

PURPOSE

This document is concerned with the enhancement of information literacy capabilities of students. The University of Auckland is committed to ensuring that all members of the University community have the opportunity to become knowledgeable about information resources and to use and manage information effectively. It recognises that all students need to be able to use information and information resources in ways that enhance their learning and research activities.

BACKGROUND

The University of Auckland's Strategic Plan, 2005 – 2012, states that " we expect our graduates to be independent and critical thinkers with an openness to new ideas, possessing intellectual curiosity and integrity, to have a mastery of a body of knowledge and professional skills, to use information discerningly, to show tolerance and an understanding of diverse value systems and views, and to have the potential and the wish to contribute in a leadership role to national and global intellectual, social, scientific, economic and cultural development." This goal can be achieved by maintaining "a programme of regular reviews of curricula, educational objectives and teaching delivery by all faculties and departments so that the teaching and learning of the University reflect developments in the discipline or disciplines, and meet the requirements of the graduate profile and the needs of students".

The University of Auckland accepts that being information literate equips students with the essential attributes required to engage with information and to develop critical thinking and life-long learning capabilities. It empowers students to find, evaluate, use, manage and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social and educational goals. The curricular integration of information literacy enhances the capacity of students to use information at a level appropriate to the discipline, and to future positions and work environments of the individual. Although Universities have traditionally equipped students with the capabilities to access and use information, the ongoing development of information and communication technologies has made these capabilities more complex and created an increased need to provide students with specialised training and knowledge.

Information literacy is relevant in all learning and research environments and fields of endeavour. The importance of information literacy has been recognised in the University of Auckland Graduate Profiles.

- An ability to recognize when information is needed and a capacity to locate, contextualise, critically evaluate, synthesise, and use information effectively
- A capacity for critical, conceptual and reflective thinking
- A capacity for critical appraisal of relevant scholarly literature

The University has invested significantly in its Library and other collections, which support teaching and learning. In order to equip all students with the ability to gain the maximum advantage from these information resources and the world of learning that they can open up, the University has developed these guidelines and principles and associated programmes and activities.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Information Literacy Guidelines and Principles are:

- to emphasise the importance of information literacy capabilities for lifelong learning
- to ensure that graduates enter the workforce information literate
- to ensure that information is used and managed as effectively as possible in the teaching, learning and research activities of the University
- to ensure that information literacy is integrated into the academic curriculum of the University
- to articulate the roles and responsibilities of the University's key contributors to the development of information literate graduates
- to ensure that the ethical and legal issues involved with using information resources are fully understood.

DEFINITION

Information literacy enables individuals to recognize when information is needed and to locate, contextualise, critically evaluate, synthesise, use and manage information effectively. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. It is a prerequisite for lifelong learning.

The University of Auckland has adopted the definitions and standards of the Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework as developed by ANZIIL (Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy). The Framework outlines "six core standards which underpin information literacy acquisition, understanding and application by an individual. These standards identify that the information literate person:

- recognises the need for information and determines the nature and extent of the information needed
- finds needed information effectively and efficiently
- critically evaluates information and the information seeking process
- manages information collected or generated
- applies prior and new information to construct new concepts or create new understandings
- uses information with understanding and acknowledges cultural, ethical, economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information".

Individual disciplines may require additional capabilities and these should be integrated in the associated curricula.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the University Librarian are designated as having responsibility within the University for the Information Literacy Guidelines and Principles. Each is responsible for implementing the guidelines and principles and reporting on performance to the appropriate University Committees, namely, Teaching and Learning Quality Committee and Library Committee.

Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments and Schools, in collaboration with the University Library, are responsible for:

- ensuring that students in their Faculties, Departments and Schools have the opportunity to develop and use information literacy competencies in the course of learning and research
- incorporating appropriate strategies in their Teaching and Learning Plans
- recognising the need for continual enhancement and updating of information literacy capabilities.

Academic staff are responsible for ensuring that information literacy capabilities have been integrated in the curricula, teaching, learning assessment and research processes. Academic staff, librarians and learning support providers are partners in providing opportunities for students to achieve the capabilities stated in the Graduate Profiles in the context of their disciplines.

The University Library provides leadership in planning for information literacy within the University; works with academic staff to integrate information literacy objectives into course curricula, outlines content and the research process; and works with the Centre for Academic Development and Board of Graduate Studies to provide sustainable training and support in the area of information literacy.

SOURCES

Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework: principles, standards and practice. (2004). Retrieved Jul 25, 2011, from <http://www.caul.edu.au/content/upload/files/info-literacy/InfoLiteracyFramework.pdf>