



Australian Library and
Information Association



ALIA ACSL Statement on School Library Staffing

Purpose

To provide guidance on the formal qualifications required to lead, manage, and work in a school library and to describe and promote the roles of school library staff.

Principle

Qualified library staff are essential for the effective functioning of the school library and the achievement of the school's learning and teaching goals. People qualified as teacher librarians, librarians, or library technicians have specialised knowledge to address and fulfil the varied functions and purposes of the school library.

School library staff qualifications

The quality and impact of the school library program is dependent on the human resources available within the school library and beyond. To meet the educational and wellbeing needs of a school community it is essential to have qualified staff in sufficient numbers according to the population of the school and its unique needs.

Library assistant

No formal qualifications are required to be a library assistant. However, Certificates III and IV in library and information services are offered at many College and Vocational Education providers which enhance an individual's skills for this role.

Library technician

A library technician holds a Diploma of Library and Information Services that meets eligibility for Library Technician professional membership of ALIA.

Librarian

A librarian holds an undergraduate, graduate or post graduate university qualification in library and information science that meets eligibility for Associate professional membership of ALIA.

Teacher librarian

A teacher librarian is dual qualified in the fields of education and librarianship. They hold a recognised teaching qualification that meets eligibility for teacher registration in their respective jurisdiction, as well as an undergraduate, graduate or post graduate university qualification in library and information science that ideally includes specialisations related to the school library context and meets eligibility for Associate professional membership of ALIA.

Teacher in the library

'Teacher in the library' refers to a registered teacher who is employed to work in the school library who does not hold any accredited library qualifications.

School library staff roles

Each member of a school library team brings unique, essential and equally important skills and knowledge to the school library setting. A school library is ideally staffed by a team of personnel.

Everyone working in a school library should have clearly defined duties and responsibilities, properly regulated conditions of employment, and compensation that reflects the role expectations of their positions.

Library assistant

Library assistants work as part of a service team and may be responsible for a range of tasks as directed by a qualified library staff member. People employed as library assistants should not be required to have sole responsibility for a school library.

Library technician

Library technicians are qualified to:

- operate the school's library management system
- manage circulation
- assist with loan and reference enquiries including inter-library loans
- assist with web-based and library database searches
- provide resource support for the school community
- maintain library resources, records, and systems through classification, cataloguing and end processing
- oversee covering, labelling and repair of collection resources
- maintain library collections by shelving, shelf-checking, reviewing, and stocktaking
- manage access to the school's resource collections including licencing and subscriptions
- undertake data entry and general administration
- operate and troubleshoot a wide range of technologies and digital platforms
- provide basic IT support for students and teachers in the library
- provide readers' advisory service
- manage school library website and social media
- collaborate and organise special events (e.g. Book Week, book fairs)
- develop library promotions, including displays and tours
- contribute to library design
- support the school's approach to student and staff wellbeing
- be aware of the school's strategic plan, mission statement and ethos
- manage school library volunteers and assistants.

Librarian

A librarian working in a school library brings high level knowledge and skills in information management and library operations. In addition to the tasks that may be undertaken by library technicians, librarians are qualified to:

- lead the design, management and evaluation of school library operations
- manage major projects including introduction of new systems and applications
- develop and maintain hybrid collections that reflect the school community
- undertake library acquisitions and oversee processing of resources
- select relevant, quality learning resources on behalf of the school
- conduct digital content curation
- evaluate and select Indigenous resources
- liaise with external providers and vendors
- develop strategic plans and project proposals

- design and implement action research and/or evidence-based projects relating to library practitioner research
- lead the marketing of the library's programs and services
- prepare budget submission and briefings for school executive about library operation and administration
- provide professional learning for school library staff
- integrate the school's strategic plan, mission statement and ethos into library policy and practice
- engage with other libraries or library groups in the broader community
- lead and manage the school library team.

Teacher Librarian

Teacher librarians possess high-level curriculum knowledge and pedagogical expertise. In addition to the tasks that may be undertaken by library technicians and librarians, teacher librarians are qualified to:

- lead initiatives to enhance teaching and learning
- teach library classes, including fixed and flexible timetabled lessons
- in collaboration with teachers assess and report on student learning
- work with students (individually, small groups or classes) to develop information and digital literacy-related capabilities
- collaboratively plan and implement curriculum and assessment with teaching staff
- develop, implement and evaluate literacy and reading programs across the school
- foster and maintain reading culture and reading for pleasure across the school
- contribute to enrichment learning across the school
- manage specialist programs such as STEM, coding or makerspace across the school
- provide small group instruction or class group teaching outside of the library as appropriate
- specialise in literature for children and young people
- develop and maintain hybrid collections that reflect the needs of the school community
- provide professional learning for teaching staff
- attend year level and/or department curriculum meetings with teachers
- attend Executive meetings with school leadership team
- design and implement cyber-safety and digital well-being units/lessons
- design and implement copyright/Creative Commons and ethical use of information units/lessons
- proactively engage with teacher librarian and professional learning networks.

Teacher in the library

Teachers appointed to fulfil library positions should do so in collaboration with qualified library staff and should be encouraged to undertake formal study to obtain a library qualification.

Related documents

ALIA ACSL Statement on School Library Funding and Resource Provision (2024)

Hay, Lyn (2023). *ALIA Professional Pathways school libraries research report*.

<https://read.alia.org.au/alia-professional-pathways-school-libraries-research-project-report>

IFLA School Libraries Section Standing Committee (2015). *IFLA School Library Guidelines*, 2nd revised edition. <https://repository.ifla.org/handle/123456789/58>

Softlink. (2024). *The 2023 Softlink Australia, New Zealand and Asia-Pacific school library survey report*. [2023 Australian School Library Survey report – Softlink \(softlinkint.com\)](https://softlinkint.com/2023-Australian-School-Library-Survey-report)

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Replaces: *ALIA ASLA Statement on Teacher Librarian Qualifications* (2016) and *ALIA ASLA Statement on Teacher Librarians in Australia* (2016)

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