



Reference point 3: the factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians

For this personal submission I would like to focus on the factors influencing recruitment and development only as many other submissions will highlight the irrefutable research which supports the value TLs bring to academic programs and the need for qualified teacher librarians in each school.

I would like to highlight three anomalies in the NSW DET hiring practices that limit the possibility of providing fully trained teacher librarians in NSW schools.

While I appreciate that these anomalies are limited to the NSW situation, this lack of consistency in employment and recruiting standards are indicative of a wider lack of understanding of the role of teacher librarians and the research that underpins their importance.

Further evidence is seen in the organizational and personal lobbying by groups such as The Hub to educate educational administrators and the public about the TL role. This level of lobbying is not seen coming from English, Math or primary teachers and is a direct contrast to the vast amounts of money recently committed to the building of new libraries by the federal government.

NSW DET has a practice where they will provide sponsorship for teachers to complete the [Graduate Certificate](#) in Teacher Librarianship provided by Charles Sturt University. This course is designed for permanent teachers currently appointed as teacher librarians in NSW DET who do not have a teacher librarianship qualification and requires they have 4 subjects to satisfy the department requirements .

There is no requirement that these teachers further their study to reach a diploma status and they can be considered qualified for the duration of their teaching life. However if a self funded DET teacher has completed these four subjects they are not entitled to apply for a transfer within the system as they are not deemed to be qualified and they are limited to applying for positions openly advertised. Equally a self funded teacher with the same 4 subjects completed is not eligible to apply for a position.

- **Recommendation**
- That the minimum level of qualification for appointment to a teacher librarian position be a Diploma standard or undergraduate equivalent recognized by ALIA.
- That teachers appointed to schools under sponsored training programs also be required to reach the same qualification levels within an appropriate time frame.

Through the internal transfer process a qualified teacher librarian with a diploma or masters degree is not able to apply for transfer to a position different to their undergraduate degree. For example a

primary trained teacher cannot apply for a position in a secondary school and vice versa. However both can apply for a position in a K-12 school. This is despite Teacher Librarianship training being generalist and not limited to an age bracket. The DET has allowed a number of recorded variances from this rule however a trained teacher librarian is not able to submit an application for appointment to another school level. This would allow employment of applicants across primary and secondary schools and reflect what is already applicable for K-12 schools. This would also provide TLs with a wider choice of employment positions and allow the return to the profession of trained TLs not currently employed as such.

Recommendation

- That any ALIA accredited teacher librarianship degree be recognized for appointment to both primary and secondary schools.

If a NSW DET TL position is openly advertised because of a lack of internal applicants there is no requirement for the principal to appoint a trained teacher librarian even though the job advertisements state that " Priority consideration for this position will be given to teachers who are approved as a teacher librarian (primary or secondary) ". For example in November 09, Coolamon Central School in the Riverina appointed an untrained teacher to an advertised teacher librarianship position despite someone applying with a master's degree (only 20% of TLs have a master's degree). This teacher will now have to be funded through the DET training unit and it will take years to reach the level of skill and understanding that a fully trained TL would have. This is an unnecessary educational privation for the school and an unnecessary financial burden for the NSW DET.

Recommendation

- That Principals, Deputy Principals and Assistant Principals undergo an induction process, on appointment, to educate them on the value that TLs bring to academic programs and the supporting research. This can be as simple as an online program to be completed in the early stages of leadership and covering the TL roles as reflected in [the Standards of professional excellence for teacher librarians](#) endorsed by ASLA and ALIA.

Thank you for considering my personal submission

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