

# Can I? can I? ... certainly!

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The role of the library technician in a school library has always focused on customer service. With the strides in modern technology, traditional tasks have been expanded to encompass not only face-to-face delivery but also making resources available throughout the school and from home.

Radford College is an Anglican co-educational day school of 1300 students in Years 5 to 12 and an Early Learning Centre. A purpose-built Junior School will commence in 2008 for approximately 200 students in Years 1 to 4. The Junior School will include a new library. Our clients include the school student population and 150 staff, including teachers, administration, support staff and ground staff. The library technicians and the assistant form part of the support staff. Library staff presently include three teacher librarians, two library technicians and one library assistant (Certificate IV). The library is supported by the IT department.

Although staff will be in two different library areas, both will use Oliver, a web-based library management system developed by Softlink. Students and staff are able to access Oliver anywhere in the school and also at home. Many online databases can also be accessed through Oliver, such as e-Library Science, Proquest Learning (for Literature and History), CultureGrams (for Geography), two encyclopedias, and e-journals.

Our resources are varied: books, periodical, videos, DVDs, posters and maps. Our multimedia equipment includes data projectors, laptop computers, digital video and still cameras, headphones, CD players, which can be loaned out for school use. The library has two teaching areas with computers for class use and also a separate area for reading and class use. We have a media room set up for viewing and dubbing videos and DVDs for assignments and oral presentations. Our online presentation room has a permanently mounted data projector connected to a DVD player and a VCR, an interactive whiteboard and a trolley of laptops with wireless connection.

The library support staff take care of most of the traditional daily tasks which include the loans desk duties, customer service, orders receipt, cataloguing, end processing and other requests such as: How do I use the photocopier? The printer won't work. Where do I find ... I left my USB in the computer, do you have it? Can I have a tissue? Can I borrow a pen? Can I use the stapler? Can I borrow headphones? Where do I watch a DVD?

We also have ClickView, a digital video library of educational videos and teaching resources from Australian providers. We supplement this with programs that are recorded from free-to-air and pay-TV channels and made accessible through Oliver. The technician monitors upcoming curriculum-related programs in consultation with teaching staff and teacher librarians; these are recorded, edited and linked through Oliver using a web address. They are then accessible to staff and students, either individually or as a class.

Cataloguing takes up the major part of the technician's day. This includes both resources held in the library and also teaching resources held within teaching departments throughout the school. Technicians catalogue not only books, but also periodicals, videos, DVDs, kits, posters and maps. SCIS (Schools Catalogue Information Service) is used as a basis for records with added features such as enhanced notes, abstracts, indexing, and analytics. Notes and abstract fields are sometimes enhanced by the addition of the contents pages from books and periodicals; we use software which converts the scanned images into text, which increases access to resources.

We also have time for more light-hearted work and a little bit of fun. We were involved in making Riley rats from stockings with Middle School students during Book Week last year and helped to run the Book Fair.

With the advances in technology, it is imperative that we keep abreast of the changes. We find our lives as library technicians challenging, often hectic, sometimes frustrating but always rewarding in the knowledge that we are providing a superior service to our customers. (And we are both ALIA members!) ✨

## Library Technician Courses—Recognition

ALIA is currently reviewing the recognition processes for library technician courses based on the National Museums and Library/Information Services Training Package.

The first stage, begun last year, brought together library technician educators from all institutions which currently offer the ALIA-recognised Diploma in Library/Information Services to examine commonalities and differences in the way competencies are packaged in each of the institutions offering the course. Also taking part in the discussions were practitioners from across the broad sector who work closely with library technicians.

There were a number of positive outcomes indicating the importance of ALIA's role as a standards body for the profession and a recognition process that was visible to the executive of each institution. Further there was general agreement that improved communication between Library Technician educators themselves and with ALIA more generally would effectively enhance the recognition process.

A further meeting of library technician educators is being planned in October 2007 as a satellite event to the National Library and Information Technicians conference, where it is aimed to finalise a revised process which will enable wider consultation and collaboration among educators, practitioners and the Association as part of the whole recognition process. Contact Marie Murphy 02 62158218 or e-mail [marie.murphy@alia.org.au](mailto:marie.murphy@alia.org.au)

