



College library goes mobile!

Libraries in TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute (WSI) are committed to providing services and facilities to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing vocational education learning environment. Library facilities and services have been expanded to embrace new technologies, interactive learning, distance education and are constantly adapting to the new challenges of training delivery methods.

The Mobile Library Service at Blacktown College was born to address the issue of students not utilising library resources. ESOL students undertaking studies in Certificate 1 & 2 were the initial focus of the program as these students were deemed most likely to lack English skills and the confidence to visit a library.

The Mobile Library was timetabled to ensure levels 1 and 2 students had the opportunity to borrow. Some of the challenges faced during implementation included transporting resources from one campus to another, choosing the most appropriate resources from the

library collection and anticipating the quantity required.

Two collapsible storage trolleys were purchased to transport the items. The initial resources selected were low-level readers, books about Australian animals, cities and Prime Ministers, picture dictionaries and videos.

The Mobile Library opened on Tuesday 3rd June 2007 and an orientation program was established with twenty six students borrowing fifty seven items on this first visit.

New library resources were purchased from bookshops and publishers who specialised in school oriented books and were catalogued using the Blacktown teaching level system for ease of identification by library borrowers i.e. 1 coloured dot = level 1 (easy reader), 2 coloured dots = level 2 (medium level reader), etc.

Due to the program's success, teachers from Adult Basic Education initiated a request to extend the library's service to

their students. These students required higher level readers which focused more on spelling and grammar. Within six weeks of inception, the program's demand was so high that an empty classroom was utilised as the location for students to meet and borrow books.

The program met a milestone of 1800 items borrowed at the six month mark. Learning and retention levels of students had significantly increased and a high percentage of Mobile Library users had progressed to borrowing from the college library.

The Mobile Library has been an overwhelming success and established a solid benchmark on how library staff, teachers, students and training organisations can work together to achieve long term goals in literacy.

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