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment has provided an online guide to transition arrangements from accredited courses to qualifications in the Library and Information Services Training Package. The nominal hours listed for each qualification and competency unit vary substantially from those listed in the Victorian implementation guidelines (South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment, 2000).

The Queensland Southbank Institute of TAFE appears, from the available online course information, to be offering all qualifications to Diploma level, with the Certificate II available to trainees employed in the information industry. The course structure is

consistent with the Training Package requirements (Southbank Institute of TAFE, 2000). Industry placement is included with assessment either in the workplace or at the college.

The Tasmanian TAFE campuses at Burnie/Devonport, Hobart and Launceston are offering all qualifications to Diploma level with core and elective units from the Training Package (TAFE Tasmania, 2000). Certificate II must be undertaken as a trainee employed in a library or information agency. Industry placement is a component of the Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications.

Case Study: Implementation of the Training Package at Northern Territory University

Library technician lecturers at NTU were invited by CREATE NT, the local Industry Training Advisory Body, to participate in two workshops designed to inform industry of the implications of the Training Package on the workplace and on the education and training of library staff. Two significant factors emerged from personal observation of, and participation in the workshops. The first was the apparent lack of awareness by industry participants of the revision of competency standards and development of the Training Packages, and the second, the concerted effort by the representative of CREATE NT to advocate assessment by qualified workplace assessors to bypass formal or workplace training processes. CREATE NT considered that the library industry requirement for a workplace assessor to possess an equivalent qualification to the workplace assessee, as well as assessor qualifications, was excessive and not considered necessary in other industries. Equally, CREATE NT suggested that professional association course recognition was no longer appropriate or necessary in the Training Package environment. In more recent discussions, CREATE NT has modified its opposition to formal TAFE training courses and promoted the concept of industry and training partnerships as the best application of the Training Packages. However, there has

been no consideration of the funding, staffing or physical resource implications, for both the library industry and training providers, in workplace assessment or partnerships processes. Given that both individual libraries and TAFE training providers already operate with minimal staff and resources, these implications warrant some deliberation.

Library technician teaching staff at the Northern Territory University have decided to offer all Training Package qualifications, except the Advanced Diploma, from 2001. The Advanced Diploma will not be offered until it has been established that there is sufficient demand for the qualification. The Certificate II qualification is being offered as a national traineeship entry level and therefore it attracts no student fees. As the Diploma is the current recognised qualification for employment as a library technician, students will be encouraged to continue to this level.

A distinct feature of the Training Packages is the lack of required prerequisites to enrol in qualification levels or individual competency units. In theory this could mean that a school leaver could enrol at the Diploma level, without having completed any prior training or work experience. Only formal assessment, including the underpinning knowledge and skills of the competency unit, would indicate and enforce the need for training in lower level competencies. The documentation of other industry Training Packages implementation processes in the TAFE system indicates that some providers are, in fact, specifying prerequisites of lower level competency qualifications regardless of Training Package instructions.

NTU course content will align with the competency units, with timetabling of associated units to enable a natural progression through related competencies. Some traditional library technician core subjects, such as acquisitions, cataloguing, and library promotion, have been delegated to elective status in the new qualifications. The rationale for this decision is extremely difficult to understand, given that library technicians have

demonstrated their workplace competence in these skills and have been increasingly employed in these areas. NTU teaching staff have decided to limit the number of elective options available to ensure that most students will gain skills in these subjects. Although unfortunately this decision will restrict student elective options, it is considered necessary to provide students with future employment prospects.

NTU will continue to employ teaching resources developed for the Diploma course and gradually revise modules to more closely reflect competency unit requirements where necessary. It is anticipated that this process of modification will not be too arduous as many of the existing Diploma modules have a direct relationship to the new competency units.

The administrative processes involved in implementing the Training Package will become more complex, with the requirement to enrol students in a number of Certificates and the Diploma concurrently. As work experience placements will comprise a number of competency units, assessment and grading for these units cannot be finalised until the student has completed the placement. Students enrolled in the current course will need to have their completed Diploma modules mapped against the competency standards and qualifications. This process must ensure that students are not disadvantaged in the progress of their studies. Recognised training providers are required to accept individual competency units or full qualifications achieved through workplace assessment. The process of identifying further training requirements or mapping completed competency units will need to be undertaken by TAFE institutions through credit transfer and RPL procedures.

Response to the Industry Training Packages

Introduction

The development and introduction of the national Industry Training Packages has been addressed by a wide range of discussion and debate which can be broadly categorised as informative, supportive or critical. While there has been little documented response, as yet, to the Library Industry Training Packages, the issues identified in the general current discussions are clearly applicable.

The extensive government documentation attending the reform to VET and the introduction of the Training Packages has obviously been informative and supportive, while industry and educator response has been generally mixed. A number of articles in the March and April 2000 issues of *Campus Review* have discussed the impact of the Training Packages from government, industry and educator perspectives and highlighted the main areas of dissension. The following brief summary of the current literature from a range of stakeholders highlights the major issues which have emerged from the debate.

Informative and Supportive Response

A speech by the Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs, David Kemp, to the Victorian TAFE Association outlines the government's commitment to the National Training Framework and its components; Training Packages, New Apprenticeships and User Choice. Kemp (1999) emphasised the importance of the Training Packages,

> For the first time we have clearly articulated pathways for learners across whole industry sectors and an across the board attempt to really integrate on and off the job training. We have nationally recognised and portable qualifications for individuals and flexible qualifications to suit the needs of employers. (p. 2)

He also acknowledged that TAFE played an important role in ensuring the success of the reforms to VET, urged providers to implement the Training Packages as quickly as

possible and outlined the funding and resources the government had committed to assist the implementation process.

The Chief Executive of ANTA, Moira Scollay, has responded to recent criticisms of the educational consequences of the reforms of the VET sector. Scollay (2000) has rejected the argument that the Training Packages are prescriptive curricula aimed at disempowering professional teachers. She argues that the "key to successful application of the Training Packages in any learning environment is the ability of the teacher/trainer to develop customised learning strategies within the framework of competencies and assessment" (p. 12). In response to criticism that the Training Packages do not adequately address "soft" or generic skills and competencies, Scollay states that ANTA is currently working on a range of activities designed to clarify and improve the application of these skills and underpinning knowledge. Scollay also discusses the financial resources and support products which have been made available by the government and ANTA to assist VET providers in the implementation process.

The pivotal role of training providers in interpreting and customising Training Packages for a range of audiences is the major focus of an article by Stewart (2000). Stewart (2000, p. 1) states that in the TAFE sector in Victoria 53% of teachers are in tenured positions, 33% are on fixed terms contracts, usually of only 9-12 months duration, 14% are sessional, and the total teaching staff has remained the same from 1993-1998 at a time when there has been an increase of about 10% in total provision. She also acknowledges that TAFE teachers have been faced with almost ten years of continuous change, including the impact of globalisation, technological change, user choice, competitive tendering and reduced funding. Stewart proposes five strategies for enabling the best use and outcomes of Training Packages for all interested parties:

- recognising that Training Packages are flexible but must ensure quality learning processes and course design,
- providing staff development and support in customising Training Packages,
- developing effective academic and information management systems which can cope with the extra recording and reporting requirements,
- designing holistic delivery and assessment programs that incorporate the general education and skills competencies and
- "shifting the focus from traditional teaching approaches to more flexible problem solving approaches in which the learner is central to the process of learning and competency achievement" (p. 4).

Down (2000) argues that Training Packages "define a form of competency-based training which relies on the centrality of the professional expertise of teachers and trainers to achieve the specified outcomes" (p. 13). Down welcomes the demise of centralised curriculum and detailed resources materials, which, she suggests, have effectively de-skilled VET teachers. Acknowledging that VET educators have faced lean environments with little professional development, status or support for the last ten years, she stresses the need "to find effective ways to increase both the professional competence and morale of the TAFE sector's most valuable asset - its teachers and trainers" (p. 13).

A Ministerial Council (MINCO) meeting held on the 30th June 2000 reported that a comprehensive project is underway to "boost the quality, update and upgrade client service and iron out the inconsistency "bugs" in Australia's national VET system" (Australian National Training Authority, 2000b). Ministers agreed that priority be given to achieving national consistency in the standards and implementation of Training Packages by the end of 2000. The Committee also forecast the introduction of a new National Training Quality Council, to replace the National Training Framework Committee, and

operate under the ANTA Board with industry leadership and State and Territory representation.

Critical Response

Criticism has focused on both the implementation and the content and quality control of the Training Packages. In his investigation into the impact of the Training Packages, Peoples (2000) found that although the Packages were developed by industry "many enterprises see the development of training packages as a complex, irrelevant and highly bureaucratic process, adding a greater complexity to a national training system, which has already been criticised as overly cumbersome and slow to react to change" (p. 10). Peoples argues that the Packages have entrenched the power of employer organisations, especially the national Industry Advisory Training Bodies (ITABs), and diminished the power of educationalists. Respondents to Peoples' survey indicated that the emphasis given to on-the-job training and assessment in the Training Packages was found to disadvantage full-time and unemployed students. The implementation process in TAFE institutions was described as time consuming because of the need to create learning pathways which matched existing curriculum, organise work placements, the time lag between endorsement and publication of the Package and changes to Packages post-endorsement. Packages are only endorsed for three years, which given the time lag, has meant that students may have been enrolled for just twelve to eighteen months before a mandatory review is required. Peoples (2000) has stated that the quality of Training Packages varies enormously, with different interpretations between industries of the qualification framework, discrepancies in nominal duration between and within Packages, inadequate assessment guidelines and variations in assessor qualifications.

Simmons (2000) has noted that "there is some cynicism about ANTA's claim to have been responsible for achieving industry involvement in vocational training" (p. 4) given that many providers have worked closely with industry for decades. As indicated in this study, the library industry has always been closely aligned with library technician training providers through Course Advisory Committees and participation in work experience placements. Simmons (2000) has suggested that the huge divergence in the quality and acceptance of the training packages has resulted from issues such as:

- the cohesiveness of the industry 'voice'
- the strength of the training tradition in the industry
- how the industry parties who determined the competencies were selected
- what interests they represented
- the ease of alignment between existing curriculum and the packages
- the extent to which new competencies were identified
- the extent to which providers/teachers have embraced and prepared themselves for the change
- any political positions of teachers or industrial relations implications. (p. 8)

Smith (2000) has asserted that there has been no research that shows that competency based training or recognition of prior learning (RPL) have improved student outcomes or any effective monitoring systems set up to enable the necessary comparative analysis. She questions the levels of skill attained by students/workers through total on-the-job delivery and assessment where there may be no teaching or training component. Smith (2000) concludes that:

> a demotivated, casualised VET teaching workforce, using Training Packages containing questionable and rigid competency standards, in a system with very little quality control, makes it just about impossible to expect that high quality training will be delivered to the current or future Australian workforce. (p. 3)

A number of other commentators, including industry representatives, have expressed concern about the shift towards deregulation contained in the Australian Recognition Framework and have suggested the need for more rigorous quality-assurance processes (Comyn, 1998, p. 9; Greening, 1998, p. 11). WRAPS, the national industry training advisory body for the wholesale, retail and personal services industries, has suggested that the fundamental weakness of the Australian Recognition Framework is that it measures the quality of a training organisation's management processes rather than "outputs". This means that there is no effective check to ensure that the provision of training is adequate and the issuance of qualifications valid (WRAPS, 1999).

Sobski (2000) disputes Scollay's assertion that the Training Packages will empower educators and suggests that expecting every teacher to interpret the Packages and develop customised learning strategies or curricula would result in enormous duplication of effort and unrealistic expectations. Sobski argues that national or state-developed curriculum are not prescriptive, but can assist the teacher to design effective learning and delivery strategies in consultation with industry.

Doughney (2000) has claimed that the Training Packages could undermine existing credit transfer and articulation arrangements for students crossing from VET to higher education or vice versa. As Training Packages only contain competencies and do not stipulate curriculum or learning outcomes, Doughney suggests that higher education institutions "will not be able to ascertain the extent to which articulating students share the same knowledge base as those who have undertaken formal study" (p. 10). Doughney laments the fact that TAFE teachers have been excluded from Training Package development, particularly as they generally possess experience in industry, grounding in the discipline upon which their industry draws and teaching qualifications. She also considers that "stripping learning outcomes and the specification of knowledge from VET

courses and replacing them with competencies that are measured directly against specified tasks in the workplace will lead to deskilling" (p. 10).

In 1998 the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) commissioned a project to examine the need for a new joint approach to policy on credit transfer and articulation between VET and Higher Education (HE). The main catalyst for the project was the reform process in VET which was considered to have consequential impacts on both current and future cross-sector arrangements. The project established that there was considerable student mobility between the sectors; in 1998, 17.5% of all new admissions to Bachelor level courses were students with a previous TAFE award and 15.3% of all VET students held a previous HE qualification. The project sought to identify the views of stakeholders on the efficacy of the Australian Recognition Framework and the Training Package competencies as the basis for establishing cross-sector qualification linkages. Carnegie (1999) has reported that survey respondents perceived difficulties in using competencies, particularly as competencies were inadequate in defining knowledge and because of the variability of competencies across Training Packages. She also noted that the lack of structure and defined scope of some Training Package qualifications, an overemphasis in many of the Packages on generic management skills at the expense of high level technical competencies and the use of different nomenclature were identified as impacting adversely on linkage arrangements. The report recommended a number of initiatives to assist the articulation process; new national linkage benchmarks, pilot programs to renegotiate existing, and develop new, cross-sector qualifications linkages using Training Packages, the development of model qualification linkages and the participation by HE in the development of Training Package support materials (Carnegie, 1999, p. 262).

Aspiring to Excellence: Report of the Inquiry into the Quality of Vocational Education and Training in Australia, November 2000

In August 1999 the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Committee was asked to conduct an inquiry into the quality of vocational education and training in Australia. The Committee was due to report by May 2000 but sought an extension of time until October 2000. The Committee's report, *Aspiring to Excellence*, was released on 9th November , 2000.

The Committee's terms of reference were to investigate the effectiveness of the vocational education and training sector in developing the educational skills of the Australian people and the skills formation and productivity of the Australian workforce. The terms of reference include:

- an evaluation of the new apprenticeships scheme;
- an evaluation of claims that the key objectives of the new apprenticeships scheme are not being met;
- an assessment of the quality of provision of TAFE and private providers in the delivery of VET services and programs;
- an examination of the impact on the quality and accessibility of VET resulting from the policy of growth through efficiencies and user choice in VET;
- an evaluation of the provision of Commonwealth and state employers' subsidies;
- an evaluation of the growth, breadth, effectiveness and future provision of vocational education in schools; and
- an assessment of the consistency, validity and accessibility of statistical information on the performance of national VET systems. (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Committee, 2000).

The Committee conducted a number of public hearings and received a total of 128 submissions from a wide range of interested parties.

The report contains 28 recommendations to the government which

> go to the heart of restoring quality in vocational education and training, beginning with a renegotiation of VET objectives with major participants in the training network, but focusing mainly on strengthening institutional arrangements which ensure compliance with quality control processes. (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Committee, 2000)

Of particular interest to TAFE teachers is the recommendation that "ANTA make a clear policy statement emphasising the importance of including people with teaching or professional educational expertise and experience in all aspects and at all levels of VET decision making, planning and development processes" (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations. Small Business and Education Committee, 2000). The Committee also suggests that the ANTA Board should include at least one member who is a practising professional VET teacher or educator.

The Committee found that there are serious deficiencies in both the design and implementation of the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF), including serious legal impediments to the effective operation of the Framework in controlling and auditing quality and consistency. To address these deficiencies the Committee has recommended that the ARF be replaced with a National Code for Quality in VET which should be made legally enforceable through Commonwealth legislation. The National Code "would contain a statement of the rights, responsibilities and obligations of all relevant parties, and standards, procedures and evidence requirements to regulate and ensure quality in all aspects of VET, including consistency of implementation" (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Committee, 2000).

In its consideration of the National Training Packages, the Committee noted the variations in implementation in different jurisdictions and recommends that national implementation plans be developed to achieve national consistency in regard to nominal hours, sample training programs, and identification of current and new resources to deliver training. The Committee recommends that a National Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority be established to oversee national implementation plans, raise the standards for the specification of underlying knowledge and skills and improve the specification of the Mayer Key Competencies in National Training Packages.

The report and its extensive recommendations, which are only briefly reported here, have far reaching implications for the current VET education and training framework, and if accepted by the Commonwealth government, ANTA and the Ministerial Council, forecast another period of change for all training providers and educators.

Response to the Revised LICS and the Library Industry Training Package

There has been little open or formal discussion about the revised competency standards and the introduction of the library industry Training Packages. A response to the changes to the standards was forwarded by the NT Branch of ALIA in 1998 to CREATE but was never acknowledged.

As Blunden (2000, p. 5) has stated, no information about input from stakeholders has been available to other interested parties or placed in the public arena for discussion. NTU library educators received no response to requests for information from CREATE or responses to documentation outlining typographical and omission errors in the draft guidelines to the Training Packages, although they are listed as contributors to the development process in the published Training Package documentation.

At the 9th National Library Technicians Conference in 1997, Reid, a member of the National Project Reference Group for the development of the Training Packages, summarised the changes in education and training for library technicians. Reid (1997) analysed the content of the Diploma course, identifying that 55% of the course could be categorised as library technical tasks, 19% IT, multimedia and OH&S, 17% communication, team work, client liaison and training, and 9% management. She posed the question "given that technicians fill a wide variety of roles, is a generic course like this the best basis for entry to the range of library work that technicians can find themselves in?" (Reid, 1997, p. 161). Reid suggested that educators should be able to provide greater options for continuing professional development for library technicians, including human resource management, IT and communications technologies, high level communication and client relations skills and higher level library skills and should undertake partnerships with employers to provide greater opportunities for work-based learning. Although Reid does not state this, these are options which are implicit in the philosophy of the Training Packages.

In a later article, Reid (1998) discussed the format and implications of the Training Packages. She identified some of the issues for the library industry:

- Will the industry see a plethora of RTOs issuing qualifications? What impact will this have on employers, universities and the traditional training organisations (TAFE and universities)?

- Will a multitude of qualifications appear, at different levels, possibly geared to different local needs? How much entry-level training will occur at school levels with the advent of the VET in schools programs?

- Library technicians have a good reputation for upgrading their skills and knowledge. As most TAFE courses change every five to eight years, many technicians generally look for a course upgrade as a means of keeping their skills current. However, there are discrepancies where ALIA recognises, for technician membership

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purposes, a qualification that is now out of date, and an employer prefers to recruit people with the latest qualification.

- What is the core body of knowledge of the profession? The core must be in competency standards, so how can we best use the standards? As part of the development of the training package, the standards will be reviewed and packaged to reflect qualifications and current options for extension into aligned industries such as IT, multimedia, records, archives, education and training.

- How can we best use the competencies and the training package to produce the type of people needed for work in the sector? (Reid, 1998, p. 31).

Reid (1998) also noted that a current inquiry into the appropriate roles of institutes of Technical and Further Education by the House of Representatives Committee on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs had implications for library education and training. She suggested that "continuing pressures to increase student numbers at TAFE had resulted in the downgrading of strong pastoral care programs and a loss of attention for individual needs" (p. 31) and change to delivery in lecture modes and off-campus delivery where possible. Reid concluded that the Training Packages offered the library industry, a small industry with fewer that 20,000 workers, the opportunity to rationalise current programs and modes of education and training to ensure that new members of the profession could work and grow successfully.

Library technician contributors to the LibTec discussion list in 1998 commented on a range of issues associated with the introduction of the Training Packages, including the number of qualification levels which were not industrially recognised, the lack of articulation arrangements to undergraduate courses, the commitment needed by libraries and training organisations to undertake the role of workplace assessors and the introduction of non-traditional training bodies and the methodology behind their registration.

In a letter to *Incite*, Blunden (2000, p. 5) provided an assessment of the draft version of the Training Package. She suggested that the name "training package" was rather misleading as the endorsed components consist of competency standards, qualifications and assessment guidelines, rather than training materials. Blunden questioned the fact that the Training Package was developed in response to the demands of the library industry, as there was no evidence of dissatisfaction with the current curriculum, and any criticisms could be met by adjustments to the present course. She also queried CREATE's industry consultation process, "The only industry consultation I am aware of taking place in Victoria involved a small and unrepresentative sample of large academic and research libraries" (p. 5). While research had identified gaps in the current course, including IT skills, Blunden asserts that the strong emphasis on information technology in the Diploma is not included in the Training Package, which either requires these skills as prerequisites or implies that these skills would be acquired from other related Training Packages as elective units. Equally the de-emphasis of technical services, with acquisition and cataloguing processes offered as electives in the Training Package, could be viewed as an erosion of the traditional core of the library technician's training. Blunden concludes her assessment by suggesting that the customisation of the Training Package by providers and competencies replacing the national curriculum will reduce the transferability and portability of students' skills and qualifications.

ALIA Response to the Training Packages

In a 1999 response to the development of the Training Packages, the Executive Director of ALIA, Nicholson, suggested that the Packages "offer several pathways to a qualification, they can be implemented flexibly to meet the needs of enterprises, individuals and training providers, yet still provide a nationally recognised qualification,

and offer a range of assessment options for the workplace and formal training" (p. 1). Nicholson stated that ALIA would be working with CREATE on a number of unresolved issues, including the realignment of vocational education and training programs, the role of competency within enterprise agreements, individual and employer responsibilities for assessment and costs of implementing competency-based training and/or assessment in the workplace. This response does not address the fact that the Training Packages can result in five qualification levels or consider which qualification levels will be recognised by ALIA as entry-level training for library technicians.

ALIA lodged a submission to the Senate inquiry into the quality of vocational education and training in Australia which included six recommendations that highlight the impact of the reforms in VET on the library and information sector, with a specific focus on TAFE libraries. ALIA recommended that TAFE libraries be allocated additional funding and resources to assist them to develop the infrastructure necessary to enhance new teaching methodologies and access to electronic information (Australian Library and Information Association, 1999b). The Association also recommended that all registered training providers be required to provide evidence of adequate learning support resources. This recommendation resulted from anecdotal evidence that private providers were utilising TAFE libraries for learning resource support.

Unfortunately ALIA did not address the quality of provision of TAFE and private providers in the delivery of courses to library technicians in its submission. It can be suggested that the reform of vocational education and training and the introduction of the Training Packages have major funding, resource and quality implications for all training providers and for library workplaces. These implications have an impact on the provision of training for library technicians, the provision of continuing professional development, the provision of on-the-job training and the ALIA course recognition process.

In a May 2000 letter to TAFE course coordinators, ALIA stated that "at the April teleconference, the Board of Education considered a report from Margaret Starre on the Library and Information Services Industry Package, identifying issues raised by the Package that require consideration by the Board of Education" (Australian Library and Information Association, personal communication, May 23, 2000). The Board intended to establish a working party to report to the July meeting on the implications of the Package and the ALIA course recognition process In a recent telephone conversation the ALIA Manager, Policy, Projects and Research stated that Margaret Starre had presented her report and recommendations at an October meeting (M. Murphy, personal communication, November 7, 2000). The report is not publicly available as yet, and requests, to ALIA and to Margaret Starre, for a copy or indication of content of the recommendations have not been forthcoming.

Marie Murphy (personal communication, November 7, 2000) indicated that, in her opinion, a wide range of issues had emerged from the Training Package development and implementation process which required clarification. These issues included the lack of prerequisites for individual competency units and qualifications, the impact and quality of workplace assessment, the emphasis on client service skills at the expense of technical skills in the Package and the continuing role of ALIA in the course recognition process. Murphy was aware that substantial changes to the Training Packages were occurring at the local implementation level and indicated that these changes were approved by regional ITABs. While Murphy suggested that ALIA wished to retain its course recognition process at the Diploma qualification level, she acknowledged that this would require careful consideration of all the issues and intensive dialogue with TAFE training providers.

In response to changes in the education and training of library workers, ALIA revised its education policy statements in 1999. In October 1999, the Board decided not to immediately implement the revised criteria for course recognition until there was further clarification of the general directions of education and training and acceptance by members of the *The Library Industry: Core knowledge, skills and attitudes* statement which was to be incorporated in the education policy statements. The revised statement (Appendix N) for the technician level is more closely aligned with the Training Package requirements. The statement still submits that "an academic unit offering courses in library studies should establish and regularly convene appropriate mechanisms for industry consultation, such as course advisory panels" (ALIA, personal communication, May 23, 2000). It could be suggested that course advisory committees, which were an important and relevant aspect of local course development before the advent of national courses and the industry endorsed Training Packages, could be considered redundant in the current training environment.

Role of CREATE Australia

CREATE organised a national workshop in Canberra on 27th October, 2000 for all those involved in implementing the Training Package to "compare notes, hear about what's happening, and plan for the future" (CREATE, 2000). The cost of attending the workshop was $65. In the promotion leaflet advertising the workshop, the Chief Executive Officer of CREATE, Cassandra Parkinson, suggests that "training packages are a useful tool for education, training and professional development but they are only as good as what teachers do with them" (CREATE , 2000) and encourages educators and trainers to share their wisdom:

> We hope that the workshop will be the start of a national library training network and that CREATE can help facilitate ongoing communication. Networking will also help us to update and improve the training package and to learn from the experience of those on the ground actually implementing it. (CREATE, 2000)

A request to CREATE for information on the outcomes of the workshop has not been acknowledged. In a recent online *Update newsletter* CREATE (2000, p. 1) reports that around 35 library representatives attended the workshop. Several participants presented case studies on the implementation of the Training Package in libraries, although no details are provided in the newsletter.

The timing of this workshop, over twelve months after the endorsement of the Training Package, and after the implementation process by most TAFE institutions, is curious. No other information or documentation has been forwarded to TAFE teachers, and apparently, as a commercial industry body, CREATE must charge fees to participants of a national library training network and ongoing communication.

The further reform of the vocational education and training sector from 1996 and the introduction of national industry Training Packages have been accompanied by wide ranging debate, review and inquiry. Response to this debate indicates that further reform is inevitable if the government is to achieve its objective of a national quality vocational education and training system in Australia.

Further reform may assist and encourage the library industry, including the professional association and training providers, to review the library industry Training Package and ensure that it meets all stakeholders' requirements for quality education and training for library technicians.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This examination of the history and development of education and training for library technicians in Australia has revealed a number of issues that have remained contentious over the thirty years since the introduction of the first course. A number of other issues have emerged more recently, particularly in response to government reform of the vocational education and training sector over the last decade.

History of Education and Training for Library Technicians

A range of stakeholders have contributed to the development of education and training courses for library technicians: professional librarians, the professional association, library educators in the TAFE and university sectors, industry advisory bodies, library technicians and students.

The initial introduction and development of courses was advocated and supported by some influential industry representatives who recognised the increasingly important role of support staff and were concerned about their personal and professional career opportunities. Early educators stressed the need for courses to reflect workplace practices and remain responsive to industry changes and developments and the importance of establishing and maintaining close links and cooperation with employers. Course recognition processes by the professional association ensured industry acceptance, encouraged standardisation of course content and portability of qualifications and assisted in quality control. Revision of course content to encompass technological and organisational changes and upgrading of qualifications from Certificate, Associate Diploma to Diploma level have occurred at regular intervals in response to industry and

enterprise demand and the evolving role and acceptance of the library technician in the workforce.

The national curriculum at Diploma level encouraged educators to develop innovative teaching and assessment products and to expand access to training opportunities through the introduction of external study packages and recognition of prior learning. It also ensured the portability of qualifications and provided pathways to higher education opportunities through formal credit transfer and articulation arrangements.

The national Library and Information Services Training Package links training to identified industry competency standards, provides a range of qualifications and encourages on-the-job training and assessment. While the current debate about the Training Packages has indicated a wide range of concerns and contentious issues, it is too early to accurately predict the outcome of their introduction. It would, however, be disappointing for all stakeholders if the Training Packages did not maintain, if not improve on, the positive features of the national Diploma curriculum.

Role of the Library Technician

The role of the library technician in the workplace has endured as a major concern in the literature. Discussion has focused on the need for differentiation between professional and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities, the need for adequate recognition of the role of the library technician and the need for the education and training of library technicians to effectively reflect library industry practice and prepare students for the workplace. This study has principally focused on the relationship between training and workplace practice and has not attempted to fully document or analyse the role of the library paraprofessional. Although, as Bailey (1993, p. 3) has noted, "the interrelationship

between practice, education, professional development, research and representation is fundamental to the evolution of library technicians".

Evidence of employer confusion about the appropriate role of the technician, professional librarian jealousy and the underutilisation of technicians have been recurring themes in both Australian and international literature, since the advent of paraprofessional education and training and the introduction of these graduates into the library workplace. The potential for misuse of technicians for economic cost cutting by employers, competition with librarians for paraprofessional positions and confusion about appropriate qualification levels are also discussed in the literature. While it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the misuse of technicians, a recent survey of the employment of graduates from the Curtin University of Technology professional courses reveals that 20.8% of librarians were employed in paraprofessional positions in the period 1993 to 1997, an increase of 5% over the 1988 to 1992 period. While the authors of the survey suggest that these graduates may have been continuing in jobs for which they were already qualified and had not been successful in changing careers, the high percentage does indicate increased competition for library technician positions (Genoni, Exon, Farrelly, 2000, p. 251).

A large number of early commentators predicted that distinct delineation of professional and non-professional roles and clearly defined and recognised educational and training objectives for both groups would address and solve workplace role confusion and ambiguity. Others suggested that major workplace restructuring was necessary to successfully accommodate this new group of workers. It could also be proposed that the introduction of education for library technicians before the delineation and restructuring processes had been considered or implemented has contributed to the lack of an effective resolution of the issue.

The professional association, the LAA and its successor, ALIA, have endeavoured to address the need for role differentiation by, initially, formulating lists of tasks appropriate to the library technician, and more recently, by devising work-level guidelines for librarians and library technicians. These guidelines have been used to inform both industry and training providers of the characteristics of different positions. However, as is evident from the literature, the guidelines have never been completely successful in achieving their objectives. More recently, various stakeholders, including ALIA, have recognised the impossibility, impracticality and even undesirability of formulating rigid definitions and guidelines. In the introduction to the current guidelines, ALIA emphasises that the increasing complexity of careers in a changing library and information environment makes it impossible and impractical to provide a definitive guide, "work value assessment now needs to focus much more keenly on the knowledge and competencies of individual people, rather than on static classification of positions" (Australian Library and Information Association, 1998, cover).

While there is evidence of continuing confusion about professional and paraprofessional roles and increased blurring of the roles of newly qualified librarians and senior library technicians, there is also more recognition of the 'distinct', rather than 'support' role of the technician which is upheld by the latest ALIA work-level guidelines. Two major ALIA Dunn & Wilson scholarship projects by library technicians have examined the career progression and practice of library technicians operating at higher than traditional levels (Bailey, 1995), and the currency, accuracy and usefulness of job descriptions for library technician positions (Denny, 1997). Both studies provide evidence of the expansion of the library technician into supervisory and management roles and acknowledge that the initial library technician education and training obtained by these workers provided a firm basis for their career progression. In a study of convergence in

the roles of library technicians and librarians, Barlow (1999) reported that interviewees perceived an increasingly professional standing for library technicians which did appear to support a convergence, but that this was subject to individual skills and performance and the circumstances of the employing institution.

A number of contributors to the discussion have argued that the continuing debate about roles is wasted effort that creates unnecessary divisions between individual library workers and within the total library and information industry. The library industry confronts a wide range of challenges in the current information environment which, it can be suggested, will only be effectively countered by a concerted effort from a united and determined workforce.

International Trends

While it is beyond the brief of this research to provide a major comparative analysis, it is interesting to note that the problems concerning the role, education and training of library technicians are not isolated to Australia. The SKIP (Skills for new Information Professionals) Project, undertaken by the University of Plymouth Academic and Information Services in 1996-1997, looked at the changing learning environment and the impact of information and communications technology on staff in UK higher education library and information services. The SKIP findings on the roles of paraprofessional staff and library assistants noted increased responsibilities for this group and variations on how levels of responsibility operated at given times, particularly in the increasing absence of professional staff. Paraprofessionals reported widespread discontent caused by poorly defined responsibilities, animosity between professionals and non-professionals, vested interests in the preservation of the professional/non-professional divide, lack of career advancement and dissatisfaction with training (Garrod & Sidgreaves, 1998). While this

group were found to be extremely receptive to new ideas, their training needs were generally overlooked by their institutions.

US educators, Wilson and Hermanson (1998), have stated that "technology is making it possible for library technicians to do many of the jobs which at one time were traditionally reserved for librarians. Economic pressures have encouraged libraries to take advantage of this" (p. 479). Commenting on the large body of literature documenting the role blurring between professionals and paraprofessionals, Wilson and Hermanson consider that this is inevitable given that in many institutions "delegation has been more ambivalent than complete" (p. 490) and that professional staff lack a clear role definition. Wilson and Hermanson conclude that "generally speaking, personnel and compensation systems have not caught up (or caught on) either, leaving a fertile ground for resentment all around" (p. 490).

Education and Training Solutions

As noted in this examination, the consensus of opinion about solving role confusion in the library workplace has stressed the need for clear definitions of professional and paraprofessional responsibilities and the development of distinct and separate educational pathways. Recent developments, such as the introduction of higher level qualifications for technicians, higher level knowledge and skills, including management, supervisory, client education and training studies, formal articulation arrangements between TAFE and the university sector, and library technician training in a university at Associate Degree level, have broken down some traditional barriers and distinctions between professional and paraprofessional education.

Since the inception of courses, educators and other commentators have noted the difficulty of designing and delivering a purely practical curriculum for library technicians.

It has been inevitable that courses have incorporated the 'why' as well as the 'how', providing knowledge as well as training in most subject areas and blurring the boundaries between professional and paraprofessional education. ALIA expects that library technician graduates will be "capable of comprehension, application and communication and have an ability to analyse and evaluate situations" (Australian Library and Information Association, 1998, p. 139), implying a sound theoretical background as well as competency in technical skills.

Some commentators have proposed more radical solutions to the role confusion problem which are worthy of serious consideration. In her predictions for the future, Young (1996), a library practitioner, educator and University Pro-Vice-Chancellor, suggested that either education and training of library and information workers would align more closely and result in the disappearance of the professional/paraprofessional distinction or that TAFE would be fully acknowledged as the training sector, and university graduates would attend TAFE for the skilling component of their preparation as library and information workers. And Hawcroft (1997) has proposed that library education should proceed along one path with exit points at appropriate stages. He suggested that the national Diploma course could provide the foundation for a single core, multi-level library curriculum. As outlined previously, the 1998 report by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training supported these views, stating that collaboration between TAFE and universities on the education and training for professional and paraprofessionals occupations could achieve resource savings and result in better quality graduates (p. 81).

General and Technical Education for Library Technicians

The content of the early courses for library technicians comprised a range of technical and general education core and elective subjects. The inclusion of general education, non-library subjects was considered necessary for students entering the course at Year 10 high school level and to provide the opportunity for students to develop personal interests. The first LAA library technician course recognition guidelines required that courses include optional studies in any of a wide range of non-library studies.

The Kangan Report of 1974 emphasised the importance of balancing general and vocational education to ensure that people were able to adapt to changing life and work conditions and was accepted by many library practitioners and educators. Some early commentators (Young, 1979) were particularly vocal and urged the inclusion of a broad range of general education subjects to equip technicians with relevant life skills and allow for greater mobility to other tertiary education.

Examination of subject offerings in courses from 1970 to 2000 reveals the gradual disappearance of any component of general education in the curriculum. The national Diploma contains only two elective modules: Literature and the library user, Australian political process and information, with any general education content, although the learning outcomes stress the need to relate these topics to the library industry. The opportunity for students to undertake specialist library studies was also reduced in the Diploma, with no specific inclusion of modules on library services for children or multicultural groups or on special collections: government and legal publications, local history, etc. A number of TAFE institutions introduced their own elective modules to provide specialist library studies.

While the Training Packages are committed to supporting the concept of lifelong learning (Australian National Training Authority, 1998, p. 7), the interpretation of lifelong

learning appears to be narrowly focused on vocational skills and competencies and the need for workers to upgrade and update their skills throughout their working lives. The Library Industry Training Package does not contain any general education units or specialist library units.

The 1998 report on the appropriate roles of institutes of technical and further education advocated the "incorporation of more elements of general education in VET, using methods appropriate to VET students and industry, so as to train more 'rounded' TAFE graduates for industry, society and personal development" (*Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 49). A 1996 research project had demonstrated that training in vocational competencies did not lead to the acquisition of the Mayer key competencies which were considered the foundation of lifelong learning. The report recommended the use of specific educational strategies to incorporate elements of general studies in such a way that makes it relevant to students and their employers (p. 50). The more recent Senate inquiry into the quality of VET has also recommended initiatives to clarify and improve the specification of the key competencies in national Training Packages (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education References Committee, 2000).

The ALIA education statement on continuing professional development suggests that members have a responsibility to themselves, as well as to the community, to demonstrate a commitment to life-long learning.

> Life-long learning extends and develops the knowledge, skills and competencies of practitioners. It also enables them to prepare for their work more effectively, to broaden their career and to undertake new tasks. Continuing professional development is a significant component of life-long learning". (Australian Library and Information Association, 2000a)

To encourage members to participate in life-long learning, ALIA has introduced a continuing professional development (CPD) compliance membership category.

Given the emphasis on the importance of life-long learning to the association and the library industry, it may be time to revisit the debate on the appropriate balance of technical and general education in courses for library technicians.

Library Technician Educators

A number of commentators have drawn attention to a range of problems which confront the TAFE teacher and obviously influence the quality of library technician education and training. Educators must conform to institution and local training authority bodies to gain course accreditation, to local industry requirements and to the ALIA course recognition processes. As has been noted, these requirements are not always in accord.

Milne (1980) was one of the first educators to discuss the pressures on TAFE teachers to provide adequate practical experience for students without sufficient funding for staff, equipment and resources. These pressures have increased, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with the introduction of automated technology, computerised library systems and the increase in library networks and costs associated with providing student access to this technology. Hyland and Naylor (1993) have outlined the bureaucratic processes involved in course re-accreditation and the concern with teachers' industrial knowledge and experience when funding is not available for professional development. Hyland and Rogers (1997) identified an aging teaching population, tighter budgets, increased class sizes and mergers with other departments as major issues for library technician teaching staff. Tighter budgets have forced teaching staff to seek alternative avenues of revenue: the provision of short courses, continuing professional development programs and the development of flexible delivery programs.

Critics of the recent reforms of the VET/TAFE sector have pointed to the stagnation in total teaching staff numbers in TAFE and increase in fixed term contracts during a period of continuous change and increase in student numbers. The Senate Committee of inquiry into the quality of vocational education and training found that government cuts to VET funding have resulted in a reduced capacity to provide quality training and a lowering of the standards of professional practice for VET teachers and trainers.

Full-time teaching loads, increasing administrative procedures and inadequate funding also make it very difficult for TAFE teachers to engage in research that is necessary to establish the efficacy of teaching and training programs. It may be suggested that the lack of specific study into the effect of competency based training and assessment on library technicians, comparative research on the outcomes of the national curriculum, and the scarcity of technician graduate surveys are a direct result of inadequate funding, full-time teaching loads and increasing administrative responsibilities in library technician programs.

As the current debate on the reform of VET and the introduction of the Training Packages implies, opportunities for TAFE educators to participate in the design of courses have been significantly reduced although there is increased emphasis on teachers to develop innovative delivery options.

The Senate inquiry into the quality of VET in Australia has recommended a major increase in funding to TAFE and the restoration of the skills and qualifications of VET teachers and trainers, including a framework for professional development and expertise. The implementation of these recommendations may have beneficial results for TAFE educators.

Library Technicians

Library technicians and students are obviously major stakeholders in programs designed for their education and training. Since the introduction of the library technician category of ALIA membership and formation of the Library Technician's Section in 1979, library technicians have been active in promoting their interests within the library industry. Library Technician conferences, a number of major publications, the ALIA Dunn & Wilson Scholarship, participation in regional Library Advisory Course Committees, State and Territory Library Technicians Sections and the ALIAlibtec listserv all provide forums for the discussion of issues of concern to library technicians. While the predominant theme of this discussion had been the role of the paraprofessional in the library workforce, there has been some consideration of the relevance of education and training to this role.

As Nicholson (1997) has stated, however, library technicians are under-represented in the professional association, with approximately 500 library technician members of the total 5898 personal membership. Nicholson (1997) has suggested that this under-representation has meant that technicians receive a high benefit at low cost, "that the responsibility for active participation falls on a few members, opportunities for interaction are reduced, and the responsibility for influencing or making decisions of significance to library technicians falls to those few or is delegated to others, to non-library-technicians" (p. 2). A number of reasons have been advanced for the poor library technician membership numbers, including cost of membership and attendance at relevant conferences, workshops, etc., relevancy, and 'what does ALIA do for us?'. ALIA, in its current revitalisation program, has recognised the need to increase its membership base and is implementing recruitment and retention strategies for students and individual members.

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Opportunities for library technician and student participation in the development of relevant education programs appear to have become more limited in the current training environment. However, it must be suggested that it is only through participation in the professional association and related forums that library technicians can expect to voice concerns or influence policy and decision-making processes.

Role of Industry

While it has been suggested that the library industry has been instrumental in determining the revised competency standards and in designing the content of the library industry Training Package, it is difficult to establish the repre ntative composition of the national industry body, CREATE Australia, and its State and Territory Branches. CREATE has been responsible for revising the competency standards, designing the Training Packages and communicating with regional and local industry representatives and training providers. Several commentators have discussed the difficulty of ascertaining the level of consultation that CREATE has engaged in during the revision process.

At the local Northern Territory level, CREATE NT has accessed Training Package implementation funding, under the Framing the Future project, to "develop strategies to use the Training Package to replace c urses currently being delivered, to introduce new courses and to investigate uses (other than delivery), for the training package" (CREATE NT, 2000, p. 1). The Project has involved two information sessions for library industry representatives and the Northern Territory TAFE training provider. As previously noted, there was evidence of considerable industry ignorance and confusion about the implications of the Training Packages at these sessions. The project manager/facilitator, who has no practitioner or educator experience in the library industry, has reported that

she has "been learning about the issues associated with workplace training in libraries" and has described the library industry "as very structured and it takes time to introduce change - particularly associated with the shift in dynamic from the registered training organisation to the workplace trainer/assessor" (CREATE NT, 2000, p. 1).

It is reasonable to question how a bureaucratic government commercial industry body, which represents all the cultural and recreational industries in Australia, can effectively understand, and communicate with, all its constituents.

Role of the Australian Library and Information Association

The examination of the history and development of education and training for library technicians indicates that the professional association, the LAA and later ALIA, at the national level, has played an important, if reactive, role. State and Territory Branches were, in a number of cases, more active in promoting the development of appropriate courses, participating in the revision and upgrading of courses and liaising with industry.

The association has stated that it has a vital role to play in the education of its members and "an obligation to ensure that courses in library and information studies will equip graduates with the capacity to meet current and future requirements for practice and to develop in their areas of expertise" (Australian Library and Information Association, 1999a, p. 2). While the association has developed work-level guidelines and first award course recognition policies, these have generally been in response to both workplace and education requirements.

It can be suggested that ALIA's failure to grasp the importance of competency standards and to ensure their primacy in setting the standards has diminished their role in the education and training of library technicians. This role has been further lessened by the apparent lack of significant input by ALIA into the development and implementation

of the Library Industry Training Package. It is difficult to ascertain what role ALIA has played in the development of the Packages given the scantiness of information available to members, industry or educators from the association. It would appear that the current revitalisation process has preoccupied ALIA and reduced its current capacity to deal with other issues.

The Training Package must impact on the ALIA library technician course recognition process. As Reid (1998) has predicted, it is apparent that the industry will see a range of private registered training organisations, as well as the TAFE sector, issuing a range of qualifications gained through workplace or private training and/or assessment. Already, a number of private providers, including AIMA Training & Consultancy Services Limited and DocMatrix/InfoTrain, have indicated they will introduce training and assessment programs to Certificate IV level. Industry and ALIA currently only recognise the Diploma as the appropriate employment entry level qualification for library technician. Other support staff, including clerical workers, library assistants and aides and shelvers, do not require any qualifications to gain employment, with basic in-house training considered sufficient. How will ALIA respond to the range of Certificate level qualifications available through the Training Package? How will ALIA ensure that the quality of training/assessment offered for these qualifications meets industry and educational standards? How will ALIA answer requests by holders of these Certificates for recognition or acceptance as qualified library workers? What responsibility does ALIA bear for supporting the introduction of Certificate level qualifications when these are not professionally or industrially recognised or rewarded?

TAFE library technician courses are accredited through individual institution and State or Territory Training Authorities. The ALIA course recognition process currently operates as an indication to industry that graduates of recognised courses satisfy

professional standards of education and training and applies only to courses offered by TAFE and higher education institutions. It is possible that unless ALIA decides to offer the recognition process to all registered training providers, the recognition process will lose its value and credibility.

The association course recognition process has been a subject of debate throughout its history, with a number of commentators suggesting that the Board of Education's influence in setting education and training standards has diminished with institutional and industry control becoming more important. The revitalisation process may be an ideal time for the association to reexamine its role in the education and training of its constituents.

Future of Education and Training for Library Technicians

As this research has demonstrated, the thirty years of education and training for library technicians in Australia has been a period of change and adjustment for the library industry, professional association, educators, library technicians and students. The influence of major stakeholders in the development of appropriate courses has fluctuated throughout the period, with government policy, implemented by bureaucracy, currently determining the major objectives of vocational education and training.

As a number of commentators have suggested, while there was general consensus that Australian vocational education and training needed to be more aligned to industry requirements, there is now an awareness that government bureaucracies in the sector have been replaced by industry bureaucracies. These bureaucracies, including CREATE Australia, appear to have excluded educators and trainers from the development process and lack adequate communication pathways with industry and professional associations.

While the National Training Framework, including competency based training and national industry Training Packages, was intended to address industry concerns with vocational education and training and promote national qualifications and portability, these objectives are not being met in current implementation processes. It is obvious, from recent debate and research, that further major reform will be necessary before the library industry, professional association and library technician educators can be confident that they are providing quality, national and portable education and training for library technicians.

Limitations of the Research

While this study has provided full details of the content of the first courses developed in each State and Territory for library technicians, it has only provided an overview of the content of courses, with some specific examples, from 1982 to 1996. The overview, supplemented by specific examples, was considered sufficient to describe and analyse course content.

The research has been derived, primarily, from existing published or officially documented sources. This has been complemented by limited personal contact with relevant individuals and organisations, particularly in relation to the implementation, and appraisal of the Library Industry Training Package. Unfortunately, a request for a copy of a report to ALIA on the impact of the Library Industry Training Package, and requests for information from CREATE Australia on a Training Package workshop were not forthcoming in time to be included in this research project.

Recommendations for Further Research

The early history of education and training for library staff has been extensively recorded, albeit in an uncoordinated and piecemeal fashion, throughout the literature. There has been very little documentation on the impact of recent changes in the vocational education and training sector on the training of library technicians from library commentators. As noted, there is a very distinct lack of formal research into the impact of competency based training and assessment and the national curriculum on library technician education and training. Obviously, the Library Industry Training Package will also require future evaluation and assessment.

There is a wide range of research that could be undertaken to address these current deficiencies:

- evaluation of the degree to which competency based training is meeting the requirements of industry, individual workplaces, employers, trainers and students;
- assessment of the contribution that competency based training has made to the achievement of knowledge and skills for library technicians;
- comparison of the effectiveness of competency based training for library technicians with previous training models;
- studies of the level of understanding and adoption of the library industry competency standards in individual organisations;
- review of cooperative links between industry and training providers to ensure quality training for library technicians, including industry placement, field work, work experience, on-the-job training and assessment arrangements; and
- examination of the development and implementation of the Library Industry Training Package.

Methodology could include national, regional and local surveys, intensive regional and local case studies, library technician graduate surveys, employment surveys and consultation with industry, the professional association and training providers.

In 1981 Levett conducted an interesting comparative study of paraprofessionals in four fields and replication of this study could analyse recent developments in education, training and workplace roles for these groups.

An examination of international trends in the provision of library paraprofessionals, particularly in those countries which have introduced competency standards and/or competency based training, such as the United Kingdom and New Zealand, could provide opportunities for valuable comparative analysis.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research is Australia's primary research and development organisation and offers opportunities, including funding, for VET and TAFE providers and educators, to undertake research and study in the field of vocational education and training. While, as previously mentioned, it is difficult for individual TAFE teachers to engage in research and study, a consortium of interested library technician educators could apply for funding and support to conduct research in relevant areas.

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APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR THE EDUCATION OF LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1976

Tasks which the Library Technician should be able to perform.

Technical Services

1. Searching and verifying bibliographical data.
2. Revising printed cards to conform to the library's practice.
3. Cataloguing duplicates, new editions and fiction.
4. Preparing descriptive cataloguing entries for library materials.
5. Classifying selected materials.
6. Assigning subject headings to selected materials.
7. Filing catalogue cards below the rod.
8. Identifying items needing repair and needing rebinding.
9. Assisting the preparation of binding specifications.
10. Listing material selected for disposal, where the form of entry has to be determined.

User Services

11. Explaining library rules and procedures to borrowers.
12. Maintaining circulation systems.
13. Operating audio-visual equipment.
14. Maintaining and making adjustments to audio-visual hardware.
15. Collecting and recording information for in-house directories and referral files.
16. Maintaining loose leaf reference material.
17. Preparing and filing vertical file material.
18. Assisting in the compilation of indexes.
19. Processing inter-library loan requests.
20. Answering ready-reference enquiries and assisting the librarian with other reference enquiries.
21. Setting up library displays and exhibits.
22. Assisting in the planning of library displays.

Production and Reprography

23. Producing publicity and display material.
24. Recording on audio-tape and video-tape.
25. Photographing in black and white and colour.
26. Processing, printing and enlarging black and white photographs.
27. Microfilming library material.
28. Duplicating print materials, slides, tape recordings, etc.
29. Making and assembling multi-media kits for loan or instructional use.
30. Assisting in the desigr and planning of multi-media kits.
31. Assisting in the production of television programmes.
32. Assisting in the production of 8 mm and 16 mm motion picture films.

Administrative and General

33. Supervising and training non-professional staff.
34. Writing procedures for tasks which he supervises.
35. Presenting in graphic form and interpreting elementary statistics.
36. Assisting in the evaluation and selection of equipment and supplies.
37. Editing computer print-outs preparatory to final runs or photo typesetting.
38. Operating in-house DP equipment.

Tasks which the library technician should be able to supervise

Listed below are typical tasks which the library technician should be able to supervise. To be capable of supervising them, he must understand how they are performed, and he may be required to perform them in a particular work situation.

1. Sorting and checking of new material.
2. Receipt and recording of serials.
3. Updating of on-order and in-process files.
4. Identification and follow-up of outstanding orders.
5. Ordering of printed catalogue cards.
6. Typing and/or duplication of catalogue entries.
7. Production of secondary entries and references.
8. Allocation of book numbers.
9. Pre-sorting of catalogue entries for filing.
10. Filing of shelf-list cards.
11. Recording of revised location data etc. on existing catalogue entries.
12. Replacement of damaged cards and guide cards.
13. Removal of cards from catalogue for discarded material.
14. Registration of borrowers.
15. Updating of registration records.
16. Charging and discharging of loans, handling reserves, overdues, etc.
17. Routing of periodicals and maintenance of routing record.
18. Recording of inter-library loan records.
19. Maintenance of publicity records, e.g. scrapbooks and cuttings files.
20. Filing of correspondence.
21. Recording of statistics.
22. Recording of financial transactions.
23. Ordering of supplies and equipment.
24. Updating of mailing lists, exchange records etc.
25. End-processing of library materials.
26. Repair of selected materials.
27. Routine preparation and dispatch of materials for binding.
28. Maintenance of binding records.
29. Inspection of materials returned from bindery and preparation for use.
30. Stocktaking routines.
31. Shifting material and adjustment of location labels.
32. Reading of shelves and files and maintenance of files in correct order.

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA ON THE RECOGNITION OF LIBRARY TECHNICIAN COURSES, 1978

Part 1: Criteria for the Recognition of Library Technician Courses

1. Nature of the course
   Courses should be generalist in nature and should prepare library technicians over a wide range of activities in all types of libraries.

2. The school or department
   (a) The Association believes that Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions are the appropriate institutions to conduct library technician courses.
   (b) The department responsible for the course should have such status within the institution as will guarantee sufficient independence. It will be expected to have -
   - An adequate and separate teaching staff whose responsibility it will be to plan and organize the course. Continuous communication between teaching staff, employers and other interested parties is essential. An advisory committee for the course may be the most appropriate way to achieve this.
   - There must be adequate accommodation and equipment for the department including staff work rooms and provision for tutorial work. The general services of the institution should be fully available to the department.
   - The students enrolled in the course should be able, and be encouraged, to share fully in the general student life of the institution.
   - The institution should possess a library sufficient to support the teaching program.
   - The library of the institution, together with other libraries within easy access, should be sufficient to:-
     (i) support the teaching program of the course in complementary and peripheral fields;
     (ii) afford students appropriate experience.

3. The teaching staff
   The teaching staff for the course will be expected to be of high calibre, well qualified for this field by education and experience, and capable of teaching well. There should be a full-time Head of Department, and sufficient staff to provide an acceptable staff-student ratio for a laboratory-type teaching situation.

4. Entry requirements
   Restrictions on entry to library technicians courses should be minimal. Performance in the course should be used as the most important criterion for judging the fitness of the student.

5. Duration of courses
   A course leading to a Library Technician Certificate should generally be of two years' duration, with concurrent work experience or field work of approximately 50% being regarded as an integral part of the course curriculum.

Part 2: Content of Courses

With the variety in entry level there will be variety in course content. In general terms:

1. Students on completion of Library Technician courses should be able to perform the operational and supervising tasks set out in Part 3. To perform these tasks satisfactorily the library technician will need to understand thoroughly the tasks themselves as well as the inter-relationship of tasks within a library. A knowledge of the functions, objectives and operations of the various kinds of library and an appreciation of their service orientation is also necessary.

2. In order to ensure that library technicians are adequately trained for they tasks they have to undertake, the course should be designed so that students reach an exit-level at least equivalent to that of final year exit-level high school students.

3. The vocational content of the course should be supplemented by enrichment subjects, the extent of which will depend on entry level. As well as library subjects there are several related subjects which are seen as having great value in a library technician course. These include supervision and training of non-professional staff; human relations; and communication, including business communication, publicity and promotion techniques.

4. The nature and extent of library and non-library subjects will vary according to the entry level and pre-requisites for the course, but should be sufficient to allow students the opportunity to develop personal interests insofar as this is compatible with the course objectives. Optional studies could be undertaken in any of a very wide range of library and non-library subjects. The choice of options may vary from one course to another.

5. Further information may be obtained from the Chairman, Board of education, Library Association of Australia.

Part 3: Tasks which the Library Technician should be able to perform

Technical Services

1. Searching and verifying bibliographical data.
2. Revising printed cards to conform to the library's practice.
3. Cataloguing duplicates, new editions and fiction.
4. Preparing descriptive cataloguing entries for selected library materials.
5. Classifying selected materials.
6. Assigning subject headings to selected materials.
7. Filing catalogue cards below the rod.
8. Identifying items needing repair and needing rebinding.
9. Assisting the preparation of binding specifications.
10. Listing material selected for disposal, where the form of entry has to be determined.

User Services

11. Explaining library rules and procedures to borrowers.
12. Maintaining circulation systems.
13. Operating audio-visual equipment.
14. Maintaining and making adjustments to audio-visual hardware.
15. Collecting and recording information for in-house directories and referral files.
16. Maintaining loose leaf reference material.
17. Preparing and filing vertical file material.
18. Assisting in the compilation of indexes.
19. Processing inter-library loan requests.
20. Assisting the librarian with other reference enquiries.
21. Setting up library displays and exhibits.
22. Assisting in the planning of library displays.

Production and Reprography

23. Producing publicity and display material.
24. Recording on audio-tape and video-tape.
25. Photographing in black and white and colour.
26. Processing, printing and enlarging black and white photographs.
27. Microfilming library material.
28. Duplicating print materials, slides, tape recordings, etc.
29. Making and assembling multi-media kits for loan or instructional use.
30. Assisting in the design and planning of multi-media kits.
31. Assisting in the production of television programmes.
32. Assisting in the production of 8 mm and 16 mm motion picture films.

Administrative and General

33. Supervising and training non-professional staff.
34. Writing procedures for tasks which he supervises.
35. Presenting in graphic form and interpreting elementary statistics.
36. Assisting in the evaluation and selection of equipment and supplies.
37. Editing computer print-outs preparatory to final runs or photo typesetting.
38. Operating in-house DP equipment.

Tasks which the library technician should be able to supervise

Listed below are typical tasks which the library technician should be able to supervise. To be capable of supervising them, he must understand how they are performed, and he may be required to perform them in a particular work situation.

1. Sorting and checking of new material.
2. Receipt and recording of serials.
3. Updating of on-order and in-process files.
4. Identification and follow-up of outstanding orders.
5. Ordering of printed catalogue cards.

6. Typing and/or duplication of catalogue entries.
7. Production of secondary entries and references.
8. Allocation of book numbers.
9. Pre-sorting of catalogue entries for filing.
10. Filing of shelf-list cards.
11. Recording of revised location data etc. on existing catalogue entries.
12. Replacement of damaged cards and guide cards.
13. Removal of cards from catalogue for discarded material.
14. Registration of borrowers.
15. Updating of registration records.
16. Charging and discharging of loans, handling reserves, overdues, etc.
17. Routing of periodicals and maintenance of routing record.
18. Recording of inter-library loan records.
19. Maintenance of publicity records, e.g. scrapbooks and cuttings files.
20. Filing of correspondence.
21. Recording of statistics.
22. Recording of financial transactions.
23. Ordering of supplies and equipment.
24. Updating of mailing lists, exchange records etc.
25. End-processing of library materials.
26. Repair of selected materials.
27. Routine preparation and dispatch of materials for binding.
28. Maintenance of binding records.
29. Inspection of materials returned from bindery and preparation for use.
30. Stocktaking routines.
31. Shifting material and adjustment of location labels.
32. Reading of shelves and files and maintenance of files in correct order.

Library Association of Australia. (1978). *Handbook*. pp. 71-73. Sydney: LAA.

APPENDIX C

LIBRARY TECHNICIAN QUALIFICATIONS
A NOTE FOR EMPLOYING AUTHORITIES

There is a need in librarianship, as in many other professions, for middle level personnel to support and assist professional staff. In the library context, the term Library Technician is often used to describe such personnel. The Library Association of Australia recognises the need for courses intended to prepare library technicians for work in libraries and library-related activities, and has prepared guidelines to ensure that appropriate courses are developed.

The library technician is a person who possesses the specific library-oriented skills and general background knowledge necessary to enable him or her to perform satisfactorily tasks agreed on as appropriate for library technicians. Generally, these tasks will fall between those carried out by professional librarians and those carried out by unskilled staff. The library technician should be able to perform these tasks in libraries and resource centres of all types and sizes and in appropriate information centres.

More specifically, the tasks that the library technician should be competent to perform and/or supervise are listed in Part 3 of the accompanying Statement on the Recognition of Library Technician Courses. They comprise a wide range of tasks in all areas of library work. In acquisitions work, for example, the library technician should be able to search for, and verify bibliographic data, supervise the receipt of new materials and maintain appropriate records. In cataloguing, the technician should be able to undertake selective descriptive cataloguing, revise printed catalogue data to conform with the Library's practice and file catalogue cards. In circulation work. the technician should be able to register borrowers and explain lending procedures, reserve, charge and discharge materials, keep records and handle overdues. In reference work the technician should be able to assist the librarian with other inquiries and assist library users with the operation of audiovisual equipment. The library technician should be able to produce publicity and display materials, set up library displays, operate reprographic equipment and check edit lists for data processing. The training given should equip the library technician to work with library materials of all kinds.

The range of tasks performed by a library technician, and the extent of responsibility expected will very according to the type and size of library in which the technician is working, his or her experience, and the availability or otherwise of specialist staff to perform particular tasks.

In many cases the technician will be required to supervise and train library aides and other non-professional staff. In addition, the experienced library technician may have substantial supervisory responsibilities over a number of other library technicians and non-professional staff.

The Library Association of Australia, committed to improve the standard of librarianship and to promote, establish and improve library services, has a responsibility to support and maintain high standards in these courses for library technicians throughout Australia. The Association supports the establishment of library technician courses in Technical and

Further Education (TAFE) institutions because technical colleges have an established role in the training of technicians in all fields and a clear distinction should be made between these courses and those at professional level taught at universities and colleges of advanced education.

The Library Association of Australia sees the benefit of some diversity of approach and emphasis in courses offered by different institutions. However, to ensure that there is comparability between and portability of the qualifications awarded by the various TAFE authorities, a process of assessing library technician courses and of recognising those that meet the Association's standards is necessary.

APPENDIX D

STATEMENT OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA ON THE RECOGNITION OF LIBRARY TECHNICIAN COURSES, 1980

Changes to the 1978 Statement are indicated in bold.

Part 1: Criteria for the Recognition of Library Technician Courses

1. Nature of the course
   Courses should be generalist in nature and should prepare library technicians over a wide range of activities in all types of libraries.

2. The school or department
   (c) The Association believes that Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions are the appropriate institutions to conduct library technician courses.
   (d) The department responsible for the course should have such status within the institution as will guarantee sufficient independence. It will be expected to have -
   - An adequate and separate teaching staff whose responsibility it will be to plan and organize the course. Continuous communication between teaching staff, employers and other interested parties is essential. An advisory committee for the course may be the most appropriate way to achieve this.
   - There must be adequate accommodation and equipment for the department including staff work rooms and provision for tutorial work. The general services of the institution should be fully available to the department.
   - The students enrolled in the course should be able, and be encouraged, to share fully in the general student life of the institution.
   - The institution should possess a library sufficient to support the teaching program.
   - The library of the institution, together with other libraries within easy access, should be sufficient to:-
     (iii) support the teaching program of the course in complementary and peripheral fields;
     (iv) afford students appropriate experience.

3. The teaching staff
   The teaching staff for the course will be expected to be of high calibre, well qualified for this field by education and experience, and capable of teaching well. There should be a full-time Head of Department, and sufficient staff to provide an acceptable staff-student ratio for a laboratory-type teaching situation.

4. Entry requirements
   Restrictions on entry to library technicians courses should be minimal. Performance in the course should be used as the most important criterion for judging the fitness of the student.

5. **Duration of courses**
   A course leading to a Library Technician certificate should generally be of two years' duration with concurrent work experience or field work amounting to the equivalent of 24 weeks being regarded as an integral part of the course curriculum.

Part 2: Content of Courses

With the variety in entry level there will be variety in course content. In general terms:

1. Students on completion of Library Technician courses should be able to perform the operational and supervising tasks set out in Part 3. To perform these tasks satisfactorily the library technician will need to understand thoroughly the tasks themselves as well as the inter-relationship of tasks within a library. A knowledge of the functions, objectives and operations of the various kinds of library and an appreciation of their service orientation is also necessary.

2. In order to ensure that library technicians are adequately trained for they tasks they have to undertake, the course should be designed so that students reach an exit-level at least equivalent to that of final year exit-level high school students.

3. The vocational content of the course should be supplemented by enrichment subjects, the extent of which will depend on entry level. As well as library subjects there are several related subjects which are seen as having great value in a library technician course. These include supervision and training of non-professional staff; human relations; and communication, including business communication, publicity and promotion techniques.

4. The nature and extent of library and non-library subjects will vary according to the entry level and pre-requisites for the course, but should be sufficient to allow students the opportunity to develop personal interests insofar as this is compatible with the course objectives. Optional studies could be undertaken in any of a very wide range of library and non-library subjects. The choice of options may vary from one course to another.

5. Further information may be obtained from the Chairman, Board of Education, Library Association of Australia.

Part 3: Tasks which the Library Technician should be able to perform

Technical Services

1. Searching and verifying bibliographical data.
2. **Revising printed cards, entries from bibliographies, or selected machine readable records to conform to the library's practice.**
3. Cataloguing duplicates, new editions and fiction.
4. Preparing descriptive cataloguing entries for selected library materials.
5. Classifying selected materials.
6. Assigning subject headings to selected materials.
7. Filing catalogue cards below the rod.

8. Identifying items needing repair and needing rebinding.
9. Assisting the preparation of binding specifications.
10. Listing material selected for disposal, where the form of entry has to be determined.
11. **Coding data sheets for key punching.**
12. **Checking computer listings of newly added or modified entries.**
13. **Adding location data to machine readable data bases.**

User Services

14. Explaining library rules and procedures to borrowers.
15. Maintaining circulation systems.
16. Operating audio-visual equipment.
17. Maintaining and making adjustments to audio-visual hardware.
18. Collecting and recording information for in-house directories and referral files.
19. Maintaining loose leaf reference material.
20. Preparing and filing vertical file material.
21. Assisting in the compilation of indexes.
22. Processing inter-library loan requests.
23. Assisting the librarian with other reference enquiries.
24. Setting up library displays and exhibits.
25. Assisting in the planning of library displays.

Production and Reprography

26. Producing publicity and display material.
27. Recording on audio-tape and video-tape.
28. **Photographing in black and white and colour especially for production of 35 mm slides.**
29. Duplicating print materials, slides, tape recordings, etc.
30. Making and assembling multi-media kits for loan or instructional use.
31. **Assisting in the physical production of multi-media kits.**

Administrative and General

32. Supervising and training non-professional staff.
33. Writing procedures for tasks which he supervises.
34. Presenting in graphic form and interpreting elementary statistics.
35. Assisting in the evaluation and selection of equipment and supplies.
36. Editing computer print-outs preparatory to final runs or photo typesetting.
37. **Assisting with the operation of in-house data processing equipment.**

Tasks which the library technician should be able to supervise

Listed below are typical tasks which the library technician should be able to supervise. To be capable of supervising them, he must understand how they are performed, and he may be required to perform them in a particular work situation.

1. Sorting and checking of new material.
2. Receipt and recording of serials.
3. Updating of on-order and in-process files.
4. Identification and follow-up of outstanding orders.
5. Ordering of printed catalogue cards.
6. **Typing of catalogue cards, added entry headings, short business letters.**
7. **Key punching.**
8. Production of secondary entries and references.
9. Allocation of book numbers.
10. Pre-sorting of catalogue entries for filing.
11. Filing of shelf-list cards.
12. Recording of revised location data etc. on existing catalogue entries.
13. Replacement of damaged cards and guide cards.
14. Removal of cards from catalogue for discarded material.
15. Registration of borrowers.
16. Updating of registration records.
17. Charging and discharging of loans, handling reserves, overdues, etc.
18. Recording of inter-library loan records.
19. Maintenance of publicity records, e.g. scrapbooks and cuttings files.
20. Filing of correspondence.
21. Recording of statistics.
22. Recording of financial transactions.
23. Ordering of supplies and equipment.
24. Updating of mailing lists, exchange records etc.
25. End-processing of library materials.
26. Repair of selected materials.
27. Routine preparation and dispatch of materials for binding.
28. Maintenance of binding records.
29. Inspection of materials returned from bindery and preparation for use.
30. Stocktaking routines.
31. Shifting material and adjustment of location labels.
32. Reading of shelves and files and maintenance of files in correct order.

Note: Additional tasks resulting from technological developments may well be appropriately carried out by library technicians and individual teaching institutions should cater for these tasks in the courses.

Library Association of Australia. (1980). *Handbook*. (pp. 79-81). Sydney: LAA.

APPENDIX E

STATEMENT NO. 3
THE ROLES OF LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1982

1. **Preamble**
The Library Association of Australia in developing and maintaining high standards for librarianship has recognised the need for different levels of staff in libraries, particularly those whose training enables them to support the work of librarians. This need has become more obvious in recent years as libraries have become more complex organisations using advanced technologies in the application of which a wide variety of specialist skills is required. As in other professions, an occupational group of trained support staff has been recognised - the library technicians. In setting standards for the education of librarians and library technicians the Board of Education has outlined the roles of each group.

2. **The Librarian**
The librarian's role focuses on management, direction and policy-making. This requires the ability to design, develop and evaluate information services in response to clients' needs, and a high level of expertise in the identification, organisation and use of sources of information.

The librarian today is faced with the tasks related to:
- analysing the information needs of the community which the library serves;
- deciding which aspects of those needs the library can effectively serve;
- devising policies and plans by which appropriate services can be provided and, in particular, adapting the library for cost-effective participation in library networks;
- interacting with other professional groups and with commercial enterprises in the creation and maintenance of effective services;
- creating original bibliographical records of sources of information which facilitate the exploitation by users of the library's resources;
- interpreting for clients the most appropriate of available information sources and services;
- designing and managing information services to meet client needs;
- evaluating library performance against measures of responsiveness to client needs and of quality control;
- communicating with others in order to ensure for the library an equitable share in the allocation of resources.

The librarian therefore needs to be competent in -
Analysis, involving the identification of the essential features or constituent elements of any given entity or situation, and their relationships.
Evaluation, involving measurement and judgement in regard to criteria developed.
Synthesis, involving the combining of separate constituent elements into a unified whole creating new knowledge through categorisation and deduction.

3. **The Library Technician** works in support of the librarian, principally in operating and supervising routine procedures which control systems for handling materials and files.

The work of the library technician normally involves:

- maintaining specified procedures for the handling of materials and files at agreed levels of efficiency;
- operating and maintaining, or arranging maintenance of, equipment at agreed levels of performance;
- suggesting changes to enhance the efficiency of specified procedures;
- supervising the operation of specified procedures.

The library technician therefore needs to be competent in -
Comprehension, involving the ability to understand, explain and summarise rules, policies, methods and procedures.
Application, involving the ability to use rules, methods, instructions and procedures in existing and new situations and to demonstrate such methods and procedures.
Communication, involving the ability to explain and summarise rules, methods and procedures and report on problems encountered in operating specified procedures.

4. **Conclusion**

Without reference to the type, scope and scale of the particular library it is not possible to specify precisely the tasks performed by librarians and very difficult to specify those performed by library technicians.

The Association points out to employers, however, that the ability to supervise is not to be confused with the ability to manage. It is the role of the librarian to plan, organise, implement and manage library services; it is the role of the library technician to support the library's objectives by carrying out agreed procedures or seeing that they are carried out.

The library technician does not have the training or expertise of the librarian in overall management of a library service, or of a large department of a library, and should not be expected to fill this role. All libraries of whatever size require staff with professional competence and staff with technical knowledge and skills. The need for professional expertise and judgment may be intermittent in the smallest services and in individual service points of large library systems, but it is essential that they should be available when needed. The Association employs a full-time Industrial Officer who is available to assist those involved in negotiating or determining salaries, classifications and conditions of employment of library staff.

APPENDIX F

STATEMENT NO. 5
RECOGNITION OF FIRST AWARD COURSES: TECHNICIAN LEVEL, 1982

1. As outlined in Statement No. 2, the Board is responsible for the recognition of awards. Recognition procedures will include assessment of curriculum content, teaching school, teaching staff, student entry requirements and course duration. The Board considers that technical and further education (TAFE) institutions are appropriate institutions for conducting library technician courses, as such institutions have considerable experience in conducting other courses at a similar level.

2. **Course design**
   (a) The Board recognises that course design is the responsibility of individual institutions.
   (b) Courses should be generalist in nature and should prepare library technicians for a wide range of tasks in all types of libraries.
   (c) The vocational content of a course should be complemented by a general studies component. For students who enter a course with less than the equivalent of final year, exit-level high school studies, the general studies component should be sufficient to bring them to that level in general.
   (d) The Board recognises the possibility of using a variety of modes in the teaching of courses. This would allow patterns of full-time and part-time studies to be varied by the use of a mixed-mode offering, including full-time/part-time/block studies.

3. **Curriculum content**
   (a) All course leading to a first award at technician level should include studies in the following areas -
      (i) functions, purposes and operations of libraries of various types, and their service orientation, at an awareness level;
      (ii) types of library materials, their formats, characteristics and uses, at an awareness level;
      (iii) details of rules, methods and procedures in
         (1) technical services procedures, associated with the acquisition, bibliographic control, subject access and shelf preparation of library materials;
         (2) user services tasks associated with the circulation (including inter-library lending), operation of equipment and assisting the librarian with reference and information work;
         (3) use of audiovisual equipment and limited production tasks associated with the development of audiovisual resources;
         (4) care and repair of library materials including preparation for binding;
         (5) general tasks, including supervision of non-professional staff;
      (iv) practical skills such as typing, photography and display;
      (v) the essentials of library public relations

   (b) Courses at the first award level should ensure that through studies in the above areas students develop the following competencies which are essential to the role of the library technician:-

(i) **comprehension**, involving the ability to understand, explain and summarise rules, policies, methods and procedures;

(ii) **application**, involving the ability to use rules, methods, instructions and procedures in existing and new situations and to demonstrate such methods and procedures;

(iii) **communication**, involving the ability to explain and summarise rules, methods and procedures and report on problems encountered in operating specified procedures.

In addition, courses should aim to develop attitudes of service to the library's public, and co-operation with other library staff, and prepare students for a future of changing technology.

4. **The teaching school/department**

A teaching school offering library technician courses should

(a) be an integral part of a recognised institution of technical and further education;

(b) have adequate accommodation and equipment to conduct the course;

(c) have access to a library sufficient to support the teaching program in all subject areas, and to other libraries of various types for student visits;

(d) have adequate administrative and clerical support.

5. **Teaching staff**

The staff in the areas outlined in 3(a)

- should be well qualified for this field by education and experience and be capable of teaching well;
- should have at least one staff member in a full-time capacity to co-ordinate, plan and contribute to the teaching and learning activity in the course;
- should be of sufficient number to allow an acceptable staff: student ratio in a laboratory-type teaching situation.

6. **Student entry requirements**

Restrictions on entry to library technician courses should be minimal. Potential performance in the course should be used as the most important criterion for determining admission.

7. **Duration of courses**

Courses leading to a Library Technician Certificate should generally be of two years duration with concurrent work experience, or field work of sufficient quantity to ensure that students have substantial practical experience in undertaking library technician tasks in a library.

8. **Special requirements for courses by external studies**

Institutions offering courses by external studies should ensure that the following additional requirements are met:-

(a) academic admission requirements are at the same level as those for internal courses;

(b) adequate administrative arrangements for maintaining an efficient external studies program are available;

(c) effective and regular communication links are maintained between staff and students, and personal contact is provided through residential schools, supervision of tutorial groups of students, and visits to groups of students by staff;
(d) educationally effective teaching materials for external study are prepared and used;
(e) adequate library resources are available to students through the tertiary institution;
(f) students have access to a variety of libraries of different sizes and types.

APPENDIX G

STATEMENT NO. 3
ROLE OF LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1987/88

Introduction

The Library Association of Australia sets and maintains professional standards by regularly assessing courses in library and information studies. A recognised qualification in library and information studies is therefore an essential element in establishing the competence of a person to practise either as a librarian or a library technician. Persons should only be called librarians or library technicians when they possess appropriate qualifications and should only be appointed to positions when they are performing the duties of librarians or library technicians when they are suitably qualified.

Definitions

Librarians are professional staff who select, acquire, organise and disseminate information and manage library services. Librarians have undertaken a course of study which qualifies them for admission to Associateship (professional membership) of the Library Association of Australia. This may be:

- A 3 or 4 year degree or diploma in librarianship or information studies successfully completed at a university or college of advanced education.
- A graduate diploma in librarianship or information studies for those who have already graduated in another discipline.
- Successful completion of the Library Association of Australia's external study Registration Examination or an accepted equivalent.

Library Technicians are paraprofessional staff who support librarians in providing library and information services. Library technicians have undertaken a course of study which qualifies them for admission to library technician membership of the Library Association of Australia.

- These courses are normally offered by colleges of technical and further education.

Roles

Librarians and Library Technicians perform different roles within libraries. The work of librarians focuses on management, direction and policy formulation and application whilst the work of technicians has an operational focus.

Librarians develop policies and services to meet the needs of the users of library and information services. This involves collection development, the organisation of resources, the provision of advice and assistance to users to users on the location of information and the establishment or amendment of systems designed to provide access to that information. The librarian's role focuses also on management, direction and policy formulation and application.

The primary focus of *library technician* work is the operation, maintenance or control of established systems. These include systems for the acquisition, accessioning, organisation, circulation and care of library material. At senior levels library technicians may operate a small library under the overall supervision of a librarian or head a section in a larger library.

APPENDIX H

WORK LEVEL GUIDELINES FOR LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1987/88

(This is an abridged version of the guidelines and contains only sections related to library technicians)

Library Technician - General Description

A library technician works in support of librarians, principally in operating and supervising procedures which control systems for handling materials and files. This involves activities such as:

- Processing and accessioning new material.
- Operating, maintaining and advising on the selection of audiovisual and photographic equipment.
- Producing publicity displays and multi-media kits.
- Duplicating print materials, slides, tape recordings, etc.
- Cataloguing using MARC records and assisting with serials cataloguing.
- Checking and maintaining name and subject authority files.
- Searching and verifying bibliographic data.
- Entering data into computer held data bases and editing the records contain therein.
- Overseeing the repair and binding of items.
- Supervising loans and circulation systems including inter-library loans.
- Locating full descriptive information on library items from reference sources.
- Carrying out procedures for ordering and accessioning library materials.
- Adding local information to machine readable records for books.
- Ordering library material and maintaining necessary records.
- Advising users about the collection.
- Compiling subject bibliographies.
- Assisting the librarian with reference enquiries.
- Supervising and training non professional staff.
- Shelving or filing library material.

Work Level Description

Library Technician Level 1

An employee at this level is required to apply a wide range of skills gained from formal course preparation and work place training and experience.

Under general direction of a senior library technician or a librarian, a library technician Level 1 operates and maintains library systems for the acquisition, accessioning, circulation, selected cataloguing and care of library material and/or under routine direction assists with the provision of reference and information services to library users.

Officers in this category include newly qualified library technicians as well as experienced technicians. They may initially require some on the job training in aspects of the work which are unique to a particular library but undertake progressively more complex tasks as they become more familiar with the library's collections. They exercise a degree of initiative and judgement in resolving minor problems associated with day-to-

day operating procedures. Level I technicians are expected to provide advice and assistance to users on matters relating to their immediate work environment and to assist library users in answering reference queries by referring to standard bibliographic tools and standard reference sources.

Typical Duties:

- Participating in routine cataloguing procedures, including coding sheets for key punching, cataloguing duplicates, new editions and fiction, producing secondary entries, classifying and assigning added entries and subject headings to selected materials.
- Routine filing related to the cataloguing process including pre-sorting, and amendment/update of cards.
- Collecting, recording and preparing information for in-house reference files and other indexes.
- Participating in binding procedures, including identifying materials in need of repair, maintaining binding records, assisting in the preparation of specifications.
- Carrying out ordering and accessioning procedures.
- Processing interlibrary loans.
- Operating circulation systems.

Work Level Description

Library Technician Level II

An employee at this level works under the limited direction of a library technician level III or a librarian and performs more complex duties relating to the operation of established systems, including the supervision of subordinate staff.

This level includes technicians who are experienced in library technician work, having acquired either a breadth of knowledge from the performance of a wide range of duties in a variety of situations or a depth of knowledge in a specialised field. Technicians at this level exercise a degree of initiative and judgement in taking corrective action to resolve problems identified or referred by subordinates to ensure that established practices, procedures and standards are adhered to. At this level the technician's ability to answer reference queries is extended with experience in using bibliographic and other information tools as well as knowledge of the collections. Guidance and assistance from librarians would be sought when problems arise for which standard policy guidelines, practices and procedures do not apply.

Typical Duties:

- Supervising base grade library technicians or clerical officers performing routine library or clerical duties.
- Assisting with selected cataloguing duties.
- Undertaking acquisitions procedures, including the operation of selected blanket order schemes and follow up of outstanding orders or legal deposit materials.
- Assisting with the provision of reference services and/or reader education programmes.
- Collecting, preparing and recording information for in-house reference files and compiling indexes of specialist subject materials.
- Assisting with the evaluation of equipment and supplies.

- Preparing library displays and exhibits.
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of routine interlibrary loans in a large library system.
- Organising and maintaining specialist collections which may include microforms, audiovisual material or computer tapes.

Work Level Description

Library Technician Level III

An employee at this level works under the limited direction of a librarian to supervise or control the activities of a discrete operational unit or specialist in accordance with set objectives and policy guidelines.

This level includes technicians who have gained extensive experience in library technician work and have substantial knowledge of functions, policies, practices or subject matter. Responsibility implies delegated accountability for the achievement of stated objectives. This may require the technician to make decisions concerning work allocation and priorities, the need for staff training and selection of new equipment. The level III technician uses initiative and judgement in monitoring the quality of the work in the section or assisting the librarian in the review of operating procedures. This involves making recommendations for change and taking responsibility for change and taking responsibility for overseeing the implementation of any new system introduced into the unit.

Typical Duties:

- Allocating and supervising the work of para and non-professional staff.
- Assessing the requirement for undertaking the training and development of para and non-professional staff.
- Developing, implementing and reviewing operating procedures relating to an area of responsibility.
- Preparing binding specifications and overseeing binding operations.
- Evaluating and selecting equipment and supplies.
- Carrying out on-line interrogation of bibliographic data bases both for cataloguing and bibliographic verification.
- Selecting and preparing information for published data bases and compiling indexes.

Library Association of Australia. (1988). *Handbook 1987/88*. Sydney: LAA.

APPENDIX I

BOARD OF EDUCATION DRAFT PRINCIPLES, 1990

Preamble
Excellence in the provision of information is of benefit to the nation and its development in the future.
In order to provide effective information services, quality professionals are essential and the key is excellence in education which requires a co-operative effort between schools, the profession and the Board of Education.
The Board, in the recognition process requires institutions to exhibit the strategies they have in place which demonstrate an understanding of the principles.

1. Responsibilities of Institutions

1.1 There shall be equity of access to courses in library and information science.
1.2 There shall be flexible modes of course offerings - full-time, part-time and external to ensure opportunities for entry for residents in all areas of Australia.
1.3 That clear patterns of articulation shall be defined: non-professional to paraprofessional level, paraprofessional to professional level, initial qualification to master and doctoral level.
1.4 The profession shall be consulted in the development of courses.
1.5 Each course shall be staffed by a group demonstrating interdisciplinary knowledge related to library and information science.
1.6 There shall be an identifiable group with responsibility for courses led by a senior academic.

2. Responsibilities of Staff

2.1 That staff teaching in the courses shall undertake research and consultancy in library and information science.
2.2 That teaching staff engaged in the delivery of courses shall demonstrate professional development as a requirement of recognition of the course.
2.3 That each school of library and information science demonstrate an on-going contribution to the continuing education of professionals/paraprofessionals as a requirement of recognition of the course.

3. Facilities and Equipment

3.1 That courses at both paraprofessional and professional level be adequately supported by facilities and equipment, including areas such as computer software and hardware.

4. Responsibilities of the Board of Education

4.1 The Board of Education of the Australian Library and Information Association shall promote and monitor all aspects of library and information science.

(Nicholson, 1990)

APPENDIX J

LIBRARY INDUSTRY COMPETENCY STANDARDS, 1995

Working with Clients

Field 1: Provide services directly to clients

1 Assist clients to access library's services and facilities
2 Assist with circulation services
3 Assist with programs, activities and promotion
10 Respond to requests from other information providers for material
11 Contribute to promotion and programs and activities for clients
16 Obtain material from remote sources for clients
17 Contribute to client access to information
18 Provide promotion and programs and activities for clients
28 Provide clients with access to required information
46 Provide consultancy service
47 Maintain and develop client services in a special area
48 Establish targeted information service
49 Provide clients with specialist and complex access to information

Field 2: Maintain client awareness and education

12 Deliver training
29 Provide training
30 Establish and maintain consultation with client groups
31 Promote the library and library services
32 Provide client education
50 Manage client education
51 Market the library and library services

Working with Information

Field 1: Develop and maintain information for client access

13 Contribute to the acquisition of information
19 Acquire and process information for access
33 Coordinate selection and acquisition of information
34 Contribute to collection development
52 Manage collection development
65 Manage information access

Field 2: Organise information for client access

4 Assist in making information accessible for clients
5 Process and prepare information for access
14 Access and process information
20 Undertake cataloguing and classification activities

21 Maintain accessibility of information
35 Organise information for client access
36 Catalogue and classify information
37 Analyse and describe information
38 Improve accessibility of information
53 Manage care and maintenance of collection
54 Provide database development
55 Provide specialist and/or complex analysis and description of information
56 Develop and improve systems and processes to increase accessibility of information

Field 3: Develop and maintain infrastructure

6 Assist with the maintenance of service area
7 Assist in the provision of a safe library environment
22 Maintain service area environments, resources and equipment
39 Initiate and carry out projects
40 Manage maintenance of library environment
41 Maintain and modify technological applications in the library
42 Contribute to the planning and acquisition of computer systems
57 Provide specialist technological support for information access
58 Manage major projects
59 Manage research program
60 Manage development and maintenance of computer systems for library applications

Working with Others

Field 1: Work in a service environment

8 Work with others
23 Contribute to effective working relationships
61 Manage external working relationships

Field 2: Maintain work effectiveness in a changing service environment

9 Contribute to own work performance and learning
15 Coordinate activities in a small area or of small work groups
24 Maintain own work, work performance and learning
25 Organise and coordinate work activities
26 Organise and coordinate the work of others
27 Provide research assistance
43 Lead a team
44 Manage own work, development and learning
45 Collect, analyse and evaluate information for research
62 Lead a functional/major policy area
63 Manage a functional/major policy area
64 Review, evaluate and promote training

66 Manage financial resources
67 Manage physical resources
68 Lead and develop staff
69 Manage library directions and development
70 Manage library operations
71 Manage staffing

Arts Training Australia, 1995. *Library Industry Competency Standards.* Sydney: ATA.

APPENDIX K

STATEMENT ON THE ROLE OF LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1996

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) sets and maintains professional standards for librarians and library technicians. The Board of Education regularly assesses courses in library and information studies and recognises those courses which meet these standards. Am ALIA-recognised qualification in library and information studies is therefore an essential element in establishing the competence of a person to practise either as a library or library technician.

Definitions
Librarians are professionals who design, develop and manage the delivery of library and information services by analysing, evaluating, organising and synthesing information to meet client needs. Librarians have completed a course of study which qualifies them for admission to associate membership of ALIA, as set out in the Association's constitution.

Library technicians are paraprofessionals who have a distinct operational role in the provision of library and information services. Library technicians have completed a course of study which qualifies them for admission to library technician membership of ALIA, as set out in the Association's constitution.

Roles
Librarians and library technicians perform complementary roles within library and information services.

The role of the librarian focuses on the design, management, direction, policy formulation and application of services; the provision of access to information resources and collections, including the design, development and delivery of highly specialised research services for discrete client groups; the organisation and management of these resources, as well as the establishment, management and supervision of systems and their associated technologies.

The role of the library technician focuses on the operational and technical aspects of library and information services. This can involve the operation and maintenance of systems which support acquisition, organisation and management of library and information services, resources and client access to information. Library technicians may have responsibility for the supervision of other staff. At senior levels they may manage a small library or information service or head a section in a large library or information service.

Australian Library and Information Association. (1997). *Handbook.* Canberra: ALIA.

APPENDIX L

EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT 1
RECOGNITION OF ENTRY-LEVEL COURSES, 1997

(This is an abridged version of the policy statement, and includes only sections relating to library technicians)

Technician level
Courses at technician level will be aligned to Australian Standards Framework level 5 (the nationally accepted paraprofessional level in the Australian Qualification Framework). This includes competency based national curriculum and equivalent courses. In recognising such courses consideration will be given to:

1. course design
2. curriculum content
3. assessment
4. resources for course delivery

1. Course design
Course design is the responsibility of the provider.
It is expected that most courses recognised at this level would:

- follow a format similar to the nationally accredited diploma;
- include library and information studies as a major focus of the program; and
- have articulation arrangements in place which ensure career progression and facilitate transfer of credits into related programs.

2. Curriculum content
All courses leading to a first award at technician level should:

(i) include studies in the following areas which are the basis for practice:
  (a) information and information formats;
  (b) information literacy and methods of access
  (c) information agencies, outlets and networks;
  (d) organisation and provision of information for client access including training and educating clients to access that information effectively;
  (e) work and work effectiveness in a service environment, including own performance and development;
  (f) development and maintenance of a safe library environment.

(ii) ensure that students are capable of comprehension, application and communication and have an ability to analyse and evaluate situations from the perspective of a paraprofessional.

(iii) aim to develop attitudes of service to the library and information services' clients.

(iv) Aim to provide practical experience as an integrated component.

3. Assessment
Course providers must be able to demonstrate a standard of assessment appropriate to that recommended in the course documentation. This will ensure:

- The assessment instruments are valid, reliable, fair and practicable;

- Both formative and summative assessment is incorporated in delivery;
- Consistency of assessment in line with competency based outcomes;
- Regular feedback is provided to the student.

4. Resources for course delivery

A teaching unit offering library technician courses should:

(i) be an accredited training provider;
(ii) have adequate accommodation, resources and funding;
(iii) have access to appropriate library and information services to support the course;
(iv) have adequate administrative and clerical support;
(v) have teaching staff who have:
  (a) appropriate academic and library and information qualifications;
  (b) successful teaching experience which includes both delivery and assessment strategies;
  (c) a record of contribution to the library and information profession;
  (d) involvement in decision making in curriculum development and resources;
  (e) a profile sufficient to co-ordinate, plan and contribute to the teaching and learning activity and to provide academic leadership;
(vi) have at least one full-time staff member to advise students, co-ordinate, plan and contribute to the teaching and learning activity of the course;
(vii) have access to other library and information agencies of various types for student visits, projects and industry placements;
(viii) provide teaching and learning materials that:
  (a) support the delivery mode;
  (b) are designed to suit different learning styles;
  (c) reflect the standards and quality appropriate to the ASF levels;
  (d) facilitate students taking responsibility for their own learning.

Australian Library and Information Association. (1997). *Handbook*. Canberra: ALIA.

APPENDIX M

WORK-LEVEL GUIDELINES FOR LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY TECHNICIANS, 1998

(This is an abridged version of the guidelines, and includes only sections relating to library technicians)

Work-level descriptions

Technician, practitioner stage 1
With guidance from an experienced technician or librarian, a range of skills and competencies is applied to resolve straightforward day-to-day operating issues. Initiative and judgement, together with skills obtained in formal course work and workplace training, are required in operating and maintaining information services and systems. This stage constitutes the formation phrase of work for recently-qualified technicians who may require some initial on-the-job training in aspects of their work which are specific to their employing enterprise. As experience is gained, technical supervision declines and more complex work is carried out.

Typical tasks may include:
- undertaking basic cataloguing procedures,
- collecting, recording and preparing information for in-house reference files and indexes,
- undertaking ordering and accessioning procedures,
- processing inter-library loans,
- identifying materials in need of repair, ensuring accurate and timely repairs are carried out,
- operating circulation systems,
- undertaking bibliographic checking,
- answering simple reference queries.

Educational qualifications required:
Completion of, or progress towards, a diploma-level course, or equivalent, conferring eligibility for library technician membership of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Industry competency standards required:
AQF 4/5

Positions found in:
School libraries, public libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, TAFE libraries, state libraries, government shopfronts, information resource centres.

Technician, experienced practitioner
Under general direction, tasks necessary for the operation of information services and systems are carried out. Supervision of staff may be involved, and initiative and

judgement are required to deal with problems in the application of established practices, procedures and standards.
This stage constitutes the standard practising phase of technician work for fully experienced staff. It requires substantial knowledge of information resources available to the community of library users. Expertise in using a wide range of information tools, equipment and technology is required. Provision of assistance to library managers in the planning, reviewing and reshaping or operating systems may be involved. At senior levels technicians may manage a small library or information service, or head a section in a large library or information service.

Typical tasks may include:

- allocating and supervising the work of technicians, clerical or other library staff, and reviewing their training needs,
- designing, implementing and reviewing operating procedures,
- assisting with provision of reference and research services,
- evaluating and selecting equipment, supplies and suppliers,
- assisting in the development and presentation of promotional programs, including displays and library tours,
- selecting and preparing information for publicly available data bases and compiling indexes,
- undertaking advanced cataloguing and classification.

Educational qualifications required:
Completion of a diploma in library and information science, or equivalent, conferring eligibility for technician membership of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Industry competency standards required:
AQF 5/6.

Positions found in:
School libraries, public libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, TAFE libraries, state libraries, government shopfronts, departments and agencies, information services, community resource centres, business and professional associations, information units in medium to large businesses.

Guidelines for distinguishing between position levels and tasks

Technician, practitioner stage 1

Depth and breadth of knowledge

Knowledge relating to:

- bibliographical tools,
- classification systems,
- ready reference tools,
- subject organisation,
- library policies and procedures,
- MARC formats,

- automated library systems,
- organisational models,
- principles of communication,
- principles of occupational health and safety, industrial democracy, equal opportunity, and mandatory reporting.

The knowledge used at this level is still mainly replicated but begins to move towards the application of the theoretical constructs which are provided in a formal program of study, or in closely supervised and mentored work situations.

Depth and breadth of skills

Routine skills in areas such as:

- database searching (including use of Internet and other relevant networks),
- bibliographic checking,
- constructing bibliographic records,
- loans and interlibrary loans,
- assisting with reference queries,
- gathering technical information,
- maintaining databases,
- conservation and preservation techniques,
- security and compliance with library regulations and other legal requirements,
- assisting with collection management,
- operating and maintaining library and office systems,
- evaluating the condition of stock,
- updating loose-leaf filing services,
- effective control of periodicals,
- supervising staff in routine matters.

Associated general skills and attributes

Including:

- high level of interpersonal skills, accuracy and data interpretation,
- high level of communication skills, both written and oral,
- application skills in information technology, including use of packages such as word processing, spreadsheets, desk top publishing,
- skills in the use of multimedia and AV equipment, e-mail operations,
- document imaging and management,
- file transfer and file management,
- ability to perform complex tasks under pressure,
- commitment to quality management processes,
- commitment to quality customer service principles,
- work effectiveness,
- social and cultural sensitivity,
- ability to contribute to the team,
- time management.

Operational parameters

Range of contexts is mostly specified.

Level of judgement requires the use of standards, guidelines, rules and regulations.

Degree of autonomy is broadened to encompass supervision of assistants or clerks, undertake daily management of a process, deputise for short periods in the absence of a librarian.

Decision making requires the ability to analyse and solve routine problems on a daily basis.

Outcomes are medium to short term.

Technician, experienced practitioner

Depth and breadth of knowledge

Knowledge relating to:

- work organisation,
- procedures, practices and systems in a range of libraries,
- information networks and resources on state, national and international levels,
- OH&S, EEO management principles,
- bibliographical tools, reference techniques (manual and online).

The knowledge used at this level is at a high level of replication and application, or theory in practice; using general rules/procedures, in specific situations which involve a degree of direction.

Depth and breadth of skills

Extension of skills in areas such as:

- allocating and overseeing tasks of subordinates on a daily basis,
- ordering materials,
- assisting in collection development and assessment,
- training clients and staff in equipment and access to the collections,
- staff motivation and teamwork,
- original cataloguing and classification, following precedents and standards,
- providing accurate and current reference and community information,
- indexing and abstracting.

Associated general skills and attributes

Including:

- IT maintenance (for example, internet connections, PC networks, printers, CD-ROMs),
- high level of skills in applications in IT, multimedia and AV,
- flexibility and adaptability in the work environment,
- sound interpersonal skills,
- good general knowledge,
- excellent verbal and communication skills,
- effective time management skills,
- excellent organisational and supervisory skills,
- leadership in the workplace.

Operational parameters

Range of contexts can be varied, or highly specific.

Level of judgement requires exercising a degree of initiative and judgement to resolve problems which may require longer term solutions.

Degree of autonomy is substantial in relation to a specified work activity, for example, in a small section or work area.

Decision making is within defined guidelines about quality service delivery and the completion of allocated tasks; refers to team leaders, policy statements and procedures manuals, works without close supervision.

Outcomes are medium to longer term.

Education and training pathways

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) considers that education is a key factor in developing excellence in library and information services. ALIA works closely with education and training providers to ensure that high quality programs are available to facilitate entry to the profession, from library assistant to professional levels. Access to continuing professional development is similarly a high priority in the sector with a wide variety of programs available on a national or local basis.

Entry-level courses
Technician level

Courses at this level are aligned to the para-professional levels of the Australian Qualification Framework, and in the TAFE sector will be based on the *Library Industry Competency Standards*.

Such courses include studies in:

- information and information formats,
- information literacy and methods of access,
- information agencies, outlets and networks,
- organisation and provision of information for client access including training and educating clients to access that information effectively,
- work and work effectiveness in a service environment, including one's own performance and development,
- development and maintenance of a safe library environment.

Graduates of such courses must be capable of comprehension, application and communication and have an ability to analyse and evaluate situations from the perspective of a para-professional. A strong service attitude is developed, usually enhanced by the integration of practice experience as part of their course work.

APPENDIX N

EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT 1, 2000

(This is an abridged version of the education policy statement, and includes only the section relating to library technicians)

B. Technician level

Courses will equate to the Australian Qualification Framework level 5 (Diploma) as a minimum and may include those developed using the Australian National Training Authority endorsed National Industry Training Package for the Library and Information Services or equivalent courses.

In recognising courses, consideration will be given to:

1. course design
2. course content
3. assessment
4. resources for course delivery
5. institutional framework

1. Course design

It is expected that courses recognised at this level would:

- be based on the nationally endorsed National Industry Training Package or equivalent
- include library and information studies as a major focus of the course, and
- have in place articulation arrangements which ensure career progression and facilitate transfer of credits into related courses

2. Course content

All courses should:

i) include the development of knowledge and skills in the following areas:
   (a) information and information formats;
   (b) information literacy and methods of access;
   (c) information services, facilities and networks;
   (d) organisation and provision of information for client access, including training and educating clients to access information effectively;
   (e) development of the client's information literacy and information technology skills and evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies used;
   (f) effective performance in a service environment, including team work, work relationships and personal performance and development;
   (g) development and maintenance of a safe library environment for clients, staff and resources; and
   (h) proficient use of relevant online technologies and resources and current multimedia capability.

ii) ensure that the learner is capable of comprehension, application and communication and has an ability to analyse and evaluate situations from the perspective of a technician

iii) develop ethical and professional attitudes of service to clients and the work group and an ability to work with client and work groups in different locations and situations

iv) integrate practical experiences and work-based projects as part of the learning strategy used, and

v) develop and enhance the concept of the library and information agency as a learning organisation through a strong focus on learning and development.

3. Assessment

Training providers must be able to demonstrate a standard of assessment appropriate to that recommended in the National Industry training Package. This will ensure that:

- the assessment instruments are valid, reliable, fair and practicable;
- assessment processes, including recognition of current skills and knowledge, are consistent with the specifications of the Package;
- the learners lay an active role in their own assessment;
- regular and timely feedback is provided to the student; and
- there is appropriate supervision of work-based learning

4. Resources for course delivery

A unit offering library technician courses should:

i) be an accredited training provider;

ii) have adequate accommodation, resources and funding;

iii) have access to appropriate library and information services to support the course;

iv) ensure that students have access to information technology resources appropriate to the development of best practice competencies;

v) have adequate administrative and clerical support;

vi) have teaching staff who have:
   (a) appropriate academic and library and information qualifications
   (b) successful teaching experience which includes both delivery and assessment strategies
   (c) a record of contribution to the library and information profession
   (d) involvement in making decisions about course development and resourcing
   (e) a profile sufficient to co-ordinate, plan and contribute to the effective development and review of the teaching and learning activity and to provide academic leadership

vii) have at least one full-time member to advise students, co-ordinate, plan and contribute to the teaching and learning activity of the course;

viii) have access to other library and information agencies of various types for student visits, projects and industry placements;

ix) provide teaching and learning materials that:
   (a) support the delivery mode
   (b) are designed to suit diverse learning styles
   (c) reflect the standards and quality appropriate to the AQF levels
   (d) facilitate the taking of responsibility by students for their own learning

5. Institutional framework

An academic unit offering courses in library and information studies should:

i) ensure that the course reflects the strategic directions of the parent institution

ii) implement quality assurance mechanisms
iii) establish and regularly convene appropriate mechanisms for industry consultation, such as course advisory panels
iv) foster support for research and consultancy activities

Australian Library and Information Association (2000). *Board of Education policy statements.*

APPENDIX O

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACTRAC	Australian Committee for Training Curriculum
AIL	Australian Institute of Librarians
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
ALTA	Australian Library Technicians Association
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
AQF	Australian Qualification Framework
ATA	Arts Training Australia
ASF	Australian Standards Framework
CAE	College of Advanced Education
CBT	Competency Based Training
CREATE	Culture Research Education and Training Enterprise
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
ITAB	Industry Training Advisory Board
LAA	Library Association of Australia
LICS	Library Industry Competency Standards
NBEET	National Board of Employment, Education and Training
NBT	National Training Board
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NFROT	National Framework for the Recognition of Training
NTFC	National Training Framework Committee
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Employment, Education Training and Youth Affairs
MINCO	(ANTA) Ministerial Council
NTETA	Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SCC	Standards and Curriculum Committee
SLANT	School Library Association of Australia
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VEETAC	Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee
VET	Vocational Education and Training