



Foundation knowledge, skills and attributes for information professionals working in archives, libraries and records management

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Preamble

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), Australian Society of Archivist (ASA) and Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIMPA) collaborated on the development of the Foundation Knowledge, Skills and Attributes for information professionals working in archives, libraries and records management.

Knowledge of the broad context of the information environment

- The historic context within which information management exists, and the theories and principles by which practitioners have operated in the past
- The current and changing contexts in which information is originated, described, stored, organised, retrieved, disseminated, modified and used
- How information can be analysed and interpreted by professionals and by users
- The relevant ethical, legal and policy issues, including privacy and copyright
- Potential partnerships and alliances with other stakeholders
- How the role aligns with government, corporate, social and cultural goals and values
- Respectfully acknowledge, learn about and understand the important contribution of our first peoples.

The purposes and characteristics of information architecture, organisation and access

- Understand the underpinning theory and practice of information management
- Source, capture, manage and preserve records and collections, to create an information environment that has integrity and is accessible, reliable, compliant, comprehensive
- Understand the importance of information technology, architecture and methodologies to determine the structure, design and flows of information
- Analyse information flow and user needs to develop systems and interfaces that adhere to recognised usability and accessibility guidelines
- Understand information administration, migration, retrieval, restructuring, manipulation and presentation
- Work collaboratively with information technology service providers.



Processes and practices relating to information management

- Identify user requirements and the processes that will meet them, including designing, implementing and evaluating systems and tools, introducing enabling technologies, developing and applying metadata
- Enable information access and use through systematic and user-centred description, categorisation, digitisation, storage, preservation and retrieval
- Manage and preserve records and information over time in accordance with organisation and community policies, as new theories, principles, practice and technologies emerge
- Provide and promote free (where appropriate) and equitable access to information and services
- Provide user services, reference and outreach programs to support accessibility in multiple environments
- Facilitate the acquisition, licensing or creation of information in a range of media and formats
- Create accurate and standards-driven metadata for enhanced and persistent access to information resources in an online environment
- Document the context within which information lies – past, present and future; cultural perspectives; legislative and regulatory mandates; ownership and governance
- Appraise and assess the significance of records and collections; establish priorities and implement decisions about their use, retention and disposal
- Identify vital records and information as part of business continuity and disaster management planning.

Information sources, services and products

- Understand and explore how information is effectively sought and utilised
- Assess the value and effectiveness of methodologies, facilities, products and services
- Support the organisation to respond to digital transformation
- Identify and investigate information needs and information behaviours of individuals, communities, organisations and businesses through creation, collaboration and partnerships
- Design and delivery customised information services and products
- Identify and evaluate information sources, services and products to determine their relevance to the needs of users
- Use research skills to provide appropriate information to users
- Turn information into knowledge
- Understand the needs for information skills in the population, facilitate the



development of information literacy and the ability for critical evaluation, and deliver information literacy education for users

- Market information services and products.

General employability skills

Information professionals also need management and transferable skills that complement specialist knowledge. Practitioners may not commence their career with all these skills, but will build capability over time. An experienced or senior practitioner working in a specialist or leadership role would be expected to have skills such as:

- Business analysis and audit
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Critical, reflective and creative thinking
- Customer service
- Development of governance and information frameworks
- Digital literacy to manage and use multiple technologies
- Ethical standards and social responsibility
- Financial and budgetary management
- Human resource management
- ICT application
- Information and statistical analysis, manipulation and dissemination
- Leadership and mentoring capabilities
- Marketing
- Partnership and alliance-building
- Problem-solving
- Project management
- Research methods
- Risk assessment
- Self-direction and management
- Supervisory
- Training and development



Professional development

While specific requirements vary, all three associations encourage members to undertake continuous professional development to ensure that their skills and knowledge remain current.

The associations provide learning environments within which members can:

- Expand their knowledge about the information profession
- Gather and analyse data and disseminate their findings to advance the theory and practice of information management.