INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS: HOW TO PROMOTE THEIR DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR COURSE

What is information literacy?

Information Literacy (IL) is exhibited in an individual's ability to:

- recognise an information need
- locate and retrieve relevant information and
- evaluate and apply information

in a formal educational environment and in the wider community (Bundy, A 2004). Information Literacy skills rest within the USQ *Scholarship* and *Lifelong Learning* Graduate Qualities; they are a sub-set of USQ academic and professional literacy skills. In a professional context, these skills are included in many professional competency statements requiring lifelong learning and continuing professional development from practitioners (DEST 2007, p. 10). DEST has identified links between employability skills, work readiness and IL, as it concerns expectations of self-managed learning and the increased importance of data-management, especially for supporting decision-making (2002, p. 35).

Why should I embed it in my course?

Embedding information literacy helps improve the students' capacity to achieve the learning outcomes you define. Within the context of your course objectives, content, pedagogy and assessment, students are encouraged to

- Analyse questions and problems
- Identify existing knowledge and knowledge gaps
- Find relevant, reputable information
- Synthesise newly found information with existing knowledge to create new knowledge that supports your learning objectives
- Present the information in an appropriate format, correctly citing and acknowledging sources.

Presenting this new knowledge in the format required by the assessment will also require the application of academic skills. Academic skills include critical analysis, writing, communication and numeracy. More information on academic skills can be found on the USQ Learning and Teaching webpage [see below].

How do I start the process?

The process begins by identifying the relevance of information literacy to your course. Then, contact your Faculty Librarian, who can provide assistance in developing information literacy activities and learning resources suitable for your course.

Contacts

Your Faculty Librarian on the Library webpage: http://www.usq.edu.au/library/faculties/default.htm.

Learning and Teaching Support Unit on the Learning and Teaching webpage: http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/..

References

Bundy, A 2004 *Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework; principles, standards and practice*, 2nd edn, Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy, Adelaide, viewed 28 October 2008 http://www.anziil.org/resources/Info%20lit%202nd%20edition.pdf.

DEST 2002, *Employability skills for the future*, DEST, Canberra, viewed 6 October 2008, http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/4E332FD9-B268-443D-866C-621D02265C3A/2212/final_report.pdf

DEST 2007, *Graduate employability skills; prepared for the Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council*, DEST, Canberra, viewed 6 October 2008, http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/E58EFDBE-BA83-430E-A541-2E91BCB59DF1/20214/GraduateEmployabilitySkillsFINALREPORT1.pdf

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