



Australian Library and
Information Association

ALIA LIS EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT TREND REPORT 2017



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ALIA LIS Education, Skills and Employment Trend Report 2017

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<https://www.alia.org.au/employment-and-careers/alia-lis-education-skills-and-employment-trend-report>

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ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth annual *ALIA LIS Education, Skills and Employment Trend Report*. Our intention is to provide students, educators, employees and employers with an understanding of the national landscape, and the Association with the data we need to help inform our approach as the sector's peak professional body.

This 2017 report updates some of the statistics in the previous publications, using the latest figures from the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Employment and the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). In some sections we have included data relating to allied fields (gallery and museum technicians, archivists, curators and record managers).

All four reports are available on the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) website <https://www.alia.org.au/employment-and-careers/alia-lis-education-skills-and-employment-trend-report>.

October 2017

KEY FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The facts

In 2017, there were 26 institutions delivering 39 ALIA accredited courses around Australia. In addition, there were VET (Vocational Education and Training) providers offering Certificates II, III and IV in library and information studies. This represented a slight decrease over the previous year.

There were 4,877 students enrolled in Library and Information Science (LIS) courses in 2015 — down from 5,144 students in 2014 — with 41% in higher education and 59% in VET. Of these 4,877 students, 3,588 were enrolled in ALIA accredited courses leading to professional membership of the Association. The most popular qualifications were the Master's degree in higher education and the Diploma in the VET sector.

The number of LIS students enrolled in ALIA accredited higher education courses using Equivalent Full Time Student Load (EFTSL) remained fairly constant for the three years 2013-2015. In the VET sector, there was a decline of approximately 10% over the same period for ALIA accredited VET courses using Full Year Training Equivalent (FYTE).

The Department of Employment *Australian Jobs 2016 report* projected that over the five years from November 2010 to November 2015, there were 43.5% fewer Librarian positions in the workforce; 16.3% fewer Technician positions, and 12.4% fewer Library Assistant positions. However, in the *Australian Jobs 2017, Occupational Projections* looking ahead to May 2022, the Department of Employment predicts a 15.6% employment rise for Librarians, a relatively stable number of Library Technician positions and a drop of 13% for Library Assistant positions.

More than two-thirds of Library Assistants worked part-time (71%), just over half of Technicians (51%) and just under a third of Librarians (31%).

The unemployment level for Librarians and Technicians was below average compared with other occupations, while the level for Library Assistants was average. The top three states in terms of the number of job opportunities were NSW, Victoria and Queensland.

Using 2013 data, Librarians, Technicians and Library Assistants had significantly higher education attainment compared with people employed in all occupations in Australia. For example, some 60% of Librarians had a Post Graduate or Graduate Diploma or a Graduate Certificate, compared with 9% for all occupations.

As well as library and information service delivery positions, there were also approximately 1000 jobs working for the Australian vendors who supply library and information related products.

Our interpretation

Library and information science is an occupation with a relatively small, highly qualified workforce (representing approximately 0.2% of the Australian labour force) and an even smaller educational footprint (approximately 0.07% of VET students and 0.14% of higher education students).

Although the LIS workforce is small, our sector has significant reach and profile because millions of Australians use library services. More than 8.2 million Australians are registered public library users (*source: National and State Libraries Australasia statistics 2014-2015*) and still more use university, VET, special and school libraries.

The library and information sector remains an attractive proposition but there is undoubtedly competition for jobs. The workforce tends to be fairly static, with a relatively small number of vacancies occurring through staff turnover, people leaving the sector and the creation of new positions.

There will be a modest increase in the number of qualified positions available over the next five years, but a significant decrease in the number of positions for staff without a library and information science qualification. Changes to ALIA's professional development program in the lead up to 2020 will reflect the need for Certified Professional status in many parts of the sector, with a formal commitment to ongoing learning.



DETAILED FINDINGS

Institutions providing LIS education

In 2017, there were ten higher education institutions offering 23 ALIA accredited courses, including Master's, Bachelor and Graduate Diploma. There was a small rise in the number of higher education institutions as Box Hill Institute was accredited by ALIA for its undergraduate course from early 2017. There were 16 universities, TAFEs and private RTOs offering 16 ALIA accredited Diploma courses, making a total of 26 accredited institutions and 39 accredited courses [figures 1 and 2].

In late 2016, Charles Darwin University announced no further intake for the Diploma in Library and Information Services and taught out the course by the end of 2016. In 2017, Canberra Institute of Technology (Diploma in Library and Information Services) and Queensland Institute of Technology (Master of Information Science) both announced there would be no further intake for their courses.

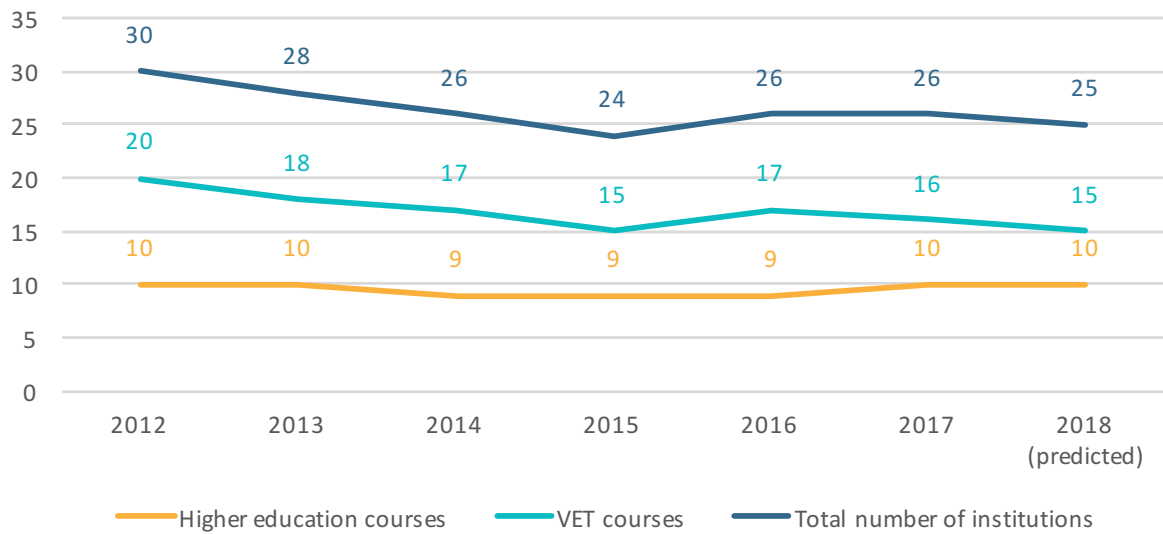
Figures 1 and 2 include courses currently being taught out. Both the Master of Information Studies at University of Canberra and the Bachelor of Information Technology (Information Services), Master of Information Services, Graduate Diploma of Science (Information Services) and the Graduate Diploma of Science (Information Services) all from Edith Cowan University will finish by the end of 2018 following the removal of the whole LIS areas from the institutions.

The University of Technology Sydney analysed their student intake and employer requirements and decided to close their Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Information and Media) program which will also finish teaching in 2018. UTS' focus remains on post graduate study options.

Predicted figures for 2019 courses will further decrease to 32 courses. The further consolidation of LIS courses is not surprising given the small education footprint of these courses compared to total student numbers. This vulnerability was noted in the 2011 report by Partridge, H. et al. *Re-conceptualising and re-positioning Australian library and information science education for the 21st century*.

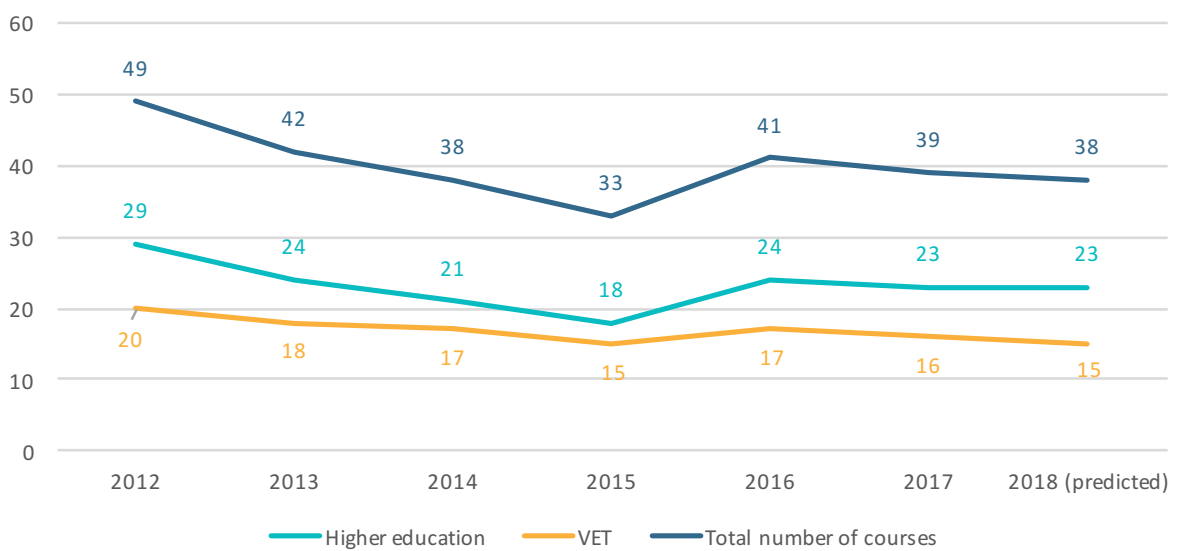
There are currently no face to face ALIA accredited courses in either Tasmania or the Northern Territory. However, the majority of Diploma and higher education courses are available online, so location is no barrier to course delivery.

Figure 1: Number of ALIA accredited institutions



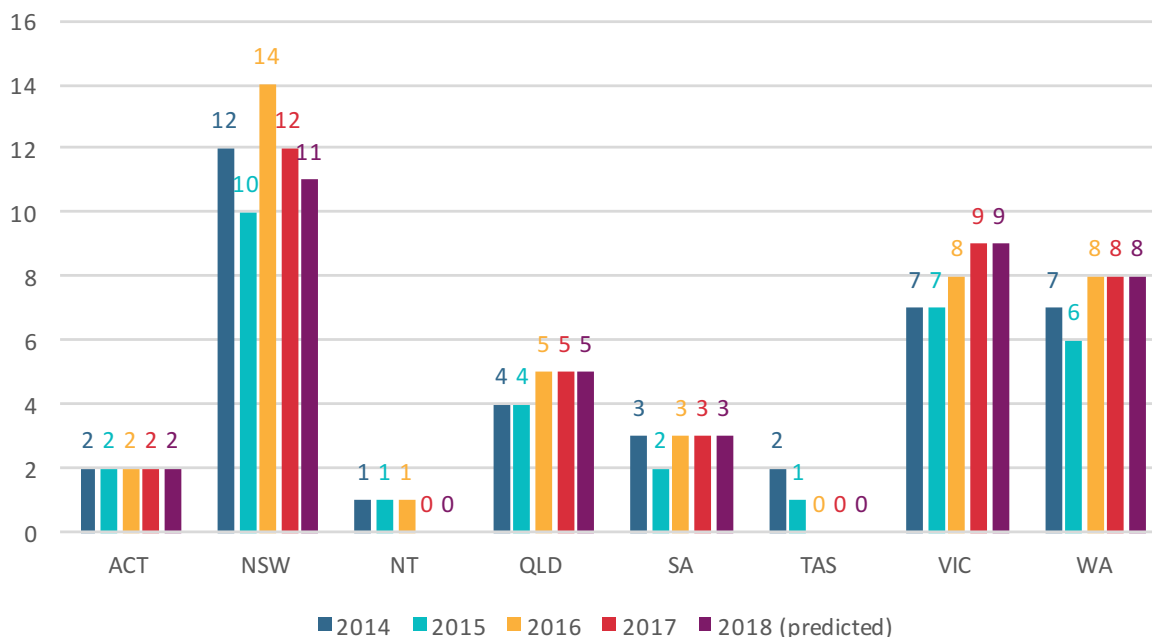
Source: ALIA course accreditation records 2017

Figure 2: Number of ALIA accredited LIS courses



Source: ALIA course accreditation records 2017

Figure 3: ALIA accredited LIS courses by state/territory



Source: ALIA course accreditation records 2017

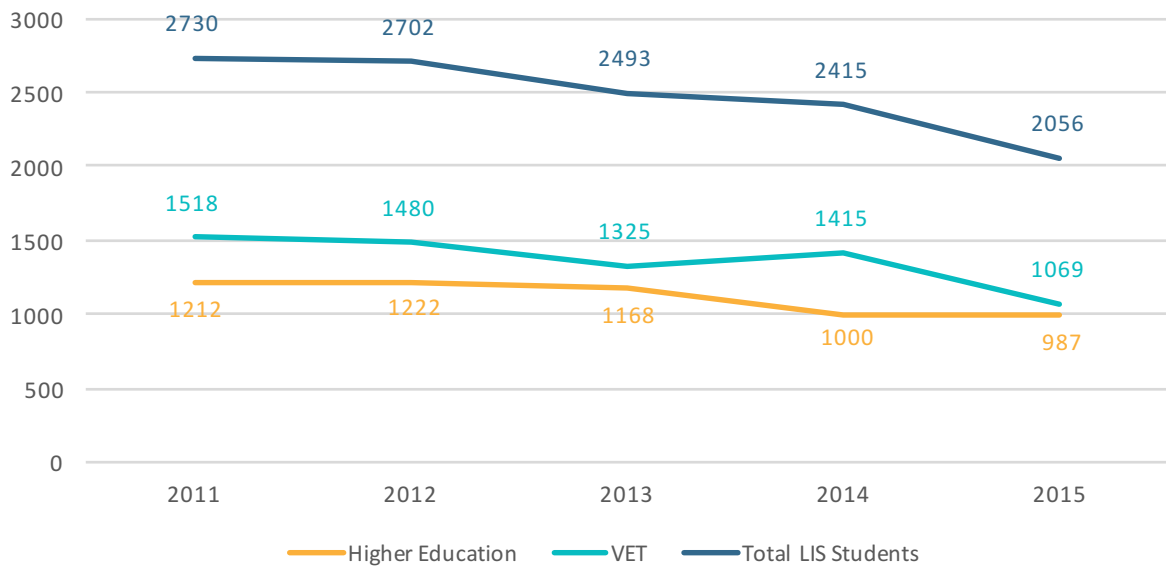
LIS students

The split of LIS students remains steady since 2011 at approximately 40% enrolled in higher education courses and 60% enrolled in VET courses (based on figure 4A headcount student numbers). Based on Equivalent Full Time Student Load (EFTSL) for higher education, and Full Year Training Equivalent (FYTE) for VET, the split varies for higher education students from 44% in 2011 to 48% in 2015. This does show that slightly more higher education students study part time than VET students. Figures 4 and 4A show enrolments that include all LIS courses (Certificate II, Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Bachelor, Graduate Diploma and Master's), while Figures 5 and 5A give figures for ALIA accredited courses.

The Master's qualification was the most popular LIS qualification in higher education (figure 6) with 575 out of 987 enrolled in Master's courses (EFTSL). In the VET sector, program enrolments fell from 3455 in 2014 to 2872 in 2015, with completions mirroring this fall [figure 7]. The Diploma remained the most popular qualification, with hardly any take up for either the Certificate II or Advanced Diploma [figure 8].

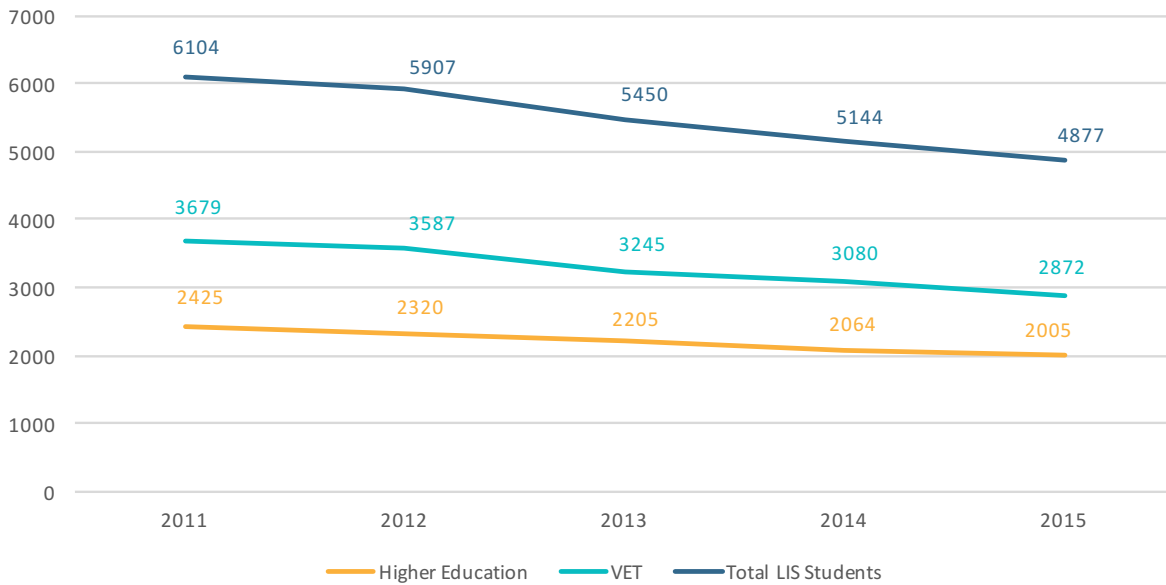
Using figures specially provided by the Department of Education and Training, we were able to go into further detail about higher education LIS students for this report. Figures 6, 9, 10, 11 and 12 show EFTSL numbers. This means that physical student numbers for each course are higher as many are studying part time.

Figure 4: Number of students enrolled in LIS courses in Australia (EFTSL HE) and (FYTE VET)



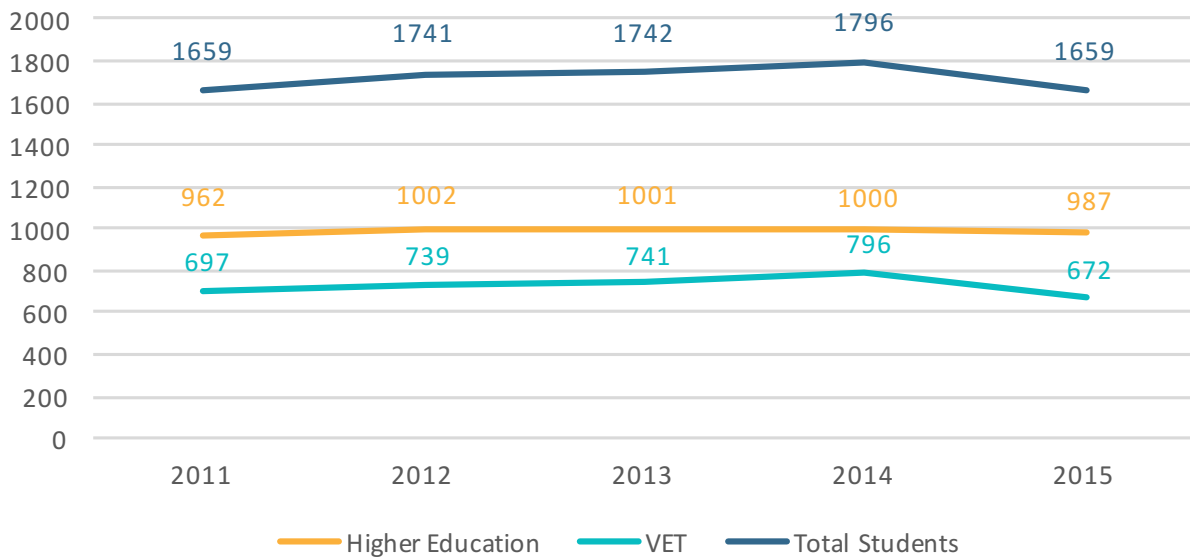
Source: Department of Education and Training, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

Figure 4A: Number of students enrolled in LIS courses in Australia



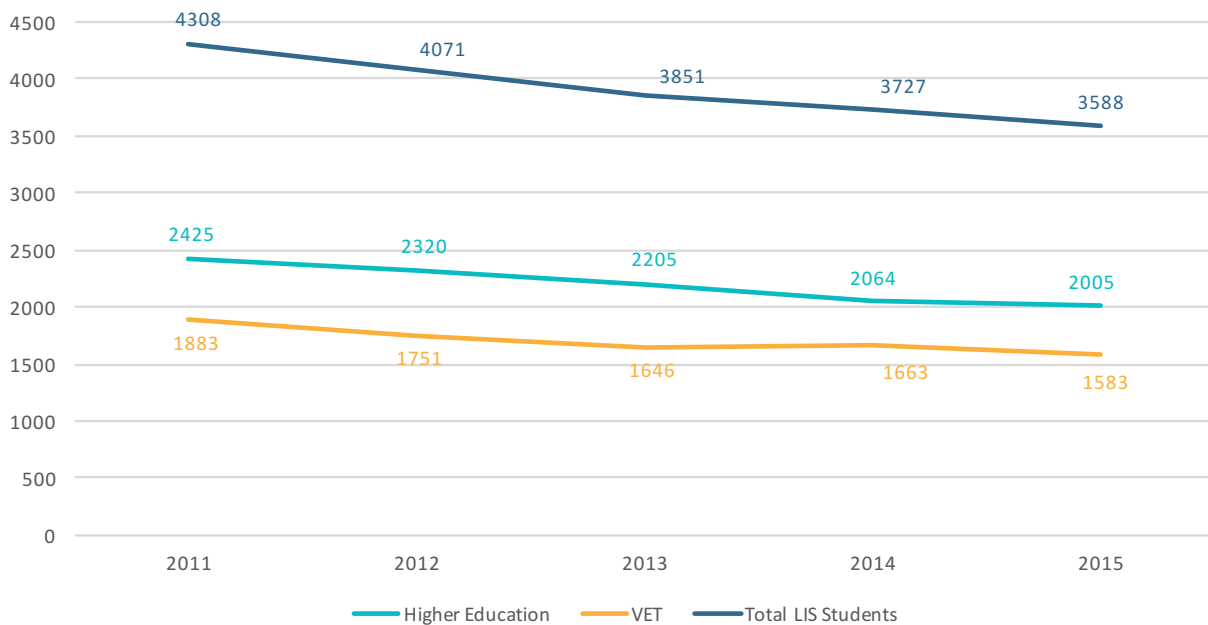
Source: Department of Education and Training, NCVER

Figure 5: Number of students enrolled in ALIA accredited LIS courses (EFTSL HE) and (FYTE VET)



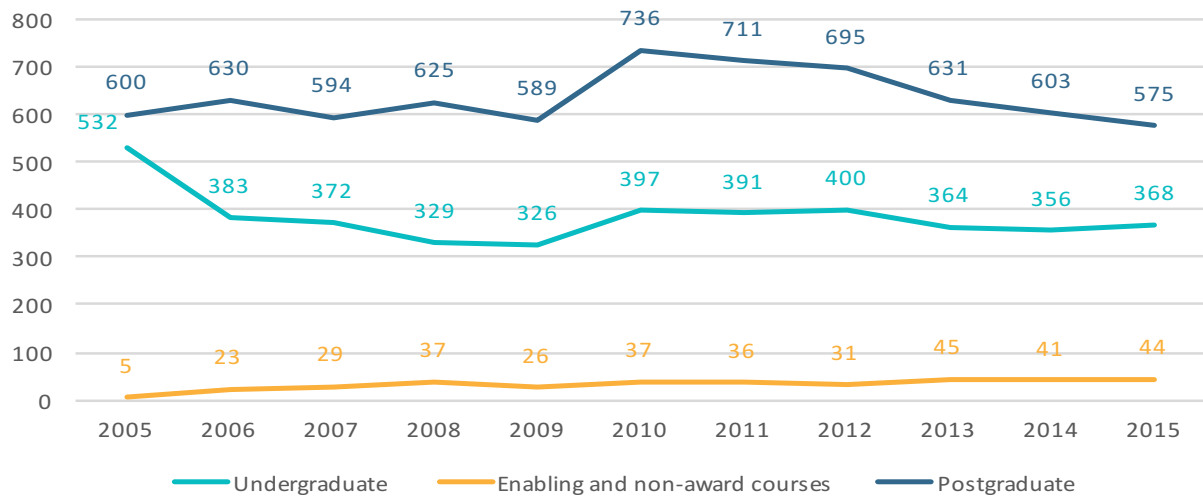
Source: ALIA, Department of Education and Training, NCVET

Figure 5A: Number of students enrolled in ALIA accredited LIS courses



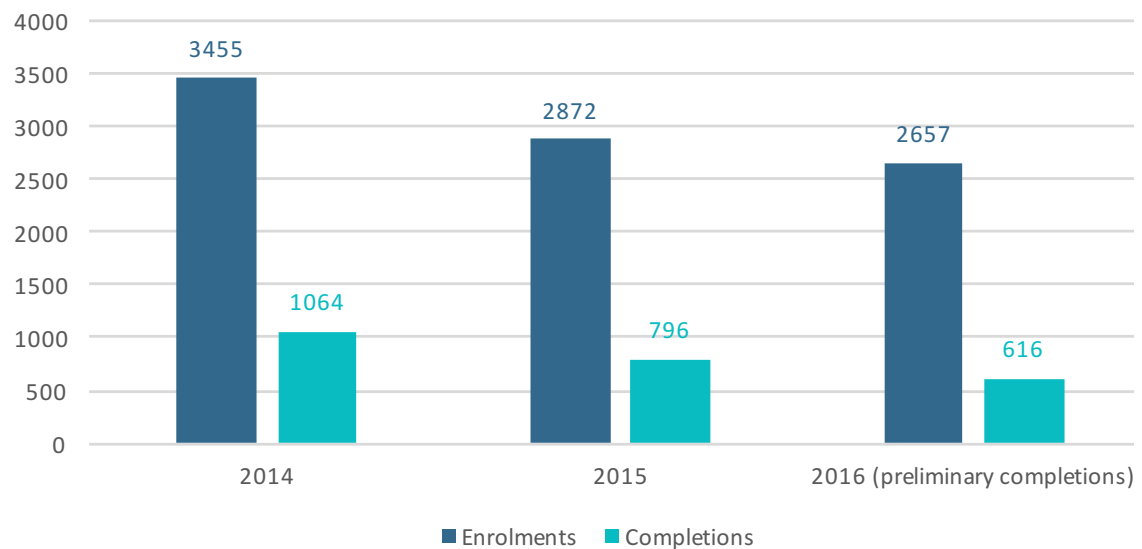
Source: ALIA, Department of Education and Training, NCVET

Figure 6: LIS Higher education student numbers by level EFTSL



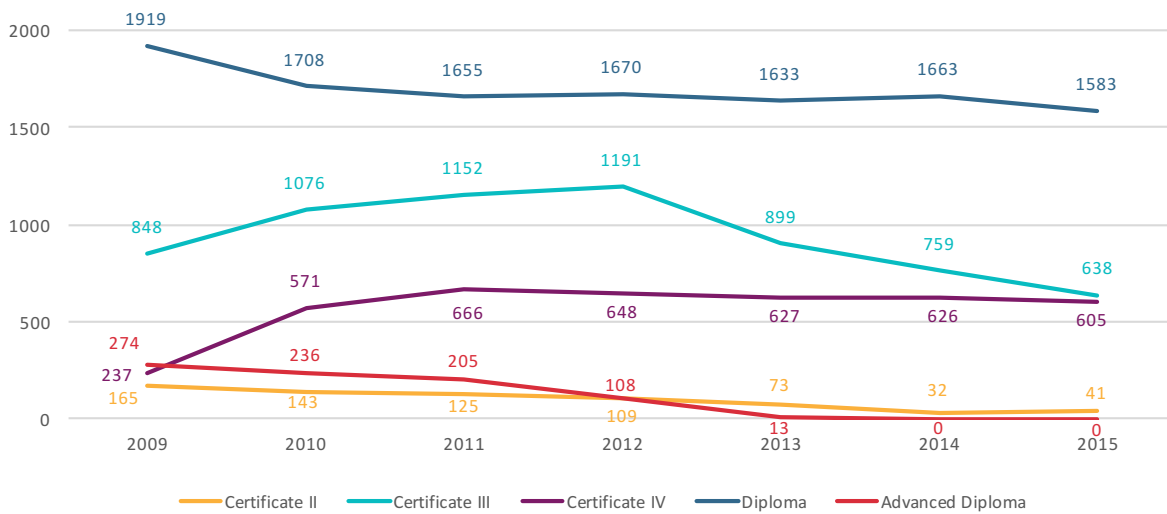
Source: Department of Education and Training

Figure 7: Total VET program enrolments and completions. Includes all levels of certification from Certificate II to Diploma



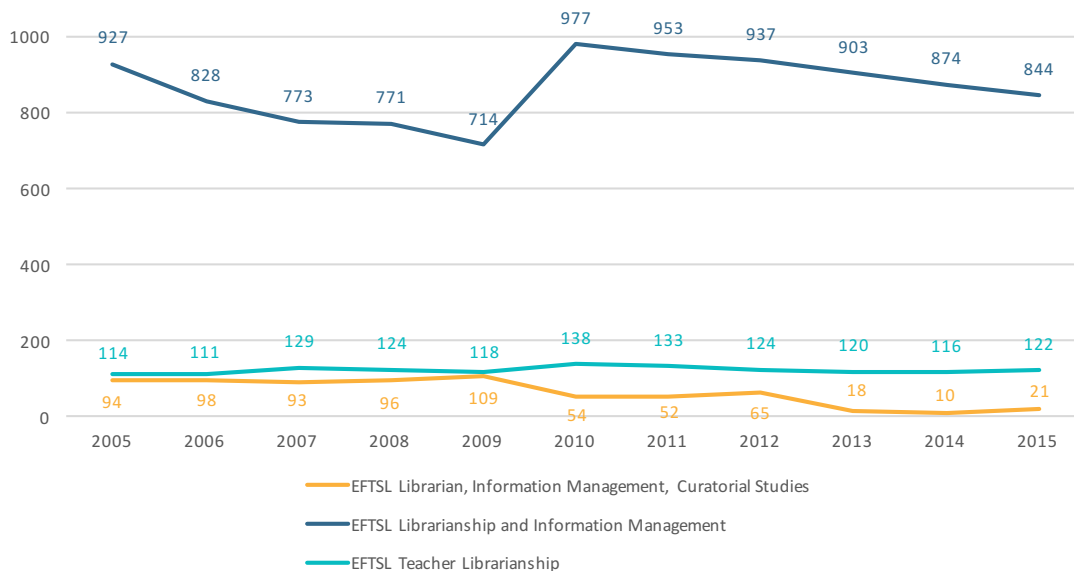
Source: NCVET 2016

Figure 8: Number of VET students enrolled in Library, Information and Cultural Services courses at various levels (not FYTE)



Source: NCVET (past year figures updated)

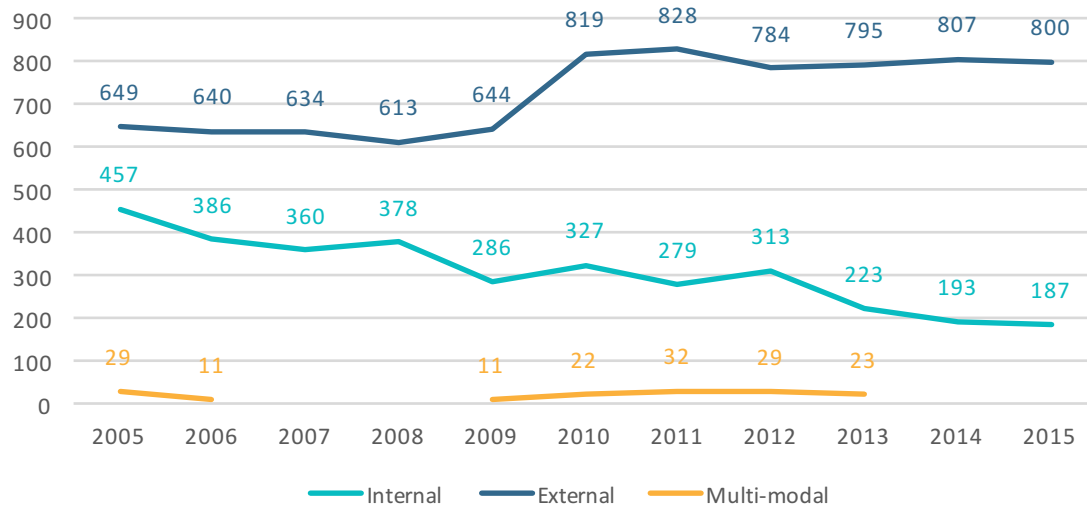
Figure 9: LIS Higher education student numbers EFTSL by discipline



Source: Department of Education and Training

Discipline: Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCE) 2001 used by Department of Education and Training and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

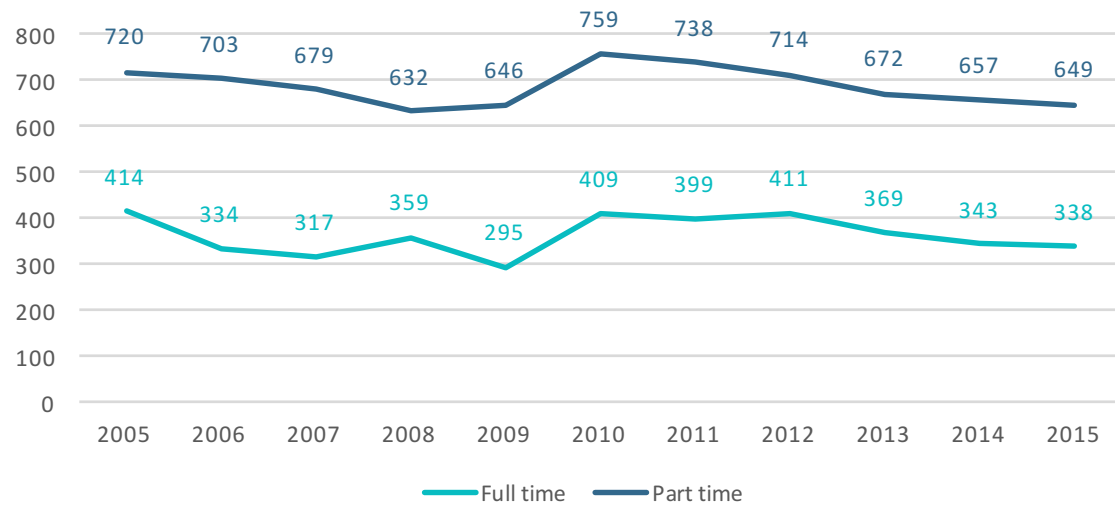
Figure 10: LIS Higher education student numbers by mode of attendance EFTSL



Source: Department of Education and Training

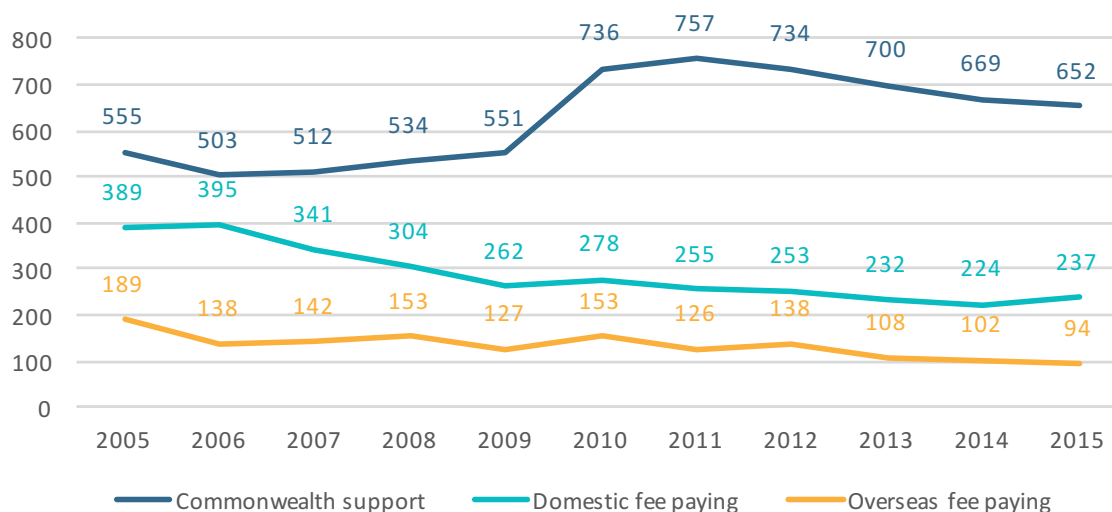
Note: The number of multi-modal students has been omitted where there are <5

Figure 11: LIS Higher education numbers by full time and part time EFTSL



Source: Department of Education and Training

Figure 12: LIS Higher education numbers by financial support EFTSL



Source: Department of Education and Training

Employment

The figures from the Department of Employment *Australian Jobs 2017* report [table 1, figures 13 and 14] continues to show a drop in positions for Librarians since 2010. Past projections suggested that the number of jobs had levelled off in 2015 and would remain at approximately the same level through to 2020 (8,500 positions for Librarians). The latest *Occupational Projections to May 2022* report shows a promising 15.6% rise in future employment change from May 2017 to May 2022 for Librarians. Archivists, Curators and Record Managers show a future employment growth of 18.3% from May 2017 to May 2022. The forecast for the number of positions for Library Technicians remains stable from May 2017, with the number of Library Assistants decreasing by 13% over the five year forecast to May 2022.

It should be noted that the Department of Employment *Australian Jobs 2017* report does state "...*The labour market can change quickly, and there is currently a great deal of discussion about the future of work and the role of automation and robotics in determining demand for particular workers.*" This highlights the importance of a robust ALIA accreditation program where courses must meet rapidly changing industry and employer needs.

Librarians, Archivists, Curators, Record Managers and Library Technicians all have a below average unemployment levels compared with other occupations, while Library Assistants have an average unemployment level compared with other occupations.

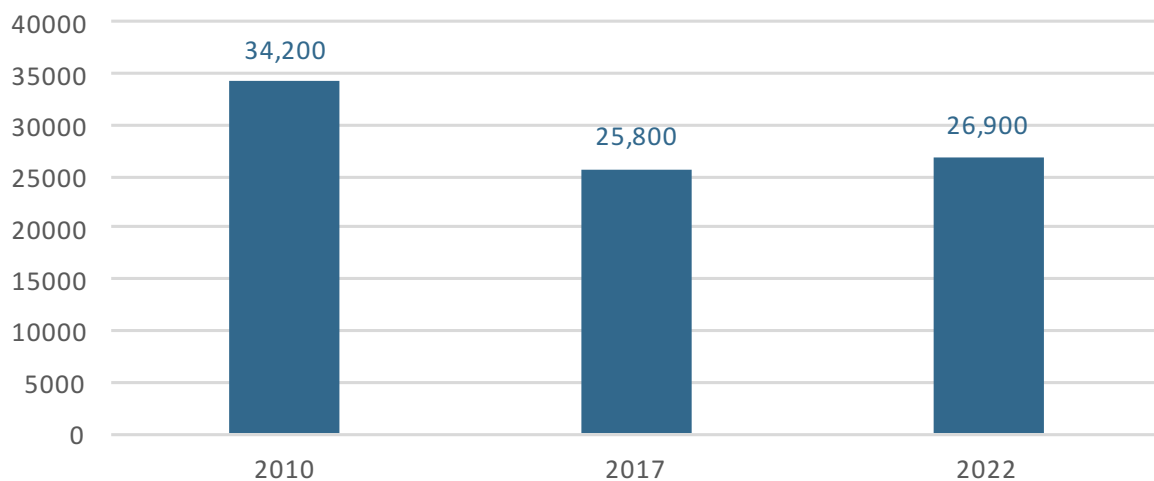
Table 1: Characteristics of LIS employment

	Librarians (ASIC 2246)	Technicians (ASIC 3993)	Library Assistants (ASIC 5597)	Archivists, Curators and Record Managers (ASIC 2242)
Number of jobs November 2010	14,900	12,500	6,800	8,600
Number of jobs November 2015	8,400	11,000	6,000	6,200
Number of jobs May 2017	12,500	6,700	6,600	6,600
Projected employment level - May 2022	14,500	6,700	5,700	7,800
Projected employment growth - five years to May 2022 (%)	15.6%	-0.8%	-13%	18.3%
Unemployment level compared with other occupations	Below average	Below average	Average	Below average
Median age	49	54	52	44
Working part time	31%	51%	71%	23%
Female	82%	90%	80%	60%
Skill level ¹	1	2	4	1

¹ Skill level 1 is commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification; 2 is commensurate with an Advanced Diploma or Diploma; 4 is commensurate with a Certificate II or III

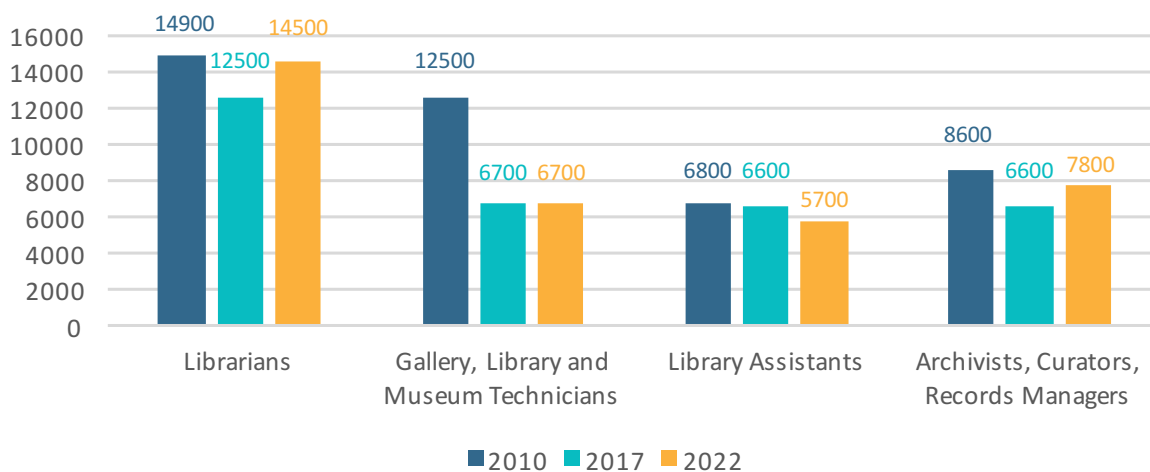
Source: Department of Employment Australian Jobs 2017

Figure 13: Number of positions for Librarians, Library Technicians and Library Assistants



Source: Department of Employment Australian Jobs 2017

Figure 14: Number of positions for GLAMR



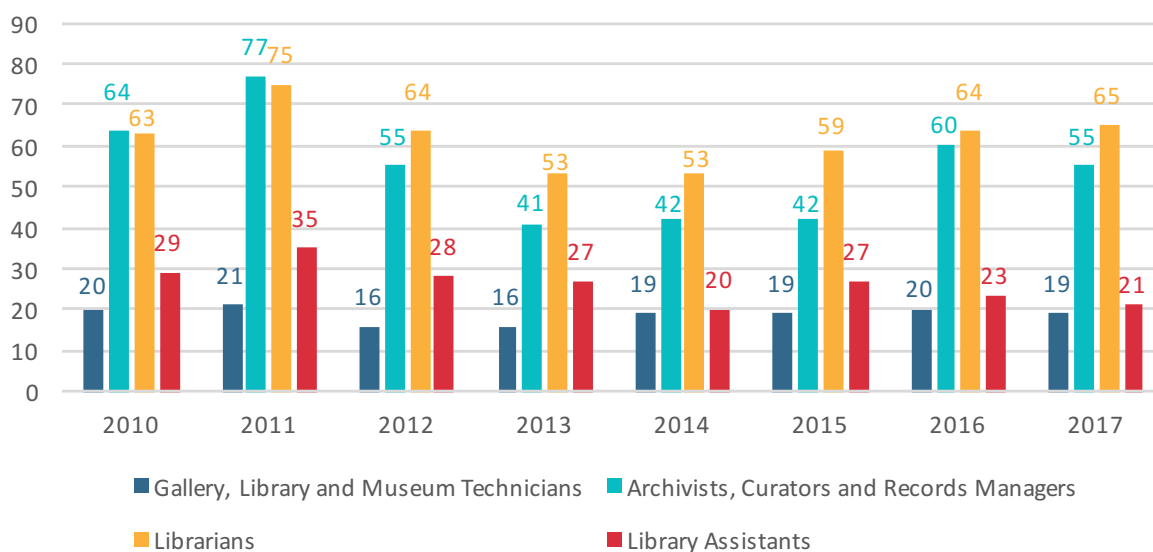
Source: Department of Employment Australian Jobs 2017

The comparison of job vacancies for Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums and Records (GLAMR) between 2010 and 2017 showed a steady demand for employees in this sector [figure 15].

Looking at the state and territory breakdown [figure 16], there were very few openings for GLAMR professionals and Library Assistants in Tasmania and the Northern Territory, which suggested that the small GLAMR workforce in each region (< 1000) was relatively static. As expected, there were greater opportunities in the most populated regions of New South Wales and Victoria. Of the other states, Queensland had the most openings. Where there were job vacancies, this could be due to staff turnover, people leaving the sector, retirement or the creation of new positions.

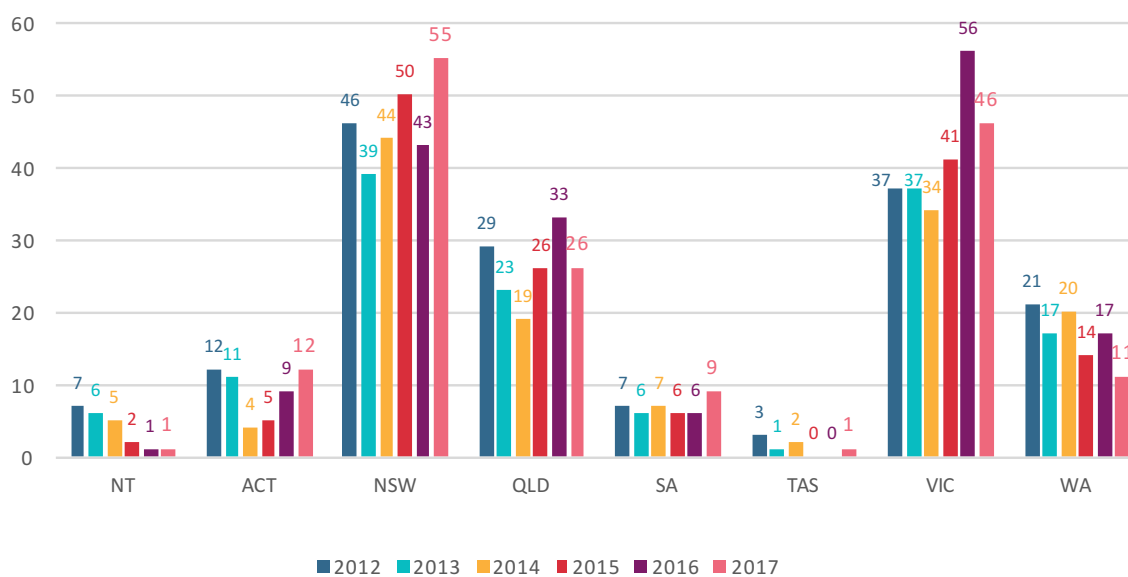


Figure 15: Comparison of GLAMR job vacancies in June of each year (all Australia)



Source: Internet Vacancy Index, March 2017

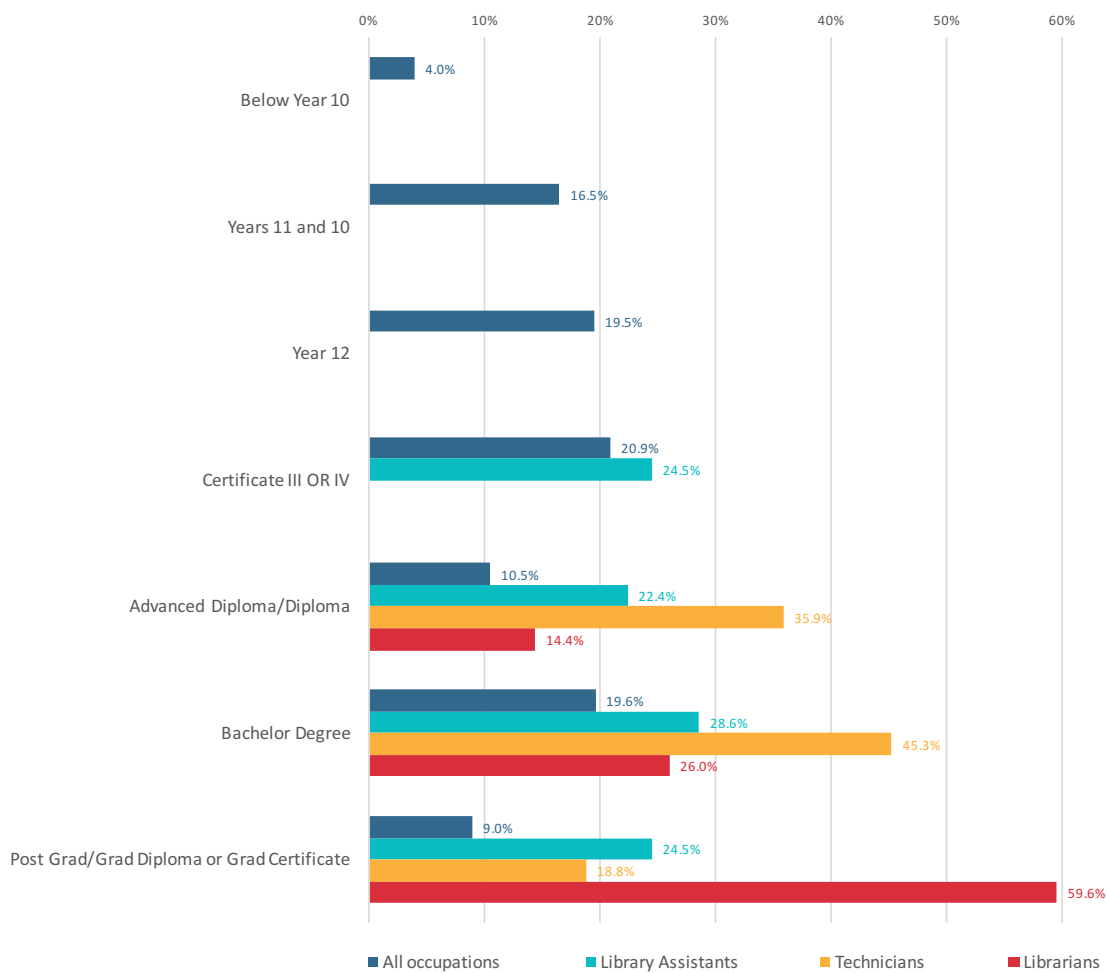
Figure 16: Comparison of combined GLAMR job vacancies in June of each year by state and territory



Source: Internet Vacancy Index, March 2017

People who worked in library and information service delivery had significantly higher educational attainment compared with those in all occupations listed [figure 17].

Figure 17: Educational attainment (per cent of employment)



Source: ABS 2013 Survey of Education and Work

Statistics on the outcomes for graduates from VET LIS courses showed that 85% were in employment six months after finishing their courses. Of those who were employed, only 14% were in jobs in the library and information sector, although the 2013-2014 figures showed that an additional 37% were employed in a different occupation where their training was relevant to their job.

Table 2: Government-funded graduate VET outcomes six months after completing their LIS course

	2013–14	2014–15
Employed or in further study after training (all graduates)	86%	85%
Employed full time (all graduates)	22%	21%
Employed part time (all graduates)	46%	44%
Employed in the same occupation as the training course	17%	14%

Source: NCVET 2013–2014 and 2014–2015 figures

There were approximately 1000 jobs in the library and information industry partners sector eg vendors and suppliers, identified by the ABS Australian Industry statistics [table 3]. Often, the employees of these companies were qualified library and information professionals.

Table 3: Employment and financial performance of LIS businesses (industry partners)

	Employment end of June*	Wages and salaries \$m	Total income \$m	Total expenditure \$m	Earnings before tax (EBITDA) \$m
2010–2011	1000	54	192	160	23
2011–2012	1000	51	182	159	17
2012–2013	1000	54	191	166	23
2013–2014	1000	51	182	154	28
2014–2015	1000	49	194	153	26
2015–2016	1000	53	216	174	23#

*Estimate has a relative standard error of 10% to less than 25% and should be used with caution

Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to less than 50% and should be used with caution

Source: ABS Australian Industry 2015–2016

SOURCES AND LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

ALIA's website has extensive information about the library and information sector, education, employment, professional development and training, specifically ALIA Futures <https://www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession> and ALIA Education, Employment and Careers <https://www.alia.org.au/employment-and-careers>.

National and State Libraries Australasia produces annual statistics for Australian public libraries <http://www.nsla.org.au/publication/australian-public-libraries-statistics-2014-2015>.

Partridge, Helen L., Hanisch, Jo, Hughes, Hilary E., Henninger, Maureen, Carroll, Mary, Combes, Barbara, Genoni, Paul, Reynolds, Sue, Tanner, Kerry, Burford, Sally, Ellis, Leonie, Hider, Philip, & Yates, Christine (2011) *Re-conceptualising and re-positioning Australian library and information science education for the 21st century [Final Report 2011]*. Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Sydney, NSW. <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/46915/>

The Australian Bureau of Statistics provides data about Australian education and employment from a number of different perspectives, including the 2013 Survey of Education and Work <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/6227.0/>, and Australian Industry 2015-2016 <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/8155.0Main+Features12015-16>

The Department of Education and Training hosts the Higher Education Statistics gathered from all Australian higher education institutions <http://www.education.gov.au/student-data>.

The Department of Employment publishes the Australian Jobs report <https://www.employment.gov.au/australian-jobs-publication> and hosts the Labour Market Information Portal <http://lmip.gov.au/>, which includes the Internet Vacancy Index.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research data provides data about VET students <https://www.ncver.edu.au/>.

