

To whom it may concern

I am a recently graduated teacher librarian now working at Hawker College in Canberra. I had previously worked as a Physics Teacher around Western Australia and also at Marist College Canberra over a period of 15 years.

I have joined ASLA and have contributed in part to the submission being prepared for this inquiry. I am however in the relatively rare position of an experienced teacher who has moved across to a teacher librarian position. I can therefore contribute some insights relevant to the third term of reference:

the factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians;

I decided to move across to a teacher librarian position after teaching Physics for 15 years for a number of reasons:

- 1) I wanted to broaden the subject areas in which I worked.
- 2) My mother was a teacher librarian which gave me an enhanced understanding of the role.
- 3) I have a love for books and have a knack with computers and technology.

So I can not be that unique, why are teacher librarians so rare (and becoming older on average)?

I found some speed bumps that may have dissuaded countless others:

- 1) **After an additional years study the benefit to pay and conditions is nil.**
- 2) A direct cost of upwards of \$10 000 for HECS.
- 3) Six months of working full time (Physics at Marist) while studying at 50% of full time (ECU Graduate Diploma of Science (Information Services) was draining.
- 4) Six months of full time study while paying myself a \$30 000 wage taken from my mortgage (having resigned from Marist).

So after spending \$40 000 cash and a lot of blood sweat and tears studying (Distinction average) I was qualified but unemployed.

I was fortunate to find employment with Hawker College where I am loving my new role.

The Hawker library is on the front foot in a number of areas including:

- a new web based OPAC (OLIVER)
- a new Digital Video Commander system
- trialing the new Virtual Learning Environment in the ACT.

I am loving my new job and can honestly say I have never been busier than now, not in WA, not in private education and not teaching Physics.

So, your challenge (as it is now) is to convince (there is a shortage which will grow) current teachers to consider moving to the library by:

- 1) Spending a sizeable sum of their own money (even the HECS is large).
- 2) Undertaking a full year university course.

knowing that they will, at the the end of it:

- 1) Be paid the same.
- 2) Have reduced career path options (no level 2 of library)
- 3) Have increased management responsibilities (over library technicians)
- 4) Be in a rapidly changing environment
- 5) **Be working in the interesting field of information services and literacy**

Good luck finding recruits, there may be more souls like myself for whom the job is the reward and who are able to convince their spouse the pain (and not to mention the \$40 000) is worth it in the end.

Might I suggest that as a bare minimum the idea of paying the HECS for potential recruits may help attract some more vitally needed recruits.

Yours

Keith Mullumby B.Sc.(Physics) Grad.Dip.Ed.(Secondary) Grad.Dip.Sci.(Information Services)
Teacher Librarian
Hawker College Canberra