



Hallam, G. (2006). Trends in LIS Education in Australia.
Presented at the Asia-Pacific Conference on Library & Information Education & Practice 2006 (A-LIEP 2006), Singapore, 3-6 April, 2006, Nanyang Technological University.

Trends in LIS Education in Australia

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4 April 2006

INFORM INNOVATE INSPIRE



Overview

- The LIS sector in Australia
- The market for LIS education
- The role of ALIA as standards body
- Trends in student numbers
- Trends in staffing
- Reforms in the higher education sector
- Trends in curriculum development
- Who are the stakeholders in LIS education?

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The LIS sector in Australia

- Public, academic and special libraries
 - * National Library & 8 State and Territory Libraries
 - * 1800 public libraries
 - * 38 university libraries
 - * 70 TAFE libraries
 - * 1130 special libraries [1999] (Smith, 2001)

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The LIS workforce

Australia:	10 million employees
LIS sector:	28,000 library workers
	13,000 librarians
	5,000 library technicians
	7,000 library assistants
	3,000 archivists or allied

ABS 6203.0 (2005)

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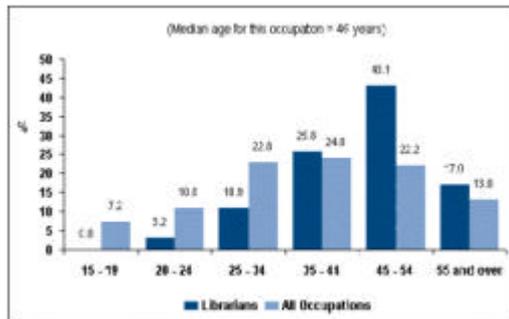
LIS workforce: age profile

45 years + 60% [35%]

35 years + 86% [55%]

under 35 14% [42%]

median age: 46



ABS Labour Force Survey,
Australia 2005 (cat. no. 6203.0)

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Market for LIS education in Australia

- 1944 Australian Institute of Librarians introduced a 'qualifying examination'
- Renamed 'registration exam' – in place until 1980
- 1960 University of NSW – p/g Diploma of Librarianship
- 1963 Library Association of Australia adopted position that librarians should hold p/g qualifications
- 1965 Education reforms – institutes of technology established, and u/g courses introduced
- 1968 LAA accepted both u/g and p/g courses as first award courses

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LIS education offerings

- ‘Professional courses’ at university level
 - u/g courses (Bachelor)
 - p/g courses (Graduate Diploma; Masters)
 - 10 universities offer both u/g and p/g
 - 1 university offers only u/g
 - 4 universities offer only p/g
- Vocational courses at TAFE level
 - Certificates I, II and III
 - Diploma
 - Advanced Diploma
 - Graduate Diploma

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Multi-disciplinary nature of the courses

- Knowledge and skills cut across information technology, management, education and psychology
- Diverse intellectual emphasis in Faculty affiliation:
 - Information Technology
 - Business
 - Management
 - Humanities and Social Sciences
 - Media and Communications
 - Law
 - Arts

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Over-supply of library schools?

Country	LIS Schools	Population	Ratio
Australia	10	20 million	1:200,000
United Kingdom	14	60 million	1:428,000
Canada	7	33 million	1:470,000
United States	50	295 million	1:590,000

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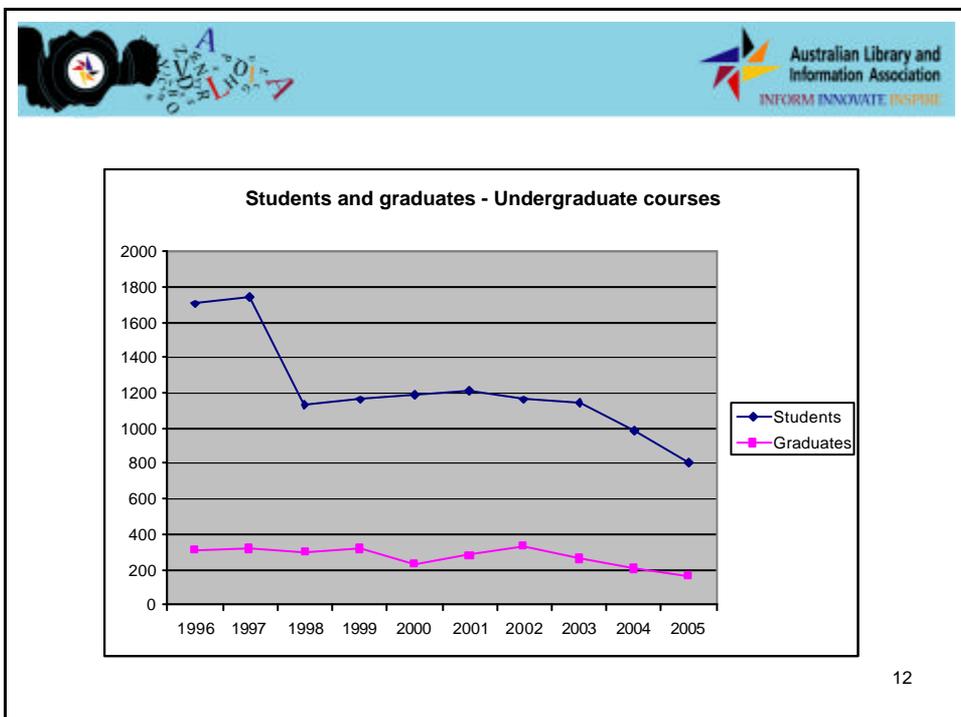
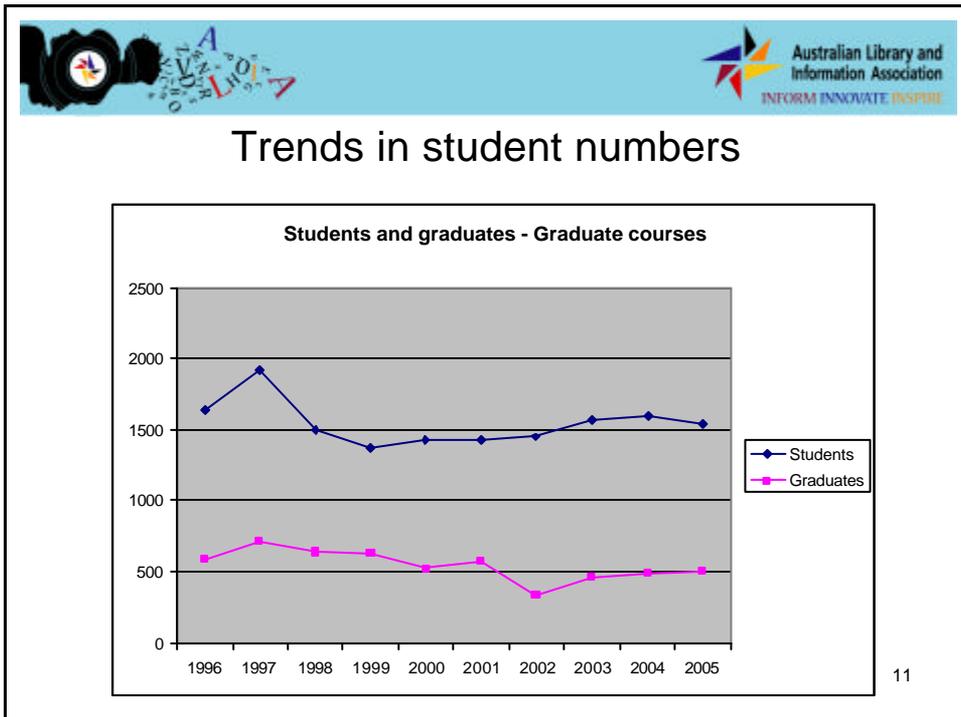



Role of ALIA as standards body

- Recognition of courses in the sector
- Qualifications from recognised courses translate to eligibility for respective levels of membership
- Key policies
 - ALIA's role in education of LIS professionals (rev 2005)
 - Courses in LIS (rev 2005)
 - Core knowledge, skills and attributes (rev 2005)
 - Role of libraries in LIS education (rev 2006?)
- Criteria for recognition (all delivery modes)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Course design * Student assessment * Resourcing * Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Curriculum content * Staffing * QA mechanisms
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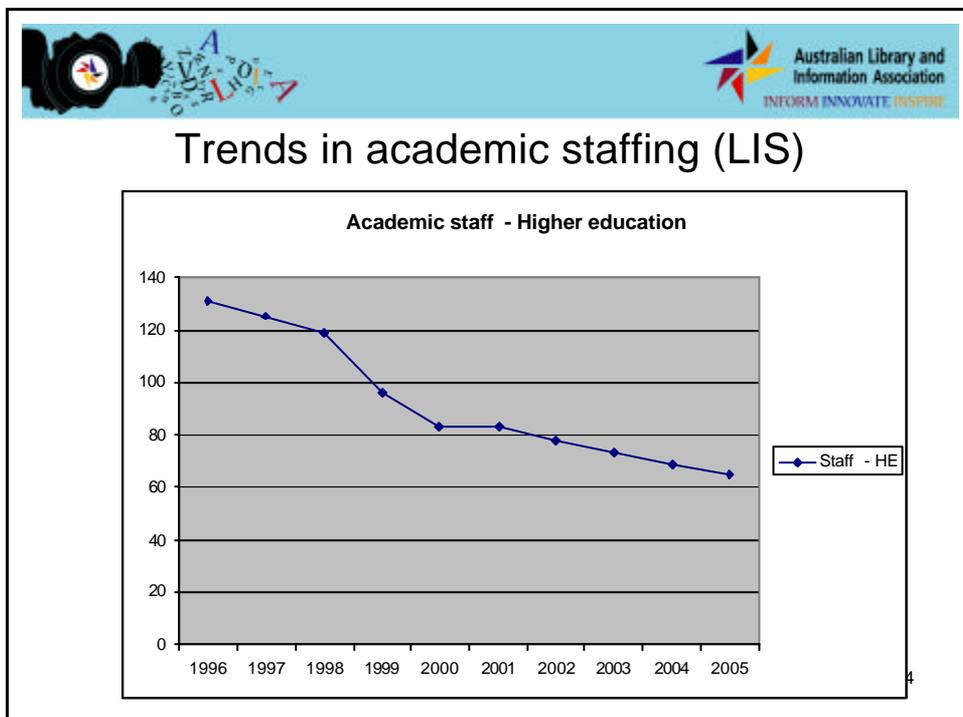
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Interpreting the data

- Impact of the introduction of student fees for p/g courses
 - u/g courses 75% government funded
 - p/g courses \$7,500 - \$24,000
- High drop out rates for u/g courses
- Closure of u/g courses – impact of HE reforms
- Theoretically, 700 new graduates enter the workforce annually (but some already employed)
- Movement towards p/g qualifications (cf 1960s)
- ‘Credential creep’
- Future competition in the workforce
 - Greying of the profession
 - Fewer young people entering the employment market ¹³





Interpreting the data

- Greying of the academics?
- Period of growth in 1970s/1980s – and they're still there?
- Currency and relevance of the curriculum in a dynamic field?
- Interplay between academia and practice?
- 'Credential creep'
- Succession planning??

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Reforms in higher education in Australia

- 2002 review of higher education:
 - the current policy and funding framework was complex and difficult to manage effectively
 - 30% students did not complete their course
 - duplication in course offerings within universities
 - increase to costs of running courses
- New reforms underpinned by 4 key principles
 - *Sustainability* – flexible, collaborative; research focus
 - *Quality* – improved T&L practices and student learning outcomes
 - *Equity* - new student financial arrangements
 - *Diversity* – collaboration between education & industry

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Impact of reforms on universities

- Performance and incentive funding –
 - demonstrated achievements in T&L, equity, workplace productivity, collaboration etc
 - new student financial contribution and loans schemes
 - more rigorous budgeting, planning, data collection and reporting to government
 - increased interest in QA mechanisms
 - student evaluations of courses and subjects
 - assessment of graduate skills (transferable skills)
 - significant push for research funding – state of play for LIS industry partners?

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Impact of reforms on LIS discipline

- Principles of economic rationalism
- Bulk of funding to bigger and stronger disciplines
- Identity and autonomy of 'niche' disciplines threatened
- Library schools ? LIS departments ? discipline stream within a school, within a faculty
- Forced into alliances with other disciplines: impact on course recognition framework
- Vulnerability through small numbers of students
 - 31.43 full time, fee paying students to cover cost of 1 staff member
 - if 6 academic staff for a course = 188.57 full time, fee paying students
- Workload issues for academic staff

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Trends in curriculum development

- Competencies for the profession?
- Generic capabilities?
- Changing models of program delivery
- Authentic learning activities
- Opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration?
- Shelf life of university qualifications?
- Need for focus on career-long learning
 - new options for training and development
 - stronger focus on performance planning and review
 - greater engagement with employers
 - increased interchange between universities and industry

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Who are the stakeholders?

What are their roles and responsibilities?

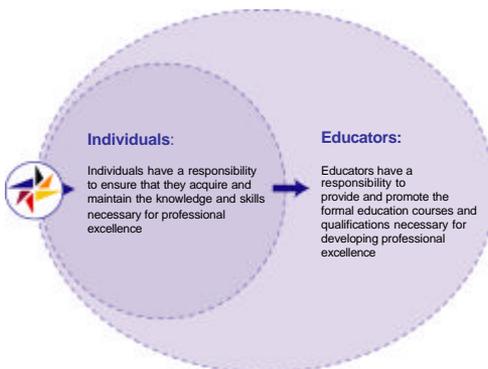
- Individuals
- Educators (incl. training providers)
- Employers
- Professional association

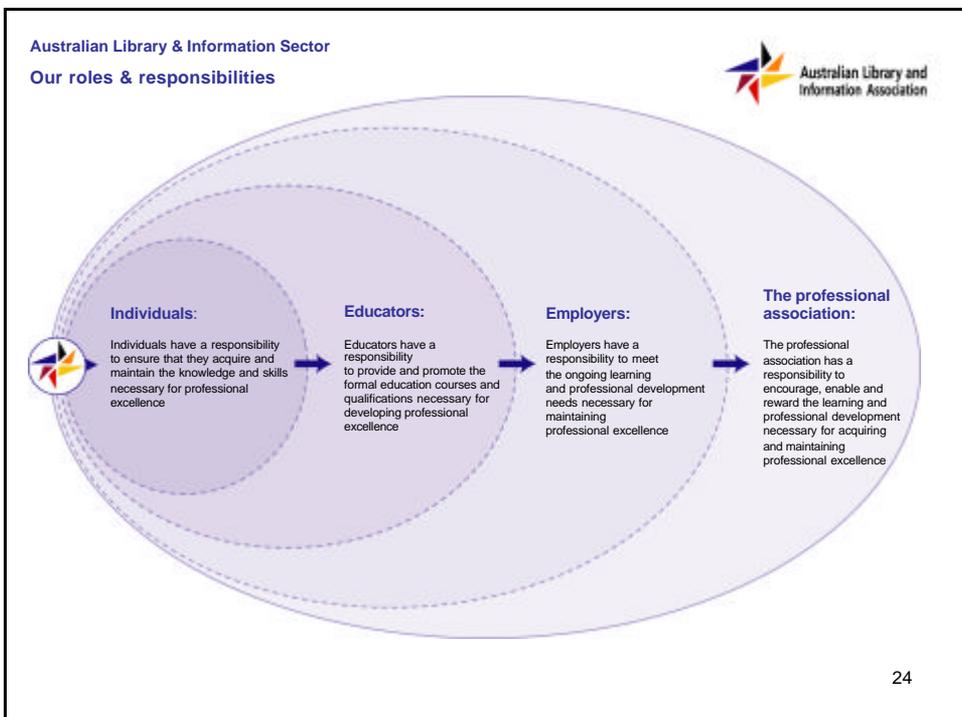
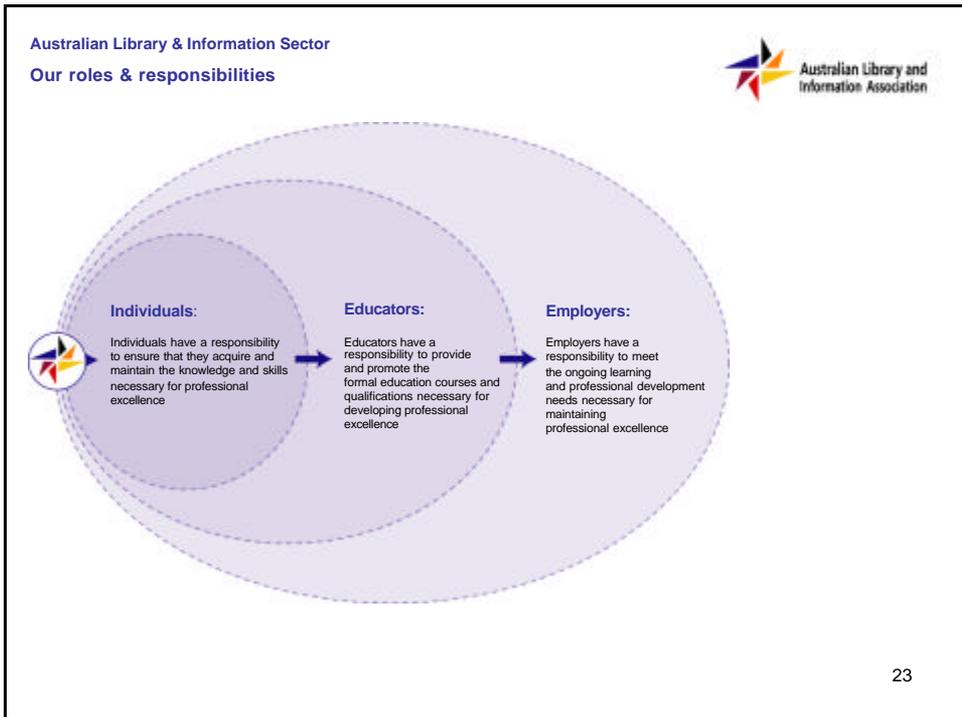
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Australian Library & Information Sector
Our roles & responsibilities



Australian Library & Information Sector
Our roles & responsibilities







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