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?
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)

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)
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)

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
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 II
  - Diploma
  - Advanced Diploma
  - Graduate Diploma

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
Over-supply of library schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>LIS Schools</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20 million</td>
<td>1:200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60 million</td>
<td>1:428,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33 million</td>
<td>1:470,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>295 million</td>
<td>1:590,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)
  * Course design
  * Student assessment
  * Resourcing
  * Infrastructure
  * Curriculum content
  * Staffing
  * QA mechanisms
Trends in student numbers

Students and graduates - Graduate courses

Students and graduates - Undergraduate courses
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

Trends in academic staffing (LIS)

[Graph showing trends in academic staffing (LIS)]
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??

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
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?

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
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

Who are the stakeholders?

What are their roles and responsibilities?

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

Individuals have a responsibility to ensure that they acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary for professional excellence.

Educators:

Educators have a responsibility to provide and promote the formal education courses and qualifications necessary for developing professional excellence.
Employers:
Employers have a responsibility to meet the ongoing learning and professional development needs necessary for maintaining professional excellence.

Individuals:
Individuals have a responsibility to ensure that they acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary for professional excellence.

Educators:
Educators have a responsibility to provide and promote the formal education courses and qualifications necessary for developing professional excellence.

The professional association:
The professional association has a responsibility to encourage, enable and reward the learning and professional development necessary for acquiring and maintaining professional excellence.

Individuals:
Individuals have a responsibility to ensure that they acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary for professional excellence.

Educators:
Educators have a responsibility to provide and promote the formal education courses and qualifications necessary for developing professional excellence.

Employers:
Employers have a responsibility to meet the ongoing learning and professional development needs necessary for maintaining professional excellence.

Australian Library & Information Sector
Our roles & responsibilities