



ALIA PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS

School Libraries Research Project Report

Dr Lyn Hay | October 2022



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ALIA Professional Pathways: School Libraries Research Project Report

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Australian Library and
Information Association



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List of Abbreviations

AASL	American Association of School Librarians
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
ATA	Australian Teacher Aide
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
ERG	ALIA Schools Expert Reference Group
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
ASLA	Australian School Library Association
BOK	Body of Knowledge
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSL	Canadian School Libraries
CSU	Charles Sturt University
DESE	Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government
EAC	ALIA Education Advisory Committee
ESO	Education Support Officer
EU	European Union
F2F	Face-to-face (conferences, or teaching)
F/T	Full-time (employment)
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GLAM	Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums
HE	Higher education
HRSCEE	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment
IASL	International Association of School Librarianship
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
ISTE	International Society for Technology Education
KSA	Knowledge, skills and attitudes/attributes
KSC	Knowledge, skills and competencies

LIS	Library and Information Science
NSC	National Skills Commission, Australian Government
NESA	NSW Education Standards Authority
NZ	New Zealand
PKSB	Professional Knowledge and Skills Base
PNTS	Prefer not to say
PPI	ALIA Professional Pathways Initiative
P/T	Part-time (employment)
QSLA	Queensland School Library Association
QTU	Queensland Teachers' Union
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
SBM	School Based Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLANSW	School Library Association of New South Wales
SLASA	School Library Association of South Australia
SLAV	School Library Association of Victoria
SLC	School Library Coalition
SNSL	Students Need School Libraries (campaign)
SSO	School Services Officer
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TL	Teacher Librarian
TLship	Teacher Librarianship (as a specialisation)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WASLA	Western Australian School Library Association

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the project

As part of the Professional Pathways Initiative, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) commissioned research in November 2021 to address the specialised needs of school libraries within the context of ALIA's (2022a) vision for developing a professional pathways framework to achieve:

A diverse, valued and supported Library and Information Sector (LIS) workforce with the skills, knowledge and ethics needed to deliver quality library and information services that anticipate and meet the needs of the population.

This was a direct result of Dr Gillian Hallam's (2022a) work on the *Professional Pathways Technical Report* which involved an extensive literature review and environmental scan in Australia and overseas, to inform the development of future frameworks which align with current and emerging developments in the international LIS field. As part of this review, Hallam identified three areas of specialist LIS practice that would require bespoke treatment to support their more complex needs, one of which was the school library sector.

Thus, the purpose of this project was:

To ensure that library and information professionals working in school libraries are clearly differentiated, appropriately qualified through relevant, contemporary course content, and able to access appropriate and recognised continuing professional development wherever they are in Australia, through their state association and through national providers.

Given the focus of the Professional Pathways Frameworks Project was the articulation of "the skills, knowledge and ethics needed to be a library and information professional", and "what pathways into and through library and information careers might support LIS professionals into the future" (ALIA, 2022b), the aim of the commissioned School Library Research Project was to identify necessary

skills for school library staff; to support library and information science (LIS) course development and accreditation; potential micro-credentials for LIS and non-LIS qualified staff; and continuing professional development (CPD) for those working in school libraries.

ALIA believes that well-resourced school libraries staffed by qualified library professionals are essential in supporting student achievement and lifelong literacy. However, library staff often face significant challenges including limited resources and isolation, and a lack of understanding of their role amongst their peers and employers (ALIA, ASLA, & AEU, 2020). The research undertaken for this project, therefore, was designed to identify professional learning challenges and opportunities not just for teacher librarians, but also those librarians, library technicians and library assistants working in schools. As ASLA and QUT observed in their 2008 submission to ALIA's Education and Workforce Summit:

School library teams are beginning to emerge that consist of a wide range of information professionals – teacher-librarians, IT managers, computer technicians, resource teachers, librarians, library technicians, library assistants and teacher aides, museum/curators/archivists. (p. 3)

Thus, the complex staffing complement of school library employees within education systems across Australian states and territories needs to be examined, as does changes to school library staffing as a result of devolution of financial management to schools and principal control, i.e., school based management (SBM), which was noted by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment (2011) inquiry into *School libraries and teacher librarians in 21st century Australia*. This challenge is not new. A decade earlier, the Lonsdale Report (2003) warned of SBM becoming more problematic within the school library sector with devolution meaning “that funding for school libraries relies on the resource allocation priorities established by the school community, which might or might not place a high priority on the need for a well-staffed library system” (p. 5). So, nearly 20 years on, how have such changes to school library staffing impacted on those LIS professionals and paraprofessionals working in schools, and how does this affect the future in terms of LIS-related qualifications, training and professional pathways, the

demand for and provision of targeted CPD, and attracting new employees to the school library sector?

Investing in new research about school library employment, delivered as part of ALIA's Professional Pathways Initiative, will help ensure that library and information professionals working in school libraries are clearly differentiated; appropriately qualified through relevant, contemporary course content; and are able to access appropriate and recognised CPD wherever they are in Australia. In addition, defining clear learning pathways for non-LIS qualified teachers and library assistants will hopefully encourage upskilling through LIS qualifications, which will help sustain and strengthen the quality of school library programs and services across education systems within Australia's states and territories, and ultimately lead to long-term benefits for Australian school students.

While this research was led by Dr Lyn Hay (Director of the Leading Learning Institute), the project was guided by an ALIA Project team, including Trish Hepworth, Jacqui Lucas, Dr Gill Hallam and Dr Phoebe Weston-Evans, and an ALIA Schools Expert Reference Group (ERG) consisting of the following school library experts:

- Anne Girolami – ALIA Schools Convenor and School Library Advisory Committee representative
- Sandra Ryan – ALIA Schools representative and Professional Pathways Advisory Board member
- Anna Apfelstedt – ALIA Schools representative
- Sharon Roth – ALIA Schools representative
- Linda Guthrie – School Library Advisory Committee representative
- Helen Weston – School Library Advisory Committee representative,

It should also be acknowledged that this project builds on the work of ALIA Schools over many years (please refer to ALIA, 2022c), including mapping teacher librarian roles to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards, and developing the ALIA CPD for Schools Specialisation Checklists, among other strategic, policy and advocacy initiatives.

1.2 Terminology

For the purposes of clarity and consistency throughout this report, the following terminology is used. This has been informed by ALIA's (2021) 'Becoming a Library & Information Professional Guide'.

'School library' is the generic term used to refer to a library or resource centre that supports the needs of a school community and includes the physical building/facility as well any resources, staff, expertise, programs, and services accessible to that school community.

'Teacher Librarian' refers to a registered teacher who also holds a graduate or post graduate library and information qualification, that includes specialisations related to the school library context, and that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA.

'Teacher' is the term used to refer to a registered teacher who does not have any professional qualification in librarianship (that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA) who is employed to work in the school library.

'Librarian' refers to a staff member holding a Bachelor or post-graduate qualification in librarianship that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA.

'Library Technician' refers to a staff member holding a Diploma of Library and Information Services that is eligible for Library Technician membership of ALIA.

'Library Assistant' refers to a staff member who does not have a formal qualification in library and information services (that is eligible for Associate or Library Technician membership of ALIA) who is employed to work in the school library. Other common titles include Library Officer, School Support Officer (Library), Education Support Officer (Library), and Teacher Aide (Library), to name a few.

When referring to year levels of schooling the following preferred terminology (underlined) is used throughout the report which is broadly based on those levels defined by ACARA (2022) in the *Australian Curriculum*:

- Pre-Foundation represents the non-compulsory early learning years, which are commonly referred to as Pre-Kindergarten, Pre-Preparatory, or Pre-Reception in some states and territories.
- Primary represents those compulsory school years from Foundation to Year 6, with the Foundation year level commonly referred to as Kindergarten (K), Preparatory (P), or Reception (R) in some states and territories.
- Secondary represents any combination of school years from Year 7 up to Year 12, e.g., some secondary schools may only offer Years 7-9 (note in the Northern Territory this is called 'middle school') or Years 7-10 curriculum.
- Senior Secondary represents the non-compulsory school years of Years 11 and 12. A third year of senior study called 'Year 13' may occur in some states, whereas in NT their 'high school' years include Years 10-12. Also note in the ACT public school sector, Years 11-12 are taught in 'Secondary Colleges'.

1.3 The School Library Context

School libraries are an essential part of school life, even though as noted above, their value is at times not clearly understood, and their role in contributing to a school's learning priorities is not fully utilised. A substantial body of empirical studies over the past two decades from North America across 26 states and provinces has shown the measurable impact school libraries and TLs have on student achievement, as summarised by *School Libraries Work!* (Scholastic Library Publishing, 2016), identifying "a credentialed school librarian, collaboration and co-teaching, technology access and collection size" as four key school library factors that elevate student learning (p.1).

Further detail of findings from these impact studies show a direct correlation between student achievement and school library programs led by school library professionals, whose dual teaching and library training qualifies them to teach information literacy, promote reading and facilitate literary learning, assist teachers and students to locate and critically evaluate information and synthesise their findings into new knowledge, effectively use technology to support teachers and

students' information seeking and knowledge construction, organise and maintain an up to date and relevant collection, provide equitable intellectual and physical access to resources, and maintain a supportive and nurturing information environment to increase student satisfaction and learning achievement (Lance, & Kachel, 2018; Woolls & Coatney, 2017; Scholastic Library Publishing, 2016; Haycock, 2003, 2011). These findings highlight the important role of a qualified teacher librarian – as information, technology and learning specialist – as part of the instructional fabric of a school's teaching and learning environment.

In Australia, ACER's Lonsdale Report (2003) review of Australian and international research literature regarding the impact of school libraries on student learning concluded that a "strong library program can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic background of the students", it can have "a significant impact on student achievement when classroom teachers and Tls collaborate on the planning of instructional units, resource selection and collection quality, and teachers' professional development, and school libraries can make "a positive difference to students' self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regards to their own learning" (p. 1).

Nearly 20 years on, within an increasingly complex digital and information world heightened by the pervasiveness of social media and exposure to 'fake news', students are at greater risk as digital citizens. For example, contrary to popular belief, "students do not instinctively know how to navigate the abundance of information available to them through traditional and digital resources", with 75% of students not knowing how to effectively locate articles and resources they need for their research; 60% of students do not know how to verify the accuracy or reliability of information found; and 44% of students do not know how to integrate knowledge from different sources (Scholastic Library Publishing, 2016, p. 2). This is even with availability of local research identifying the teaching of information literacy and academic integrity as a critical role of Tls in schools (Herring, 2006, 2010; Williamson et al., 2007; Williamson & McGregor, 2011; Laretive, 2019; Hossain, 2022), and the impact of teacher librarians collaborating with classroom teachers to support students' skill development and understanding of information use within specific disciplinary learning contexts (Herring, 2010; Whisken, 2019, 2021a; Zeidler & Nasir, 2020).

Concerns about students' preparedness to cope in such a challenging digital and informational world and the need for parents to understand the importance of their child having access to a school library with qualified staff, led to the establishment of the *Students Need School Libraries* (SNSL, 2022) campaign in 2018. This initiative is supported by the School Library Coalition (SLC), a cooperative working group of school library associations in Australia, including two national library organisations (ALIA and ASLA) and five state library organisations (SLANSW, SLASA, SLAV, QSLA and WASLA). The campaign now has over 140 volunteers from across all Australian states and territories, NZ and the world, who have joined together to advocate for all Australian students having equitable access to quality school library services.

Advocacy efforts, however, requires a solid body of evidence, and one of the challenges faced by Australian TLs in the past has been drawing upon North American research findings for strategic or advocacy purposes. As Lance and Russell (2004) claim, "Most public policymakers are certain that their locality, state, or even nation is so unique that the findings of a study done elsewhere might or might not be true for their jurisdiction" (p. 15). Thus, replication within and across states and territories is essential in strengthening the evidence of school library impact in Australia.

By the mid-2000s, some Australian studies on the impact of school libraries and the role of the TL on student learning emerged (Hay, 2005, 2006; Coombs, 2008; Hay & Todd, 2010; Hughes, 2013; Hughes et al, 2013; Lupton, 2016). Sofflink's annual reporting since 2010 examines annual school library budgets, staffing levels, collection size, the use of digital devices and digital resources in school libraries, school library objectives and services, and trends key trends and issues impacting school libraries, and library budgets, staffing levels, school library objectives, emerging trends, with latter reports also presenting a breakdown of findings across Catholic, Government, and Independent school sectors (refer to 2016–2022 in References).

Further data regarding school library staffing in Australia has been collected, including ACER's analyses (Weldon, 2016) of the federally-funded national *Staff in*

Australia's Schools (SiAS) survey data on teachers working in school libraries, which provides a staffing snapshot regarding age, gender, qualifications, basis of employment, job satisfaction, and intentions to consider changing employment. The most recent and significant research undertaken regarding the status of school libraries in Australia is ACER's *School Libraries in South Australia 2019 Census* (Dix et al, 2020) commissioned by the School Library Association of South Australia (SLASA). This census examined the profile of school library staffing in South Australia schools across all three sectors and explored those factors influencing school libraries and their staffing. One key finding was that schools with a qualified teacher librarian are more likely to have improved student literacy outcomes (which reaffirms the results of previous studies). In terms of staffing census, the results showed that 94% of schools in South Australia do employ a person to manage the library collection and to select resources; however, less than a quarter, only 23%, were found to be managed by a qualified teacher librarian. Further findings from the above two ACER research projects on school library staffing will be referred to throughout this report as appropriate.

With the school environment becoming increasingly digital, both equity and access have become critical arguments for the provision of school libraries to support the diverse needs of students from a range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, particularly for those students without access to resources and technologies at home (Hay & Todd, 2010), and when the COVID pandemic hit Australia in early 2020, this showed demonstrably the importance of online access to the school library's digital resource collections for both teachers and students when teaching and learning from home (Dearnaley, 2020; La Marca, 2020; Wall, 2020).

In Australia, we also now have local research that demonstrates the impact of library access on students' performance in literacy testing (Hughes, 2013; Hughes, Bozorgian, & Allan, 2014), including Softlink's (2016) comparative analysis of school library data and NAPLAN results from 2012 to 2016, which found a positive correlation between library budgets and NAPLAN results over the five-year period, reporting:

...an upward trend with schools that reported less library funding achieving lower than the national average reading literacy scores. It also highlights that as funding increases so do NAPLAN results, indicating that schools with libraries that receive higher funding achieve higher than the national average reading literacy scores. (p. 14)

In addition, Sofflink (2016) identified a positive correlation between library staffing numbers and NAPLAN reading literacy results of Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Building on this, the ACER's *School Libraries in South Australia 2019 Census* (Dix et al, 2020) analysed NAPLAN 2018 results with library staffing and found that schools with a qualified TL are more likely to have improved student literacy outcomes. In particular, students' reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation outcomes at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 were found to be significantly associated with the qualification level of the person who managed the library. The study concluded students in schools with a qualified TL can have up to two month's learning gain, compared to students in schools without a staff member managing the library, with the difference being particularly evident in Year 9 students' literacy outcomes (p. 5).

In the past two decades we have also seen TLs in Australia acknowledge the need to adopt evidence-based methods to highlight that the work they do in their own schools does make a difference (Gillespie, 2013). While some of this work has focused on the positive impact on student learning by collaboratively working with teachers to design and implement inquiry-based learning programs (Garrison & FitzGerald, 2019; Sheerman & FitzGerald, 2019; FitzGerald, 2019, 2015, 2011, 2007; Scheffers & Bryant, 2013; Scheffers & Alekna, 2015; Scheffers & Joukhdar, 2016), more recently the work of school libraries in supporting student wellbeing has gained traction within the profession (Dearnaley, 2022; Raffaele, 2021; Whisken, 2021b; Korodaj, 2019).

Dr Margaret Merga (2019a, 2019b, 2020, 2022) has also become a major contributor to the body of research about the impact of Australian school libraries on students' lives, including literacy development, reading engagement and wellbeing, with a particular focus on the role of the teacher librarian as a literacy educator; and creating and maintaining a school library environment to support reading

engagement for pleasure and wellbeing, the development of students' health literacy skills, and encourage healing through reading. In addition, Merga's research (2019a) has identified 40 recurring practices and strategies that Australian teacher librarians implement to foster the literacy and literature capabilities of students. These demonstrate the breadth and richness of the TL as a literacy educator; however, we find some school leaders still questioning the value of TLs, with the position being eroded in some education systems and states more than others. In response to this, Merga (2019a) warns:

We cannot afford to ignore the contribution of teacher librarians to students' reading engagement and subsequent literacy attainment, as this is an area of concern in many nations, with literacy attainment tied to academic, vocational and social opportunity in the modern world. (p.16)

School libraries are part of an evolutionary process of change and development, as the information, technology, and education landscapes change, and with this comes a shift in staffing complements, and individual's roles and responsibilities. The breadth of the role of the TL across school contexts is acknowledged, and with this, specific school library teams also require different emphases on particular aspects of their roles, which is ultimately dependent upon the nature of the library staffing complement and the specific needs of the school. While the above overview of research includes school library contributions and impacts in some Australian states and nationally, the majority of these studies have only collected data about the position and role of the teacher librarian, with particular emphases on the importance of dual qualified TLs being employed in Australian schools. This has, however, led to minimal collection of data from schools with non-traditional models of library services. Anecdotal evidence from within the school library profession suggests that the staffing of school libraries is incredibly diverse, involving a complex mix of LIS qualified and non-LIS qualified employees working in school libraries, along with divergent concerns of demarcation of professional and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities, and what Merga (2022) defines as "job creep or role creep" (p. 29).

That is why ALIA's investment in the School Libraries Research Project as part of the Professional Pathways Initiative is both significant and timely. Updating and articulating skills frameworks, required qualifications, and career-long professional development for all school library staff is essential, as we work to create wider recognition of the role and importance of school libraries and the people who work in them.

1.4 Project Methodology

The project was designed to inform ALIA's Professional Pathways Initiative within the context of school libraries in Australia states and territories across all three education sectors. The project employed an initial scoping phase which involved a review of the literature and professional documentation specifically targeting the school library context (given the extensive literature review and environmental scan undertaken by Dr Gillian Hallam (2022a) to complete the *Professional Pathways Technical Report*). Thus, any review of literature, professional policy, systems- or school-based documentation within this present report is designed to complement rather than replicate findings and conclusions in the *Technical Report*. Policies and frameworks of professional associations, accrediting bodies, government departments, and school systems, as well as system- and school-based job descriptions and role statements, were collected via system and school websites, and from members of the ALIA Schools ERG.

The second phase comprised further scoping and a gap analysis, which involved a series of individual interviews with key stakeholders (including ALIA Schools ERG members), and a series of focus groups with the four main school library employee groups identified for the purposes of this project, i.e., Teacher Librarians, Librarians, Library Technicians and Library Assistants, as well as LIS academics. These were held in November 2021 through to the end of January 2022. Calls for participation were advertised through the *ALIA Weekly Newsletter*, via ALIA's News web portal, through direct email invitations to ALIA members working in schools, via email to School Library Coalition and OZTL_NET (2022) members, and via ALIA's and the author's social media channels.

The objective of the interviews and focus groups was to identify the current continuing and professional development needs of teacher librarians, school librarians, school library technicians, and school library assistants, and identify gaps in current offerings and areas to be addressed or needing greater emphasis, or broader or deeper focus. Participants were also invited to share any concerns, issues, or challenges they had experienced as a school library employee, and to suggest any possible changes or solutions to address these. A total of 47 participants were involved in focus groups and interviews, each approximately one hour in duration. Participants included ALIA School ERG members, other ALIA representatives and members, teacher librarians, heads or managers of school library teams, librarians, library technicians, library assistants, library educators, and people providing library support in education systems (with some of the participants representing more than one of the stakeholder groups).

Interview and focus group data were analysed according to each of the four main employee groups, i.e., teacher librarians, librarians, library technicians, and library assistants, which provided feedback regarding:

- current LIS education offerings, identification of issues or gaps in these offerings, and recommendations for future course offerings, both in terms of content and delivery;
- current CPD offered by ALIA (in the past two years), identification of issues or gaps in these offerings, and recommendations for future course offerings (for 2022-23), both in terms of content and delivery;
- issues, concerns and challenges about gaining qualifications for employment and/or promotion; and
- issues, concerns and challenges regarding existing professional pathways, and recommendations to address these in the future.

Preliminary findings of the scoping and gap analysis were presented to the ALIA project team and ALIA Schools ERG for discussion and feedback in January 2022. The preliminary findings and results of these discussions informed the third phase of the project, which involved the design and implementation of an online questionnaire, to broaden the scoping and gap analysis to a larger population of school library employees in Australia.

ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey

This survey is to be completed by only those people currently employed in a school library whether they be a Teacher Librarian, Teacher, Librarian, Library Technician or Library Officer/Assistant *

Please tell us about your current position and role in your school's context, as well your career aspirations, professional interests, and professional development needs as a school library employee.

This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

If you work in more than one school library, please complete this survey for the school library where you are employed for the majority of your time per week.

All responses are anonymous and only summarised results will be reported.

* Definitions for the purpose of this survey are informed by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) *Becoming a Library & Information Professional Guide*:

'**Library**' or resource centre is used to refer to a managed centre of resources, programs, expertise and services accessible to a school community.

'**Teacher Librarian**' refers to a registered teacher who also holds a professional qualification in librarianship that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA.

'**Librarian**' refers to a staff member holding a Bachelor or post-graduate qualification in librarianship that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA.

'**Library Technician**' refers to a staff member holding a Diploma of Library and Information Services that is eligible for Library Technician membership of ALIA.

'**Library Assistant**' refers to a staff member who does not have a formal qualification in library and information services (that is eligible for Associate or Library Technician membership of ALIA).

Confidentiality: All information that is collected in this study will be treated confidentially. All data collected are kept strictly confidential as defined in the Privacy Act 1988. You may view ALIA's [Privacy Policy](#) for more detail. SurveyMonkey is being used to collect data for this ALIA School Libraries Professional Pathways Project. You may also wish to view SurveyMonkey's [Privacy Notice](#).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

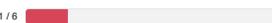
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Figure 1: Online questionnaire introduction page

The 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' consisted of five parts, asking respondents to respond to:

- Part A: Your school library setting, which asked about the state or territory worked in, school sector, school type, geographical area, and type of school library worked in.
- Part B: You and your school library setting, which asked demographic questions such as gender and age, and questions about basis of employment, employee category and position title, level/type of library qualifications and additional qualifications other than LIS, and number of days per week employed in the school library. Respondents were also asked to identify specific aspects of library work that were core to their role as a school library employee and level of responsibility for each aspect.
- Part C: Professional membership, which asked respondents to describe their involvement with professional associations and organisations as a school library employee. This included membership of ALIA, other professional associations/unions/groups that support their work as a school library employee, professional networks (face-to-face or online), and professional networks on social media used to inform/support their work in the school library.

- Part D. Further education and career prospects, which asked respondents questions about their intentions for further education (and at what level) and aspirations in terms of career prospects as a school library employee. Respondents were also asked about their intentions to further their career in a library setting other than a school library in the future.
- Part E. Professional development, which asked respondents questions about their engagement with professional development activities as a school library employee, including kinds of professional development activities undertaken in the past 18 months, average number of hours undertaken each year during school hours and out-of-school hours, their interest in completing skill-specific short courses as part of a microcredentials program to gain credit towards a further qualification, and identifying those areas of school library work respondents were seeking professional development in during 2022-2023.

The questionnaire consisted of a total of 28 questions (some included sub-questions), with the majority of these collecting quantitative responses. Some of the questions also provided an open comment section for respondents to provide further detail (qualitative responses). The questionnaire concluded with an open comment section inviting respondents to provide any additional information about their current school library position and role, career aspirations, professional interests, and/or professional development needs as a school library employee, that they thought might help inform ALIA's Professional Pathways Initiative regarding school libraries and school library employees. The complete survey instrument is presented in Appendix A.

The questionnaire was created in and hosted by SurveyMonkey and piloted by the ERG. All responses were anonymous, and respondents were advised that only summarised data would be reported. The data collection period commenced in Term 1 from February 28 and the survey closed on April 30, 2022. Average completion time of the questionnaire was 16 ½ minutes. A total of 758 attempts were made to complete the online questionnaire which resulted in a complete data pool of 693 full responses.

Quantitative data were analysed using a combination of SurveyMonkey and Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics were generated from the demographic data in terms of counts and percentages, along with comparative analyses of responses by employee group, position title, qualifications, and ALIA membership. Qualitative data sets were coded and analysed based on emerging themes and issues, then specific qualitative responses were identified and added to the report to support key findings and provide examples of school library employee voice to illustrate concerns, issues, and challenges raised, or solutions and recommendations shared by respondents.

1.5 Report Structure

While this chapter provides an overview of the School Library Research Project, including its context within ALIA's Professional Pathways Initiative and the project's methodology, key findings of the survey and focus groups are presented in Chapters 2-6. Chapter 2 focuses on the nature and demographics of the employee groups working in school libraries in Australian schools, and identifies issues and challenges faced by school library employees. Chapter 3 provides an overview of existing LIS qualifications for those working in school libraries; identifies issues, challenges, and concerns of each employee group; examines qualification pathways; and concludes with considerations for the future.

Chapter 4 examines knowledge, skills, and competencies required of school library employees, identifies those points of differentiation between those working in school libraries and the broader LIS profession, and suggests a career stages approach to charting level descriptors as part of ALIA's proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour. Chapter 5 explores ethics and professionalism within the context of school library employees, identifies areas of emphases by conjoining (LIS and education) ethical principles and practices, and examines professional identity within the school library context.

Chapter 6 evaluates the content and delivery of existing continuing professional development for school library employees, identifies areas of need for the provision of professional development for each employee group in the future, and identifies challenges and opportunities for ALIA (and partners) in designing and delivering

CPD in the future. The final chapter of the report (Chapter 7) presents a summary of key findings and conclusions, followed by a set of five recommendations.

Chapter 2. School library employees in Australia

This chapter presents results from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' from questions in Part A and some questions in Part B that provide an overview of the demographics of school library employee respondents and the school library in which they currently work. Please note for the purposes of the questionnaire and based on focus group and ERG feedback, we introduced the category of 'Teacher' as a fifth school library employee group, to ensure that data on any qualified teachers without a LIS qualification who are working in school libraries could be identified and analysed separately, as well as provide data for comparative analyses with the four main employee groups.

2.1 School background

All 693 respondents answered the questions regarding school demographics. Figure 2 presents the percentage breakdown of school location by Australia state or territory, with just over 23% of school library employees each working in Victorian (23.81%) and Queensland (23.38%) schools, and the third largest group of employees working in NSW schools (19.77%).

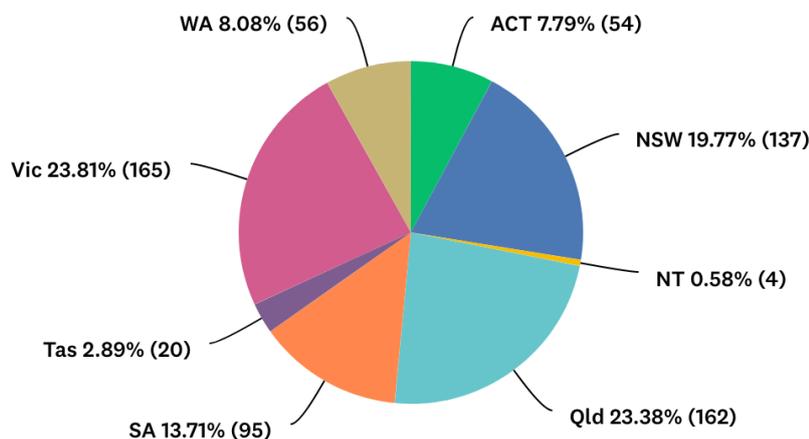


Figure 2: School location by state/territory

Given the total number of schools in the ACT is 136 (based on recent census by ABS, 2022), 54 responses from school library employees working in ACT schools was a considerable response rate.

Respondents (n=693) were asked what school sector they were currently working in (Figure 3). Just over two-fifths were working in government schools (41.85%), with over one third working in an independent school (35.50%) and the remainder working in a Catholic school (22.66%).

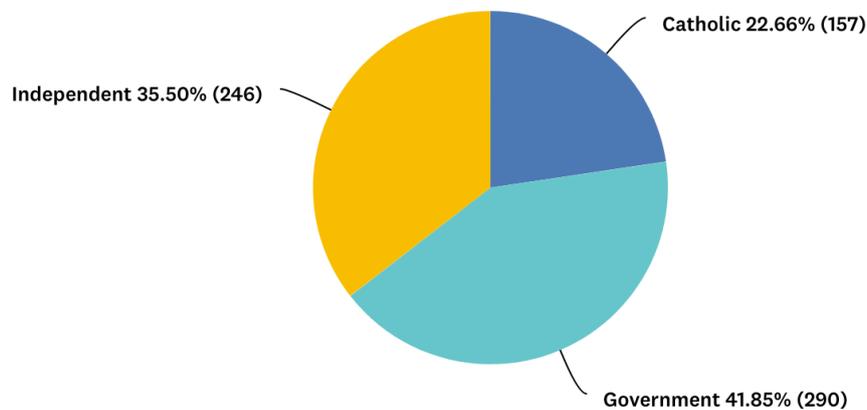


Figure 3: School sector

Respondents were asked to select what school type they worked in from the following list:

- Pre-Kindergarten/Reception/Preparatory/Foundation (non-compulsory early learning year before Primary)
- K-6/R-6/P-6/F-6 (Primary)
- 7-10
- 7-12
- 11-12
- K-12/R-12/P-12/F-12
- Other (please specify)

The final option to select 'Other' allowed respondents the opportunity to provide a response that better represented their school type (if not adequately covered by the above list). As a result of some differences between states and territories with year levels in primary and secondary schools, just under 10% (63) of respondents selected 'Other'. Therefore, all responses to this question were recoded to reflect seven broad school type categories, including Pre-Foundation, Primary, Secondary, Senior Secondary, Combined Pre-Foundation – Primary, Combined Primary – Secondary, and Combined Foundation – Secondary as presented in Figure 4.

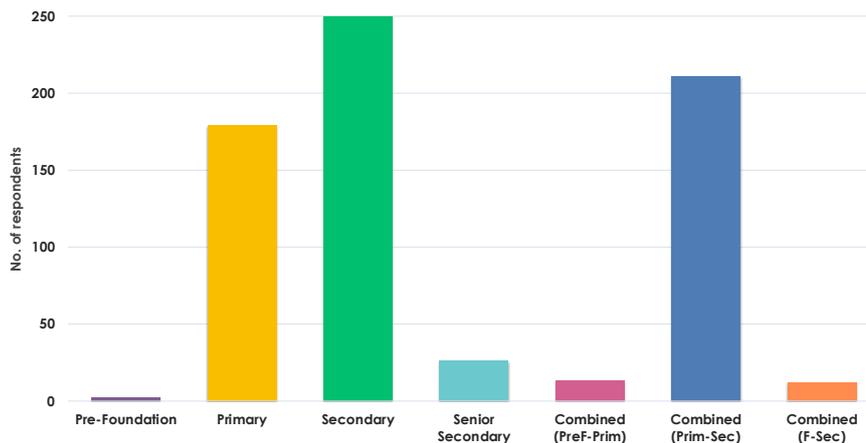


Figure 4: School type

Based on all responses (n=693), the majority of respondents (92%) worked in either a primary (26%), secondary (36%) and a combined primary-secondary (30%) school, with only 2 respondents working in a Pre-Foundation (PreF) school, 13 people working in a combined PreF-Primary school, and 12 people working in a school which accommodated PreF, Primary and Secondary age students.

Respondents were asked to identify the geographical location of their school. Four broad location categories were used based on the Modified Monash Model (MMM) (Dept. of Health, 2019) which classifies metropolitan, regional, rural, and remote areas in Australia according to seven categories of geographical remoteness (refer to Appendix B for detailed descriptions of the MMM). The four broad location categories follow, along with their corresponding Modified Monash category numbers:

- Metropolitan schools located within greater city area of a capital city (MM 1);
- Regional schools located within small regional cities and large rural towns (MM 2 & MM 3);
- Rural schools located in medium and small rural towns (MM 4 & MM5); and
- Remote schools located in remote and very remote mainland areas or islands (MM 6 & MM 7).

Figure 5 presents the breakdown of respondents' school location according to geographical area, with over two thirds of school library employees working in metropolitan schools, and just under one third working in regional schools.

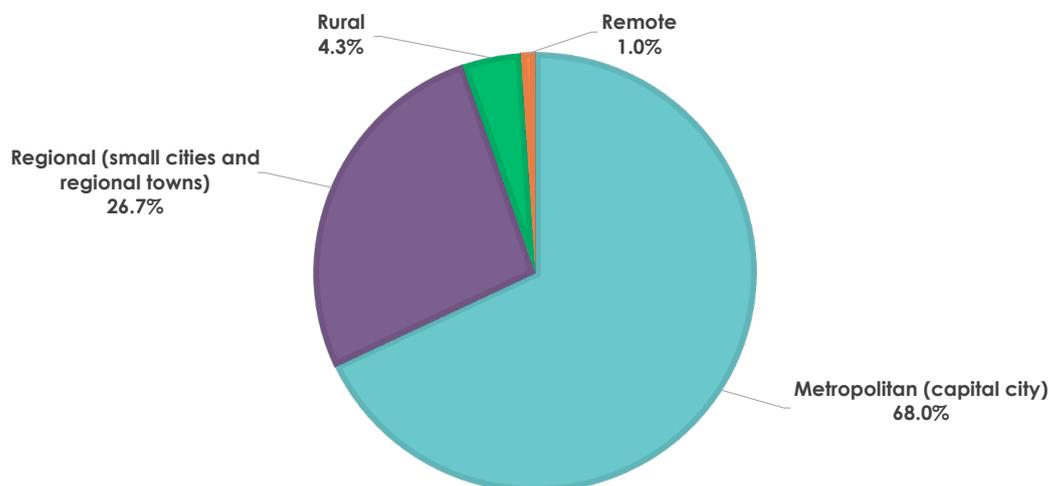


Figure 5: School location based on geographical area

Of the 476 respondents working in metropolitan schools, 38% were employed as TLs, with 16% employed as librarians, 24% employed as library technicians, 20% as library assistants, and ten teachers being employed in a metropolitan school library. Of the 187 respondents working in regional schools, over 40% were employed as TLs, with just under 30% and 20% employed as library assistants and library technicians respectively. Just under 10% were working as librarians, with five teachers employed in regional school libraries.

Of the thirty respondents working in rural schools, 50% were employed as teacher librarians, with eight employed as library assistants, four as library technicians, two as librarians, and one employed as a teacher. Of the seven people working in remote schools, only one was employed as a teacher librarian, with three employed as school assistants, two as library technicians, and one as a librarian.

Respondents were asked to select what type of school library they worked in from a list that described a range of configurations including a physical library or resource centre within the school (i.e., may include multiple libraries), single site library, dual sites with junior library and senior library, a jointly managed school-community and

public library, and a virtual library of school-managed online collections and resources (e.g., databases, e-books).

The final option to select 'Other' allowed respondents the opportunity to provide a response that better represented their school library type (if not adequately covered by the above list). Just over 6% (43) of respondents selected 'Other'. To provide a simpler overview, all responses to this question were recoded to reflect four broad school library types as presented in Figure 6.

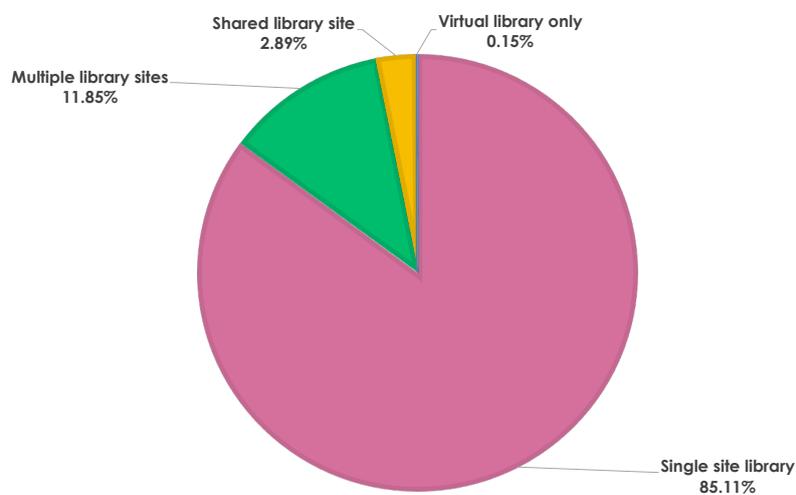


Figure 6: Type of school library

Based on all responses (n=693), just over 85% of respondents were employed in a single site library, with 17% working in single site Primary (F-6) school libraries, 24% in single site secondary (7-12) school libraries, and just under 9% working in a single site F-12 school library. Just under 12% were employed in a school with multiple library sites, with the majority of these having separate junior and senior libraries, and 20 respondents were working in a 'shared library site', with 16 of these working in a jointly managed school-community and public library facility. Other shared sites included a shared campus for a public school and Catholic school which shared the one library facility, a shared library servicing both a public and independent school, and a joint school/university library on a university campus. There was only one respondent working in a school library that consisted of a virtual library service of school-managed online collections and resources to support rural students.

2.2 Employee demographics

This section presents findings regarding the demographics of the five employee groups identified as working in Australian school libraries, with reference to gender, age, basis of employment, and type of employment. Respondents were asked to identify which of the five employee categories best reflected their position in the school library in which they currently worked. The results based on school library employee category are presented in Figure 7.

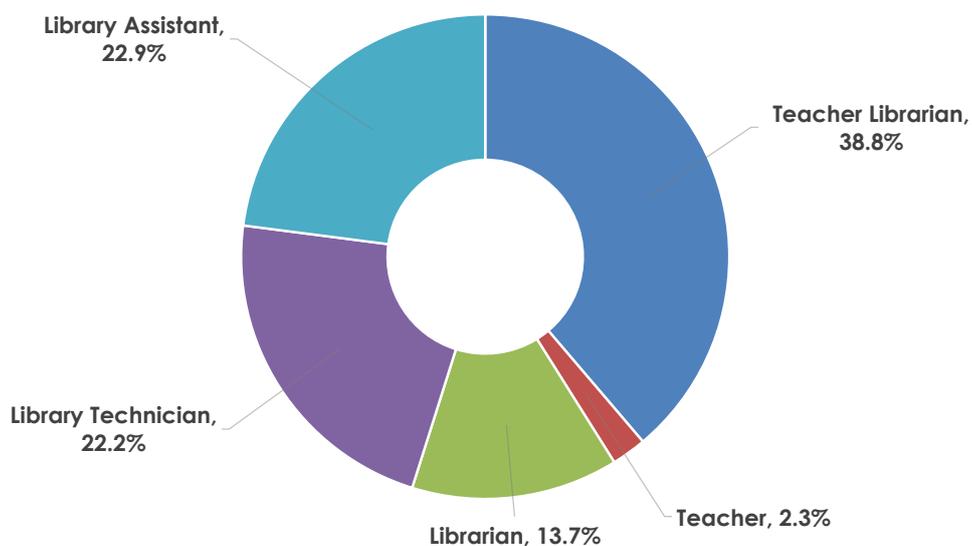


Figure 7: Percentage of respondents per employee category

Of the 693 respondents, over one-third of the sample (38.8%, 269) were employed as TLs, with only 16 teachers (2.3%) employed in the school library. Those employed as librarians comprised 13.7% (95) of the sample, with 22.2% (154) as library technicians and 22.9% (159) employed as library assistants. Thus, the four main employee groups were well-represented in this sample to identify patterns or trends.

Respondents (n=693) were asked to select what gender they identified with. The majority (94.2%) of respondents identified as female, with 4% male, four people identifying as non-binary, and 8 people preferring not to say, as presented in Figure 8.

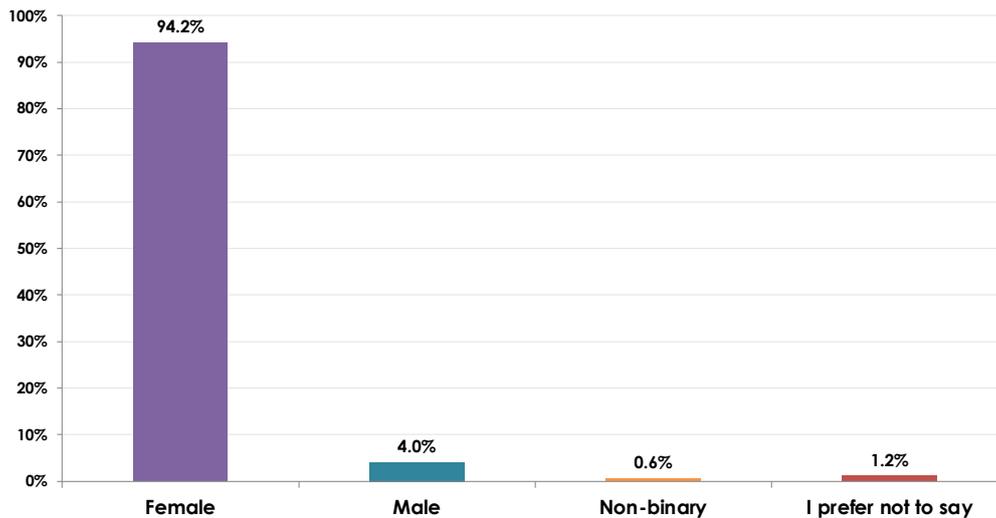


Figure 8: Gender of school library employees

The following presents a summary of gender breakdown of employee groups working in the school libraries represented in the survey sample:

- Teacher Librarians (269 respondents) – 93.7% female and 4.8% male
- Teachers (16) – 100% female
- Librarians (95) – 93.7% female and 5.3% male
- Library Technicians (154) – 93.5% female and 3.9% male
- Library Assistants (159) – 95.6% female and 2.5% male

In comparison to teaching staff data collected by the ABS (2022) with 82% and 61.2% of teachers working in primary and secondary schools (respectively) in Australia being female, and with 18% of male teachers working in primary schools and 38.8% of male teachers working in secondary schools, the TL and teacher employee groups working in school libraries (as represented in this survey sample) exceeds the national average of female teachers, with the male TL and teacher employees of this survey being significantly less than the national average of male teachers. Another point of comparison of data about teachers working in school libraries are results from ACER's analyses of *Staff in Australia's Schools* (SiAS) survey data which concluded that, "Over 80 per cent of teachers involved in library work are female", with 18.4% of male teachers working in a library role (Weldon, 2016, p. 13). Again, the females in the TL and teacher employee groups represented in this survey sample exceeds ACER's national average of female educators working in

school libraries, with the males represented (4.8%) being far less than that found in the SiAS data.

Regarding gender trends in employment of library staff in Australia, the National Skills Commission's *Labour Market Insights* (NSC, 2022a) states that females make up 84% of the librarian workforce (which is 36 percentage points above the 'all jobs average' of 48%). Like the TL and teacher employee groups represented in this survey sample, the librarians employed in the school library sector (93.7%) exceeds the national average of female librarians employed in Australia, with the male librarians (5.3%) in this sample being less than half the national average. With regards to library technicians, according to NSC (2022b), females make up 88% of the workforce with 12% of males working as library technicians. In comparison, results of this survey sample were 93.5% female and 3.9% male. Similarly, with the national library assistant workforce, NSC (2022c) calculates 87% of female share with 13% male, compared to this survey's results of 95.6% female and 2.5% male. Thus, all five employee groups represented in this survey sample highlight female employment in the school library sector exceeding the national average of female teacher and library employees, with males working in the school library sector being significantly less than the national average of teacher and library employees in Australia.

The results of the question regarding the age of school library employees who participated in this survey (n=693) (as presented in Figure 9) are also significant, with a predominance of employees over the age of 40 years, with more than 60% aged 50 years or over, and only 15.6% of school library employees 39 years of age or less, with two people working in a school library under the age of 20 currently enrolled in undergraduate LIS programs. Please note PNTS in the chart is an abbreviation of the 'I prefer not to say' category.

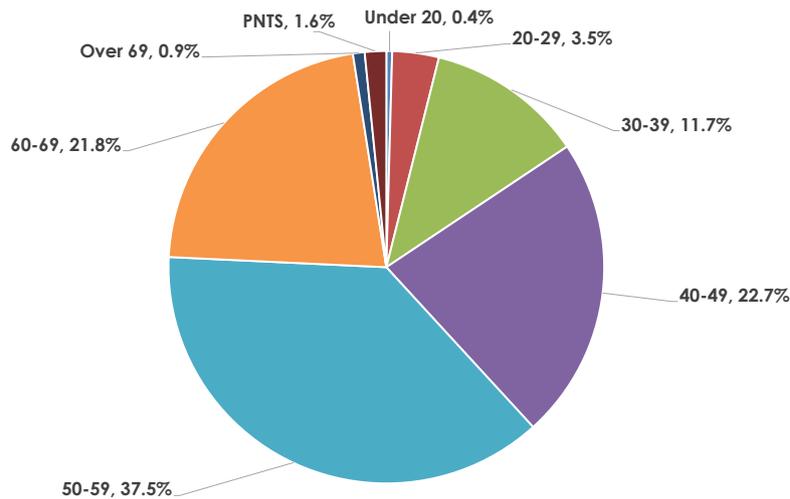


Figure 9: Age of school library employees

In comparison to national workforce trends data, the school library employees represented in the survey sample are older across all employee groups when compared to National Skills Commission occupation profiles. Figure 10 presents the age range of the four main employee groups of TL, librarian, library technician and library assistant. According to NSC's (2022d) worker profile on primary school teachers (of which "Primary School Teacher-Librarian" is identified as a specialisation), the median age of primary school teachers is 41 years, with a large share of teachers aged 25 to 34 years (NSC, 2022d). Similarly, "Secondary School Teacher-Librarian" as a specialisation is included in the occupation data for secondary school teachers (NSC, 2022e), with the median age being 43 years and a large share of secondary teachers aged 25 to 34 years. When compared with the TL age range results in Figure 10(a), it is clear that this survey sample of TLs are older than the national average of teachers with 87.8% over the age of 40 years and with the median in the 50-59 year range and 59.5% of TLs aged 50 and over. This result is comparative to the results of the Coombes (2008) and Weldon (2016) studies.

In addition, Weldon's (2016) analyses of early career teachers (defined as those with five years or less experience) highlights the lack of younger teachers entering the TL profession, with 12.7% of early career teachers (ECTs) working in a primary school

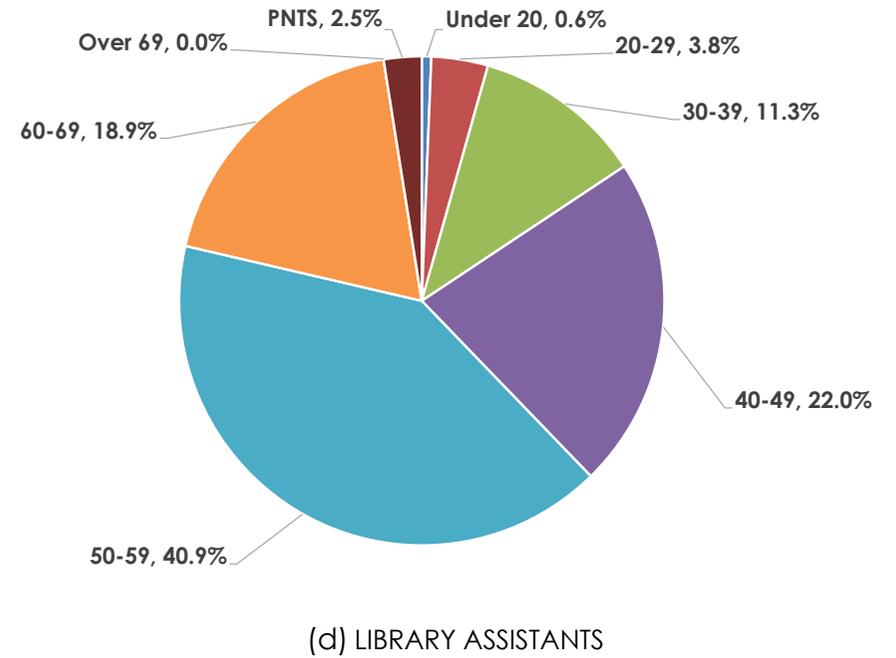
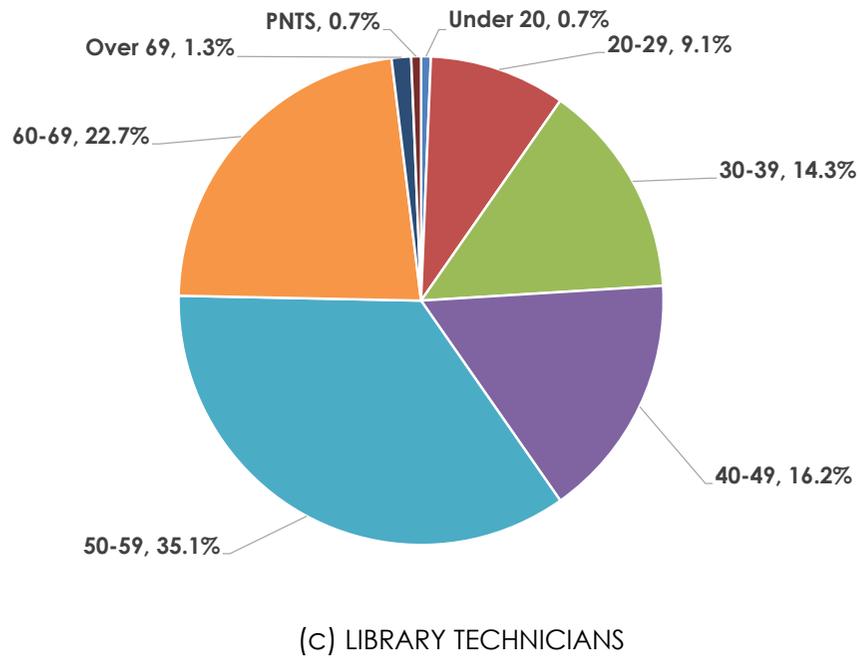
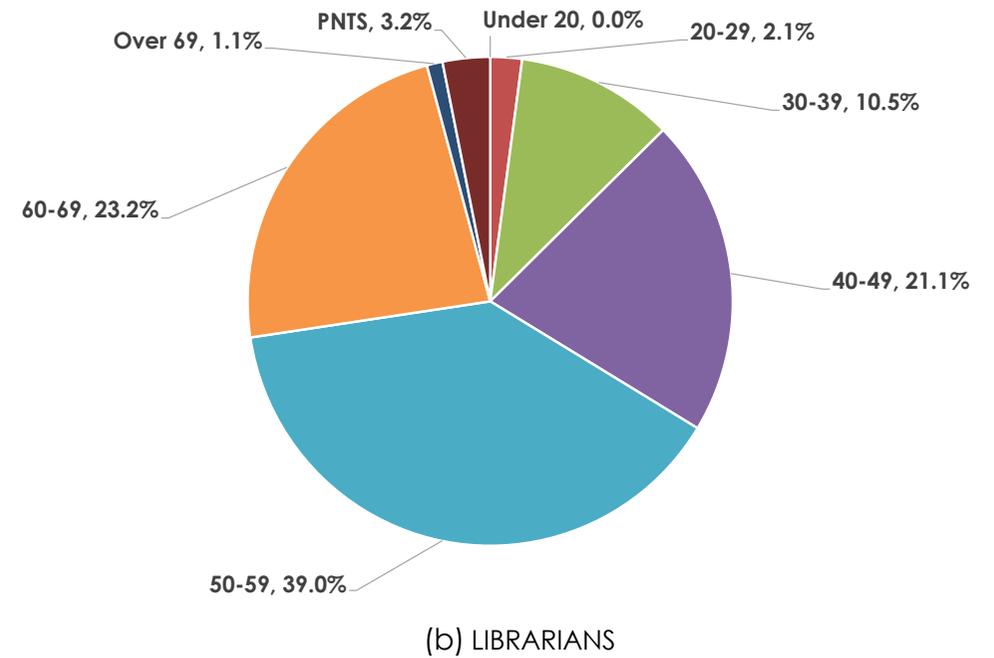
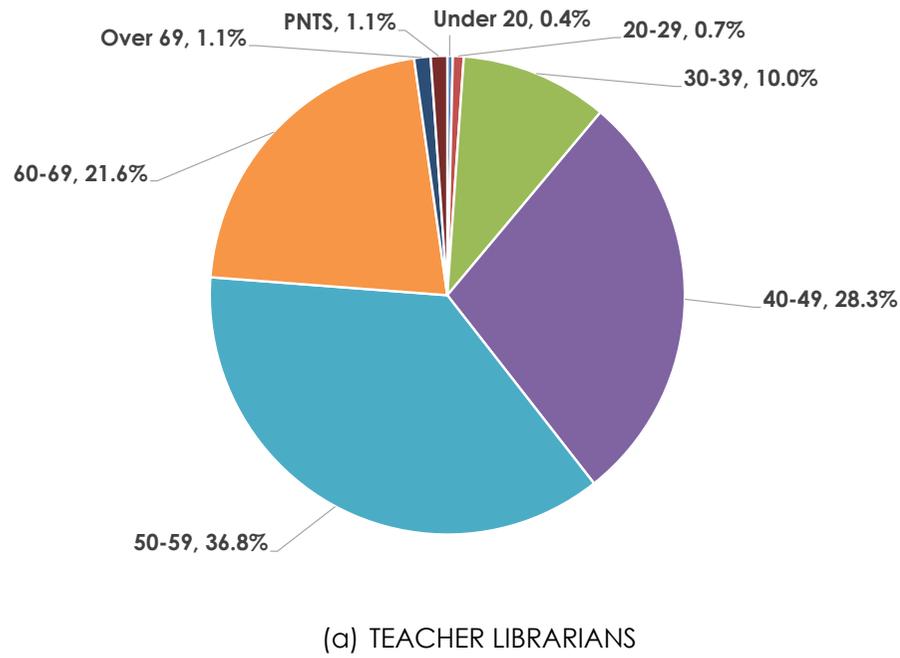


Figure 10: Comparison of age range across the four main employee groups

library role and 4.7% of ECTs working in a secondary school library (p. 17). Given the TL profession is an ageing population, this does raise serious issues regarding succession planning and sustainability. One contributing factor is the existing pathway for a teacher to retrain as a TL, which requires their completion of the equivalent of a Masters degree that includes a specialisation in teacher librarianship. Often teachers come to postgraduate study later in their teaching career, as noted in the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment's (HRSCEE, 2011) Inquiry report where, "teachers often do not come to the discipline of teacher librarianship until their late 30s or early 40s" (p. 72). This often leads to TL graduates only working for another 15 years before retirement, so there is not the same longevity of the TL profession compared to teachers working in schools.

Regarding the other three main school library employee groups, NSC (2022a) identifies the median age of the Librarian workforce in Australia as 51 years, which does fit within the median age range of 50-59 in this survey sample; however, nearly two-thirds of librarians in this sample (63.3%) were aged 50 and over. Similarly, in the library technician workforce, the median age of Library Technicians is 51 years (NSC, 2022b), and the school library sample does identify the 50-59 range as the median. While a large share of the library technician workforce in Australia are aged 45 to 54 years (NSC, 2022b), the larger share of school library technicians in this sample (59.1%) were 50 and over. Furthermore, library assistant workforce data recorded by NSC (2022c) states the median age of Library Assistants is 49 years, with the school library sample identifying 50-59 as the median age range. While NSC data states a large share of library assistant workers in Australia are aged 45 to 54 years, in this survey sample a large share of the school library assistant respondents were in the 40 to 69-year ranges, with just under 60% being 50 and over.

Overall, these results do suggest the majority of Australia's school library workforce (no matter what employee group) do come to employment in the school library sector later in their careers, and once they gain employment the majority remain working in the school library sector until retirement. Some of the qualitative comments from respondents highlight some of the challenges faced by school library employees as an ageing population. For example:

"As one TL I am nearing retirement and am maintaining a teacher-librarian presence as I fear that when I leave the T-L role will not be maintained." [Teacher Librarian, aged over 69]

"I have enjoyed my career and learnt much about helping all people in our community as a school/community library TL. Am looking to take long service leave prior to retirement in the near future." [Teacher Librarian, 60-69 age range]

"I'm probably not interested in furthering my career as I am nearing retirement. However, I'm always interested to know where things are at for school libraries... If I was younger, I would've considered training to be a teacher librarian."
[Library Technician, 60-69 age range]

"I have been working in school libraries since 1996 after graduating with an Associate Diploma of Science (Library Technology)... I have managed the school library on my own for over 15 years since the Education Dept removed teachers from primary school libraries... I plan to retire at the end of this year, and have thoroughly enjoyed my time working in a school library environment." [Library Assistant, 60-69 age range]

"I have retired from forty years as a teacher librarian, library coordinator and now enjoying small part time library assistant role in term time only."
[Library Assistant, 60-69 age range]

"I am happy with my work and will hope to continue in this role till I retire in a few years... I enjoy helping other school library staff with issues they experience and enjoy helping to train them... I am solely responsible for all aspects of my school library. I have my Cert 3 in Library studies but as I am close to retirement I don't wish to take on any further study." [Library Assistant with position title of Head of Library, 50-59 age range]

"I have been managing our school library [primary] for almost 4 years. I am a qualified TA [teacher aide] and fell into the Library position after our Teacher-Librarian retired." [Library Assistant with position title of Library Manager, 50-59 age range]

Of note here is the issue of TL positions not being filled with another qualified TL after an incumbent retires. This is an issue that will be addressed in section 2.4 of the report.

Respondents (n=693) were asked on what basis they were employed at their current school. The majority of respondents were employed on a permanent basis (85.7%), with 12.6% employed on a fixed-term contract, and only 12 people employed on a casual basis.

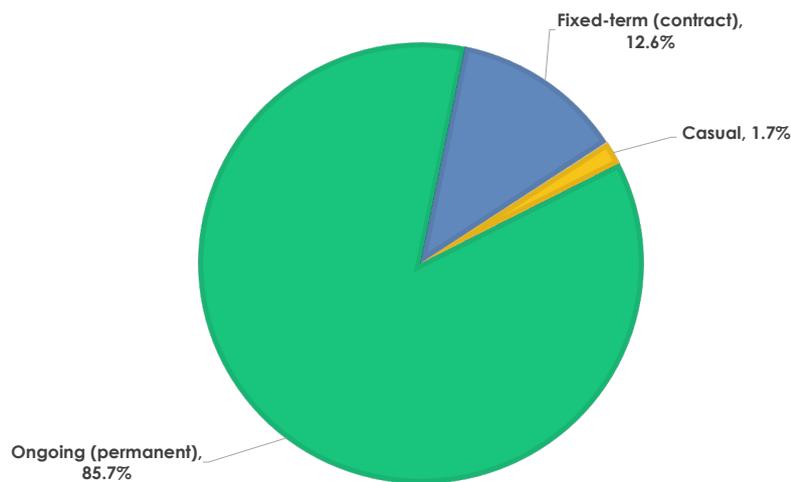


Figure 11: Basis of employment

Please note, this result may be somewhat skewed in terms of those employed casually possibly not having ready access to the communication channels used by ALIA and the author in promoting the invitation to participate in the survey. That said, with a significantly large number of respondents stating they have permanency (and combined with the age range of school library employees as discussed previously), this could have implications for movement of employees (or lack

thereof) within the school library sector with few opportunities for either qualified LIS or non-qualified LIS people to enter the sector at times.

This question also included an open comment field for respondents to provide further detail of their basis of employment. This led to the identification of different types of employment, including the implementation of employing school library employees in some schools as 'Permanent – Term Time'. This seemed to be more prevalent practice for LIS positions compared to teachers or TLs. For example, a librarian, library technician or assistant could work in a 'Permanent – Term Time' position where they are employed 38 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, which means they do not receive pay for those weeks that are school holiday weeks. While some employees were only paid for the 40 weeks worked per year, others received fortnightly payments that consisted of a calculated reduction of pay across 52 weeks of the year. Some examples included, a qualified Library Technician who was being employed as the 'Library Manager' on the basis of Permanent – Term Time with very specific hours of employment, i.e., 5 days per week at 6 hours and 40 minutes term time only; and another = qualified Library Technician who was employed in a F-12 school library as a Library Assistant with 12-18 paid hours per week in a relieving capacity, and she worked additional hours in the school library in a volunteer capacity to complete the work that needed to be done.

Examples of this type of employment were identified as practice occurring within the independent and Catholic school sectors in some states and territories; however, if there are limited openings for school library employment in the area in which a person lives, particularly those living in regional, rural or remote locations, then people wishing to enter the school library workforce may agree to such terms of employment. In other words, "a job is better than no job" mentality. Furthermore, some teachers (aspiring to be TLs) were faced with fixed term contracts while trying to pursue permanency, or securing a TL position. For example, one teacher was currently working in a public school as a TL on a fixed-term (contract) with the promise of gaining permanency once she finished her MEdTL degree (i.e., once she was qualified). While a teacher in an independent school being employed permanently as a teacher was currently working in the Head of Library position on a 3 year fixed-term appointment in order to "get the job".

A comparison of basis of employment across the five employee groups as presented in Figure 12 shows a greater total percentage of fixed-term contract and casual employment with library technician (16%) and library assistant (28%) positions in the schools represented in the survey sample.

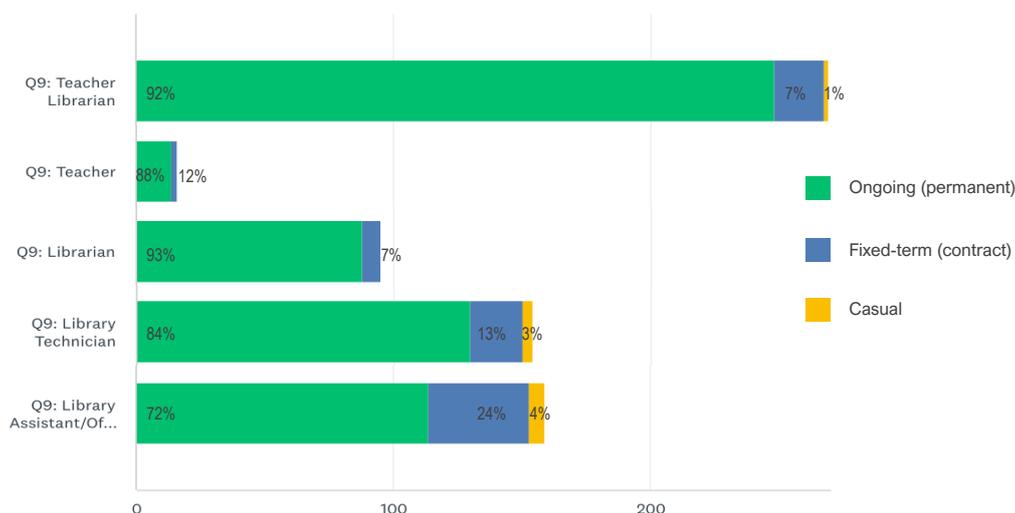


Figure 12: Basis of employment across employee groups

That said, with such a high level of permanency across all groups (from 72 to 93%), this does lead to several concerns raised by survey and focus group participants regarding professional pathways and investing in further education or training (which will be examined in Chapter 3).

Respondent were asked to identify whether they worked either full-time or part-time in the school library using the following 'full-time equivalency' (FTE) scale based on number of days worked per week:

- Full-time equivalent (FTE) (5 days per week)
- 0.8-0.9 FTE (4-4.5 days per week)
- 0.6-0.7 FTE (3-3.5 days per week)
- 0.4-0.5 FTE (2-2.5 days per week)
- 0.2-0.3 FTE (1-1.5 days per week)
- Less than 0.2 FTE (less than 1 day per week)

The results (n=693) in Figure 13 show that just under 45% of respondents work full-time (F/T) in the school library, with just under 20% working at the maximum of part-time (P/T) hours (FTE of 4-4.5 days per week).

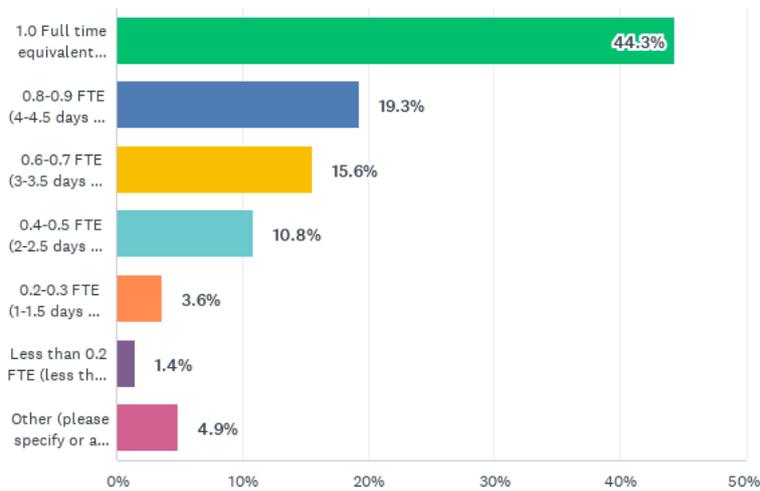


Figure 13: Proportion of respondents in F/T vs P/T employment

Respondents were also given the option of selecting 'Other' if they felt the above scale did not clearly represent their situation. This resulted in 4.9% of the sample describing a range of different configurations of what their part-time employment looks like. Examples included respondents who were employed F/T in their school but were working P/T days/hours in the school library, or they were employed P/T but working across two different campuses and library sites within each week. A number of teacher and TL respondents referred to being employed in a F/T school library position but also being allocated other teaching responsibilities leading to actual school library days/hours becoming a P/T load, as described by these respondents:

"Technically, I am 1.0, but I also teach other subjects and have relief lessons, so I am actually approx. 0.8-0.9."

"Technically it's a full time library position but due to staff shortages I have a non-library teaching load of 0.6."

"In theory I am 1.0 Teacher Librarian, however I now find that about 50%-60% of my time is spent as a relief teacher - often with two classes at

once "because there is space for them, and you can watch the Library at the same time."

"Employed as a TL, but substitute through school when teachers are away I take 6 classes of 21 and have been made to do school band against my wishes."

"They have me teach Japanese too; also during COVID was put on classes and they shut the library."

A number of these responses demonstrate how a TL position is put at risk or can be eroded when used as a back-up to fill teaching load due to staff shortages, instead of the school employing a casual teacher to cover classes or employing a casual specialist teacher (such as the above case with LOTE) to teach specialist subjects or extra-curricular activities (such as school band). While school management may see this use as providing the school with some staffing flexibility in-house, it does undermine the full-time equivalency of the TL position and productivity of the TL within a school.

Some employees while based in the school library as their workplace, they were also fulfilling other school-based roles that aren't library duties for part of the week, such as, "I am based in the Library full time, but my role encompasses a number of other responsibilities, also situated within the library" and "I work in the library everyday but split the role as First Aid Officer too". Working on a Term Time agreement (as discussed above) was also identified as a form of P/T employment, for example, as some respondents explained "1.0 FTE but Term Time only", "0.8 - full time during term, but only 40 weeks per year", and "Full time during term time, but technically part time (42 weeks a yr)".

Other school library employees worked over the 5 days of the week, but they worked limited hours per day, as described by some respondents, "Part time 5 days a week", and "3hrs per day, 5 days per week". A number of respondents stated they worked a 20-hour week over a 4-day period, and of course, one casual teacher noted irregular hours, "As I am an on-call casual, hours may vary week to week".

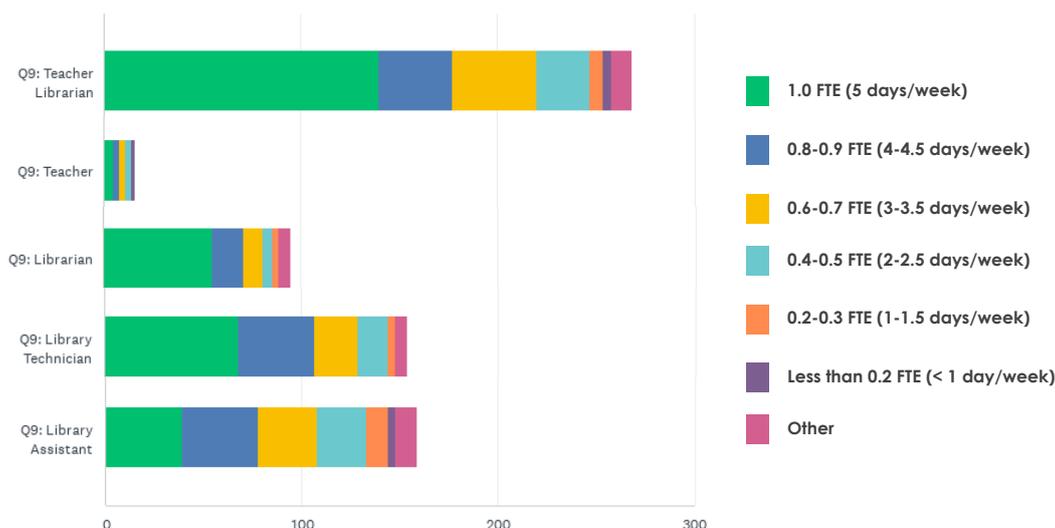


Figure 14: Comparison of F/T vs P/T employment across employee groups

Figure 14 compares the results of F/T versus P/T employment across each of the five employee groups, with over 50% of TLs being employed F/T and 81.8% of TLs working 3 or more days a week in the school library. Compared to Weldon's (2016) findings where 68.9% of teachers were working F/T and 33.1% P/T in primary school libraries, and with 73% of teachers working F/T and 27% P/T in secondary school libraries, this survey sample suggests less TLs are working F/T with more TLs working P/T, particularly from 3-4.5 days. While some of this may be lifestyle choice, other factors could be an increase in job-sharing TL positions in some schools, or as described in the TL quotes (above), some 1.0 FTE TL positions have been eroded to less than 5 days as TLs are given additional teaching duties of specific curriculum areas, are being used as an in-house 'casual' (at times of casual teacher shortage within the area), or they are allocated additional whole school or extra-curricular responsibilities that take them away from their F/T duties in the school library.

In terms of the LIS employees, 57.9% of librarians were employed on a F/T basis, which is comparable to the NSC (2022a) result of 61% of the librarian workforce. With regard to library technicians, 44.2% in this sample were employed F/T, which again is comparable to the NSC (2022b) figure of 44% library technicians, and while 24.5% of library assistants were employed on a F/T basis in this sample, this result is also comparable to the NSC (2022c) figure of 29% of F/T library assistants. Overall survey results also found that in terms of LIS employees working 3 or more days per week in

their school library, this involved 85.2% of librarians, 83.8% of library technicians, and 67.9% of library assistants.

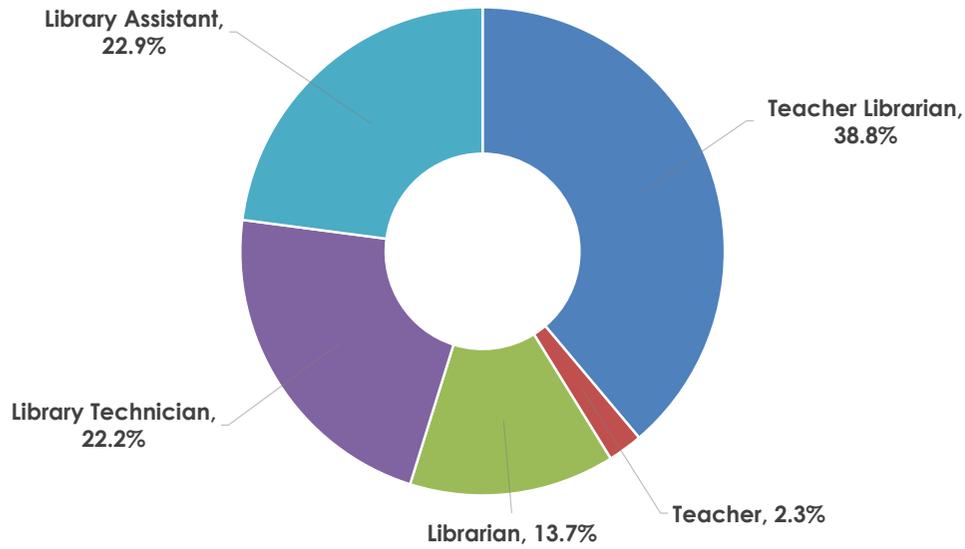
In terms of P/T employment in the school library for 2.5 days or less, it was more common for the library assistant employee group (25%) to be employed P/T for a few hours to 2.5 days per week, when compared to TLs (14%), library technicians (12.3%), and 8.5% of librarians, with little casualisation across all employee groups.

2.3 School library positions and roles

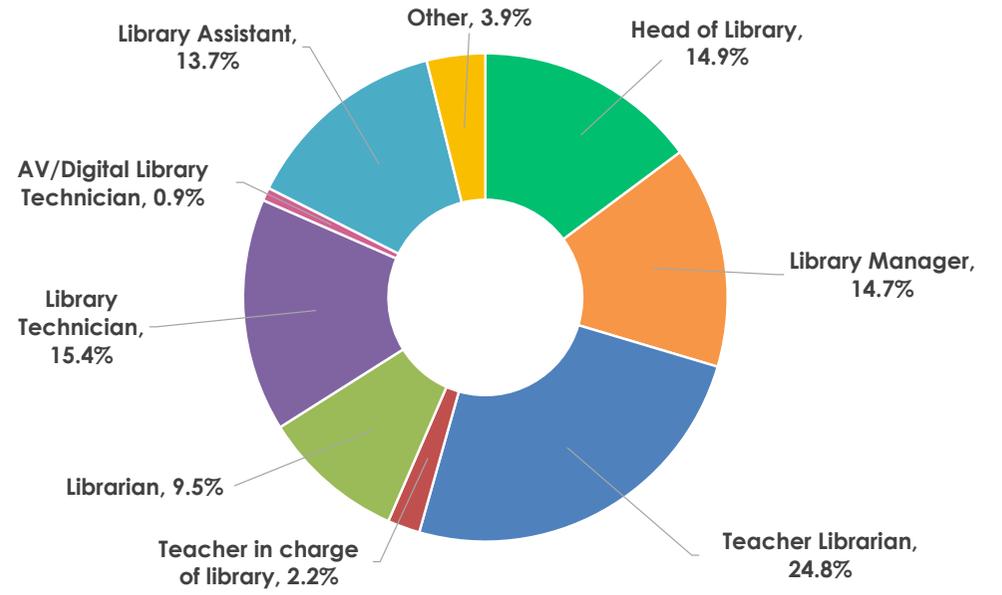
To gain further understanding of the nature of, and difference between, the role and responsibilities of school employee groups, respondents (n=693) were provided with a list of common position titles held by people working in school libraries. These included:

- Head of Library
- Library Manager
- Teacher Librarian
- Teacher in charge of library
- Librarian
- Library Technician
- AV/Digital Library Technician
- Library Assistant

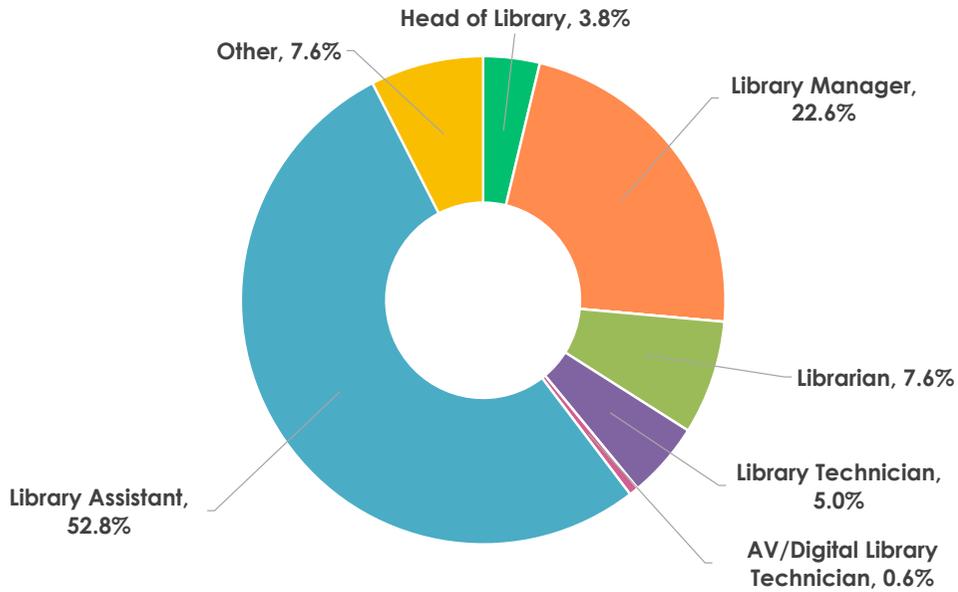
Respondents were then asked to select a position title that best reflected their role in the school library they were currently working in. The main reason for asking this question was to then be able to compare the position title held by an employee versus the employee category which best reflected their level of employment (the latter often commensurate with the salary or pay scale of an employee). Figure 15 illustrates some differences in the number of respondent's employment level (i.e., category) and the position title they currently hold in the school library. For example, while 22.9% of respondents who were employed as library assistants (as per Figure 15a, top left), only 13.7% of respondent's position used the title of 'Library Assistant' (as per Figure 15b, top right). Further analysis of this employee group identified a



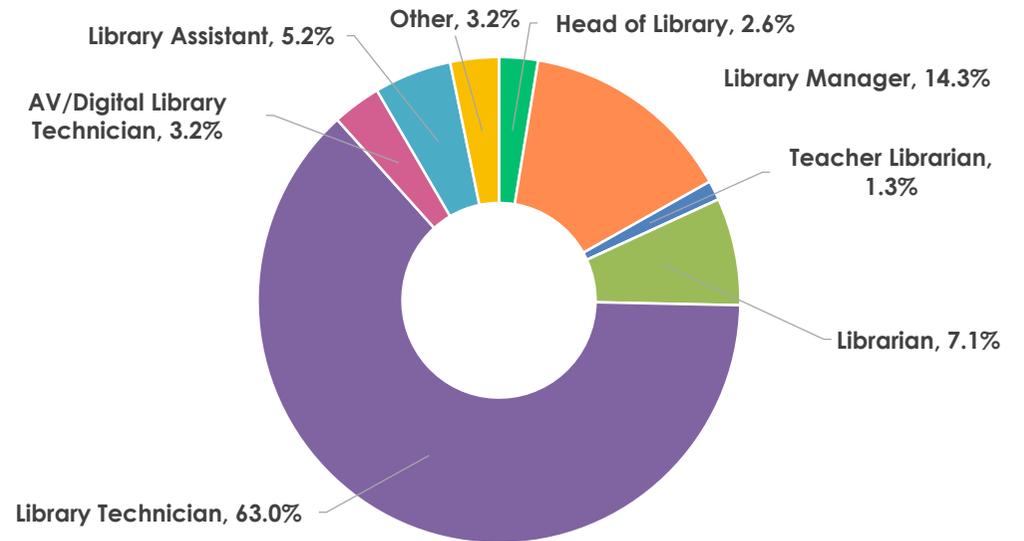
(a) EMPLOYEE CATEGORY – ALL



(b) POSITION TITLE – ALL



(c) LIBRARY ASSISTANT TITLES



(d) LIBRARY TECHNICIAN TITLES

Figure 15: Comparison of respondent's Employee Group versus Position Title

significant range of position titles held by those employed at the level of library assistant. For example, of the 22.9% of respondents employed at the library assistant level (in 15a), in comparison Figure 15c (bottom left) shows that only 52.8% of the library assistant employee group identified 'Library Assistant' as the position title that best reflected their role, with just under one quarter of this employee group selecting the title of 'Library Manager' as reflecting their position and role in the school library. In addition, just under 10% of the library assistant employee group identified the title of 'Librarian' or 'Library Technician' best reflecting their role, with six from the school assistant employee group selecting the title 'Head of Library' as best reflecting their position. Twelve respondent's selected 'Other' and provided more details about their position titles, which included that of "Teacher Aide", "Library Services Specialist", "Library Trainee" and "Digital Curator". Some respondents also detailed their supervisory and/or management roles, as illustrated in the following comments:

"Junior Library Supervisor/Library Assistant"

"Teacher Aide who is in charge of the library"

"I am 1 of 2 library officers managing the library"

"We have no library qualified staff. Myself and another Library Officer run the library"

"Library assistant, resource management, digital management and maintenance"

"Community library assistant - but I manage the other SSOs who work weekends and holidays/one day a week"

"Library Officer/Library Head (run the library including purchasing)"

These findings highlight that a number of people working in school libraries while being employed at the lower end of position/salary scale, are in fact being required to fulfill a library position with roles and responsibilities above their employment level.

Similarly, with the library technician employee group who comprised 22.2% of total respondents (n=693) as presented in Figure 15a, the results from the question regarding position title (in Figure 15b) shows that only 15.4% of total respondents selected the title of 'Library Technician' as best reflecting their position in the school library. Upon further analysis of the library technician employee group as presented in Figure 15d, 66% selected the title of 'Library Technician' or AV/Digital Library Technician to best represent their position in the school library, thus two-thirds of people being employed at the library technician level identified their position title as same. However, the remaining one-third provides some insights into the other roles library technicians are fulfilling such as that of 'Library Manager' (14.3%), 'Librarian' 7.1%, with four respondent's titles reflecting the position of 'Head of Library'. Five respondents selected 'Other' and provided more specific detail of their titles which included, "Cataloguer/Library Technician", Library Technician and "Digital Archivist" or "Archives Assistant", "Library Services Specialist - Events & Communications", and one person who held two P/T positions within their school has a different title for each position with her Junior School Library title as "Library Technician" and her Senior School Library title as "Resource Officer".

A similar trend was found for librarians (95 respondents), where those who selected Librarian as the employee group that best represented their level of employment at their school comprised 13.7% of total respondent (in Figure 15a), however, the number of employees using the position title of 'Librarian' was less than this (see 9.5% in Figure 15b). The results upon closer examination of position titles used by the librarian employee group are presented in Figure 16, which shows that less than half (42.1%) of those employed as librarians used the position title of 'Librarian'. In fact, exactly 50% used 'Head of Library' or 'Library Manager' as their position title, which suggests a significant of librarians employed in schools are employed at a supervisory or management level. Other position titles attributed to individual respondents included 'Teacher Librarian' and 'Senior Librarian' (note both these people had a dual qualification in teaching and librarianship but were employed as a librarian), and 'Librarian and eLearning Coordinator' (a qualified librarian with no

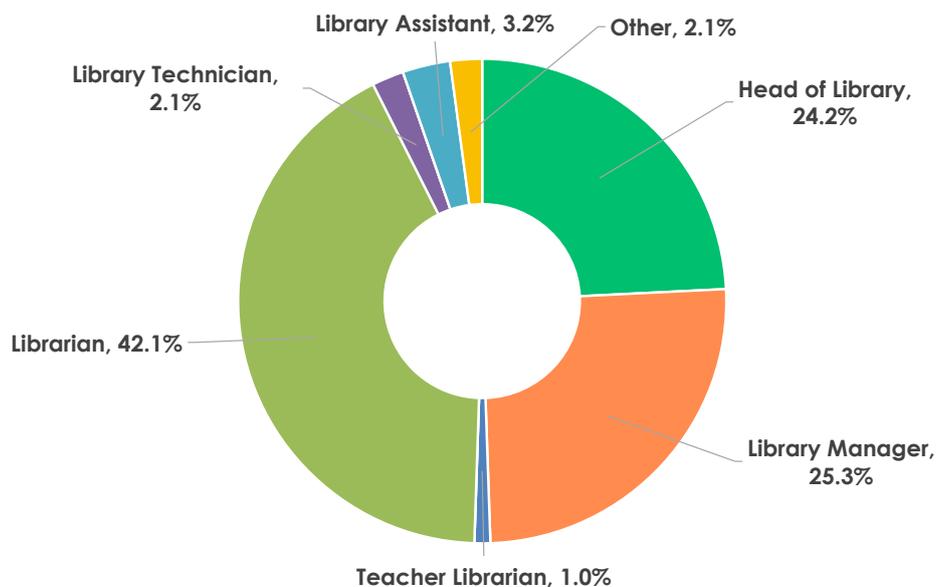


Figure 16: Breakdown of Librarian employee group position titles

teaching qualification). Clearly, two of these titles suggest that a component of the librarian's role is teaching, and even teaching leadership as an 'eLearning Coordinator'. Another TL respondent who had a dual qualification stated, "[My Substantive position is 4 days pw as library manager (librarian) and 1 day pw at TL (teaching)". This adds to the concern that a some qualified TLs are accepting employment at the librarian level, and/or are being paid a higher salary as a library manager, which would still be considerably less than being employed as a TL on a teacher award.

Of the 269 respondents who selected the employee category of 'Teacher Librarian' as best reflecting their position in the school library (as presented in Figure 17), nearly two-thirds of them (62.1%) use the same for their position title, with one-third of them having a position title that was commensurate with a library management role (24.9% with titles best reflecting 'Head of Library' and 7.8% 'Library Manager'). Seven respondents stated their position title best reflected that of 'Teacher in charge of library' and two stated their role was best reflected by the title 'Librarian'. Those who selected 'Other' shared their specific titles, with two having the title of "Head of Department – Curriculum" (suggesting their responsibilities are broader than solely a library management role), and the other three titles were "Library Coordinator", "Leader of Research and Resources", and "Teacher Librarian and Digital

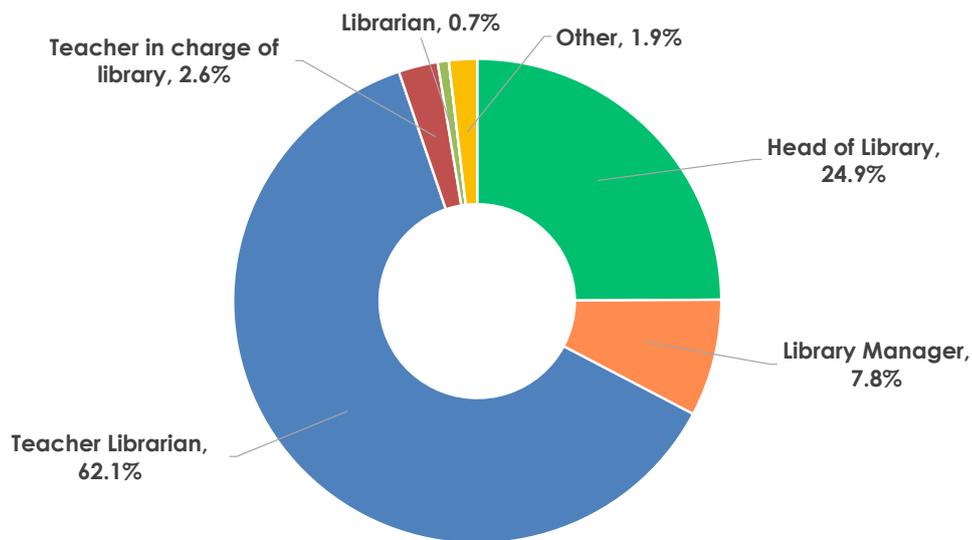


Figure 17: Breakdown of Teacher Librarian employee group position titles

Technologies Teacher", where the latter worked part-time (0.6-0.7 FTE) in a primary school with a dual role and responsibilities. Compared to the results presented above regarding Librarian, Library Technician and Library Assistant employee groups, the results of the TL employee group do not identify any significant differences between employee category and position titles.

Of the 16 respondents in the teacher employee group (and currently working in a school library), position titles included 'Teacher in charge of library' (50%), with three using the title of 'Head of Library', four 'Teacher Librarian', and one in the position of 'Librarian.' Given such a small sample of respondents in this employee group, it is difficult to any conclusions, other than some teachers' title and role in the school library is best reflected by the label 'Teacher in charge of library', while some teachers are fulfilling positions that reflect such titles as 'Head of Library' and 'Teacher Librarian' without having undertaken postgraduate study to gain a qualification to fulfill these roles. That said, three of the respondents in this group did state that they were currently studying for the Master of Education in Teacher Librarianship to become a qualified TL while being employed by their school in a library position.

Upon examination of each of the five school library employee groups (above), we start to see how a blurring of the lines between position titles, roles and qualifications,

and potential for position creep within school libraries. Furthermore, one can understand how members of school communities find it difficult to determine the difference between school library employee's position titles, awards they are employed on, their level of qualification and their roles and responsibilities as a school library employee. Examination of qualifications versus employee categories and positions is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3. Qualifications and qualification pathways

This chapter provides an overview of existing LIS qualifications for those working in school libraries, presents a snapshot of findings from the survey and focus groups regarding any qualification-based trends, issues, challenges, and concerns for each of the five employee groups, and examines qualification pathways for each employee group. A section is dedicated to each employee group, and the chapter concludes with a summary of considerations for the future.

3.1 Teacher Librarians

According to ALIA & ASLA (2016) policy, *Statement on Teacher Librarian Qualifications*, a TL should be a member of a school's teaching team, given they have "a role in the planning, implementing and evaluating of educational policies, curricula, outcomes and programs, with particular reference to the development of students' information literacy". As such, a person employed by a school as a TL should, therefore:

- (a) hold the same level of education and preparation as classroom teachers;
- (b) hold formal qualifications in education, and librarianship or knowledge/information/technology management;
- (c) hold qualifications in librarianship which allow for eligibility for Associate (i.e., professional) membership of ALIA; and
- (d) participate, regularly, in continuing professional learning.

This does differentiate TLs from other school library employees, in that TLs hold a dual qualification in education and librarianship. In previous decades, people came to a career in teacher librarianship from a range of pathways, whether that was an undergraduate teaching qualification first, followed by a postgraduate LIS qualification, or vice versa, or in some instances, people could train as a TL as part of an undergraduate teaching degree that included TLship as a curriculum specialisation. Hallam (2022) provides a detailed overview in ALIA's *Professional Pathways Technical Report* (pp. 99-103) which will not be duplicated here, suffice to say there are currently few options regarding pathways to become a TL, with ALIA's (2021) advice on becoming qualified clearly stating that TLs hold:

- qualifications that meet *eligibility for teacher registration* in respective jurisdictions, as well as
- an ALIA accredited graduate or postgraduate library and information qualification that include *specialisations related to the school library context*.

This does mean that the most efficient way to become a TL (in terms of time and money invested in gaining a dual qualification) is to firstly complete an undergraduate teaching qualification followed by a postgraduate qualification in LIS with a TLship specialisation. With Queensland University of Technology's Master of Education (Teacher-Librarianship) concluding in mid-2022, the Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) course offered by Charles Sturt University (CSU) is the only program available in Australia to school teachers wishing to train as a TL (Hallam, 2022, pp. 100-101).

Based on the survey results, Figure 18 provides a breakdown of the LIS qualifications held by those respondents in the Teacher Librarian employee group. Of the 269 respondents, over 90% (243) held a dual qualification in teaching and librarianship (with two of these people also having a Library Technician diploma). Thus, most respondents in this survey sample working as TLs were fully qualified.

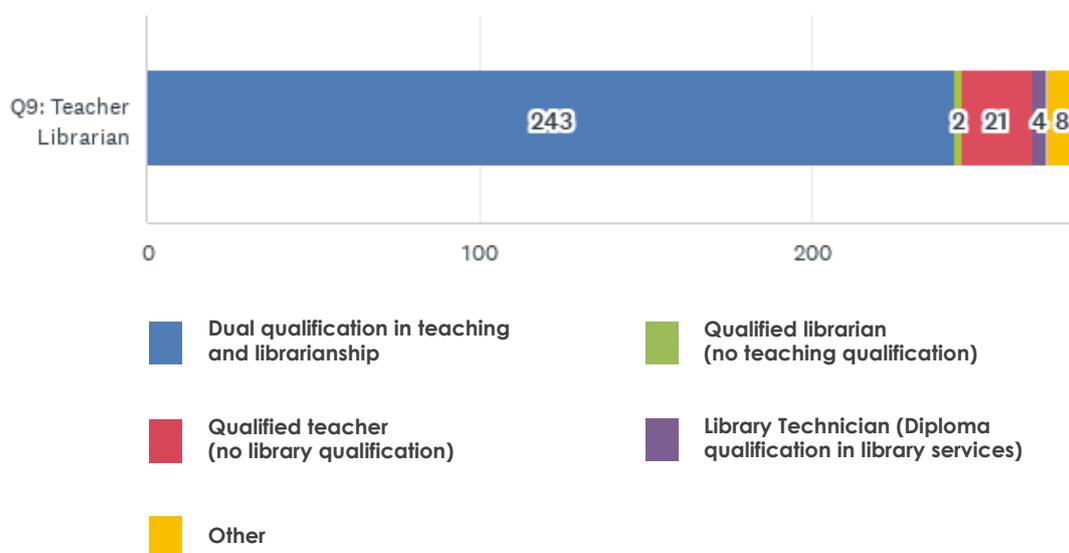


Figure 18: Breakdown of LIS qualifications held by Teacher Librarian employee group

While there were 21 qualified teachers (with no library qualification, i.e., 7.8%), a number of these respondents stated they were currently enrolled in CSU's MEdTL course. Only 2 people working as a TL had a librarian qualification (with no teaching qualification), both of whom also held a Library Technician diploma. Those who selected 'Other' provided examples of other education-LIS combinations of qualifications such as "Qualified teacher, Masters in Children's Literature & Reading", "BEd Primary and Master of Information Studies", "Qualified Teacher & Qualified Librarian (two separate qualifications)", and "Master of Librarianship". Thus, the majority of these people had completed a combination of courses that provided foundational knowledge and skills in education and LIS, but their qualifications did not include "*specialisations related to the school library context*" as per ALIA guidelines (2021).

Respondents were also asked what additional qualifications they held other than a library qualification. Of the 223 people who responded to this question, only three people held a doctorate (two with PhDs and one with an ED), with 33 holding Masters degrees in areas such as educational leadership, computing and ICT, digital technologies, e-learning, knowledge networks and digital innovation psychology, children's literature, literacy, STEM, TESOL, theology/religious education, science, arts (visual arts, performance, creative writing, or linguistics). Of the 76 people who stated they also held a Graduate Diploma qualification, 43 stated they held a Graduate Diploma in Education, with some of these being accepted in the 1990s as a teaching qualification with a specialisation based on one's undergraduate qualification. For example, someone with a Bachelor degree in Science, Mathematics, English, History, or Geography could become a secondary teacher by completing a GradDipEd (Secondary Teaching). Whereas some qualified teachers, in addition to their initial teaching qualification, completed a specialisation as a GradDip or GradDipEd. For example, teachers retaining in careers teaching, LOTE, gifted education, inclusive education, literacy, or special education followed this pathway. Of this cohort, seven stated they had a Graduate Diploma in Teacher Librarianship or GradDipEdTL qualification which had been accepted as an ALIA-accredited TL qualification up to the late 1990s.

This leads to a question that was frequently raised in the focus groups discussions and interviews, “*What level of qualification should be required for a person to train as a qualified TL?*” Feedback from stakeholders was that TLship degree programs must be maintained at the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 9 - Masters Degree (DESE, 2013). It was noted, however, that a qualified teacher may not see this pathway to become a qualified TL as attractive, because education systems rarely offer an increase in salary upon a teacher graduating with a Masters qualification in TLship. That said, a number of teachers do seek to retrain as a TL for a career change (if they wish to remain working in the education), as opposed to seeking a salary increase, and current enrolments in the Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) (CSU, 2022) does demonstrate that there is some demand from teachers utilising this current pathway.

The focus groups and interviews of teacher librarians also provided specific feedback on current course offerings available to those wishing to become a dual qualified TL. Some issues raised included:

- The lack of on-campus university offerings available for teachers to gain a TL qualification, with some people stating their preference for a course that offered some face-to-face (F2F) coursework, or at a minimum a blended approach (mix of online and F2F).
- Although, some argued that online offerings can provide a university with the opportunity to employ a greater pool of experts (even if on a casual basis) to teach into a degree program, particularly where it might be difficult to recruit full-time, part-time, or casual lecturers if they are required to relocate to live near and work on the university campus.
- Teachers (as prospective students) need access to a greater pool of tertiary providers offering TLship degrees, i.e., where they have some choice in who they wish enrol with. Some people stated they would prefer to study with a university within their own capital city or state/territory, which could allow for some F2F or blended learning opportunities as part of coursework.

- As a result of the past 30 months with the COVID pandemic, stakeholders believed Masters degrees in TLship now need greater emphasis on services provided by Tls to support blended and online learning design within schools. Topics included information design principles, website design/development, developing online modules for information literacy/fluency, how to design self-managed online coursework for school students that are differentiated and manageable to address a range of needs, how to design and implement a micro-credentials program, and how to use data analytics from library management systems and learning management systems for reporting purposes.
- Stakeholders also felt that teachers enrolled in Masters degrees in TLship need greater access to observing the work of qualified Tls in practice. For example, ALIA's practicum requirements for the Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) stipulate it occurs in a library setting other than a school library. There was also the concern by some that there are few qualified Tls available who are willing to take on the responsibility of hosting postgraduate students studying to become Tls for professional placements, work experience, and professional projects as part of coursework and ALIA accreditation.

With regards to qualification pathways, as stated previously, there used to be a range of accepted pathways to become a dual qualified TL; however, the main pathway is teacher → teacher librarian. As one interviewee who has employed Tls stated, *"If you are not already a fully qualified teacher, it is difficult to navigate a professional pathway that leads to a dually qualified TL."* Survey and focus group data identified several issues regarding qualification pathways for those wishing to become a TL, these include disparate policies regarding the employment of Tls across education systems; lack of information about efficient and cost-effective pathways; lack of support by school systems for those wishing to gain a TL qualification; and the need for university programs to better accommodate the contextual needs of those working in school libraries in the future.

Disparate policies and approaches of education systems across Australian states and territories regarding qualifications and employment criteria when recruiting people to fill TL positions in schools is problematic. Few education systems have a policy that clearly states a system-wide approach to employing TLs in schools. For example, the recent ACER *School Libraries in South Australia 2019 Census* (Dix et al, 2020), which collected data of all school libraries across all three education systems in South Australia, found while 94% of schools had a person to manage the library collection and to select resources, only 23% of schools employed a qualified teacher librarian to fulfill this role.

In other states, teacher unions are fighting to change education system policy regarding the employment of qualified TLs in schools. For example, in the recent enterprise bargaining round in Queensland, the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU, February 2019) submitted under 'Other Factors' of the union's Log of Claims 'Schools EB9' the request that Education Queensland provide a "Fully funded teacher-librarian position in all secondary schools", and to devise and implement "Role descriptions for specialist teacher-librarian position in secondary schools" (p. 2). Unfortunately, these two requests were not included in The Offer tabled by Education Queensland (QTU, July 2019).

The NSW public school system appears to remain the only employer with clear policy. For example, the Teach NSW recruitment website states, "*To become a teacher librarian in NSW public schools, you will need to complete approved courses in primary or secondary teaching and librarianship... Studies in librarianship may be undertaken through undergraduate study or as a combination of undergraduate and postgraduate study.*" (Teach NSW, 2022a). More specifically, teachers working in the NSW public school system "*who have been recommended for a teacher librarian position following merit selection or permanently appointed as a teacher librarian*" are required to undertake "*an approved postgraduate qualification in teacher librarianship*". The only drawback to this policy is that it is only applicable to a teacher being allocated to specialist teaching position that is a minimum of 0.6FTE. This means that teachers without a TL qualification can be employed in a TL position that is less than 3 days per week, without a requirement to gain a TL qualification.

In terms of department incentives for NSW public school teachers to retrain in TLship, those employed in a 0.6 – 1.0 FTE position are encouraged to apply for the Department's (Teach NSW, 2022b) 'Teach and Learn Scholarship (Specialist Teaching Areas)' which targets the retraining of teachers to become qualified TLs, Careers Advisors, and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) teachers. Incentives of this program include financial support of \$20,000 per year of full-time study and \$500 per week practicum allowance (up to \$5,000), and the Department offers two pathways for teachers to retrain as a TL – an appointed teacher pathway and a temporary teacher pathway. The Appointed Teachers pathway is available to permanent teachers who are "recommended for a permanent specialist teaching position (minimum 0.6 FTE) following merit selection or permanently appointed to a specialist teaching position (minimum 0.6 FTE) and who are required to undertake further studies as a condition of employment". Applications for this pathway are accepted all year round. The second pathway is for temporary teachers "who hold a current permanent teaching approval with the NSW Department of Education" and who are "currently employed in a temporary specialist teaching position (minimum 0.6 FTE)". Applications are processed by semester (with the possibility of two intakes per year). Note, Teach NSW (2022c) policy is stated more specifically under the 'Teacher Librarian' section of the 'Subject requirements' page:

To become a qualified teacher librarian in NSW public schools, you must:

- 1. be an approved primary or secondary teacher with the NSW Department of Education; and*
- 2. complete an approved postgraduate program at master's degree level in teacher librarianship.*

Note that AQF 9 – Masters Degree level is confirmed here, and it states the specialisation of 'teacher librarianship' as opposed to a general LIS program. CSU's Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) is currently listed as the only approved program for teachers seeking to retrain as a TL when being employed in NSW public schools.

Another problem identified by stakeholders from the Librarian and Library Technician employee groups in both the survey and focus groups was the lack of information

about TL qualification pathways for these people when they commenced their initial LIS training, whether that be a TAFE Certificate or Diploma, or an undergraduate LIS degree. For those aspiring to “one day become a TL”, they felt that their initial LIS qualification was a logical step towards that goal, without realising the implications of pursuing an LIS pathway before a teacher qualification pathway, which does result in a longer pathway and more expensive pathway. Some stakeholders felt they were not provided with accurate and timely advice about TL qualification pathways by the LIS education providers at TAFE and/or university levels regarding employment prospects in a school library setting. Once these people had invested both time and money in LIS study, many felt they could not then pursue a four-year teaching degree after completing their initial LIS qualification, which was generalist and without a TL specialisation. Therefore, prospective TLs (even if this may be a long-term goal) do need greater access to advice regarding the most efficient and cost-effective TL qualification pathway that is available on the market.

In addition, to attract younger people into the TL profession, some stakeholders suggested that TLship be offered by universities as part of an undergraduate teaching degree (Bachelor of Education) with TLship as a teaching specialisation. For example, a school leaver could enrol in a teaching degree to train as a high school teacher with English or Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) as their teaching area plus Teacher Librarianship as a second teaching area, or a primary school teacher could enrol in a primary teaching degree with STEM as their specialisation plus Teacher Librarianship as a second specialisation.

Another issue raised about LIS university programs was the disparity between TL and LIS curriculum for those people wishing to work in school libraries, and the need to rethink our LIS and TL university programs in the future to better accommodate the contextual needs of those professionals working in school libraries. As one person stated:

We need a library course with a range of modular specialisations that supports the needs of both TLs and librarians working in school library settings, develop a suite of subjects that have a common core - need to step back and rethink how university library courses could be constructed.

One final issue regarding TL pathways, was the lack of career path opportunities for qualified TLs wishing to seek promotion. For example, after working in a TL position for a number of years, those TLs aspiring to further their career usually need to leave their school library position to achieve this. It was also noted by those working in the public schools, that there are very few Head of Library or Head of Department positions available for TLs to seek promotion, and to do this requires sectorial shift to an independent school, as articulated by one TL currently working in the public sector:

As a teacher librarian in a government school, there is no avenue for progress without leaving the library. I am currently undertaking the paperwork required to apply for Highly Accomplished Teacher through NESA. Going forward I would like to move into a leadership position, preferably within a library or library related field either in the private school system or outside of schools.

Similarly, for primary TLs seeking promotion, the only pathway available in public schools is to move to Assistant Principal or Principal positions (again, having to leave the school library position). Based on the survey results of the TL employee group, 21 stated they were aspiring to be employed at the Head of Library or Library Manager levels, 10 were keen to gain a promotion to Head of Department level (which may or may not include the school library as part of that role), and two stated they had aspirations to become a school leader, either as a Principal, Deputy Principal, or Assistant Principal. The following quote from one primary TL working at the executive level highlights the challenges of those seeking a Head of Department role while trying to maintain TL responsibilities:

I am an Executive Teacher as well as being responsible for the school library. I still love working as a teacher librarian and I am not interested in pursuing roles where I have to leave that part of the job behind. I do find it challenging to juggle the demands of leading and supporting a teaching team along with my TL role and I think I will need to look at putting some

more supports in place in terms of getting some of the 'lower level' library work done.

The survey also asked respondents if they planned undertaking further education to inform their current work as a school library employee. Of the 96 TL respondents who answered this question, Figure 19 shows that under 30% were interested in undertaking further study to inform their current role as a TL, with over two-thirds stating 'No' or were 'Unsure'. Of those who selected 'Yes', seven TLs were interested in pursuing a Doctorate, with a number of them mentioning researching the impact of TLs or school library programs on student learning, with six of those pursuing a Masters degree mentioned they were currently undertaking their MEdTL qualification. Literacy, IT, reading, and children's literature were popular areas at the GradDip and GradCert levels.

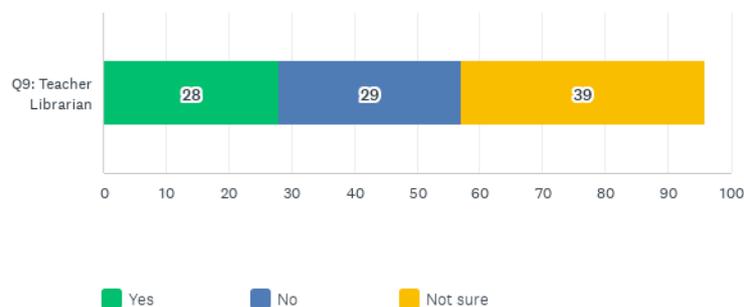


Figure 19: Intention to undertake further education to inform current work as a TL

In focus group discussion and interviews, participants believed that universities offering professional learning coursework that is micro-credentialled (and assessable), and that can build towards the completion of a degree (or part thereof) or eligible to gain credits into a degree program, was an attractive pathway option for further study. This led to the inclusion of a question in the survey asking employees if they were interested in completing skill-specific short courses as part of a microcredentials program to gain credit towards subject completion in a university or TAFE qualification. Of the 96 TL employees who responded to this question, 100% of them stated 'Yes', they were interested. Of this cohort, 35% stated they would prefer micro-units to gain credit towards completion of a Masters degree, while 22.5% would be interested in gaining credit towards a Graduate Diploma, and 18.8% towards a Graduate Certificate. Therefore, for those people

working as TLs who did wish to pursue further education to either inform their current role or contribute to a qualification that could lead to career progression, was seen as attractive. New models for microcredentials program could be developed to best meet the needs of prospective students, wishing to pursue more formal education in the future at postgraduate levels (AQF Levels 8 or 9). Whether these be offered solely by universities, or universities partnering with PD providers (such as ALIA or education systems) and then negotiating a clear credit package for micro-units completed by TLs, there is evidence that there is a relatively strong market for such offerings.

3.2 Teachers

Of the 16 respondents in the teacher employee group (and currently working in a school library), one quarter of those were undertaking graduate-level university study with three of these people completing their Master of Education in Teacher Librarianship) and the other enrolled in a Graduate Diploma of Information Systems. Survey results from these teachers, indicated that 40% were planning to undertake further education to inform their current work as a school library employee, with 60% stating 'No' or were 'Not sure'. Those who selected 'Yes', indicated that they were completing, or would be pursuing the completion of the MEdTL at CSU or an LIS Masters degree. None indicated further education at the GradDip and GradCert levels. Upon being asked whether these teachers intended to further their career within a school library setting in the future, just under half (47%) selected 'Yes', with 53% stating 'No' or 'Not sure'. The teachers were then asked to select which employee category best reflected the role they aspired to being employed as in the school/school library, with 86% selecting 'TL' and 14% selecting 'Librarian', with two stating they would also aspire to gaining a Head of Library position in the future. Four of the teachers also aspired to working in other library settings in the future, with their interest in public libraries, other educational libraries like university or TAFE, or galleries/museums, although none of these respondents were interested in undertaking further study to gain employment in another library setting.

While the treatment of TL qualification pathways for teachers has been covered in detail in the previous section (3.1), the teachers' response to their interest in completing skill-specific short courses as part of a microcredentials program to gain

credit towards a university or TAFE qualification was mixed with 53% selecting 'Yes' and 47% selected 'No'. Of those interested in pursuing microcredentialled PD, 40% stated they would prefer micro-units to gain credit towards completion of a Masters degree, while 13.3% would be interested in gaining credit towards a Graduate Diploma, and 20% towards a Graduate Certificate. Although the teacher employee group were a very small sample, for some teachers working in a school library, having access to a PD as part of a micro-credential program was seen as attractive; however, a number of these teachers were already enrolled in the MEdTL, or planning to complete it, to become a dual qualified TL, so for those people undertaking more PD or further education (at present) was not a priority.

3.3 Librarians

According to ALIA's (2021) advice on becoming a qualified librarian, a person needs to complete an ALIA accredited undergraduate or postgraduate university course in library and information science. There is only one undergraduate course currently available to those wishing to train as a librarian in their first university degree – the Bachelor of Information Studies (CSU) (ALIA, 2022d). Postgraduate courses currently on offer for those people who have already completed an undergraduate degree (e.g. Bachelors) include: Master of Information Studies (CSU) with the option of early exit with an ALIA accredited Graduate Diploma; Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Studies and Master of Information Management (Curtin); Master of Information Management (RMIT) which is in teach out mode to 2024; Graduate Diploma of Information Management and Master of Information Management (UniSA); and Master of Business Information Systems (Monash) which is also in teach out mode with no further intakes.

With a lack of undergraduate LIS courses available in Australia, this certainly reduces the LIS profession's chance of attracting younger people as qualified librarians to work in a range of library settings, including the school library sector. This is no doubt contributing to the ageing population of librarians, as presented in Figure 10, with 2.1% of survey respondents in the librarian employee group being 29 years of age or less, and only 10.5% in the 30-39 year range. This clearly highlights the need to establish new qualification pathways for librarians, and the need to promote librarianship as a career path for school leavers. Also of note is the single

undergraduate program currently on offer is offered in online mode only, which will not be attractive to the school leaver demographic who are not being given the opportunity to engage with face-to-face teaching and learning on campus, nor experience university life in general.

Based on the survey results, Figure 20 provides a breakdown of the LIS qualifications held by those respondents in the Librarian employee group. Of the 95 respondents, over 12.2% (13) held a dual qualification in teaching and librarianship, which suggests some qualified TLs have either accepted a Librarian position (thus being paid far less than their qualification would command if employed in a TL position), or they are employed in a library management role. Thus, the majority of respondents working as librarians were fully qualified (72%), with 59.8% having a qualification commensurate with an ALIA-accredited course, and 13 people having a dual qualification of librarianship and education.

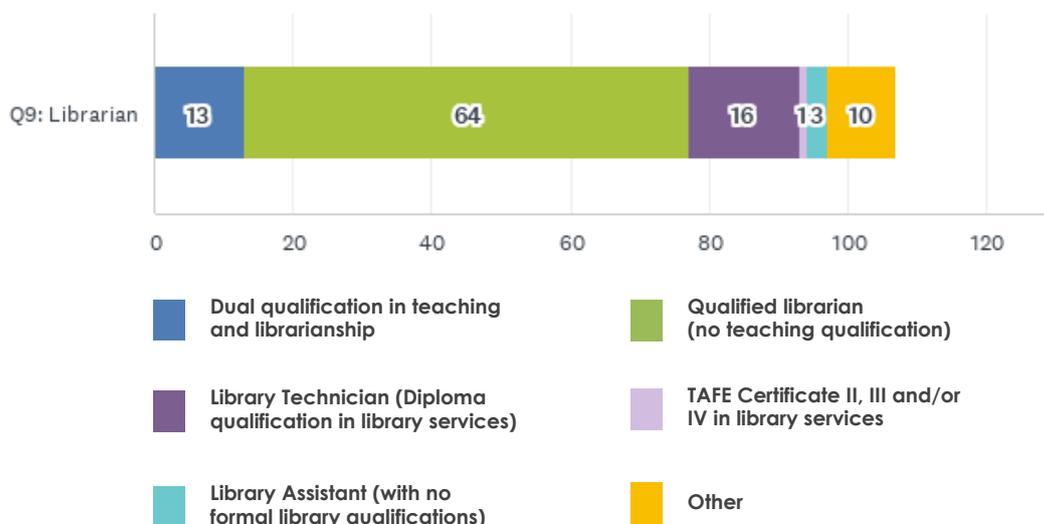


Figure 20: Breakdown of LIS qualifications held by Librarian employee group

In addition, 15% of this cohort held a library technician diploma, one person also held a TAFE certificate in library services, and three people being employed as a librarian did not hold any LIS qualification. Six people noted in 'Other' that they were currently undertaking study at the Master or GradDip level, with one just finishing their BIS while working in a librarian position. One stated that their teaching qualification was not recognised in Australia thus not working as a TL, and one stated that their qualification was having "over 10 years of experience on the job". Thus, the majority of these people in the librarian employee group had completed a

combination of courses that provided foundational knowledge and skills in LIS, with 5% not having completed, or even partially completed, any LIS training to inform their role as a librarian in their school.

Respondents were also asked what additional qualifications they held other than a library qualification. Of the 77 people who responded to this question, only one person held a doctorate (PhD), with 14.3% holding Masters degrees in areas such as information technology, management, children's literature, learning innovation, architecture, and information architecture, and 13% holding a GradDip qualification, a number of those listed were in education, IT or educational technology, nursing, nutrition and environment. Over half of the respondents (55%) held undergraduate Bachelor degrees in arts, commerce, IT, engineering, music, accounting, science, maths, business, accounting, psychology and sociology.

While the above analysis of the librarian employee group's qualifications, comprising 13.7% (95) of the total survey sample (n=693), a greater proportion (16.6%, 115) of the total sample stated they had a librarian qualification (with no teaching qualification). Figure 21 presents a comparison of the employee category versus position titles of those 115 respondents holding a Librarian qualification (that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA).

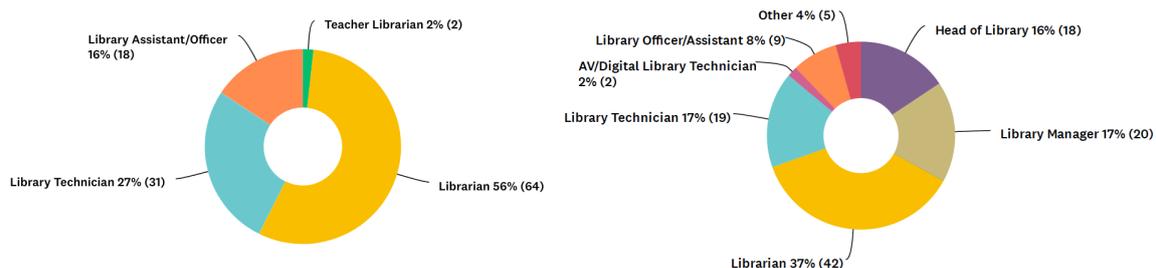


Figure 21: Comparison of employee category versus position titles of those respondents with a Librarian qualification

The pie chart of the left presents the breakdown of the 115 qualified Librarians regarding the employee category selected as best reflecting their current position in a school library. The results show that over half of them (56%) are being employed as a librarian, while 43% (getting close to half of them) are being employed in a position that is below their qualification, i.e., as a Library Technician (27%) or Library

Assistant (16%). This suggests that 43% of these people are over-qualified for the level they are currently employed at their school. The above comparison also suggests that this group of qualified library professionals working in the school library sector are possibly being stretched the most, with only 37% of them stating the current role they have in the school library reflects the position title of Librarian, and another one-third (33%) of this cohort being employed in management positions. So, on one hand, we have just under half of qualified librarians in this sample working in school library positions below their qualification and remuneration that one would expect at a qualified Librarian level, and conversely, fulfilling library management positions which could be beyond their qualification and remuneration for the work they are responsible for, but paid as a Librarian. Some additional position titles provided in 'Other' included: Cataloguer/Library Technician, Senior Library Technician, Librarian and eLearning Coordinator, Digital Curator, and the previous example of a qualified librarian having two separate titles when working at the different campus libraries, "My junior school title is Library Technician and my senior school title is Resource Officer", neither title suggesting they are being employed at level commensurate with their LIS qualification.

The focus groups and interviews of librarians also provided specific feedback on current course offerings available. Some issues raised included:

- A major concern that fewer LIS courses are available and there is a lack of choice, especially for those wishing to enrol in a course within their own state or territory, and possibly have access some F2F or blended learning experiences while undertaking a degree.
- The market needs a variety of degree programs on offer that provide different approaches to LIS education, and prospective students (particularly those wishing to work in the school library sector) need options in terms of specialisations that are relevant to the school library context, e.g., children's librarianship, information/digital literacy, technology and learning, resourcing to support blended and online learning (especially with the impact of the COVID pandemic on schooling).

- There was a concern that CSU is the only remaining option for a prospective student to complete an undergraduate degree (with other universities only provide postgraduate qualification pathways). This was viewed as being problematic in that this limits the recruitment of younger people into the LIS profession as their first career choice (as opposed to a second or third career choice, which is the norm).

- Professional practice and workplace learning were identified as being a valuable and essential components of LIS degrees; however, there were concerns that study visits, library placements, and workplace projects opportunities needed to offer students greater exposure to the school library context as part of these programs.

- Some librarians also argued while technical services, information organisation, and readers advisory are all core aspects of a librarian's role in a school library setting, librarians also need to have a solid understanding of the curriculum to effectively evaluate, select and curate appropriate resources to support specific curriculum units, and generalist LIS degree program do not provide students with enough exposure to this as part of their studies.

With regards to LIS qualification pathways for those wishing to become a qualified librarian, it was noted (similar to lack of pathway advice provided for prospective TLs as mentioned previously) that people who commence their LIS training at the TAFE Certificate level II or III need to be provided with advice regarding their longer-term LIS pathway goals before continuing with more training at the AQF 4 level. For example, those who invest time and money into a TAFE Certificate, may discover that it would have been far more efficient for them to enrol directly into an ALIA accredited TAFE diploma course to become a qualified library technician (based on previous TAFE qualifications and work experience).

Likewise, a person who enrolls in a TAFE Diploma in LIS whose longer-term goal is to become a qualified librarian, could be advised (upon entry to the TAFE course) to consider applying directly into an undergraduate LIS degree program instead of investing the extra time and money completing the full Diploma in LIS. While CSU

does offer a credit package for graduates who have completed an LIS Diploma, prospective students do have other pathways to directly enter into a university (AQF Level 7) Bachelor Degree.

Most Australian universities allow school leavers, without an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) and who are over the age of 18 years, a Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) pathway which is an alternative entry method to university. This involves a two-hour multiple choice test organised through the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) which assesses a prospective student's ability to think critically and analyses the material given, rather than testing knowledge of specific academic subjects. University bridging courses are another pathway where prospective students complete short courses as prerequisites for admission to an undergraduate course of study. The only limitation with both these pathways is that there is only one Australian university currently offering an undergraduate LIS degree to become a qualified librarian.

Some people who have completed a library technician qualification may think that they have undertaken enough study for them to fulfill the role of librarian (without being fully qualified). One Library Technician in a focus group discussion elaborated on this as a dilemma regarding pathways to become a qualified librarian, because those who have completed a TAFE Diploma in LIS and are honing their LIS knowledge and skills "on the job", do not necessarily understand the significant shift between training via a TAFE Diploma compared to studying a undergraduate LIS degree at university. She noted that:

The BIS digs a lot deeper across all aspects of library work. As a Lib Tech working in a school, I didn't realise the difference between library management knowledge and skills in a Lib Tech Diploma compared to BIS which requires far greater engagement with theory and learning how this underpins practice.

In other words, people with a Library Technician qualification can underestimate "what they don't know", and this belief could result in Library Technician's lack of

interest in exploring the completion of a degree pathway to become a qualified librarian. CSU has a clear pathway and recognition of prior learning for students holding a Diploma to enter the Bachelor course.

For those 108 respondents holding a librarian qualification, when asked if they planned on undertaking further education to inform their current work as a school library employee, only 16% selected 'Yes', with 47% stating 'No' and 37% were not. The majority of who selected 'Yes' stated that they were currently enrolled in, or were interested in completing, a Master of Teaching degree which indicates these qualified librarians' career aspiration to gain a TL position in a school. While three of these respondents identified their interest in undertaking a MIS degree with a focus on leadership suggesting an interest in gaining a library management position in the future. In fact, when asked specifically what position title best reflected the role they aspired to being employed as in the school library, 30 respondents selected Head of Library or Library Manager positions for career progression.

Of the 108 qualified librarians who answered the question regarding their intention to further their career in a library setting other than a school library in the future, Figure 22 shows that 29 (26.9%) of these people did intend to find work in other library settings. The range of library settings of interest to 33 respondents who stated the type of libraries they were interested in securing employment was public libraries and university libraries, followed by national/state and TAFE libraries, special libraries and galleries/museums. Of course, the type of library was also dependent on geographical location with 80% of these respondents living in metropolitan areas and just under 20% in regional cities/towns. That said, some qualified librarians were using their employment in a school library as a stepping stone and saw other library settings being part of their career progression.

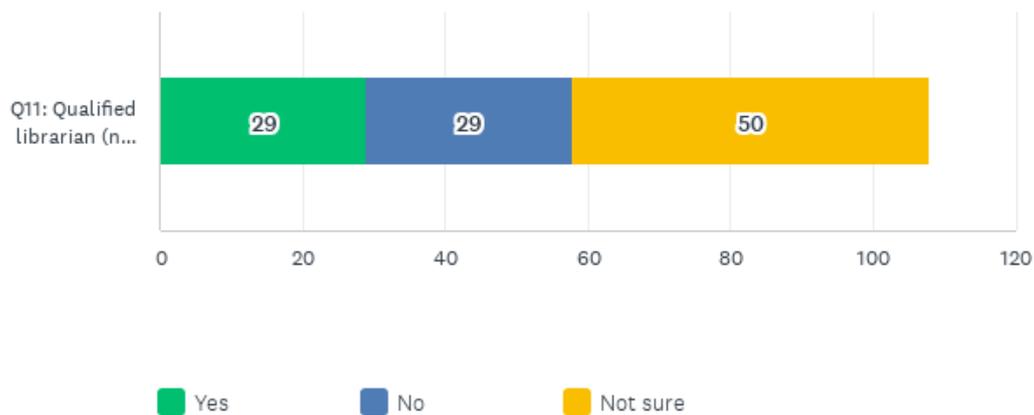


Figure 22: Qualified Librarians' intention to further career in other library settings

Equally, 29 (26.9%) of these people did not intend to find work in other library settings, as one respondent stated, "Love school libraries, don't plan to change." Some people who were in library management positions or in acting positions felt less inclined to undertake further education, as one person stated, "Acting in Manager role & demonstrating I can do the job". Just under 50% of the 108 respondents were unsure as to whether they would consider employment in library settings other than school libraries, with some stating they already have the qualifications to work in other library settings but it was more a case of positions available, e.g., "already have a qualification, but not enough openings to apply". There were a couple of people who had actively sought employment in other library settings but unsuccessfully, with one person sharing her experience in seeking employment elsewhere with working in the school library setting as her only library-based work experience, "I do not feel like I should be locked into working in a school library but the discrimination experienced when interviewing for other libraries is mind boggling".

Of the 100 qualified librarians who answered the question about their interest in completing skill-specific short courses as part of a microcredentials program to gain credit towards a university or TAFE qualification, the response was mixed with 52% selecting 'Yes' and 48% selected 'No'. Of those interested in pursuing microcredentialled PD, just under two-thirds (65.3%) stated they would prefer micro-units to gain credit towards completion of a Masters degree, while 32.7% would be interested in gaining credit towards a Graduate Diploma, and 28.6% towards a

Graduate Certificate. There was very little interest in completing micro-units for credits towards a qualification below the AQF 8 level. Therefore, for qualified librarians working in a school library, having access to PD as part of a micro-credential program was seen as attractive by approximately 50% of the sample, if the completion of this PD gained credit into a postgraduate course at GradCert, GradDip or Masters levels.

3.4 Library Technicians

According to ALIA's (2021) advice on becoming a qualified library technician, a person needs to hold an ALIA accredited Diploma in Library and Information Studies, which is usually delivered through a TAFE institute, with the expectation that library technicians "usually work under the supervision of a librarian and play a vital role in creating access to library and information resources with a focus on operational and technical aspects of library and information work." Several Diploma courses are currently available from TAFEs in NSW, Qld, Vic, SA and WA, with a range of study options including on campus, online and blended offerings (as per ALIA, 2022e). In addition, there are two Victorian universities currently offering Diploma courses (Swinburne University of Technology and Victoria University Polytechnic). Thus, there is choice for prospective students in the existing LIS Diploma market for both full-time and part-time study, and across the three modes of delivery.

Based on the survey results, Figure 22 provides a breakdown of the LIS qualifications held by those respondents in the Library Technician employee group. Of the 154 respondents, two-thirds (66.2%) held a Diploma level qualification in LIS, thus commensurate with an ALIA-accredited library technician course, with some stating they also held an Advanced Diploma in LIS (AQF Level 6 which can be issued by either universities or TAFEs). One-fifth of respondents (20.1%) were fully qualified as librarians, which suggests some have accepted a library technician position, thus being paid far less than their qualification would command if employed in a Librarian position. Six people had dual qualifications in librarianship and education with the majority working in school libraries in regional locations of Qld, SA and Tasmania, and there was one qualified teacher working in a school library as a Library Technician, with all of these people working in the independent school sector. Again, this demonstrates people's willingness to gain employment within the school library sector, even if offered positions below a salary their qualification(s) could command.

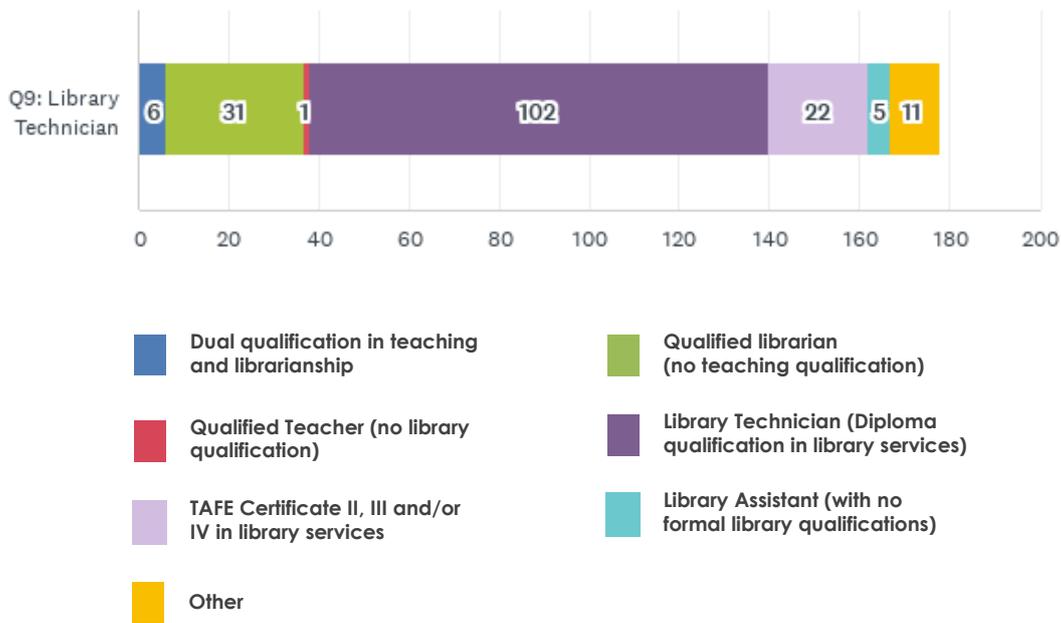


Figure 22: Breakdown of LIS qualifications held by Library Technician employee group

Six of this employee group were being employed as a library technician without any LIS qualification (three of whom worked in positions with the title equivalent to 'Library Manager'). All of these respondents were over the age of 40, with one in the 60-69 age range stating her qualification was "40 years experience of working in and running libraries in education". Eleven people noted in 'Other' that they were currently undertaking study at TAFE Diploma level, or studying at university to complete either the BIS, a GradDip or a GradCert, with one just finishing their BIS while working in a librarian position. Thus, the majority of people (85.1%) in the library technician employee group had completed a combination of courses that provided foundational knowledge and skills in LIS, with 3.8% not having completed any LIS training to inform their role as a library technician in their school.

Respondents were also asked what additional qualifications they held other than a library qualification. Of the 91 people who responded to this question, only one person held a doctorate (PhD), with 5 holding Masters degrees, 8 holding a GradDip qualification (a number of those listed were in education), and 8 holding a GradCert (in business, marketing, science, commerce, and professional editing). Nearly half of the respondents (48.1%) held an undergraduate Bachelor degree in the arts, science, economics, psychology, tourism, media, music, and event management, to name a few. Respondents also held TAFE Diplomas (15.4%) in business

administration and management, nursing, marketing, hairdressing, publishing and graphic design, and TAFE Certificates (29.7%) in such areas as education support, school officer or office practices, early childhood, business, graphic design, project management, retail, nursing, and aged care. This demonstrates the breadth of additional relevant knowledge and skills (beyond LIS) those working as library technicians can bring to their position in the school library.

The focus groups and interviews of library technicians, and those who employed them, also provided specific feedback on current course offerings available. Feedback from library technicians with a TAFE Diploma qualification stated this level of study was far more useful than completing a Cert III or IV in LIS, as described by one library technician, "Cert IV is a good start but Diploma level meets the broader requirements of the Library Tech position, it brings more to the position and a person with a Diploma qualification can be more independent in managing their roles and responsibilities". Those in library management positions also agreed, as illustrated by this Library Manager's claim:

A Lib Tech with a Diploma has a greater understanding of the library collection and more detailed components of the Library Management System, and are more informed about the school library collection, processes and procedures.

Other aspects of school library work where qualified library technicians add value included:

- Library design – contributing ideas about the physical layout of the school library and being able to articulate why particular aspects of design and layout should be implemented in certain way;
- User needs and services – trained library technicians have a deeper understanding of users' needs (both online and physical) such as e-book platforms and physical collections;
- Marketing – can take a lead in marketing the school library as place, marketing the collections and designing displays, and marketing programs, services and events; and

- Technical and operational tasks – has knowledge and skills in cataloguing and technical management of digital collections, such as ClickView, ebooks, and databases.

In addition to LIS expertise, TL and librarian focus group participants (some of whom included those who employ library technicians), identified a range of other TAFE courses that could be relevant to enhancing the knowledge and skills of library technician positions (based on the areas of expertise required for a specific position within a school library team). The following list is designed to be indicative of the range relevant course (and is neither mandatory nor comprehensive):

- Certificate III or IV in Information Technology (12 months)
- Certificate IV in Information Technology (Web-Based Technologies) (12 months)
- Microsoft Office Specialist: Associate (Office 365 and Office 2019) (6 months)
- Microsoft Office Specialist: Expert (Office 365 and Office 2019) (6 months)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (PowerPoint and PowerPoint 2019) (3 months)
- Adobe Bundle - Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator (6 weeks)
- Develop Customer Service Skills (8 weeks)
- Certificate IV in Design (6 months)
- Diploma of Graphic Design (12 months)
- Beginners Digital Video Production (6 weeks)

Some issues regarding Library Technician pathways have already been discussed in the previous section (3.3), specifically regarding lack of pathway advice provided for those aspiring to become qualified librarians while undertaking a Diploma level qualification, and who do not have an ATAR because they have left school before completing senior secondary years. Another issue is access to advice regarding universities providing credit packages for prospective students who have completed an LIS Diploma, with the only limitation at this stage with this pathway being the lack of choice in undergraduate LIS programs available to become a qualified librarian, with no on campus or blended offerings currently available to those who do not want to study solely online.

When those respondents holding a library technician Diploma qualification were asked if they planned on undertaking further education to inform their current work as a school library employee, 134 people answered this question with 19% selecting 'Yes', 43% stating 'No' and 39% were not sure. Of this group, only 35 provided details about LIS qualification(s) they aspired to complete as a school library employee. One-third stated they aspired to complete an undergraduate LIS degree, 5 wanted to complete a MEdTL or MIS degree, and 6 planned to complete a GradDip or GradCert (mainly in LIS, with a couple in online learning design).

When asked of their intention to further their career within a school library setting in the future, of the 134 respondents who answered this question, 27% selected 'Yes', while 46% selected 'No' and 28% were not sure. Of those who selected 'Yes', 58% aspired to become a qualified librarian, 18% wished to become a TL, and 21% wished to gain a Library Technician position in a school (20 of these people were currently working in a library assistant position).

Of the 134 qualified library technicians who answered the question regarding their intention to further their career in a library setting other than a school library in the future, Figure 23 shows that 29 (21.6%) of these people did intend to find work in other library settings. The range of library settings of interest to 31 respondents who stated the type of libraries they were interested in securing employment was public libraries and university libraries, followed by national/state and TAFE libraries, galleries/museums, then records, archives or cultural services and special libraries. Access to employment in other types of libraries was also dependent on geographical location with 68% of these respondents living in metropolitan areas and 32% living and working in regional cities/towns. In comparison to the qualified librarians, survey results suggests that the qualified library technicians were less likely to use their employment in a school library as a stepping stone to work in other library settings as part of their career progression.

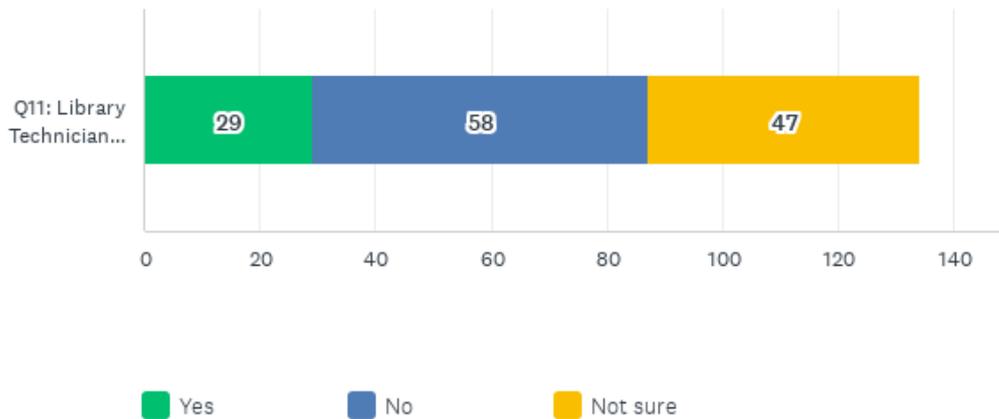


Figure 23: Qualified Library Technicians' intention to further career in other library settings

A larger proportion of respondents (43.3%) did not intend to find work in other library settings, with just over one-third (35.1%) of the 134 respondents unsure as to whether they would consider employment in library settings other than school libraries, and a number of respondents stated they were unsure what additional library qualification(s) they would need to gain employment in one or more of these other library settings, as one person stated "Not sure what I can do I have only an diploma in Library Technician." This suggests there could be a greater need for providing advice regarding professional pathways for those with a library technician qualification, by identifying options in, and opportunities for, career (and qualifications) progression. That said, given a significant number of qualified library technicians in this sample did not aspire to move out of the school library setting and felt they had the qualification they needed to fulfill the position they currently held, the provision of advice and promotion of pathways would need to be targeted.

In terms of the attractiveness of a microcredentials program to gain credit towards a university or TAFE qualification, of the 123 qualified library technicians who answered this question just under half (48.8%) selected 'Yes' and 51.2% selected 'No'. Of those interested in pursuing microcredentialled PD, just over one-third stated they would prefer micro-units to gain credit towards completion of either a Masters (36%) or Bachelors (34%) degree, with just under one-third interested in a GradDip (31%) and 19% in a GradCert. There was also considerable interest in completing micro-units for credits towards a qualification from AQF levels 3-6, with 49% being interested in gaining credits at the undergraduate associate degree, diploma or certificates levels, and 26% interested in gaining credits at TAFE diploma or certificate levels

(dependent on the topics available). Therefore, for qualified library technicians working in a school library, having access to PD as part of a micro-credential program was seen as attractive by approximately 50% of the sample, with people being open to gaining credit for PD at either undergraduate or postgraduate levels, dependent on their pathway progress.

3.5 Library Assistants

For the purposes of the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey', the term 'Library Assistant' refers to a staff member who does not have a formal qualification in library and information services (thus, not eligible for Associate or Library Technician membership of ALIA). According to ALIA's (2021) advice on working in library and information settings, a library assistant position does not require a formal qualification; however, "many TAFEs and private vocational education providers offer Certificate II, III and IV in library and information services that would enhance an individual's skills and employment prospects for this type of position". Several TAFEs in NSW, Qld, Vic, SA and WA, with a range of study options including on campus, online and blended offerings (as per ALIA, 2022e). While the Certificate III in Library and Information Services is designed to provide a starting point for those wishing to gain employment as a library assistant (equivalent to 18 weeks of full-time or 36 weeks of part-time study), a Certificate IV in Library and Information Services program (an additional 18 weeks FTE) is designed to build on the Cert III basics and develop more advanced LIS knowledge and skills that provides a stepping stone to career preparation for technician level study and work, for positions within the GLAM industry. Thus, there is choice for prospective students in the existing LIS Certificate market for both full-time and part-time study, and across the three modes of delivery.

Based on the survey results, Figure 24 provides a breakdown of the LIS qualifications held by those respondents in the Library Assistant employee group. Of the 159 respondents, over half (55.4%) stated they held no formal library qualification, with 13.8% having completed a TAFE Certificate in LIS and 12.6% with a Diploma level qualification in LIS (equivalent to an ALIA-accredited library technician course). Of the remaining respondents, 11.3% were qualified librarians, four people were

qualified teachers, and three people held dual qualifications in education and library (commensurate with an ALIA-recognised TL qualification).

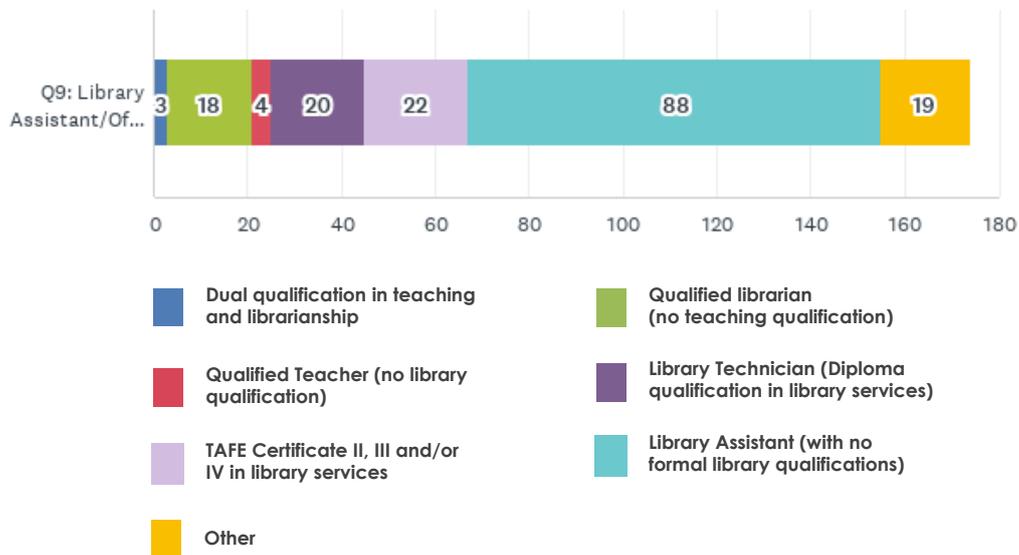


Figure 24: Breakdown of LIS qualifications held by Library Assistant employee group

Just over 10% of respondents selected 'Other', with 19 respondents providing more details regarding their qualifications. A number of these people were currently undertaking LIS studies at the TAFE Certificate and Diploma levels, while others were completing postgraduate LIS studies at the GradDip and Masters levels. Some with no formal qualification provided details of how many years they had worked in either a school or public library, e.g., "I have 5 years in the sole Library role of running the school library". Of the 13.2% of respondents who were fully qualified LIS professionals (either TLs or librarians), most were working in metropolitan schools, which suggests some have accepted a library assistant position (thus being paid far less than their qualification would command if employed in an LIS professional) regardless of geographical disadvantage. Likewise, of the 20 qualified library technicians being employed as library assistants, most people were also working in metropolitan schools (negating regional access to positions as a disadvantage of this group within the sample), and they worked across all three education sectors (thus no sectorial difference). Therefore, this again demonstrates people's willingness to gain employment within the school library sector, even if offered positions below a salary their qualification(s) could command. Furthermore, with just over 40% of people in the library assistant employee group having completed, or partially completed, LIS coursework that provides foundational knowledge and skills to inform

their role as a library assistant in their school, this highlights the lack of formal LIS qualifications (even at an introductory TAFE Certificate level) of those working as library assistants in the school sector. This suggests a significant market for TAFEs, particularly targeting those people already working in school libraries who need entry level LIS qualifications at Certificate levels in the future.

While the above analysis was based on the library assistant employee category, further analysis of data regarding those people working in schools with no formal library qualification (96 of n=693, nearly 14%) was undertaken. Specifically, a comparative analysis of this group across employee category and position titles as presented in Figure 25 (please note, due to the small sample of teachers in the sample, they were not included in this analysis).

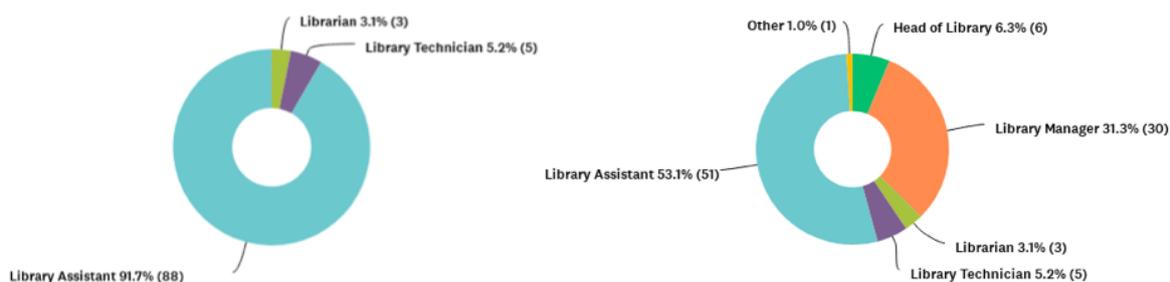


Figure 25: Comparison across employee category and position titles for those with no formal LIS qualification

The pie chart on the left of Figure 25 presents a breakdown the 96 respondents without a formal LIS qualification by employee category, with the majority (91.7%) selecting the employee category of 'Library Assistant' as best reflecting the level of employment in the school library, with 5.2% and 3.1% being employed at library technician and librarian levels respectively. In comparison, the chart on the right identifies the breakdown of position titles that these people felt best reflected their role in the school library – this identified two significant differences. Firstly, while close to 92% of this group selected 'Library Assistant' employee category best representing their level of employment at the school (as per chart on left), just over half (53.1%) of these respondents were being employed with the position title reflecting the role of a Library Assistant. Conversely, nearly 40% of respondents were fulfilling position titles other than Library Assistant, which leads to the second issue; that a considerable percentage (just under half) of this group (with no formal library

qualifications) were working in positions with titles that would require some formal qualifications in librarianship, such as library technicians (requiring a TAFE Diploma qualification), or a librarian (undergraduate or postgraduate degree qualification), and some position titles also reflected library leadership or management roles with 37.6% selecting 'Library Manager' or 'Head of Library' as best reflecting their role. This suggests a significant proportion of employees 'managing school libraries' have no formal qualification.

Unfortunately, the recent results of ACER Census of South Australian school library (Dix et al, 2020) reflect the above, where those South Australian schools that did have someone to manage library resources, over one-third of those managing the school library being employed as support officers (Library Assistants) with no formal library qualifications (36%) (p. 28). While one might argue these school library employees could be a significant and untapped market that TAFEs might target in the future, one challenge is the average age of those with no LIS qualification currently filling these positions. For example, Figure 26 presents the age ranges of those respondents with either a TAFE Certificate qualification, and no formal LIS qualification, with a view to proposing that these groups of school library employees could (or should) be one of the main target audiences for ALIA's Professional Pathways initiative. However, upon examining age range for TAFE Cert-qualified respondents, over half of these people are 50 years and over, and those with no formal LIS qualification aged 50 and over comprise just under two-thirds of the sample. This suggests that professional development may be a more effective strategy in upskilling a large proportion of this school library employee group (which will be examined in detail in Chapter 6).

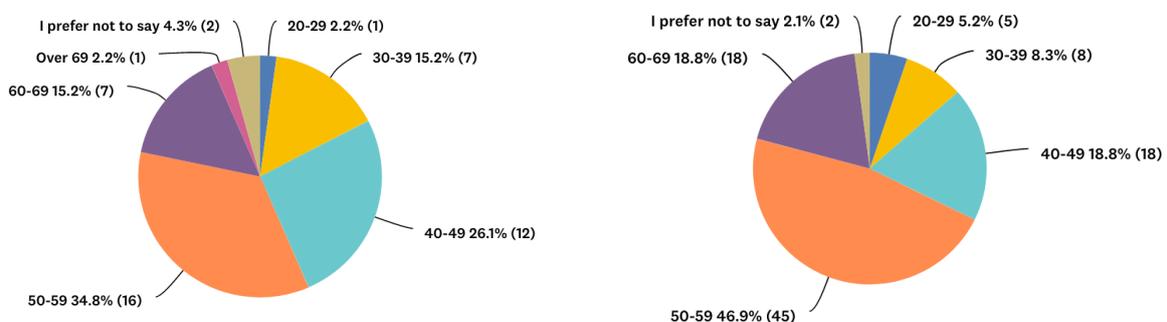


Figure 26: Age ranges of those with a TAFE Certificate (left) versus those with no formal LIS qualification (right)

With regard to current course offerings for this employee group, feedback from focus groups did emphasise that people seeking employment in schools at an officer or assistant level would more than likely seek a TAFE Cert IV in School Based Education Support (or similar) to “get your foot in the door” in public school systems as a teachers’ aide (TA), school support officer (SSO), or education support officer (ESO), and only after securing a position in the school library would a person consider enrolling in a Cert III/IV in LIS to inform their work as a library assistant. Focus group discussions identified some in-house library management systems training provided by education departments for library assistants; however, this is mainly procedural skills training. Those LIS professionals employing library assistants also identified other TAFE courses (that were non-LIS) that could be relevant, particularly those with an IT, digital or multimedia-focus (based on the areas of expertise required for a specific assistant position within a school library team). Some examples of such TAFE courses were listed in section 3.4.

Respondents with no LIS qualification were also asked what additional qualifications they held. Of the 59 people who responded to this question, two people held a Masters degree with one currently undertaking a Master of Teaching, and five held a GradDip qualification (in education and community development). Nearly one-third of the respondents (18) held an undergraduate Bachelor degree in the arts, education, tourism, business, nursing, health, and media. Respondents also held TAFE Diplomas (15.3%) in early childhood, business, and hospitality, and just under half held TAFE Certificates (49.2%) with over half these respondents completing a qualification in education support (other areas included business administration, office procedures, health, and disability services). This demonstrates the breadth of additional relevant knowledge and skills (beyond LIS) of some working as library assistants can bring to their position in the school library. It also demonstrates that a significant number of people working in school libraries with no LIS qualification already hold one or more qualifications in other fields or specialisations, which means they have already invested both time and money in further education in the past.

When asked whether they planned on undertaking further education to inform their current work as a school library employee, of the 85 people who responded to this question, 27% stated 'Yes', 26% stated 'No' and 47% were not sure. Of the people who did plan to undertake further education, 11 people aspired to complete a postgraduate qualification in either LIS or TLship (four for a Masters degree, five a GradDip, and one GradCert), and five planning to undertake a Bachelor degree in LIS. Six respondents stated they were already enrolled in a TAFE Diploma in LIS, and four looking at TAFE Certificates in library, technology, or a combination of both.

Some people currently working in school libraries as library assistants do aspire to progressing a career within a school library setting. For example, Figure 27 shows the breakdown of the 146 Library Assistant employees who responded to the question regarding intention to further a career within a school library setting, with 32% stating 'Yes', 31% stating 'No' and 38% unsure.

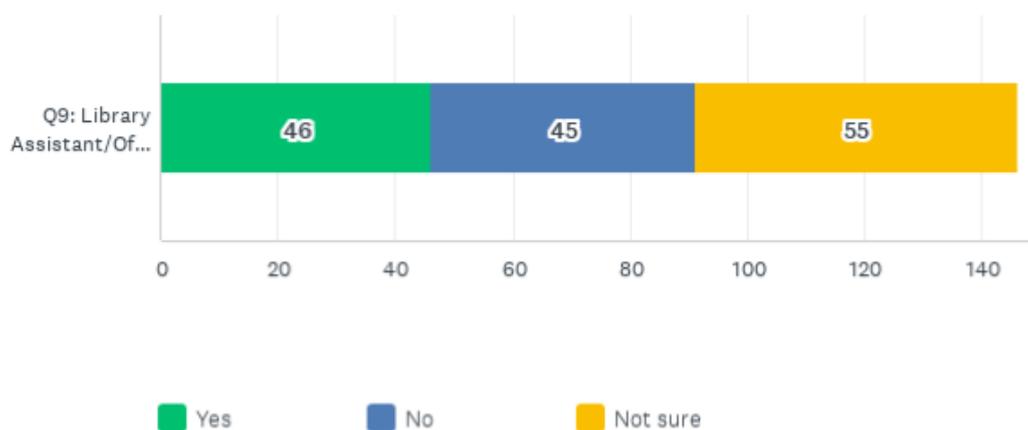


Figure 27: Library Assistant employee group's intention to further career within a school library setting

From within this library assistant cohort, 48 responded to the question that asked them to select which employee category best reflects the role they aspire to being employed as in a school library. Figure 28 presents the results, with just over one-third each aspiring to become either a library technician (35%) or librarian (38%), with six people wishing to gain employment as a library assistant (note some of these people are employed as TAs, SSOs or ESOs with some hours working in the school library), and seven people aspiring to become a TL.

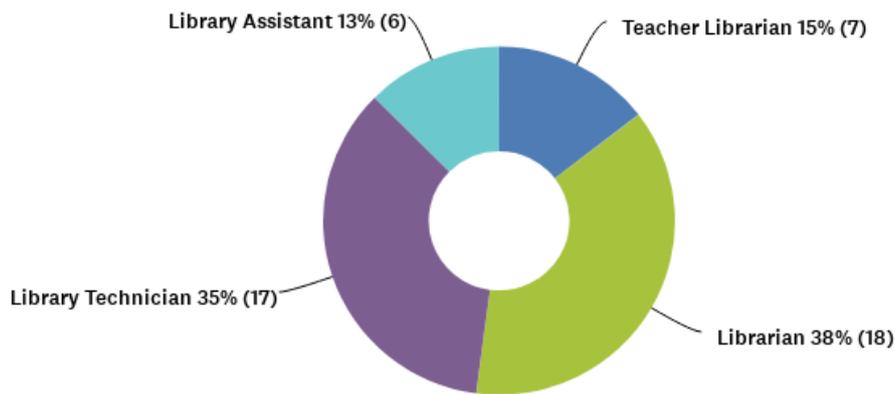


Figure 28: Library Assistant employee group's intention to further career within a school library setting

Of this group, 34.3% were aspiring to undertake a postgraduate qualification (Masters or GradDip) in LIS or TLship, with one person seeking to complete a Master of Teaching and three wishing to complete an undergraduate education degree, and 45.7% of these library assistants seeking either a TAFE Certificate (5.7%) or TAFE Diploma (40%) in LIS, with the latter wishing to become a qualified library technician. The above results demonstrate there are people working as library assistants who will require pathway advice to help them reach their career goal in the most efficient way in terms of both time and money; however, the breadth of the courses being sought by people working in school library assistants, does suggest that a number of specific pathways need to be mapped and articulated to assist those in reaching their respective goal.

Of the 146 respondents in the school assistant employee group who answered the question regarding their intention to further their career in a library other than a school library in the future, only 23 (15.8%) of these people did intend to find work in other library settings (see Figure 29). The range of library settings of interest to 25 respondents who stated the type of libraries they were interested in securing employment in included public libraries and university libraries, followed by TAFE libraries, galleries/museums, special libraries, then records, archives or cultural services and national/state libraries. Again, access to employment in other types of libraries was also dependent on geographical location with 56% of these respondents living in metropolitan areas and 44% living and working in regional cities/towns, as one library assistant working in rural South Australia stated, "When my

kids reach an age where they need to go to the city for high school education I hope I might be able to find work at a library in the city." In comparison to the qualified librarians and library technicians, the survey results suggest that those working as library assistants were less likely to use their employment in a school library as a stepping stone to work in other library settings as part of their career progression.

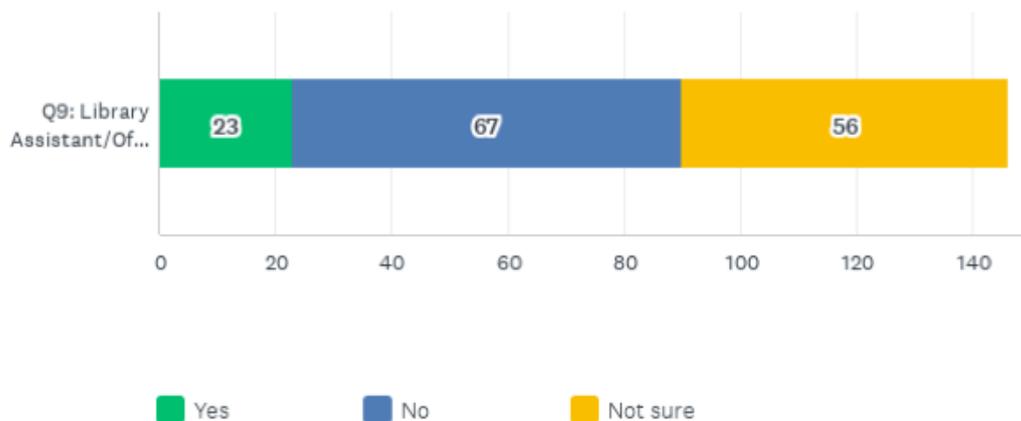


Figure 29: Library Assistants' intention to further career in other library settings

A larger proportion of respondents (45.9%) did not intend to find work in other library settings, with over one-third (38.4%) of the 146 respondents unsure as to whether they would consider employment in library settings other than school libraries, and when asked what additional library qualification(s) they would need to gain employment in one or more of these other library settings, a out of the 15 people who responded, some stated they felt they already had the requisite qualification, as illustrated by one person's comment, "I have just completed a Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Studies so don't wish to gain any more professional learning other than in the workplace." The remainder stated they realised they might need further LIS qualifications but were unsure of what that might be. This suggests there could be a greater need for providing advice regarding professional pathways for those without an LIS qualification, by identifying options in, and opportunities for, career (and qualifications) progression. Keeping in mind, however, that over 80% of the library assistant employee group were aged 40 years and over (as per Figure 10), with nearly 60% aged 50 and over, which suggests that PD offerings might be more attractive to those library assistants who do not aspire to gain promotion within the school library sector, nor refocus their career prospects in libraries other than school

libraries. Therefore, the provision of advice, and promotion of pathway options, would need to be targeted. One potential avenue to provide targeted advice for those working in library assistant positions could be directly through the three education systems (Government, Catholic and Independent) within each state and territory. If ALIA could establish a stronger relationship with library coordinators or professional learning coordinators within these systems, with teacher unions and public service unions, this could provide ALIA with a more direct channel to those school library employees seeking advice regarding career progressions, further education, and professional pathways.

In terms of the attractiveness of a microcredentials program to gain credit towards a university or TAFE qualification, of the 123 library assistants who answered this question just under half (47.7%) selected 'Yes' and 52.3% selected 'No'. Of those interested in pursuing microcredentialled PD, 50% stated they would prefer micro-units to gain credit towards completion of a university qualification in LIS at either the Masters (18%), GradDip (20%) or Bachelors (12%) level, with 17% interested in a GradCert. There was also considerable interest in completing micro-units for credits towards a qualification from AQF levels 3-6, with 23% being interested in gaining credits at the undergraduate associate degree, diploma or certificates levels, and just over half interested in gaining credits at TAFE diploma (32.5%) or certificate levels (18.4%). Therefore, people working in library assistant positions did see access to PD as part of a micro-credential program as attractive by approximately 50% of the sample, with people being open to gaining credit for PD at either undergraduate or postgraduate levels, dependent on their career aspirations and pathway progress.

The focus groups and interviews of library assistants, and those who employed them, also provided specific feedback about pathway issues experienced by this employee group. For example, the cost of initial LIS training and/or further education was considered problematic, if a school or library as the employer was not willing to pay for or subsidise the cost of coursework or PD for those working in library assistant positions. Focus group discussions also raised the issue of library assistants not earning a salary that would allow them to afford to pay for their own training or CPD, and the need for employers to provide library assistants to undertake CPD during school/work hours. Feedback also highlighted disparity between some education

systems and states/territories. For example, feedback from those working in Qld public schools stated that the education system has organised for untrained staff to enrol in a Certificate IV in School Based Education Support course, but to date, Education Queensland does not subsidise training through a TAFE Certificate in LIS. Other feedback presented the library assistant experience where they often learn about their role "on the job" with training provided by the TL, Librarian, or immediate line manager in the library. This was mentioned as "the norm" in public schools, where it is expected that the TL takes on library staff training as part of their role.

Furthermore, people in library assistant positions need to see value in investing their time and money in gaining a qualification (such a TAFE Diploma to become a qualified library technician) and feel confident the investment will lead to an increase in salary or promotion to a library technician position. There was little evidence of library technician positions available to those who became fully qualified in the public school sector, but focus groups and interviews did present evidence of some independent schools paying for their library assistants to complete a TAFE Diploma in LIS to become a qualified library technician. In WA's public school system, there is a mechanism for library assistants at Library 1 Officer level (with salary range \$50,639 - \$58,514 per annum) who take on more responsibilities in managing the school library for them to apply for a reclassification to a Library 2 Officer position (with an increase in salary to \$60,189 - \$64,931 per annum); however, this opportunity needs to be published more widely as feedback from participants suggest few people employed as L1Os are aware of this pathway.

3.6 Considerations for the future

Feedback from focus groups and interviews identified the need for certified acknowledgement of training that a library assistant completes that can build towards some kind of certification recognition, similar to ALIA's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme, but for those who have not undertaken the equivalent of an ALIA-accredited qualification as yet. This would provide those working in school libraries with no formal LIS qualification to begin to chart their existing PD and training and establish a plan for their own professional pathway.

Based on the demographic data presented in this report, very few school leavers are seeking employment in school libraries, whether that be in professional or paraprofessional positions. ALIA's Professional Pathways Initiative can be used as a vehicle to leverage greater interest in the school library sector to carve out a career or seek school library work as a stepping stone in one's career progression within the broader GLAM industry. Developing a Professional Pathways campaign that targets careers counsellors and advisors across school sectors and provides information about career prospects and LIS education for school leavers.

Survey results (as presented in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report) clearly demonstrate a significant proportion of school library employees do not hold a LIS qualification, particularly those employed as library assistants, many of whom are fulfilling roles and responsibilities in school libraries far beyond what their position entails. This highlights the need for the provision of basic library training within school sectors, and ALIA could seek partnerships within school sectors and provide policy advice regarding greater provision of training for library assistants and guidance regarding professional pathways within school libraries across all five employee groups examined in this report.

In terms of provision of more affordable LIS education at the degree level, particularly for those wishing to become qualified librarians; one solution could be TAFE offering LIS Associate Degrees at AQF Level 6 to build on the knowledge and skills taught at TAFE Certificate and Diploma level. Feedback from focus groups, interviews and those who have employed school library staff did see as a possible pathway for gaining a LIS qualification at a reduced cost (compared to university fees for a degree program). Questions were also asked by participants about establishing subsidised or sponsored opportunities for LIS education through the VET sector, particularly for those who have already secured a position working in a school library without any LIS qualification or training. Traineeships as a strategy for recruiting young people into the school library sector are lacking, and of the 693 respondents to the survey, only one person was working in a school library as part of a subsidised trainee program. While some traineeship programs may not be specifically designed to target the school library sector, one Head of Library in the focus groups identified an AFL graduate program (funded by the AFL) that offers

Year 12 school leavers a position in a school for one year full-time to develop hands-on work experience in areas such as sport or IT, and she saw this as an opportunity to employ a male school leaver to work in the school as a Library Assistant for one year in the hope that he might consider a career in school libraries. Such a program could potentially become a new pathway to attract young men into the LIS profession in the future.

Thus, greater utilisation of VET traineeship programs within the school library sector was raised as one way of encouraging more young people into the LIS profession, given there are more school libraries in Australia than any other library sector. Given this would require a significant shift in employer's (education systems and/or school management) thinking about school libraries as workplaces to support traineeships or apprenticeships, ALIA (as our industry's voice) could play an important role in leveraging such a shift in thinking to establish one or more formal trainee programs.

What is clear, is that the school library sector could provide far greater professional pathway opportunities for LIS workers in the future, with the school library workplace setting being used as a springboard for people to gain both LIS qualifications and experience, before seeking work in other library and information contexts.

Chapter 4. Knowledge, skills and competencies

This chapter examines knowledge, skills, and competencies required of school library employees, identifies those points of differentiation between those working in school libraries and the broader LIS profession, and summarises issues and challenges across employee groups. Given the comprehensive analysis of skills frameworks for LIS professionals in the Professional Pathways Technical Report (Hallam, 2022a), this chapter will focus on isolating those core professional competencies and specialised professional competencies as they relate to the school library sector. Also, in light of ALIA's Professional Pathways Board's recommendations in response to the Technical Report to guide the next stages of the Professional Pathways initiative, the contents of this chapter and Chapter 5 have been written to inform the development of ALIA's proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour as per Recommendation 1 (Hallam, 2022b, p. 4) within the context of teacher and LIS professionals, and paraprofessionals, working in the school library sector.

ALIA's (2020a) 'Foundation knowledge for entry-level library and information professionals' policy provides an overview of the foundation knowledge and skills required by a graduate who is seeking employment in the broader library and information sector. These are presented within a framework of ten domains, including:

- The information environment
- Information services
- Information management
- Literacies and learning
- Digital technologies
- Community engagement
- Leadership and management
- Research
- Behavioural skills
- Professionalism.

Also of note are nine skills for future professional practice identified by Hallam's (2022a) review of the literature in the Professional Pathways Technical Report, which include:

- Digital dexterity
- Digital curation
- Data librarianship
- Open scholarship
- Digital humanities librarianship
- Information governance
- Artificial intelligence and machine learning
- Media literacy
- Cultural competence.

All nine of these future-focused skills are highly relevant to those working in the school library sector and are essential inclusions for ALIA's proposed new framework, as these all involve new knowledge, skills and ethical behaviours that will increasingly become core to LIS professionals and paraprofessionals.

In terms of the school library context, ALIA's (2015) CPD Core Competencies Guidelines for Schools Specialisations identifies the following eight key competencies relevant to LIS-qualified professionals working in schools:

1. Understand the library sector and the policies, issues and trends that impact upon the education system.
2. Understand and apply the principles and practices related to developing information services to meet users' needs.
3. Know and understand the importance of reading and develop programs for users.
4. Understand and facilitate the management of information resources in a broad range of formats.
5. Know and understand the application of leadership, finance, communication, and management theory and techniques.

6. Understand and use technology and systems to manage all forms of information and media.
7. Know and understand the importance of information literacy and develop programs for users.
8. Maintain currency of professional knowledge and practice.

As noted by Hallam (2022a), international guidelines such as those published by IFLA and IASL focus more on the responsibilities of a school librarian, rather than articulating a framework of skills or competencies. There is also a lack of guidelines specifically targeting the points of difference between the roles and responsibilities of qualified LIS professionals and those fulfilling paraprofessional positions, with the majority of international documentation focusing on qualified teacher librarians or school librarians. This is problematic for those working in the school library sector, particularly in Australia where we do see a diverse range of staffing mix in school libraries, which are often dependent on the school education system and state/territory approaches to school library employment. As noted in Chapters 2 and 3, there are significant points of difference between employees who are qualified librarians or library technicians compared to teacher librarians and teachers working in school libraries. Furthermore, results from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' also shows there are a significant number of people employed by individual schools or school systems to work in school libraries without an LIS qualification or with little formal training in LIS knowledge or skill development. The school library sector in Australia therefore needs a sector-wide framework of knowledge, skills and competencies that represents the qualifications, positions and roles and responsibilities across the four main school library employee groups of teacher librarian, librarian, library technician and library assistant. Given the disparate nature of roles, responsibilities, practices, and tasks across these employee groups, such a framework will need to accommodate those points of distinction between each group, while having provision to chart professional pathways based on employees' undertaking further education and training, CPD, or refining their knowledge and skills on-the-job.

The questionnaire used for the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' included a question asking respondents to identify what aspects

of library work core to their role as a school library employee by rating the level of responsibility across 55 aspects of school library work. The complete list is available in Appendix C. While this list was not meant to be comprehensive nor exhaustive, it provided a range of aspects of library work where some of these could be more representative of a qualified TL or a librarian in a leadership position in the school library, or more technical or operational tasks that would be representative of the work of a library technician or library assistant. To identify points of difference in aspects of library work undertaken by employee groups, the following 'levels of responsibility' rating scale was implemented:

- (a) 'Lead' means that the person is responsible for designing, managing and evaluating this aspect of library work;
- (b) 'Maintain' means that the person is responsible for undertaking the majority of tasks related to this aspect of library work;
- (c) 'Assist' means that the person is not responsible for managing or maintaining this aspect of library work but does help other library staff complete some tasks related to this aspect of work; or
- (d) 'No' means that the person does not complete any tasks related to this aspect of library work.

Comparative analysis of each employee group for each aspect of school library work did identify key points of difference. For example, teacher librarian respondents rated 'Lead' on those aspects of library work that involves teaching classes and working with individual students on information and digital literacy-related tasks, compared to librarians, library technicians and library assistants as illustrated in Figure 30.



Figure 30: Comparative analysis across employee groups regarding levels of responsibility for teaching information and digital literacy

While a greater percentage of teacher librarian respondents rated their level of responsibility as 'Lead', the above figure does show that some people working in the other employee groups were also taking 'a lead' in teaching information and digital literacy in their school library, although for those working in library technician or assistant positions this was considerably less. This does highlight, however, that some people working in one of the employee groups, other than teacher librarians, are undertaking some tasks that involve working with students in information and digital literacy skill development. Then there are aspects of school library work where the responsibility is shared or distributed more evenly, thus illustrating less demarcation of duties and expertise as presented in Figure 31 where a large percentage of all employee groups saw themselves taking a lead in providing reader advisory services.

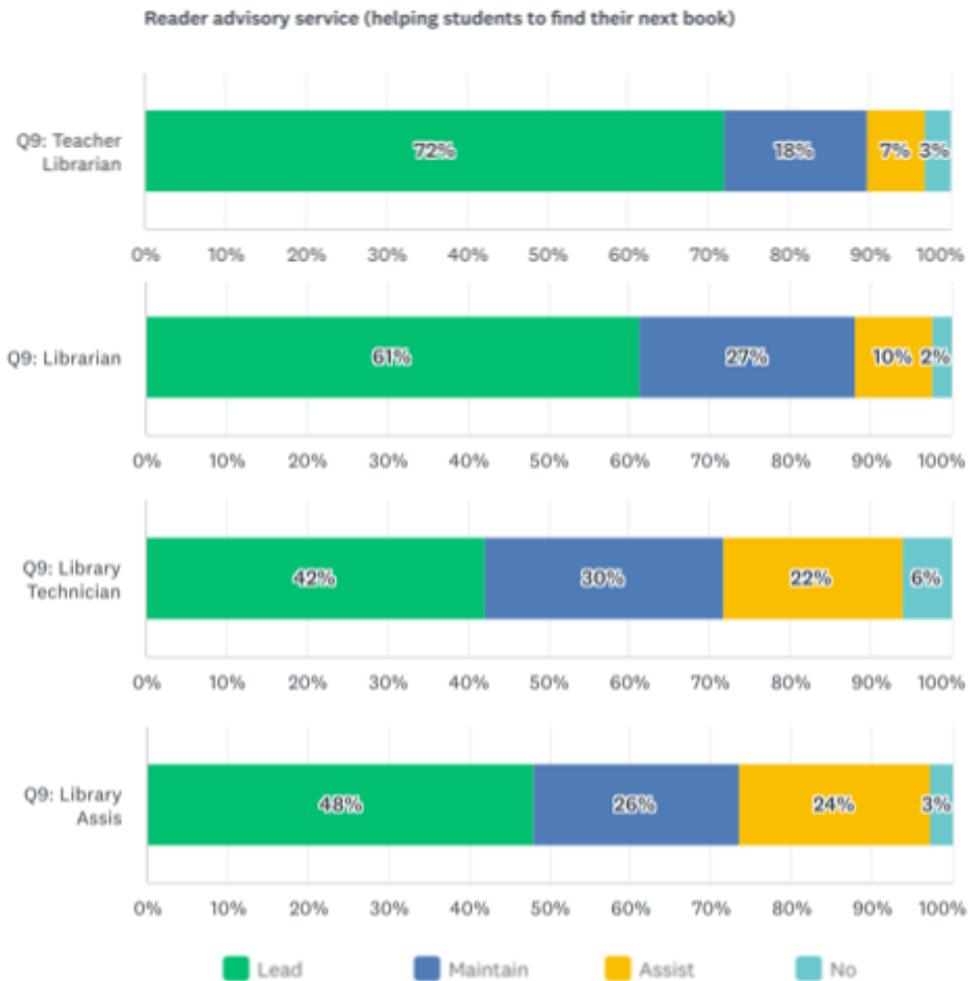


Figure 31: Comparative analysis across employee groups regarding levels of responsibility for reader advisory service

Similarly in Figure 32 regarding employee groups' provision of IT support for students and teachers. The level of responsibility for IT support in the school library will also be dependent on the staffing mix of a school library team and whether a school employs dedicated IT support staff across the school, thus reducing the IT support load of school library staff.

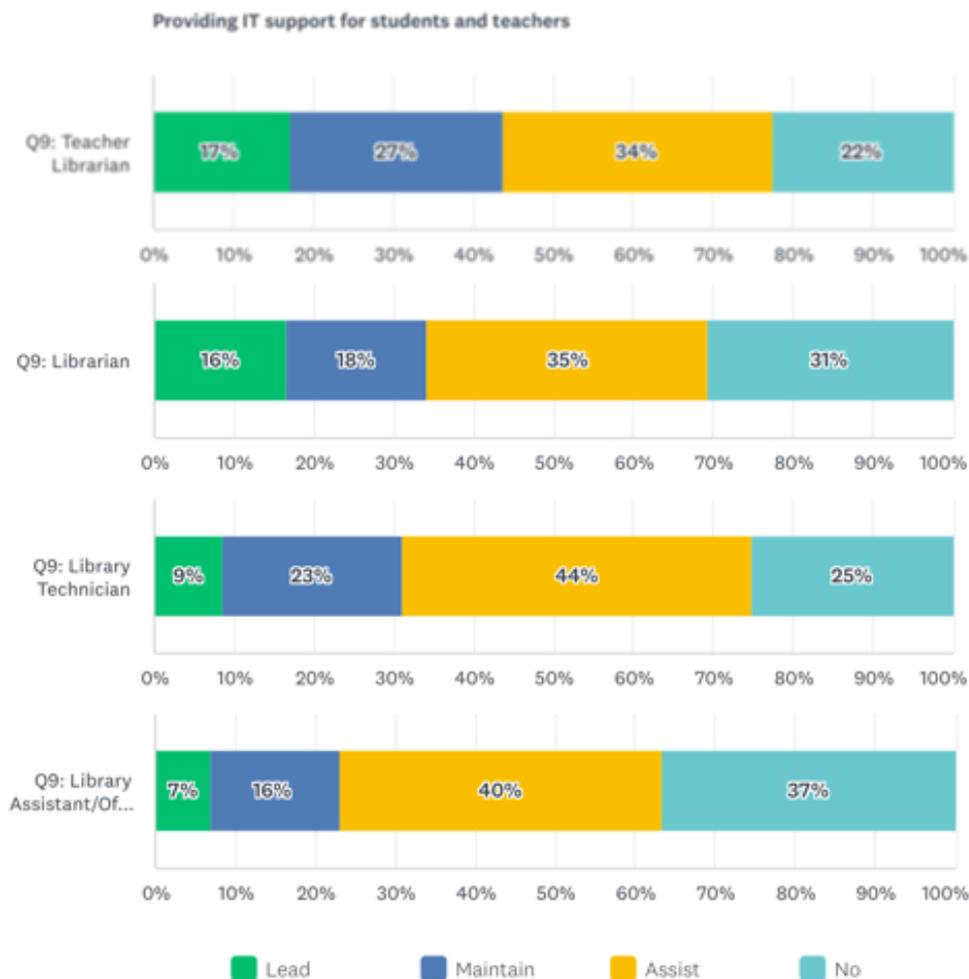


Figure 32: Comparative analysis across employee groups regarding levels of responsibility for provision of IT support to users

These few examples highlight that the development of a proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and competencies will need to accommodate and represent school library workers across employee groups, with each employee engaging at different levels of responsibility and practice based on the context of their school.

One model that could be adopted by ALIA with the proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour to support the Professional Pathways initiative could be a career-staged approach as implemented by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL, 2022) with the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. Each of AITSL's Standards are organised into four career stages to "reflect the continuum of a teacher's developing professional expertise from undergraduate preparation through to being an exemplary classroom practitioner and a leader in the profession" (p. 3). These four stages

include graduate standards which underpins the accreditation of initial teacher education programs; proficient standards which underpin processes for teacher registration; and highly accomplished and lead career stages of the Standards used to inform voluntary certification.

A similar level of granularity could be included as part of the new Professional Pathways framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour, with possibly introducing an initial and first stage of 'in-training' or similar to accommodate the knowledge and skill development of those without an LIS qualification, who are receiving initial training on-the-job, by way of CPD and/or enrolled in a TAFE Certificate or Diploma. This would allow the development of level descriptors for each knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour statement within the framework to represent individuals' qualifications and career stage progression. Such a framework could be used to inform the development of professional learning goals, including further education/training and CPD, and to "recognise their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements" (AITSL, 2022, p. 3).

The Australian Teacher Aide (ATA) organisation, who provides CPD for members who are teachers' aides working in Australia schools, is currently in the process of developing the 'Australian Standards for Paraprofessional Educators in Schools' (2022). This set of standards is based on AITSL's *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*:

- Professional Knowledge Standard 1: Know students and how they learn
- Professional Knowledge Standard 2: Know how to support teaching and learning
- Professional Practice Standard 3: Collaborate with teachers to implement effective teaching and learning
- Professional Practice Standard 4: Contribute to, and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
- Professional Practice Standard 5: Contribute to assessment and provide feedback on student learning
- Professional Engagement Standard 6: Engage in professional learning

- Professional Engagement Standard 7: Engage and communicate professionally with colleagues and the school community

Given that a number of people working in school libraries as library assistants or officers are Cert III or IV qualified and employed as teachers' aides, and teachers and TLs working in school are already bound by these AITSL Standards, it would be valuable for those working in the school library sector to have access to an ALIA Professional Pathways' framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviours that reflect AITSL and ATA Standards. While ATA is yet to determine the career stages for the ATA Standards for paraprofessional educators, it would be strategic for ALIA to begin a conversation with ATA about the development of their Standards and explore how these might inform the work and further education/training of LIS paraprofessionals working in the school education sector.

To conclude, ALIA's (2020a) 'Foundation knowledge for entry-level library and information professionals' policy, its series of ALIA PD Scheme Schools Specialisation Skills Audit Checklists (2015), and the nine Skills for Future Professional Practice identified by Hallam (2022a) in the Technical Report, along with AITSL's (2022) *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and ATA's (2022) *Australian Standards for Paraprofessional Educators in Schools*, are all important, foundational documents that provide a starting point for development of the proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviours (including those representing the school library sector). In addition to these documents, a list of 43 ethical principles underpinning the professional knowledge, practice, and engagement of those working in school libraries is presented in Table A in the following chapter to further inform ALIA's proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviours relevant to those working in, or aspiring to work, in school libraries.

Chapter 5. Ethics and professionalism

This chapter explores ethics and professionalism within the context of the school library sector. Areas of emphases are identified by conjoining LIS and education ethical principles, and professional identity is examined within the school library context by drawing upon results from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' about school library employees' engagement with professional associations and networks. The chapter concludes by identifying employees' use of social media platforms to support their work in the school library and how this may be harnessed by ALIA in the future.

The first key finding of ALIA's Professional Pathways Technical Report Overview (Hallam, 2022b) states that "core professional knowledge, values and ethics sit at the centre of professional practice and professional identity" (p. 43), and while this is also the case for those working in the school library sector, there are some differences between employees qualified as librarians or library technicians compared to teacher librarians and teachers working in school libraries. In addition, results from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' also show there are a significant number of people working in school libraries without an LIS qualification nor little formal training in LIS knowledge or skill development. So how do these employees gain access to core values and ethics as information workers (particularly within the context of school libraries), develop a professional identity that is representative of an LIS professional, and engage with the LIS profession? This chapter explores these issues and challenges within the context of the school library sector.

5.1 Ethics

IFLA's (2012) code of ethics, which is endorsed by ALIA (2018d), is based on the belief that:

Librarianship is, in its very essence, an ethical activity embodying a value-rich approach to professional work with information... Information service in the interest of social, cultural and economic well-being is at the heart of librarianship and therefore librarians have social responsibility... Code making is

an essential function of a professional association, just as ethical reflection is a necessity for all professionals. (p. 1-2)

IFLA articulates six core codes that inform ethical practice of LIS professionals, which include:

1. Ensure access to information "for all for personal development, education, cultural enrichment, leisure, economic activity and informed participation in and enhancement of democracy" and "reject the denial and restriction of access to information and ideas most particularly through censorship whether by states, governments, or religious or civil society institutions" (p. 2);
2. Responsibilities towards individuals and society by promoting inclusion and eradicating discrimination, to "ensure that the right of accessing information is not denied and that equitable services are provided for everyone whatever their age, citizenship, political belief, physical or mental ability, gender identity, heritage, education, income, immigration and asylum-seeking status, marital status, origin, race, religion or sexual orientation", and provide services that promote reading skill development, information literacy, and the ethical use of information (p. 3);
3. Respect privacy, secrecy and transparency, by helping with the protection of personal data, maintaining confidentiality of users and their data, and supporting and participating in transparency, always working for the public good;
4. Provide effective and open access to information, "advocate for exceptions and limitations to copyright restrictions for libraries", "recognise the intellectual property right of authors and other creators and [sic] seek to ensure that their rights are respected", and advocate for information in the public domain to remain both public and free (p. 4);
5. Be committed to neutrality and an unbiased stance regarding collection, access and service, work towards achieving a balanced collection and

ensuring balanced access to information is achievable. Be able to distinguish between one's "personal convictions and professional duties... [and] not advance private interests or personal beliefs at the expense of neutrality". Uphold personal integrity and professional skills, "strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing their knowledge and skills" and aiming for "the highest standards of service quality and thus promote the positive reputation of the profession" (p. 5); and

6. Treat colleagues with fairness and respect, "oppose discrimination in any aspect of employment because of age, citizenship, political belief, physical or mental ability, gender, marital status, origin, race, religion or sexual orientation", support and facilitate employer/employee relationships by sharing one's professional experience with colleagues and guiding those newly entering the profession, and "strive to earn a reputation and status based on [one's] professionalism and ethical behaviour" (p. 5).

Hallam (2022a) argues that the "notion of values and ethics are closely intertwined because a code of ethics will inevitably reflect a profession's shared values [where] values determine what is important, while ethics determine what is right" (p. v). As Hallam's review of the literature shows, ethical practice is considered a core competency for LIS professionals, and this certainly applies to those working in the school library sector, where professional ethics underpin a school library employee's practice, decision-making, and actions on a daily basis. ALIA's *Core Values Policy Statement* (2018a) presents ten core values which directly inform one's ethical and professional compass when working in a school library. These include:

1. Promotion of the free flow of information and ideas through open access to recorded knowledge, information, and creative works.
2. Delivery of authentic information and evidence-based practice supported by quality research.
3. Connection of people to ideas, knowledge creation and learning.
4. Dedication to fostering reading, information and digital literacies.
5. Respect for the diversity, individuality and equality of all and recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

6. Adherence to information privacy principles.
7. Management, organisation and preservation of the human record.
8. Excellence, accountability, integrity and responsibility in services to our communities.
9. Commitment to maintaining currency of professional knowledge and practice.
10. Partnerships and collaborations to advance these values.

Ethical principles, specifically within the school library context, are presented in several documents jointly published by ALIA and ASLA:

- Joint Statement on School Libraries and ICT (2016)
- Joint Statement on School Library Funding (2016)
- Joint Statement on Teacher Librarian Qualifications (2016)
- Joint Statement on Teacher Librarians in Australia (2016)
- Standards of Professional Excellence for Teacher Librarians (2004)
- Statement on Information Literacy (2016)
- Statement on Library and Information Services in Schools (2016).

ALIA has also published further guidelines and policies, either specific to or relevant to, school libraries addressing ethical principles and/or practice. These include:

- Guidelines for the time allotment of teaching and librarianship for teacher librarians (2022)
- Guidelines on library and information services for people with disabilities (2019)
- Libraries and privacy guidelines (2005)
- ALIA library privacy guidelines for ebook lending and digital content provision (2018)
- Foundation knowledge for entry-level library and information professionals (2020a).
- Foundation knowledge, skills and attributes relevant to information professionals working in archives, libraries and records management (2020b)
- Professional development for library and information professionals (2019).

This is supplemented by ALIA Schools and the Victorian Catholic Teacher Librarians group's second edition of *A Manual for Developing Policies and Procedures in Australian School Library Resource Centres* (2017) which provides guidelines for those working in school libraries to "ensure equitable access to resources for all in the school community" (p. 4). ASLA's *School Library Bill of Rights* (2018) articulates the responsibility of the school library in supporting the development of the whole child, which builds on IFLA and ALIA guidelines specifically within a school library setting, to:

- provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the pupils served;
- provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literacy appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards;
- provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgements in their daily life;
- provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking;
- provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our society and heritage; and
- place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the users of the library.

Ethical responsibilities and practices of both teacher librarians and teachers working in school libraries is also informed by the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in 2011 (subsequently revised in 2018 and 2022). The Standards comprise seven Standards which outline "what teachers should know and be able to do" (p. 4). This set of standards are "interconnected, interdependent and overlapping", and are grouped into the following domains of teaching:

- Professional Knowledge
- Professional Practice; and
- Professional Engagement.

It is expected that all teachers' practice draws on aspects of all three domains. Therefore, the professional knowledge, practice, engagement, and indeed career progression, of teacher librarians and teachers working in school libraries is also shaped by each of the seven Standards, in comparison to the other three school library employee groups whose work in school libraries is not defined by "teaching quality", nor requiring registration as a teacher or voluntary certification for career progression as a teacher (as per AITSL Standards).

In response to AITSL Standards, ALIA Schools developed *AITSL Standards for teacher librarian practice* (2014) to assist teacher librarians (and their supervisors, including school principals) in identifying what TL practices within the school library setting address each of the standards, and provides types of tangible evidence a TL should draw upon to demonstrate how their practice meets each standard and focus areas at proficient, highly accomplished and lead career stages in primary and secondary schools.

Given that teacher librarians and teachers working in school libraries are required to use the AITSL Standards to inform their professional knowledge, practice and engagement, an analysis of ethical principles was undertaken using a suite of IFLA, IASL, ALIA, ASLA, and AITSL documents to identify ethical principles for both LIS and education professionals as they apply to the school library sector. Please note that much of the IFLA and ALIA content presented below is based on Table 38 of the *Professional Pathways Technical Report* (Hallam, 2022, p. 203-204).

As a result, in comparison to Hallam's Table 38 which listed 31 ethical principles, the list presented below in Table A has been expanded to include 43 ethical principles to reflect a combination of LIS and education ethics underpinning the professional knowledge, practice, and engagement more accurately of those working in school libraries, with this expansion particularly relevant to those employees with a teaching qualification and teaching responsibilities.

Table A: Ethical principles for school library employees as identified by IFLA, IASL and Australian associations (listed in alphabetical order)

Ethical principle	IFLA	IASL	ALIA	ASLA	AITSL
Accessibility of information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accessibility of services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Children's right to know	✓	✓		✓	
Development of the whole child	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital literacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distinguish between personal convictions & professional duties	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Diversity, equality & inclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Empowering learners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Equitable access to technology	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethical use of information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Formulate & publish policies on library service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foster creativity and innovation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Freedom from bias	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Freedom of access to information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Global citizenship & civic engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Information literacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intellectual freedom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lifelong learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Literacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintain and enhance professional knowledge and skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oppose discrimination in the workplace	✓	✓	✓		
Pay equality	✓		✓		
Principles of open access, open source, open licences	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Privacy & confidentiality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Professional engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promotion of collections and services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Protection of personal data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide representations of young people's own cultural heritage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quality education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reputation of the profession	✓		✓	✓	✓
Resist censorship	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Respect for copyright	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Respect for Indigenous cultural & intellectual property	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Respect for intellectual property rights of creators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Respectful relationships in the workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Services free of cost	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Share professional experience	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strive for professional excellence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student safety and wellbeing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sustainability	✓	✓	✓		
Teaching and learning for all	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transparency of public information	✓		✓		
Transparency, accountability & good governance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

5.2 Professionalism and professional identity

As noted in the previous section, working in the school library setting requires a blending of LIS and education knowledge, values, ethics, skills and practices for school library employees to best service the needs of their school community. The *Professional Pathways Technical Report* (Hallam, 2022) states that, “While professional identity is associated with an individual’s professional self-concept based on attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences, there is also a collective dimension where values are common to the professional community as a whole” (p. iv). This is reflected in many of ALIA and ASLA’s joint policy statements regarding school libraries; however, findings from the ‘ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey’ presented in Chapters 2 and 3 have identified considerable breadth in qualifications and training across the five school library employee groups, with two of the five groups employed as teachers and the other three employed as LIS professionals and paraprofessionals. Therefore, the profession does face some challenges with bringing all of these employee groups collectively ‘into the fold’, and to help individuals (whether qualified, in-training or unqualified) in building a professional identity that reflects the knowledge, skills, values and ethics expected of those who choose to work in school libraries.

ALIA’s series of ALIA PD Scheme Schools Specialisation Skills Audit Checklists does provide a starting point for those working in school libraries to evaluate and reflect upon sets of knowledge, skills, values, and ethics relevant to the employee groups of Librarian (2015a), Library Technician (2015b) and Teacher Librarian (2015c). Those working in Library Assistant or Officer positions are usually provided with systemic or school-based position or role statements which are more task-focused and lack core values and ethical guidelines to inform their work as paraprofessionals. In future, ALIA could expand this set of checklists to include a set of guidelines targeting the latter employee group, which reflects those core values and ethical principles underpinning the practice of information workers in a school library setting. This could contribute to the Professional Pathways project goal of attracting people from different backgrounds into the LIS profession, “given the ways in which the range of knowledge and skills required by staff working in library and information services is broadening and deepening” (Hallam, 2022, p. iv).

Furthermore, ALIA's *Foundation knowledge for entry-level library and information professionals* policy (2020a) states that upon gaining employment within the library and information industry, a graduate must "be able to demonstrate professionalism in their career and a commitment to lifelong learning" (p. 1). The policy provides eight key areas of knowledge, practice, standards, and values represented under the domain of 'Professionalism' for those maintaining currency upon graduating at either the Associate (Librarian and Teacher Librarian) or Library Technician level. These include:

- the understanding and application of moral, cultural, ethical principles and legal responsibilities involved in the provision of library and information services to individuals and communities;
- advocacy for the library and information profession;
- active contribution to society by sharing specialist knowledge and expertise as a library and information professional;
- membership of and participation in ALIA as well as other professional associations, as appropriate to the individual's specialisation;
- commitment to undertaking formal and informal continuing professional development activities to build knowledge and skills;
- professional certification through the relevant ALIA PD specialisation;
- mentoring and coaching activities; and
- research and publishing in the professional literature. (p. 6)

Greater exposure to, and engagement with, one or more of these key areas can fine tune one's professionalism and practice, and ultimately strengthen one's professional identity. This was confirmed in Henczel's (2016) study of the impact of national library associations which found that participants' involvement with their association resulted in:

Professional values [being] developed through interaction with others, learning from them and collaborating with them. The development of professional values caused changes in attitude and behaviour such as increased professionalism in the workplace and increased engagement with the profession itself. (p. 124-125)

Furthermore, with this increased engagement, participants felt they were provided with ongoing reinforcement of their professional identity which was being continuously influenced by the professional community; thus, providing “a sense of self, where individuals are able to define themselves through the eyes of others” (p. 191). Given the disparate backgrounds and nature of those currently working in the school library sector, we do have much work in connecting with those working in isolation in school libraries, particularly those who have not had the opportunity to undertake LIS education or professional development to help shape their understanding of their role in the school library, and “how they fit” within the broader community of school library employees.

Results from the ‘ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey’ about school library employees’ engagement with professional associations and networks sheds some light on professional engagement and identity within the school library context. For example, of the 693 respondents, 671 answered the question about being a current financial member of ALIA. If respondents were an ALIA member, they were asked to identify what type of membership they held. Figure 33 presents the results of ALIA membership with over half of respondents (55%) being a current financial member of ALIA. This included 24% having access to institutional membership through their school library, 18% being a Professional Personal (Associate) member, 6% being a Professional Personal (Library Technician) member, and 6 respondents (1%) held a Professional Personal (Allied Field) membership. Other types of membership included 20 respondents with a Personal Student membership, and 18 respondents were Personal General members.

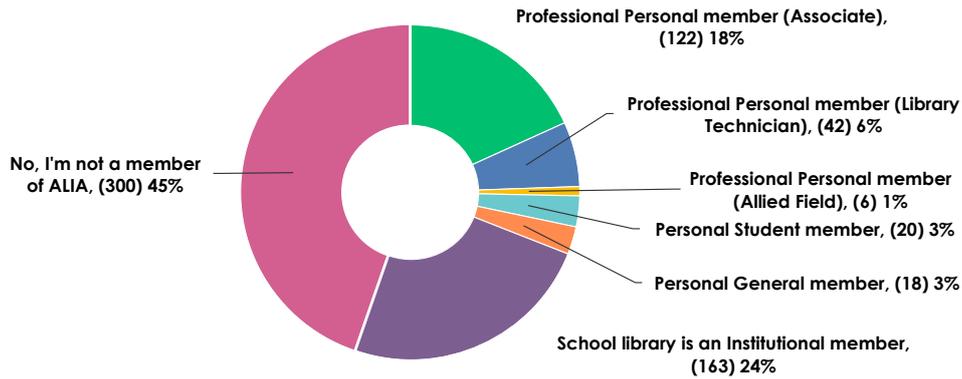


Figure 33: Status of respondents' affiliation with the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)

Less than half of respondents (45%) said they were not currently a member of ALIA, and they were asked to provide a reason for not being a member. Some of the main reasons identified included the cost of membership with some people feeling that they could not afford to pay for a Personal membership, with others stating they had requested institutional membership for their school library which had been denied due to lack of school budget to invest in professional memberships. Some respondents stated they were currently enrolled in an LIS or MEdTL course and would consider joining upon graduating and gaining employment. Others commented because they did not hold a library qualification, they did not feel they were eligible to invest in an ALIA membership, with some respondents stating that now this question had been asked, they would explore membership options available to them in the future. Some stated that they were employed part-time, or as a casual, or were on a contract, and would only pursue membership if working full-time or securing permanency in the future. Others noted that they were only new to the sector and hadn't explored what was available to them in terms of external support beyond their school or school system. Some respondents stated that they were a member of another school library association at the state or national level and had specifically made the choice to invest in only one professional association, with others stating that they felt their professional learning needs were currently being met by their school system or local/regional network.

Professional membership and engagement with ALIA (or other professional associations) also differed across the school library employee groups. For example, of the 265 respondents employed as a TL, 56% were current ALIA members while 44%

were not; however, within this group, of those who were not ALIA members, many of these respondents did have affiliation with one or more other professional school library and/or teaching associations. Upon further analysis of those 261 respondents who held a dual qualification in teaching and librarianship, there were significant differences between those working in specific school sectors in relation to ALIA membership. For example, Figure 34 presents a comparison between qualified TMs with ALIA membership (in the left chart) versus those currently without ALIA membership (in right chart).

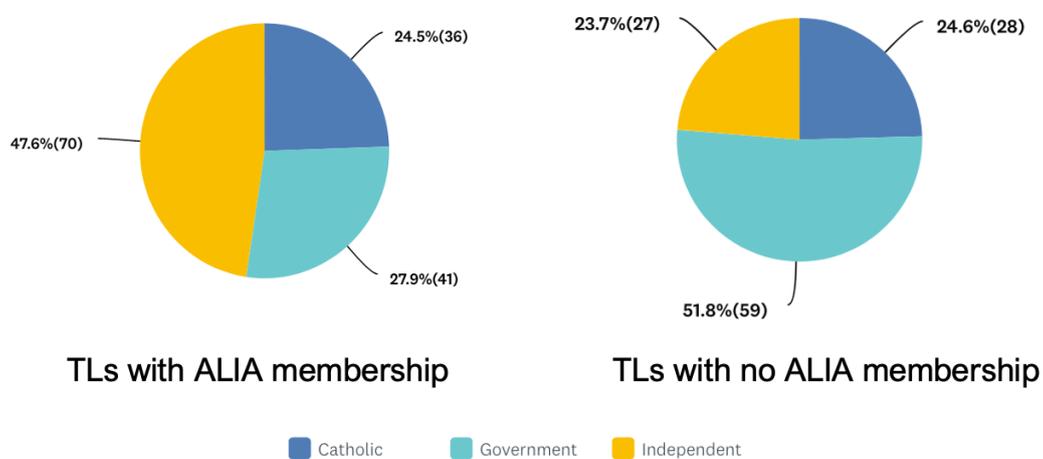


Figure 34: Comparison of ALIA membership of qualified TMs across school sectors

In the left-hand chart of Figure 34 there is a greater percentage of qualified TMs working in the independent sector having access to some type of ALIA membership compared to those working in either public or Catholic systems. Furthermore, (as per the right-hand chart) over half of those TMs without access to ALIA membership who responded to the survey were currently being employed within a public school system.

In comparison to the TM employee group, of those respondents employed as librarians, 66% stated they were ALIA members with 34% not currently having access to ALIA membership; thus, a greater percentage of the librarian employees viewed ALIA as their preferred affiliation with a professional association. Of the 150 Library Technician respondents, 58% had access to ALIA membership with 33% having a Professional Personal membership, 21% working in a school library with institutional membership and 4% having either a Student or Personal General membership.

Unsurprisingly, the Library Assistant employee group (with 148 responding to this question) had the lowest percentage of ALIA membership (45%), with 55% having access to ALIA membership including 21% with access through their school library as an institutional member, 5% as a Professional Personal (Associate) member, 5% as a Professional Personal (Library Technician) member, and 1 person held a Professional Personal (Allied Field) membership. This group also held more Personal Student (10) and Personal General (9) memberships. Of the 81 people employed as Library Assistants who were not currently financial ALIA members, a number found completing the questionnaire a learning experience as they did not know if they were eligible to become a member of ALIA, and as a result were interested in finding out more information about what ALIA could offer them. This shows that there is potential for ALIA to have greater reach to this employee group across school sectors. That said, lack of personal funds, or lack of school funds, to invest in ALIA membership were identified by some as main reasons why they had not joined ALIA. Interestingly, a few respondents stated they received the free 'ALIA Weekly' via email and appreciated having access to regular updates from ALIA.

In anticipation of some survey respondents not being members of ALIA, people were also asked if they held memberships with other professional associations, unions, or groups to support their work in, and/or professional learning about, school libraries. Of the two-thirds of respondents who answered this question, Figure 35 presents the percentage of total respondents (n=693) who stated that they do engage with professional organisations or groups, other than ALIA.

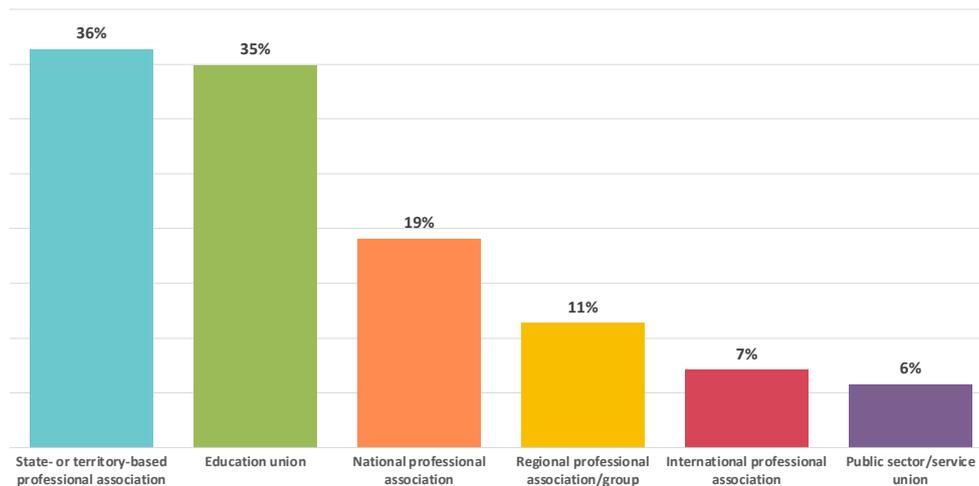


Figure 35: Percentage of respondents' membership of professional organisations or groups other than ALIA

State- or territory-based professional associations and education unions were the most popular professional memberships (other than ALIA) that respondents formally connected to, with 36% and 35% of all respondents respectively, via paid membership. Depending on the state or territory where respondents were working, the school library associations of SLANSW, SLASA, SLAV, QSLA and WASLA were all mentioned, as were state-based Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) branches, English Teachers' Associations, Science Teachers' Associations, and a few people mentioned their membership with Principal associations, and computer or IT in education associations. Both national and state- or territory-based education unions (with the majority of TLs and teachers working in schools having teacher union membership) also provided a school library or TL special interest group as part of membership. A number of respondents (6%) also identified themselves as members of a public sector or service union (particularly for those working in school libraries in non-teaching or administrative positions), such as state-based branches of the Public Service Association (PSA), Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), Australian Services Union (ASU), and Australian Education Union (AEU), to name a few.

Just under one-fifth of respondents (19%) stated they held current membership with a national professional association, with 60% of these respondents stating they were members of ASLA and just under half of these respondents (45.5%) were members of

both ALIA and ASLA. Other national associations identified included CBCA (although this membership is through state and territory branches), the Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA), the Australian Literacy Educators Association (ALEA), Australian Society of Archivists, Australian Christian School Library Network (ACSLibNet), Independent Primary School Heads of Australia (IPSHA) Libraries, and Australian Law Librarians' Association. This shows that some school library employees are connecting to other professional association communities to best meet their interests and needs.

Just over one-tenth (11%) of all respondents identified as having membership with a regional professional association or group. Some of these were regional groups within a state- or territory-based association such as SLAV Ballarat or SLAV Geelong, QSLA Darling Downs or Brisbane Sub-Committees, and Toowoomba Catholic Schools network, while other groups were entities in their own right, such as the Illawarra School Libraries Association and MANTLE (the Professional Committee of Teacher-Librarians in Maitland, Newcastle, Taree and Lake Macquarie Districts), whose memberships come from across all three school sectors and principally involves the organisation of an annual conference and PL events to meet the specific needs of that district or region. Professional networking groups specifically designed to meet the needs of members within an education system were also identified, for example, the Hornsby Teacher Librarian Network, the North Coast NSW Teacher Librarian Network, and the Sutherland Shire Teacher Librarian Network's membership is based on TLs and teachers working in NSW Department of Education school libraries, and the Australian Independent Schools' AISNSW Secondary Teacher Librarians' group is an example of a professional group of TLs from independent schools coming together as a professional community.

Finally, 7% of respondents stated they were a member of an international professional association. The majority of respondents stated they were a member of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), with some people holding membership with the American Library Association (ALA), Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the International Boys' Schools Coalition (IBSC), International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), and the International

Literacy Association, to name a few. The respondents holding international memberships were all LIS qualified, either as a qualified TL (5%) or a qualified Librarian (2%).

The survey also asked respondents about their membership of, and engagement with, other professional networks (either face-to-face or online) to support their work in, and professional learning about, school libraries. Results are presented in Figure 36 with under half of total respondents (n=693) answering this question, with just over one-fifth (22%) of total respondents stating they were members of either a national and/or state- or territory-based discussion list or online forum.

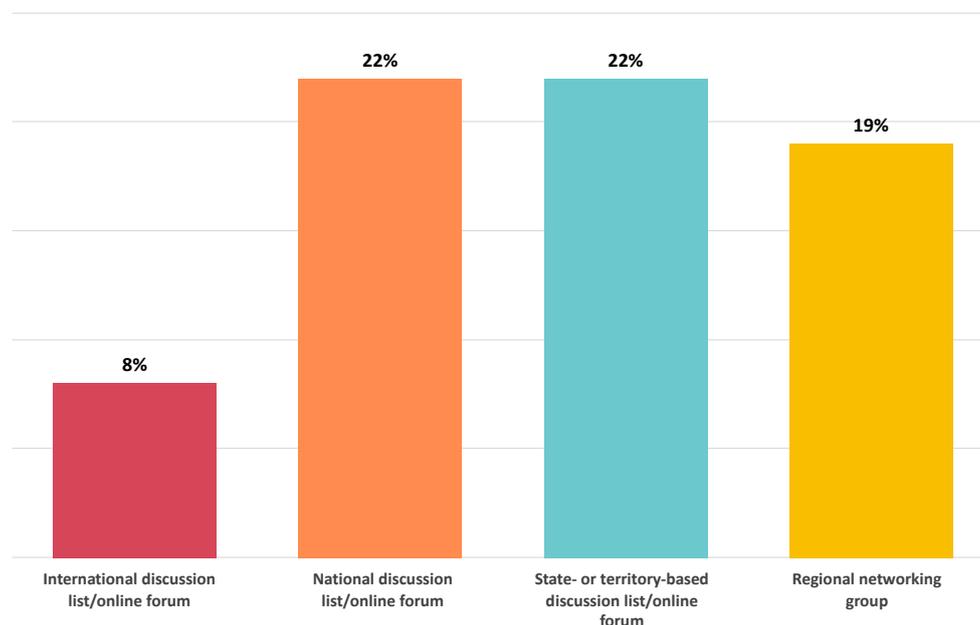


Figure 36: Percentage of respondents' membership of other professional networks (either face-to-face or online)

The CSU-hosted OZTL_NET mailing list community was the most subscribed national discussion list/online forum with 72% of respondents stating they were a member. Other national forums included AIS Teacher Librarians, SPUN (Spydus users network), and the School Library Coalition list, as well as various Facebook groups such as 'Library Staff Support Group', 'SCIS for school libraries group', 'Library Bulletin Boards and Displays' group, 'School Library Staff in Australia' (targeting all school library employees), and 'Let's talk Library' group (specifically for library assistants/officers). National discussions via groups using Twitter hashtags were also identified, including ALIA Students and New Graduates Group's #auslibchat and the Students Need

School Libraries campaign's #StudentsNeedSchoolLibraries. State- or territory-based discussion lists included TLNetACT (ACT and Region School Libraries Network), QLDTL (Queensland Teacher Librarians Listserv), Tasmanian Catholic Libraries eList, and WAIN (Western Australian Information Network), with a few state-based groups on Facebook identified by respondents including 'NSW School Library Matters', and 'Teacher Librarians of SA'.

In terms of professional engagement via regional networking groups, 19% of respondents stated they held a membership with a regional group with some groups being cross-sectorial and inclusive of all school library employees, where others were specifically targeting the needs of a specific employee group such as Tls or library assistants. Some regional groups were part of a state-based associations such as 'SLAV Northern Metropolitan Regional network' and Bendigo SLAV, while others were school sector specific such as the 'South West Sydney School Library Network' (NSW DoE), 'Broken Bay Secondary Teacher Librarians' (Catholic Ed), 'Toowoomba Catholic Schools TL Network', 'BCE Teacher Librarian Network' (Catholic Ed), and 'School Library Support Pilbara Team group' (WA Dept of Ed). Some of the regional groups communicated primarily via email lists due to distance, for example, the NQTL mailing list, and 'Darling Downs Teacher Librarians' email list.

Just under one-tenth (8%) of all respondents stated they were a member of an international discussion list/online forum. This provides school library employees with an opportunity to connect with like-minded people from around the world, thus expanding their professional network. The US-based LM_NET was one large professional community some TL respondents subscribed to, as well as the 'Future Ready Librarians' Facebook group which started as a US-based group but has grown to become an international network of Tls and school librarians. International associations identified included mailing lists of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), International Boys' Schools Coalition (IBSC), and groups, and the IB Librarians Facebook group connecting school library employees working in International Baccalaureate (IB) World Schools

Respondents were also members of international groups focused on a specific aspect of school libraries, for example, the UK-based group who collaborate via the

Framework Of Skills for Inquiry Learning (FOSIL) forum, and the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) Education Committee.

Respondents were also asked to identify what professional networks they accessed via social media to support their work in, and professional learning about, school libraries. Of the total number of respondents (n=693), 477 answered this question (which is just under 70% of total respondents). Figure 37 presents a summary of respondents' use of social media for professional purposes.

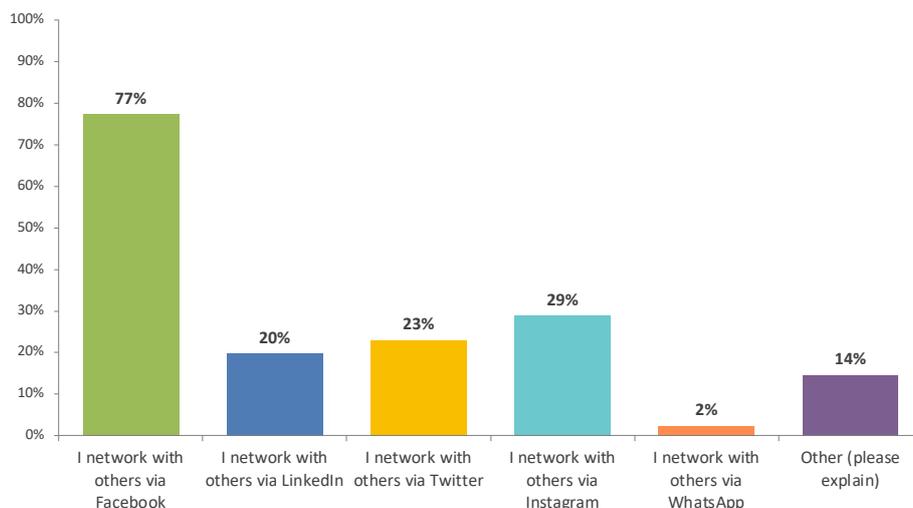


Figure 37: Respondents' use of social media for professional purposes

Facebook was clearly the most widely used social media platform, with 77% respondents using Facebook to support their work in, and professional learning about, school libraries. This was followed by Instagram (29%), Twitter (23%), and LinkedIn (20%). Only 2% stated they used WhatsApp for professional purposes, and 14% selected 'Other'; however, 10.5% of those selecting 'Other' gave reasons why they didn't use social media or listed their preferred networking channels which were email lists or face-to-face networking groups. This question also made some respondents evaluate their use of social media for professional purposes, for example, "I don't use social media as well as I could", while others clearly stated why they did not use, or preferred not to use, social media:

I understand the role these platforms can play however I am uncertain of security and how it can influence future employment prospects should privacy of information and discussion be disseminated without permission.

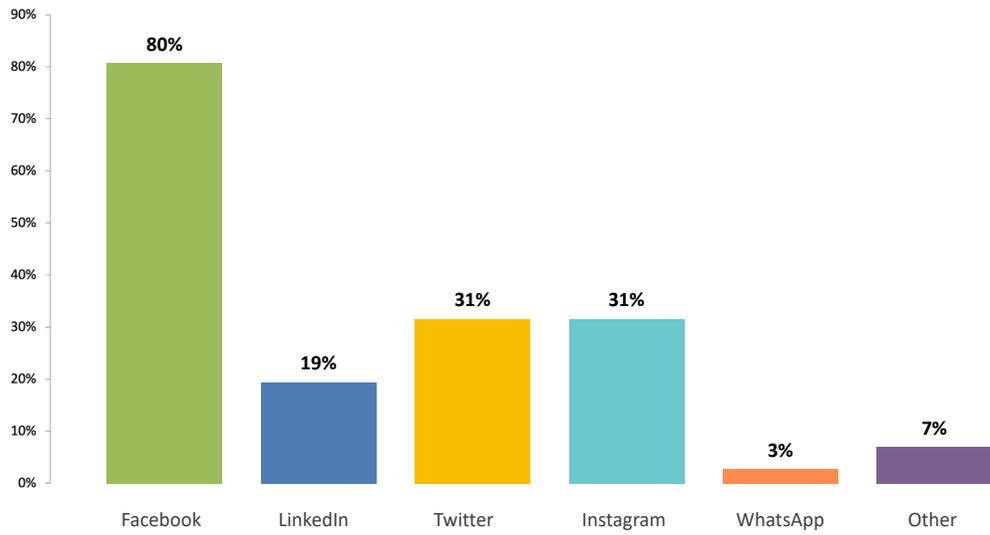
I am not a member of professional networks on social media. I have deliberately made this choice as one strategy to manage my mental health and stress levels... I have a personal Facebook account and a professional LinkedIn account, but am not overly active on either.

Of the 3.5% of respondents who did state they also used other forms of social media for professional purposes, they identified platforms such as Yammer, TikTok, Discord (similar to What's App), and blogs written by teacher librarians and public libraries. One primary TL provided a detailed list of her social media use for professional purposes, including:

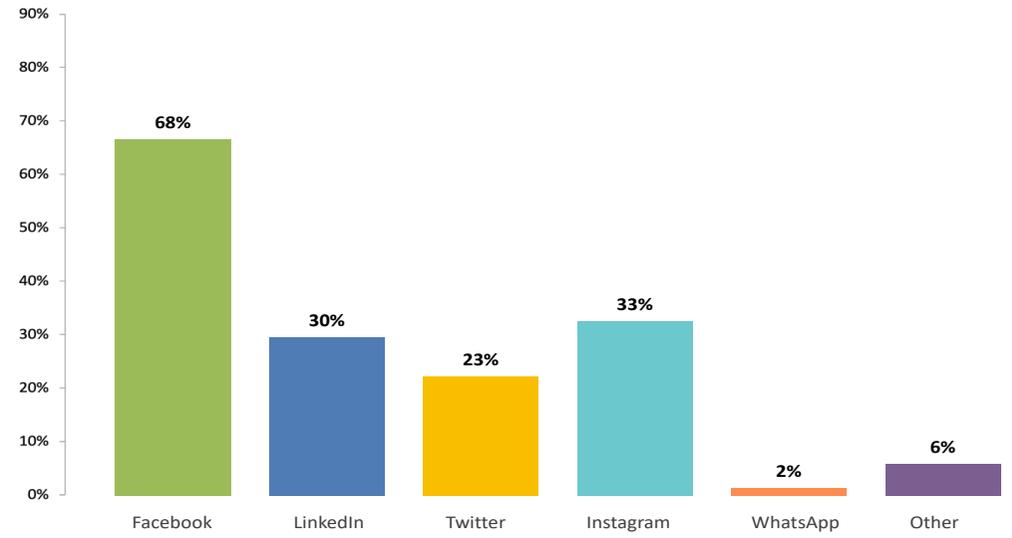
Podcasts: Your Kid's Next Read, School Librarians United, Teach. Facebook groups: Oliver (Softlink) User group, The Reading League Teacher group, Library Staff Support group, Reading Science in Schools, Teacher Librarians of SA, LANGUAGE & Learning - Training & Support, Learning Librarians, Let's Talk Library, Too Many Books! Elementary Book Talks, Library Bulletin Board Displays, Your Kid's Next Read, Dyslexia Support Australia.

Across employee groups, there were some differences in preferences for social media platforms for professional use, as presented in Figure 38. This figure provides a comparison between those employed as TLs, librarians, library technicians and library assistants, with Facebook clearly being the most commonly used social media platform with 80% of TLs and library technicians using Facebook, and 74% and 68% of library assistants and librarians using Facebook, respectively. No other platform comes near to this level of access and use, which suggests that ALIA could potentially connect with more people via Facebook in each of these employee groups about school library-related issues and support in the future. Furthermore, given the number of people working in school libraries with little or no training, ALIA could utilise Facebook as a platform to support a Professional Pathways for School Libraries outreach program.

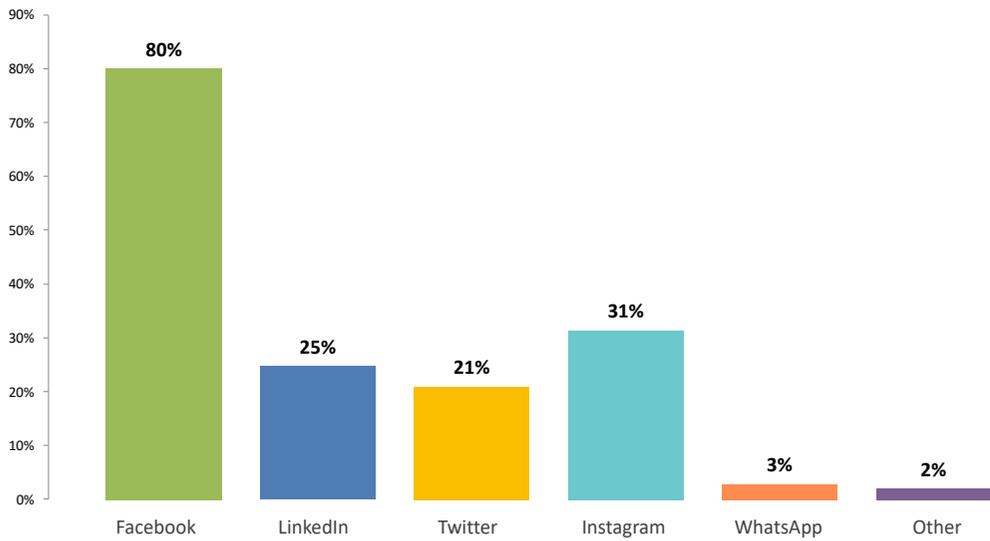
Of the other social media platforms available, TLs identified Twitter (31%) and Instagram (31%) as their next preferred platforms, while Instagram (33%) and LinkedIn (30%) were preferred after Facebook by those working as librarians in school libraries.



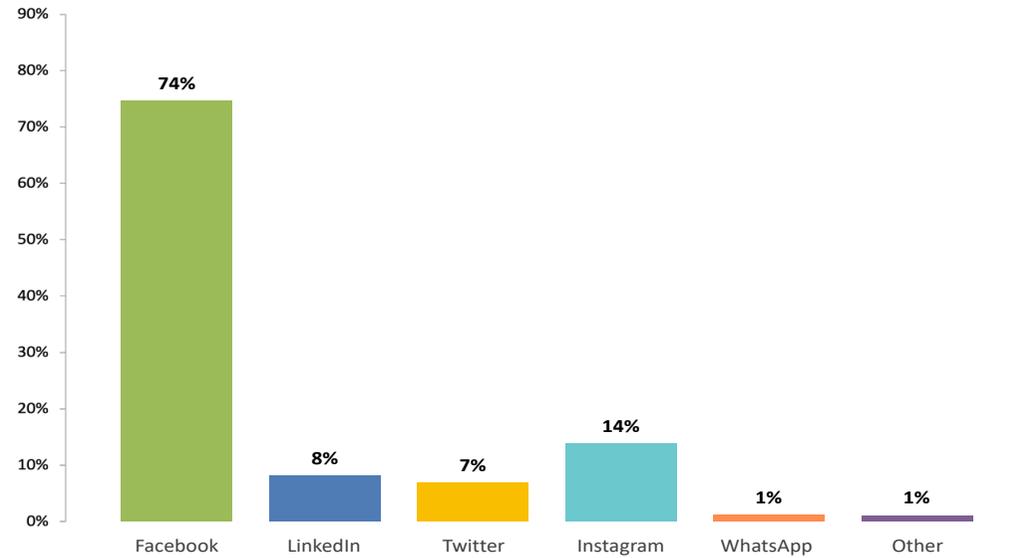
(a) TEACHER LIBRARIANS



(b) LIBRARIANS



(c) LIBRARY TECHNICIANS



(d) LIBRARY TECHNICIAN TITLES

Figure 38: Comparison of employee group's use of social media

Similarly, as LIS professionals, library technicians identified Instagram (31%) and LinkedIn (25%) as preferred social media platforms after Facebook. In comparison to the other three employee groups, Facebook was identified as the primary platform of choice, with little interest in or connection with other social media platforms. Again, this is something to note by ALIA in the future when seeking ways of connecting with those working in schools as library assistants or officers, particularly regarding professional pathways options and employment opportunities.

This chapter has identified core principles of professional ethics within the school library setting and has explored factors influencing the shaping of one's professional identity within each of the school library employee groups. Professional associations and networks are essential contributors in supporting individuals achieve a level of "active professionalism" (Szplif, 2020), and there are clearly opportunities for ALIA to work with school library employees to chart new pathways into the profession. Findings from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' are useful in informing strategic directions of, and initiatives by, ALIA to specifically target the needs, interests, and aspirations of each school library employee group as part of the Professional Pathways program.

Chapter 6. Continuing professional development (CPD)

This chapter draws upon focus group, interview, and survey data to identify the type of CPD school library employees engage in and their preferences for CPD delivery; evaluate the content and delivery of existing continuing professional development for school library employees, identify areas of needs for the provision of professional development for each employee group in the future; and identify challenges and opportunities for ALIA (and partners) in designing and delivering CPD in the future. A section is dedicated to each employee group, and the chapter concludes with a summary of considerations for the future.

6.1 Teacher Librarians

Survey respondents were asked to identify the types of professional development activities they had participated in the past 18 months. CPD activities included in-school workshops or courses, education conferences or seminars, library conferences or seminars, state- or system-sponsored network meetings, coursework (contributing to a formal qualification program, e.g., certificate, diploma, degree), an ALIA professional development activity, mentor program as a mentor, mentor program as a mentee, observation visits to other school libraries, industry-specific short courses, and on the job training by a library team member. There was also an open comment section ('Other') where respondents could provide further detail as required. A summary of those CPD activities undertaken by 247 of TL respondents is presented in Figure 39.

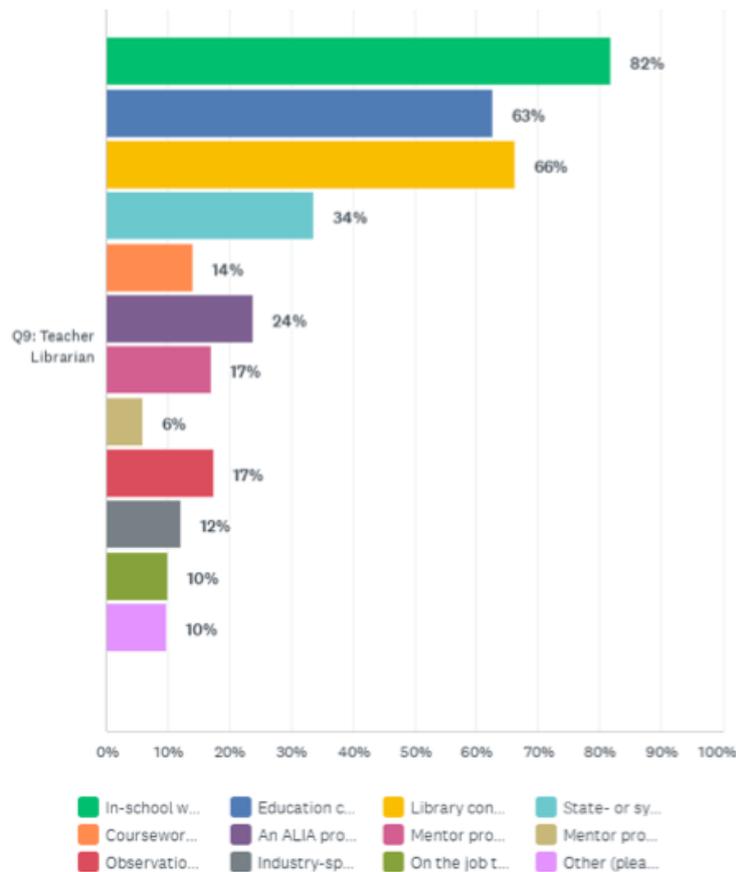


Figure 39: CPD activities undertaken by TLs in the past 18 months

Of the CPD undertaken by TLs respondents in the past 18 months, in-school workshops or courses (82%), library conferences or seminars (66%), and education conferences or seminars (63%) were the most common activities undertaken by the majority of participants. It should be noted that the period respondents were asked to report on (i.e., past 18 months) was in Term 3/4, 2020 through to Term 1, 2022 which for some states and territories were school terms heavily impacted by the COVID pandemic, thus opportunities for face-to-face CPD were limited, which could have resulted in less opportunities to engage in some CPD activities during this time, particularly those that involved interstate or intrastate travel, as one noted by these TLs:

I would normally have done observation visits to other school libraries, but the pandemic prevented it during the last 2 years.

COVID has significantly affected the amount and type of PD in the last few years.

Due to COVID our term based regional school library meetings are on hold.

No - COVID stopped everything.

A number of TLs added that they had attended more online CPD such as webinars and Zoom meetings, while others identified teacher-led CPD hours invested in professional reading, listening to podcasts and conducting research about specific topics, as illustrated by these TLs' comment, "Professional readings, podcasts, videos or online conversations; trawling other libraries' websites for policies, procedures and ideas" and "I have also signed up for an online book club to help me to refresh my knowledge of current Young Adult literature."

That said, 34% of TL respondents managed to attend state- or system-sponsored network meetings and 24% of the sample attended an ALIA professional development activity, with 17% participating in a mentor program as a mentor and 6% as a mentee. Just under one-fifth of TLs had engaged in observation visits to other school libraries, with 14% undertaking coursework contributing to a formal qualification, 12% completing industry-specific short courses, and 10% having completed on the job training by a library team member.

Survey respondents were also asked to estimate on average how many hours of CPD they undertook each year during school hours and out-of-school hours, i.e., at night, on weekends, and during school holidays. Figure 40 presents a summary of TLs' estimate of CPD hours undertaken per year during school hours (figure on left) versus out-of-school hours (figure on right). Of the 250 TLs who responded to these questions, 60% estimated they undertook between 5-30 hours of CPD during school time, with the median being 10-20 hours per year. While 8% of TLs stated they did not undertake any CPD during school hours, just less than one-fifth (18%) of the sample estimated they undertook over 31 hours per year during school time, including 14 (5%) TLs completing over 81 hours of CPD during school time. This illustrates how diverse school libraries as workplaces are for TLs to have opportunities to undertake CPD during school hours, with some TLs being able to complete a considerable

number of CPD hours at school, compared to those 19 TLs who have had no opportunity to undertake CPD during school hours and 28% of the sample only being able to complete 9 hours or less of CPD while at work.

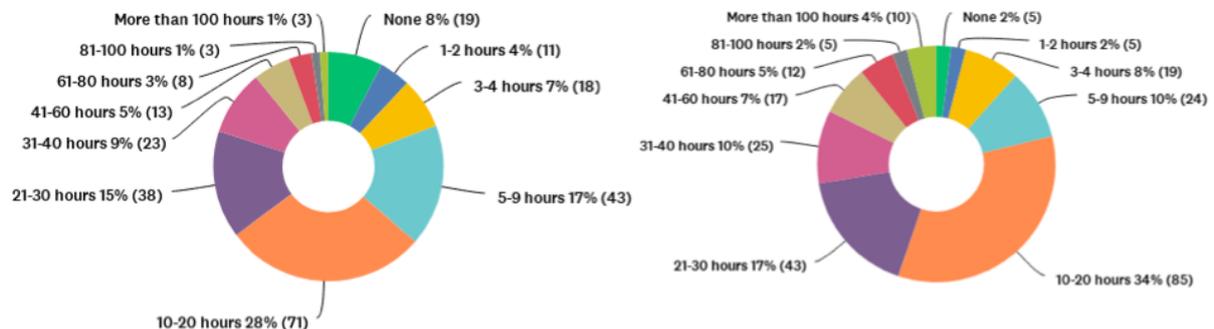


Figure 40: Estimate of CPD hours undertaken by TLs per year during school hours (left) versus out-of-school hours (right)

The results show that TLs invest more out-of-school hours to undertake CPD than during school hours, with 61% of TLs estimating they undertake between 10-40 hours of CPD in their own time, with the median being 10-20 hours per year. While 15 (6%) TLs estimated they complete over 81 hours of CPD in their own time, only 5 of the 250 respondents stated they did not undertake any CPD during out-of-school hours. The following comments from survey respondents illustrates the challenges faced by, and preferences for, CPD delivery:

Would you consider short courses that are online? For example, 3x 1-hour webinars out of school hours? So much easier to commit out of school hours... 5:00-6:00pm is more manageable, online means we don't have to find travel time and more people can be involved across Oz, and then we can still get home for family duties in the evening. Thanks for all you do!

The focus group discussions and interviews also provided feedback regarding ALIA's current CPD offerings. ALIA Schools' current approach to CPD provision is to examine emerging trends within the TL profession and design an annual program in response around the key areas of reading and literature, information literacy, digital resourcing of the curriculum, online searching (algorithms), library staffing (e.g., role statements, staffing guidelines, working as a team, advocacy, and programs and services. In previous years, ALIA Schools offered F2F sessions in Melbourne and roll out

repeat offerings to regional areas; however, the current offering is now based on hosting four 1-hour online seminars per year, with a plan to move towards 90 mins online sessions with a keynote and group discussion.

ALIA Schools sessions normally held on Saturdays, and feedback received suggests this time and format have worked well in the past; however, a decision has been made to not offer F2F events in the future and continue with online offerings to target an Australia-wide audience (as opposed to Melbourne-based F2F events). All webinars are now recorded which means that TLs can access these as CPD at a time convenient to individuals' schedules. Overall feedback from focus group participants was very positive, as one TL noted, "Anything that ALIA Schools offers is good, they have their finger on the pulse re the needs of TLs". In terms of current ALIA offerings, ALIA's Mentoring Scheme is valued by those TLs who are ALIA members. Current online courses run by ALIA, such as the cataloguing, readers' advisory, and super searching were identified as useful refresher courses for qualified TLs. That said, there were some respondents who would still like to see F2F delivery of CPD by ALIA, as suggested by this TL:

Currently the training I see from ALIA is online modules. It would be good to have 'champions' or 'trainers' located in each state to run face-to-face modules. Using local members who have skills and abilities to deliver content. I myself would be interested in delivering content in my areas of expertise and attending workshops from those with other expertise. This could be supplemented by online modules for certification following the workshop.

In terms of current offerings by ALIA, three concerns were raised by focus group participants. Firstly, that ALIA Schools and ALIA currently plan and host PD offerings separately, and participants felt it would be more efficient and effective to employ a more coordinated approach. Secondly, some participants felt that ALIA conferences were not accessible to many school library employees, in terms of the cost of conference fees (where most school PD budgets would not be able to cover such fees), and in terms of programming school library-related sessions across multiple conference days. One suggestion was that ALIA consider scheduling all

school library-related sessions on one day of the conference program to allow some school library employees to register for that one day using single day registration. Thirdly, there was some criticism from school library employees (in particular, qualified librarians and library technicians) that ALIA School offerings are primarily targeted at qualified TLs and there is little other CPD offered by ALIA in the school library setting. This third concern may be, in part, a result of the first concern (above), or this might be rectified with more targeted marketing across school library employee groups.

While micro-credentialling was treated in detail in Section 3.1, focus group discussions with TLs also raised the dichotomy of some seeing value in completing short courses that lead to credits for further education, while others were not as interested in CPD run as short courses that included assessment requirements. This suggests that if ALIA offered CPD as a micro-credential, then it might be strategic for ALIA to provide two pathways for TLs and teachers with these offerings. The first being a CPD pathway that might offer accrual of NESAs, TQI or equivalent accredited hours, and the second being a micro-credential pathway where participants who choose this option with some assessable tasks added to the coursework to meet university or TAFE credit-eligibility requirements.

The final question of the survey instrument was designed to identify areas of needs for the provision of CPD for school library employees in the future. Respondents were provided with a comprehensive list of CPD topics and asked to select those areas they were seeking professional development in during 2022-2023. In addition, they were also asked to identify which knowledge/skill level they required when learning about each topic – at an Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced level. The following lists the top 20 areas (in priority order) that TLs identified for future CPD, with the majority of 206 respondents seeking Intermediate-Advanced treatment of knowledge and skill across these areas:

1. Digital content curation
2. Reading & literacy in schools
3. Selecting & evaluation Indigenous resources
4. Designing library spaces

5. Collection development issues & challenges
6. Research, evidence-based practice & program evaluation
7. Marketing library collections, programs & services
8. Managing digital collections and databases
9. Information/digital/media literacy
10. Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries
11. New & emerging technologies
12. Designing blended & online learning modules
13. Library data & learning analytics
14. Copyright
15. Designing curriculum units that integrate AC General Capabilities
16. Effective search strategies
17. Role of the TL in teaching across the curriculum
18. Readers' advisory
19. Social media for school libraries
20. Strategic leadership

A number of these CPD areas are already being addressed (to some degree) by existing ALIA CPD online courses, including media literacy, copyright, effective search strategies and readers' advisory, a number of the above CPD areas do need to be situated within the school library context, particularly those that involve teaching across, or resourcing, the Australian Curriculum. Furthermore, a number of these areas of school library work could lend themselves to a series of short courses that contribute to both pathways mentioned above, i.e., a CPD pathway and a micro-credential pathway for TLs.

6.2 Teachers

While there were only 16 teachers working in school libraries who responded to the survey, it is important to share the results in terms of their CPD needs. A summary of those CPD activities undertaken by 14 of teacher respondents in the past 18 months is presented in Figure 41. Of the CPD undertaken by teacher respondents in the past 18 months, in-school workshops or courses (79%) and education conferences or seminars (57%) were the most common activities undertaken by the majority of participants, which is to be expected. Of note, however, are the next four most

common activities undertaken by these teachers, including library conferences or seminars (43%), engaging in observation visits to other school libraries (43%), and completing on the job training by a library team member (43%), with just over one-third (36%) undertaking coursework. In comparison to the TL employee group, a greater percentage of the teacher sample were therefore involved in school library-based CPD with on the job training, observing school library practice, and undertaking coursework as part of the Masters degree program they are currently enrolled in.

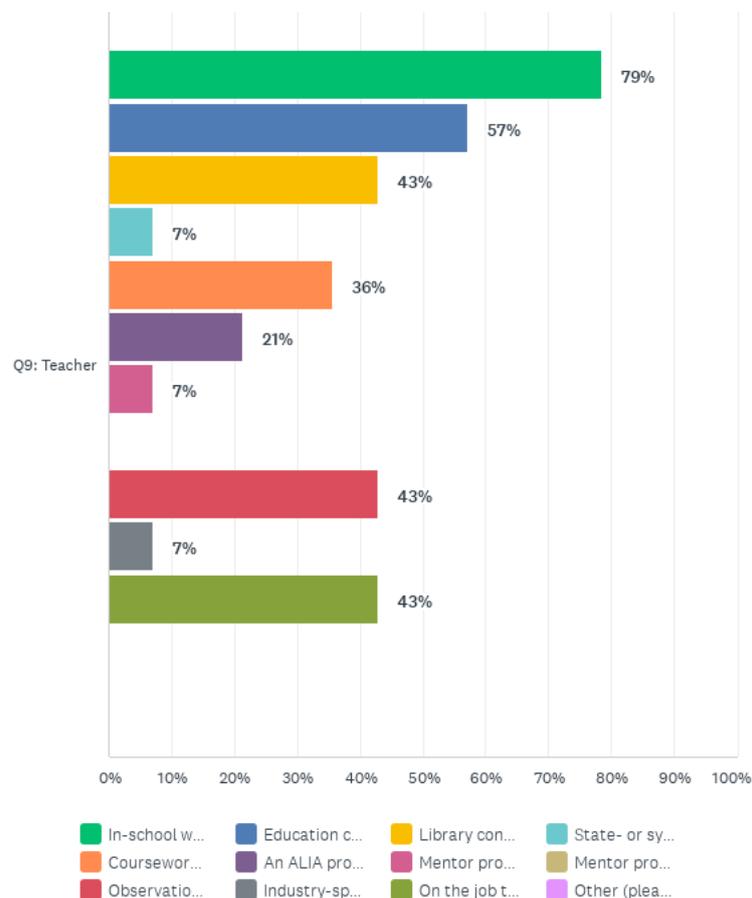


Figure 41: CPD activities undertaken by teachers in the past 18 months

Some of these teachers described the nature of (and need for) workplace learning, including the opportunity to work-shadow a TL before taking over the position:

I have been in my role from the start of this year and have learned by immersion (aka being thrown in the deep end!) So far things are good, but I know how to do things, not necessarily why. Anything I can learn to enhance my support of students and staff would be wonderful.

I am fortunate to be a Teacher Librarian at a school I worked at previously, so I was familiar with the community. However, there was no handover between the previous TL and myself or between the Library Technician (who was new 9 months before me). Had the opportunity been available, I would have found it helpful to work one day in the library a fortnight leading up to the staff member leaving. This would have been helpful as I stepped into the role at the start of 2020 before the pandemic hit! Work experience programs for interested teachers would be invaluable - both for libraries and interested teachers!

Of this teacher sample, only one teacher managed to attend state- or system-sponsored network meetings, with 3 teachers having attended an ALIA professional development activity. In terms of average hours of CPD undertaken each year during school hours and out-of-school hours, Figure 42 presents a summary of teachers' estimate of CPD hours undertaken per year during school hours (figure on left) versus out-of-school hours (figure on right).

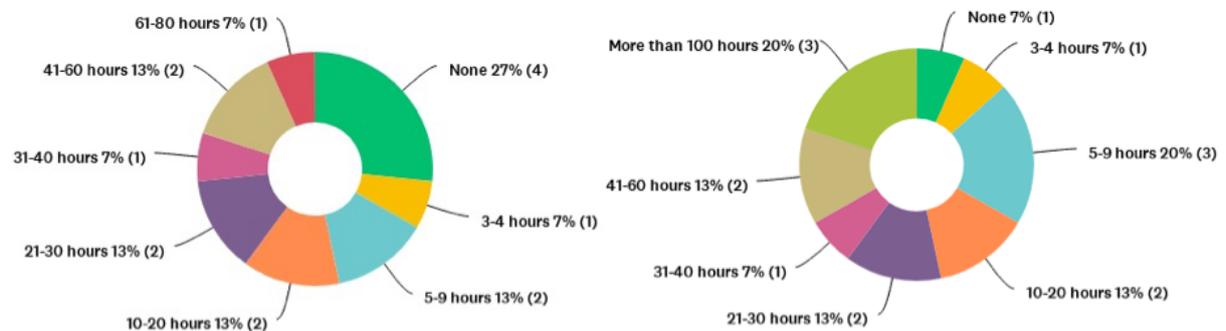


Figure 42: Estimate of CPD hours undertaken by teachers per year during school hours (left) versus out-of-school hours (right)

Of the 15 teachers who responded to these questions, 59% estimated they undertook between 5-60 hours of CPD during school time, with the median being 10-20 hours per year. While 4 teachers stated they did not undertake any CPD during school hours, only one estimated they undertook over 61-80 hours per year during school time. The results also show, like TLs, that teachers working in school libraries invest more out-of-school hours to undertake CPD than during school hours, with two-thirds of these teachers estimating they undertake over 10 hours of CPD in their

own time, with the median being 20-30 hours per year. Furthermore, 3 (20%) teachers estimated they complete on average more than 100 hours of CPD in their own time, which could be due to the hours spent undertaking university coursework to complete their Masters degree. Only one of the teachers stating they did not undertake any CPD during out-of-school hours.

In terms of areas of need for the provision of CPD in the future targeting teachers working in school libraries, the following list presents the top 20 areas (in priority order). Given the diverse backgrounds in school library experience and with close to completing their Masters qualification, there was no single level of treatment identified to meet the knowledge and skills needs of this cohort across these areas, with some areas being evenly split across the Introductory-Intermediate-Advanced scales. Therefore, all the areas listed below are required across all three levels of treatment (except where noted):

1. Effective search strategies
2. Collection development issues & challenges
3. Managing digital collections & databases
4. Library data & learning analytics
5. Role of the school library
6. Managing programs & events
7. Marketing library collections, programs & services
8. Assessing library management systems
9. Cataloguing
10. Digital content curation
11. New & emerging technologies
12. Information ethics for school libraries
13. Copyright (Intro-InterM)
14. Designing library displays & signage
15. Designing library spaces
16. Reading & literacy in schools
17. Graphic novels
18. IT skills for library staff
19. Role of the TL in teaching across the curriculum
20. Acquisitions & processing resources

In comparison to the CPD list for TLs, this list for those teachers working in school libraries does highlight some CPD areas which address fundamental knowledge and skills that would be covered by the curriculum of an ALIA-accredited qualification in TLship. For example, No. 5 Role of the school library, No. 8 Assessing library management systems, No. 9 Cataloguing, No. 12 Information ethics for school libraries, No. 19 Role of the TL in teaching across the curriculum, and No. 20. Acquisitions & processing resources, are just some areas that would be addressed if a teacher enrolled into a postgraduate degree or diploma program. Alternatively, some of the CPD areas could be taught as short courses in a microcredentials program that could be used to gain credit towards subject completion towards a university qualification, such as the MEdTL. Of the teachers in this sample, 53.3% stated that they would be interested in undertaking micro-units as a credit pathway for further education, with the majority of teachers seeking credit towards either a Graduate Diploma or Masters degree.

6.3 Librarians

Survey responses by the Librarian employee group about the types of CPD activities they had participated in the past 18 months are summarised in Figure 44. Of the 75 librarians who answered this question, the two most common activities undertaken by the majority of participants were in-school workshops or courses (72%), and library conferences or seminars (71%), with 43% of librarians have engaged with ALIA professional development activities. Some librarian respondents also mentioned access to CPD in the past 18 months being impacted by the COVID pandemic; however, just under one-third had managed to engage in observation visits to other school libraries (29%), with one-fifth undertaking on the job training in their school library.

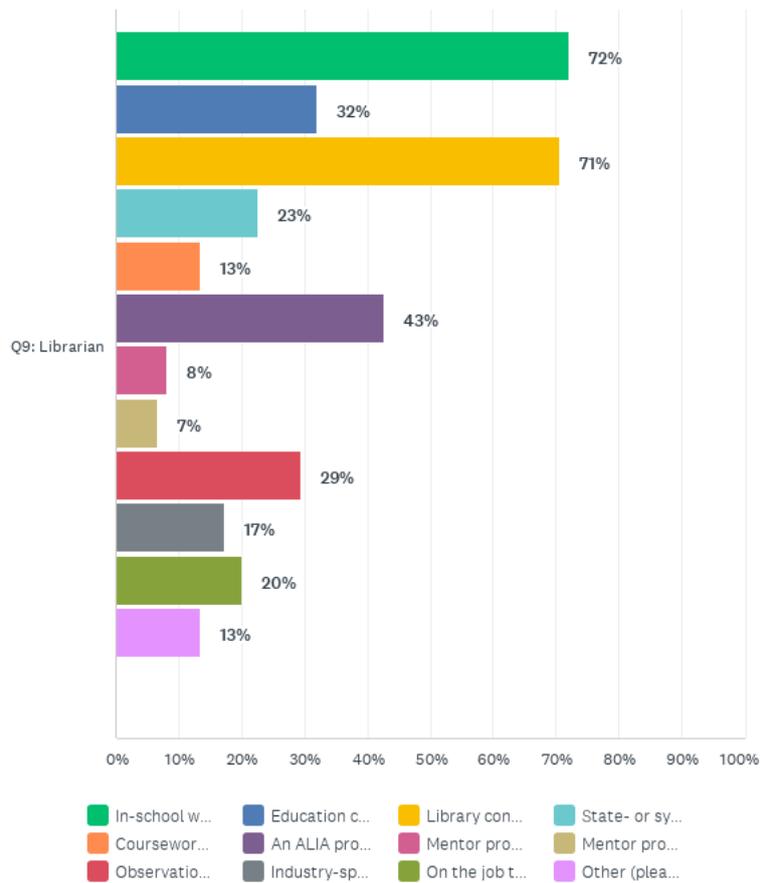


Figure 44: CPD activities undertaken by Librarians in the past 18 months

A number of librarians stated they had attended more online CPD during the pandemic such as professional webinars and following Twitter hashtag and email list discussions, while others invested more time in professional reading. That said, 23% of librarians managed to attend state- or system-sponsored network meetings and 17% undertook industry-specific short courses, with 11 librarians participating in a mentor program as either a mentor or mentee, and 10 librarians enrolled in coursework as part of a formal qualification.

Figure 45 presents the results of 82 library respondents' estimate on average hours of CPD undertaken each year during school hours (figure on left) and out-of-school hours (figure on right), with the majority (71%) estimating they undertook between 3-30 hours of CPD during school time, with the median being 10-20 hours per year. While 10% of librarians stated they did not undertake any CPD during school hours, 10% of the sample estimated they complete over 31 hours per year during school time, including one librarian completing over 100 hours of CPD during school time. Again, this illustrates how diverse school libraries as workplaces are for employees to

have opportunities to undertake CPD during school hours, with some librarians being able to complete a considerable number of CPD hours at school, compared to those 8 librarians who have had no opportunity to undertake CPD during school hours and just under half (45%) of the sample only being able to complete 9 hours or less of CPD while at work.

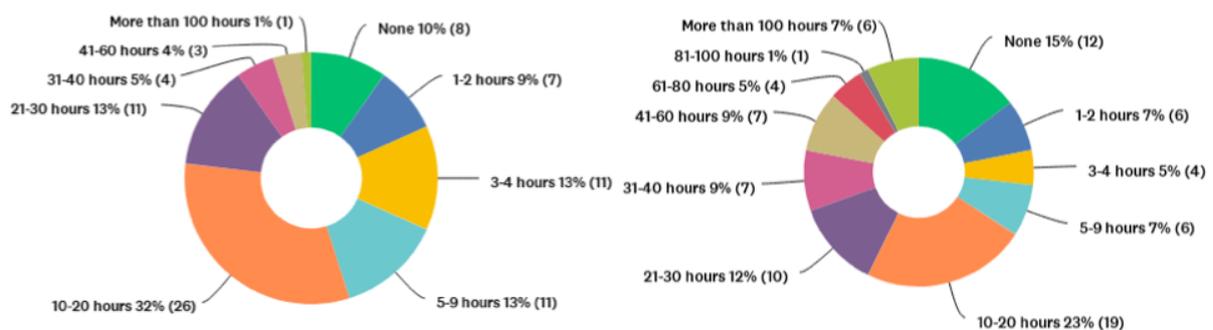


Figure 45: Estimate of CPD hours undertaken by Librarians per year during school hours (left) versus out-of-school hours (right)

The results show that (like TLs and teachers) librarians invest more out-of-school hours to undertake CPD than during school hours, with 43% of librarians estimating they undertake between more than 21 hours of CPD in their own time, with the median being 10-20 hours per year. While 22% of librarians estimated they complete over 41 hours of CPD in their own time, only 12 (15%) of the 82 respondents stated they did not undertake any CPD during out-of-school hours.

The focus group discussions and interviews also provided feedback regarding ALIA's current CPD offerings. Given access to F2F CPD has been difficult in the past two years with COVID, librarians working in school libraries have valued the convenience of undertaking ALIA online courses, as one person commented, "I like being able to do it [CPD] in your own time". Specific online courses run by ALIA received positively by librarians were the RDA course ("A great refresher"), Readers' Advisory, Copyright, Great Library Spaces, and Acquisitions. Other feedback included, "Anything on displays and marketing, web publishing, using social media", and the need for more in-depth treatment of CPD on Indigenous resources for school libraries. The provision of access to recordings of online events was also valued by attendees/participants to revisit, as well as providing access to others to view after the event. Other ALIA services such as the ALIA Weekly and *Incite* magazine are also

valued by members, as one librarian shared, "Reading the ALIA weekly and Incite magazine has been crucial in keeping up to date with Information services in other library types such as university and public libraries. I look forward to ALIA PD's every month to see what webinars are available and what short course are offered for further information".

In terms of areas of need for CPD in the future targeting librarians working in school libraries, the following list presents the top 20 areas (in priority order) for future CPD, with the majority of the 65 librarians who responded seeking Intermediate-Advanced treatment of knowledge and skill across these areas (except those noted below where there was an even split across all three levels of treatment):

1. Digital content curation
2. Selecting & evaluating Indigenous resources (Intro-ADV)
3. Reading & literacy in schools
4. Designing library spaces
5. Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries (Intro-ADV)
6. Marketing library collections, programs & services
7. Managing digital collections & databases
8. Information/digital/media literacy
9. Collection development issues & challenges
10. Library data & learning analytics
11. Designing library displays & signage
12. Writing proposals, grant applications & budgets
13. IT skills for library staff
14. Genrefication
15. Web design & development for school libraries
16. New & emerging technologies
17. Digital preservation, historical collections & archives for school libraries (Intro-ADV)
18. Role of the school library
19. Information ethics for school libraries
20. Policies, systems & procedures for school libraries and Copyright

Like TL and teacher respondents, a number of these CPD areas are already being addressed (to some degree) by existing ALIA CPD online courses (e.g., media literacy, copyright, designing library spaces, and readers' advisory), although a number of the above CPD areas could include greater treatment within the school library context, while some areas might need newly-developed CPD courses or seminars at the intermediate to advanced level of treatment (thus, building on those currently being offered at a basic '101' level). It should be noted, that the majority of the CPD areas identified as a priority by librarians were focused less on teaching and learning aspects of school library work, and more so on facilities, technology, and resource provision and services. It was also noted from librarians wishing to pursue promotion to a Head of Library position, that greater CPD addressing aspects of leadership would be valuable for qualified librarians wishing to remain working in a school library setting. Furthermore, a number of the priority areas of school library work (listed above) could lend themselves to a series of short courses that contribute to both pathways mentioned above, i.e., a CPD pathway and a micro-credential pathway for librarians wishing to gain credits for micro-units targeting more specific LIS specialisations via a GradCert or a top-up Masters such as Stage 2 of CSU's MIS (equivalent to four subjects) in the areas of Children's Librarianship, Data Management, Information Management, Leadership, Librarianship, and Records & Archives Management.

6.4 Library Technicians

Survey responses by the Library Technician employee group about the types of CPD activities they had participated in the past 18 months are summarised in Figure 46. Of the 125 library technicians who answered this question, the two most common activities undertaken by the majority of participants were similar to the Librarian cohort, with in-school workshops or courses (57%), and library conferences or seminars (48%), and 31% of library technicians having engaged with ALIA professional development activities. Note, in comparison to qualified librarians in the sample, results showed that 10-25% of library technicians were less likely to participate in one or more of these activities. Some noted less access to CPD in the past 18 months was impacted due to the COVID pandemic, while others noted lack of school-based sponsorship or subsidisation to attend CPD. However, a higher percentage (21%) of library technicians undertook coursework contributing to a

formal qualification in the past 18 months compared to librarians and TLs, with just over one-fifth having managed to engage in observation visits to other school libraries (22%), 28% participating in on the job training in their school library, and 14 respondents involved in a mentor program as either a mentor or mentee.

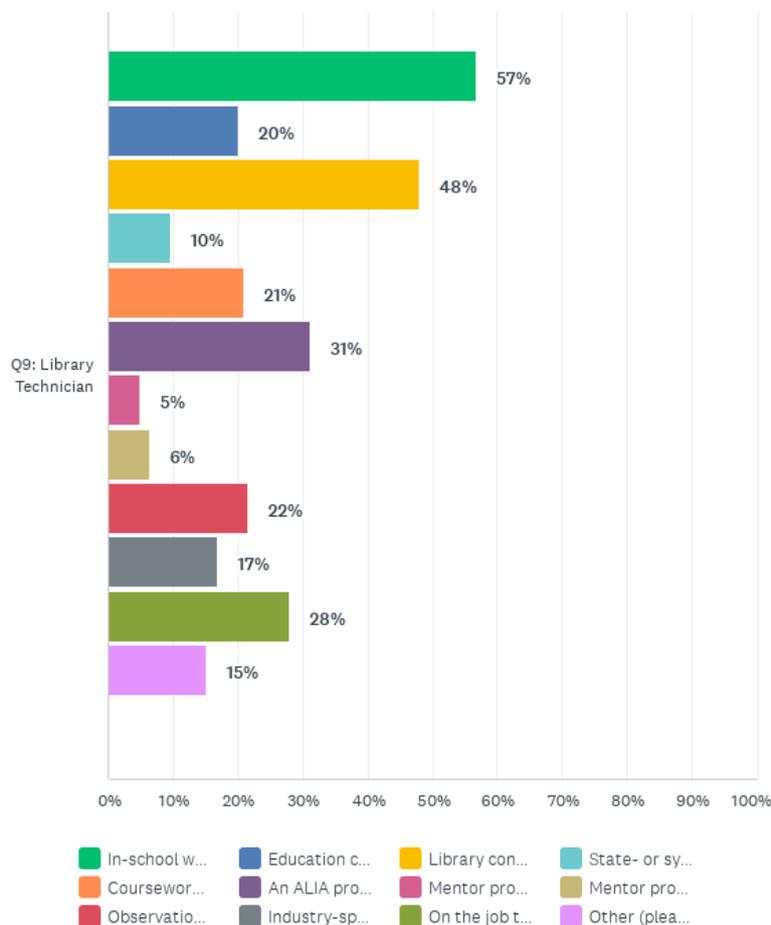


Figure 46: CPD activities undertaken by Library Technicians in the past 18 months

A number of library technicians stated they had attended more online CPD, including a combination of professional and vendor webinars such as SCIS, Softlink and other library management system providers, Clickview, World Book Online, and the Copyright Council. These types of CPD are representative of aspects of library work completed by library technician in a school library. That said, 20% managed to attend education conferences (with some of these being held by state-based school library associations), 10% of librarians managed to attend state- or system-sponsored network meetings and 17% undertook industry-specific short courses. Feedback from respondents was mixed regarding their preference for online versus F2F, with a few preferring F2F over online, as expressed by this library technician:

Try to get to library conferences and ALIA professional development activities but not during the last 18 months due to COVID. Not as enthused to go to online seminars. Meeting and having discussions with other library staff at conferences is as valuable as the actual structured course or seminar.

Figure 47 presents the results of 135 library technician respondents' estimate on average hours of CPD undertaken each year during school hours (figure on left) and out-of-school hours (figure on right), with the two-thirds (66%) estimating they undertook between 3-30 hours of CPD during school time, with the median being 5-9 hours per year, which is less hours than those undertaken by Tls and librarians. While 12% of library technicians stated they did not undertake any CPD during school hours, 6% of the sample estimated they complete over 31 hours per year during school time, including one library technician completing over 100 hours of CPD during school time. Again, this illustrates the diverse working conditions for library technicians working in school libraries, with some being able to complete a considerable number of CPD hours during school time, compared to 12 who have had no opportunity to undertake CPD during school hours and over half (60%) of the sample only being able to complete 9 hours or less of CPD while at work.

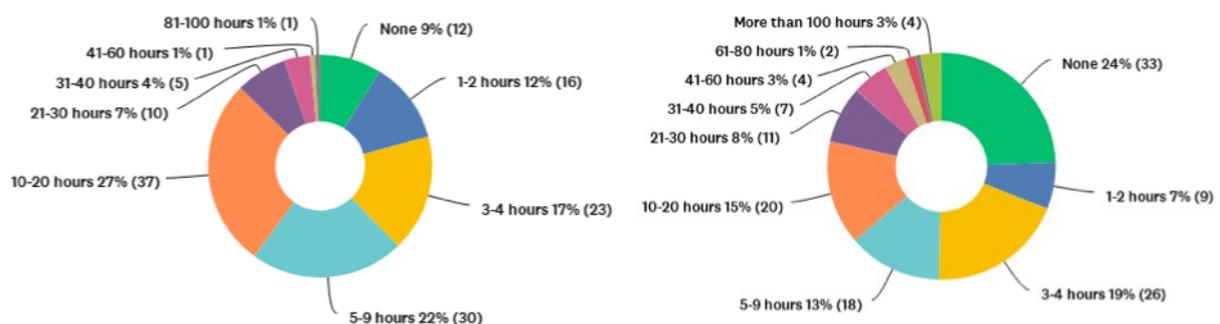


Figure 47: Estimate of CPD hours undertaken by Library Technicians per year during school hours (left) versus out-of-school hours (right)

In comparison to Tls, teachers and librarians in this sample, the results show (in figure on right) that a considerable number of library technicians elect to not undertake any (24%), or very few, hours of CPD out of school time, with 63% undertaking nine hours or less per year in their own time, with median hours for this cohort being

between 3-4 hours of CPD out of school hours which is less than the median of 10-20 hours for TLs and Librarians, and 20-30 hours for the teacher cohort. Some of the issues faced by library technicians working in school libraries are articulated by these survey respondents:

As a library technician my days are full and we are often understaffed. I have great difficulty gaining access to PL if it is held during school hours. Events like conferences are often impossible to attend as would mean the library would have to close. Also the cost of many of these activities can mean I cannot attend unless I fund them myself. Other programs in the school are prioritised.

The biggest hurdle in enticing school library staff to invest their time and money in training is the fact that we are often employed very few hours in the library as the investment the school makes in that area is often very low... If school library staff don't see their job as stable and valued they are less likely to do further study. I have looked at ALIA courses, and there were a few I was very interested in doing when I joined but the cost is too high considering it won't help me get more hours or a pay increase as most of us with a Diploma qualification still get paid as a library assistant.

I currently do the work of two people, it is very hard to find the time and energy to look for and execute professional development. As much as I would like to, furthering my education on the wages of a school library technician on permanent term time employment (40 weeks per year) is financially not feasible at this time.

The focus group discussions and interviews also provided feedback regarding ALIA's current CPD offerings. For example, ALIA's online courses in Super Searching, Copyright, Great Library Spaces, and Customer Service were identified as being very relevant to a library technician's work. Cataloguing was also mentioned, but this was qualified with "trained Library Techs should be beyond the basics", thus suggesting the need for more in-depth treatment. Other feedback included the need for ALIA to offer more targeted CPD for the library technician market within a

school library setting, and providing a blended approach to CPD, as described by one library technician, "which includes a combination of some online coursework that is self-directed for flexibility, but we also need some webinar touchpoints or online forums to assist with progress and completion". Two central ideas for CPD delivery were discussed in the focus groups for library technicians. The first was to establish an online CPD webinar program with a session hosted each school term that is presented by library technicians for library technicians, and which provides a forum for participants to share their practice on relevant topics. The second idea was to offer a project-based course where library technicians can work on either a term- or semester-based project with online peer group check-ins for support. Some project ideas included: designing a Year 7 Orientation Program; suggested reading lists for students and writing reviews of books; how to teach students how to access ebook platforms, catalogue or other databases; and how to effectively promote ebooks using social media, to name a few.

In terms of future areas of need for library technicians' CPD, the following list presents the top 20 areas (in priority order). Compared to the previous employee groups, there was quite a diverse range of responses from the 122 library technician respondents regarding the treatment level of knowledge and skills across these areas, where the demand for some aspects was at the Intermediate-Advanced level, with other aspects had a relatively even split across all three levels of treatment. Therefore, each aspect includes the levels of treatment requested by the library technicians:

1. Collection development issues & challenges (InterM-ADV)
2. Selecting & evaluating Indigenous resources (Intro-ADV)
3. Digital content curation (Intro-ADV)
4. Digital preservation, historical collections & archives for school libraries (Intro-ADV)
5. Managing digital collections & databases (Intro-ADV)
6. Marketing library collections, programs & services (Intro-ADV)
7. Collection evaluation & stocktaking (InterM-ADV)
8. Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries (Intro-ADV)
9. Designing library spaces (InterM-ADV)

10. Designing library displays & signage (InterM-ADV)
11. New & emerging technologies (Intro-ADV)
12. IT skills for library staff (InterM-ADV)
13. Reading & literacy in schools (InterM-ADV)
14. Copyright (InterM-ADV)
15. Information/digital/media literacy (InterM-ADV)
16. Readers' advisory (Intro-ADV)
17. Library data & learning analytics (Intro-ADV)
18. Social media for school libraries (Intro-ADV)
19. Information ethics for school libraries (Intro-ADV)
20. Genrefication (InterM-ADV)

Like previous employee groups, a number of these CPD areas are already being addressed (to some degree) by existing ALIA CPD online courses (e.g., media literacy, copyright, designing library spaces, readers' advisory, and ethics), again with several of the above CPD areas requiring greater treatment within the school library context. Like the librarians' CPD priority list, the majority of the CPD areas identified by library technicians were focused more on the technical and operational aspects of library work as well as facilities, digital and technology knowledge and skills, and aspects concerning collections and information service provision. Again, a number of these priority areas could lend themselves to short courses that contribute to a micro-credential pathway for library technicians wishing to gain credits for into an undergraduate or postgraduate LIS degree program to become a qualified librarian, given that 56.3% of the 135 library technicians who answered the question regarding microcredentials responded positively in their interest, with 29% interested in gaining credit for entry into an undergraduate LIS program and 73% interested in micro-units for credit into a postgraduate program, whether GradCert, GradDip or Masters level.

6.5 Library Assistants

Survey responses by the Library Assistant employee group about the types of CPD activities they had participated in the past 18 months are summarised in Figure 48. Of the 116 library assistants who answered this question, the two most common activities undertaken by participants were similar to the library technician cohort,

with in-school workshops or courses (57%), and library conferences or seminars (41%), with just under one-third (28%) undertaking on the job training. Results for library assistants across the board were quite similar to librarian technicians in the sample, including the fact that 10-25% of library assistants were less likely to participate in one or more of these activities; however, a similar percentage (22%) of library assistants undertook coursework contributing to a formal qualification in the past 18 months, with just over one-fifth having managed to engage in observation visits to other school libraries (21%), 17% participating in ALIA CPD, 10% undertaking industry-specific professional development, and 11 respondents involved in a mentor program as either a mentor or mentee.

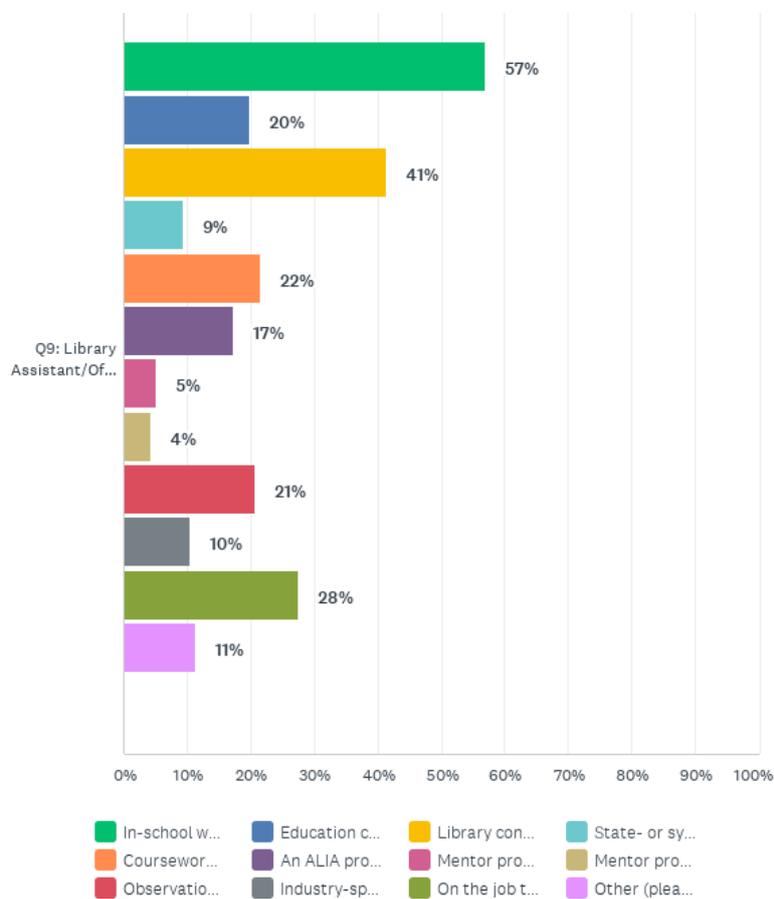


Figure 48: CPD activities undertaken by Library Assistants in the past 18 months

Some noted less access to CPD in the past 18 months due to the COVID impacts, and defaulting to online options when they became available, particularly those offered by professional associations or vendors (similar to those sought by library technicians in section 6.4) which are representative of aspects of library work

completed by library assistants in a school library. That said, 20% managed to attend education conferences (with some of these being held by state-based school library associations), and 9% of librarians managed to attend state- or system-sponsored network meetings.

Figure 49 presents the results of 132 library assistant respondents' estimate on average hours of CPD undertaken each year during school hours (figure on left) and out-of-school hours (figure on right), with the two-thirds (66%) estimating they undertook between 3-30 hours of CPD during school time, with the median being 5-9 hours per year, which is exactly the same as the library technician results (and less hours than those undertaken by Tls and librarians). While 17% of library assistants stated they did not undertake any CPD during school hours, 4% of the sample estimated they complete over 31 hours per year during school time, with no library assistants completing over 60 hours of CPD during school time. This highlights lack of access to CPD hours during school time, especially for people working as library assistants but having responsibility for managing the library, which means if they wish to undertake CPD during school hours, the school library is closed. With over two-thirds (68%) of the sample only being able to complete 9 hours or less of CPD while at work in a year, it is clear that professional learning opportunities are fewer for the library assistants employed in the school library sector.

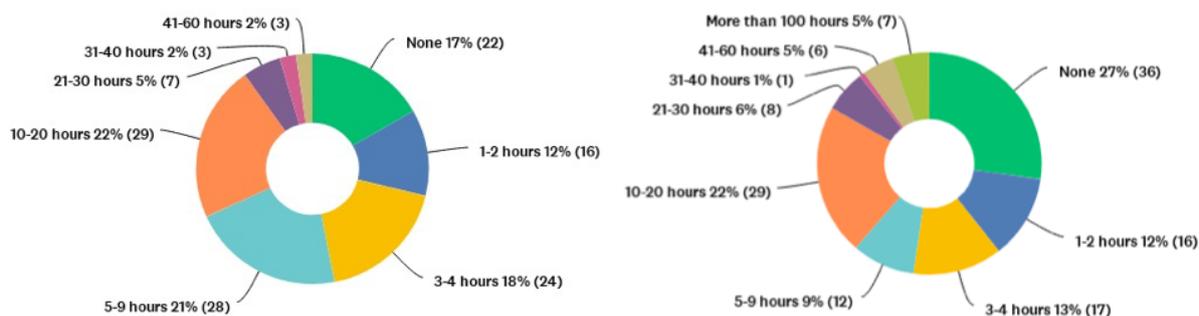


Figure 49: Estimate of CPD hours undertaken by Library Technicians per year during school hours (left) versus out-of-school hours (right)

Similar to library technicians in this sample, the results show (in figure on right) that a considerable number of library assistants elect to not undertake any (27%), or very few, hours of CPD out of school time, with 61% undertaking nine hours or less per year in their own time, with median hours for this cohort being between 3-4 hours of

CPD out of school hours. Seven library assistants estimated undertaking more than 100 hours of CPD which represents the hours invested in completing coursework to gain a formal qualification, such as a TAFE Certificate or Diploma, or an undergraduate LIS degree. Some of the issues faced by library assistants working in school libraries were shared by these survey respondents:

The main issue facing any further skills advancement is time - I am completing my Certificate III on my own time and I am also paying for same. If the employer was to "come to the party" and be shown a range of relevant and valuable training packages, I might have a better chance of participating in same. It would be good to know one's professional development aspirations are supported by the employer, especially if they are industry-driven courses.

I do not have time within my work day to access many of the online short courses offered by PLSA or to participate in online networking opportunities which have become available since covid. Unfortunately I also do not have time to follow this up at home as I have two young children and a household to run.

I am a qualified Teacher Aide and fell into the Library position after our Teacher-Librarian retired... After 2 weeks of on the job training I have made the position my own, but realise that there are several gaps in my knowledge and I have almost completed a Cert III in Library Assistant TAFE course to assist with this. If it wasn't for the expense, I may have completed the Diploma. But my wage will not increase with any extra qualifications, they won't be recognised under the Teacher Aide agreement. So why bother?

Ultimately I would love to work in a school library as a Library Tech or assistant, supporting a qualified teacher librarian and students, so I may be able to go home and not take so much work and stress with me most weeks. Increasing my qualifications may assist with this goal.

The focus group discussions and interviews also provided feedback regarding ALIA's CPD offerings, although there were few library assistants who had completed ALIA CPD. From those who had, ALIA's Readers' Advisory course was identified as valuable, with displays and marketing, web publishing, and using social media as practical areas of interest, and ALIA's Public Library Proficiency Program was also mentioned.

Cost of ALIA membership and CPD were identified as barriers for library assistants wishing to engage with a professional association. Some library assistants working in schools that held ALIA institutional membership stated that they could not gain access to ALIA CPD unless they paid to become a personal member. Feedback from a person who had taken student membership with ALIA stated, "I became a student member of ALIA while completing the Cert III but realised that if I was not enrolled in another course after that I'd lose my access to ALIA membership". Focus group discussion with library assistants did raise the idea of ALIA being able to provide a membership level for a person in a school assistant position (without an LIS qualification and who is not studying) with a level of membership that was more affordable based on a library assistant salary range. Some library assistants stated they had joined a state-based school library association because of lower membership fees when compared with ALIA's fee structure. However, it was also noted that the majority of CPD offered by those associations were primarily targeted at TLs.

In terms of future areas of need for library assistants' CPD, the following list presents the top 20 areas (in priority order). Compared to the previous employee groups, there was quite a diverse range of responses from the 105 library assistant respondents regarding the treatment level of knowledge and skills across these areas, where the demand for some aspects was at the Introductory–Intermediate level and others at the Intermediate–Advanced level, with a few aspects having a relatively even split across all three levels of treatment. Therefore, each aspect includes the levels of treatment requested by library assistants:

1. IT skills for library staff (Intro-ADV)
2. Collection development issues & challenges (InterM-ADV)

3. Designing library spaces (InterM-ADV)
4. Social media for school libraries (Intro-InterM)
5. Cataloguing (InterM-ADV)
6. Marketing library collections, programs & services (Intro-InterM)
7. Designing library displays & signage (InterM-ADV)
8. Collection evaluation & stocktaking (InterM-ADV)
9. Copyright (Intro-ADV)
10. Digital content curation (Intro-InterM)
11. Selecting & evaluating Indigenous resources (Intro-InterM)
12. Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries (Intro-ADV)
13. Managing digital collections & databases (Intro-InterM)
14. Acquisitions & processing resources (InterM-ADV)
15. Role of the school library (InterM-ADV)
16. Library data & learning analytics (Intro-InterM)
17. New & emerging technologies (Intro-InterM)
18. Digital preservation, historical collections & archives for school libraries (Intro-InterM)
19. Web design & development for school libraries (Intro-InterM)
20. Graphic novels (Intro-ADV)

Like previous employee groups, a number of these CPD areas are already being addressed (to some degree) by existing ALIA CPD online courses (e.g., designing library spaces, cataloguing, copyright, and acquisitions), again with several of the above CPD areas needing to be situated within the school library context. Like the library technicians' CPD priority list, the majority of the CPD areas identified by library assistants were focused more on technology-based knowledge and skill development (across 7 aspects), and technical and operational aspects of library work, including facilities, collections and information management, access to resources and information services. The breadth of treatment (across all three levels) requested for some aspects suggests the range of knowledge and skills of those working as library assistants, with some people already having basic LIS training and therefore seeking Intermediate or Advanced treatment of some areas of school library work, while others are seeking a basic, introductory level of treatment for CPD.

Regarding access to a micro-credential pathway, 47.7% of 132 library assistant respondents expressed an interest in completing short courses to gain credits for further education, with 35% of these library assistants wishing to gain entry into a TAFE Certificate (35%) or Diploma (62%) program, with 35% interested in gaining credit for entry into an undergraduate LIS program and 55% aspiring to gain credit for micro-units that could help them enrol in a postgraduate program to further their career in the library sector, whether GradCert (17%), GradDip (20%) or Masters (18%) level. Thus, a micro-credential pathway is obviously seen as an effective way to undertake CPD that helps those working in library assistant positions to leverage their professional learning to gain credits towards the completion of coursework to become a qualified library technician or librarian. As one library assistant stated, *"I know personally I would be very interested in completing 'skill-specific short courses' that may help when going to University or TAFE. I hope this comes about not just for myself, but for others that want the same."*

6.6 Considerations for the future

The above findings can be used to inform the development of a suite of CPD to meet the professional learning needs of those working in school libraries. The range of CPD topics and treatment levels across the five employee groups is presented as a matrix in Appendix D. A set of prioritised shortlists of CPD topics for employee groups or groupings (based on qualification and library position) have also been devised using a modified Delphi technique. Furthermore, where there was demand for a CPD topic across four or more of the five employee groups, a list of CPD topics was devised representing priority CPD topics that could be developed as a suite of CPD targeting the needs and interests of all school library employees. These are listed in priority order:

1. Collection development issues & challenges
2. Selecting & evaluation Indigenous resources
3. Digital content curation
4. Designing library spaces
5. Marketing library collections, programs & services
6. Information/digital/media literacy
7. Reading & literacy in schools

8. Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries
9. Managing digital collections & databases
10. Social media for school libraries
11. Copyright
12. Library data & learning analytics
13. New & emerging technologies

While some of the above areas are addressed by existing ALIA online courses (e.g., designing library spaces, media literacy, and copyright), it is recommended that the coursework for these be reviewed by a group of school library employees to provide ALIA with feedback regarding their adequacy of coverage in school library contexts.

Some CPD topics were only identified by one employee groups, most representing the unique needs of that group. For example, the following CPD areas were rated as priority CPD for TLs only:

1. Research, evidence-based practice & program evaluation
2. Designing blended & online learning modules
3. Designing curriculum units that integrate AC General Capabilities
4. Strategic leadership

And TLs and teachers were the only groups to identify 'Effective search strategies' and 'Role of the TL in teaching across the curriculum' as priority CPD areas to support their teaching role in the school library. In comparison, those employees working non-teaching LIS positions identified the following as priority CPD topics (in priority order):

1. IT skills for library staff
2. Designing library displays & signage
3. Digital preservation, historical collections & archives for school libraries
4. Role of the school library
5. Genrefication
6. Web design & development for school libraries
7. Information ethics for school libraries

Appendix D can, therefore, be used for future CPD planning and development by ALIA, as well as providing the basis for discussion when seeking partnerships with other CPD and further education providers when targeting the professional learning needs of each school library employee group or groups.

Based on the findings presented in this chapter, there is considerable scope for the development and implementation of a comprehensive CPD program to meet the needs of those working in, or those aspiring to work in, school libraries. While a CPD pathway is attractive for those who are already LIS-qualified and have gained requisite employment at the level of that qualification, a micro-credential pathway is seen by those working in school libraries as an effective and efficient way for a person to leverage CPD to access credit for entry into an ALIA-accredited LIS course to gain a qualification and progress one's career.

The successful implementation of such a program, however, is dependent upon TAFE and universities' willingness to partner with CPD providers to establish such a pathway. Given ALIA is the accrediting body for LIS education providers in Australia, it makes sense for ALIA to begin conversations with existing LIS education providers, as well as explore opportunities for the establishment of new LIS courses at tertiary institutions who do not currently service the LIS sector, and more specifically the school library sector, given schools are the largest employer of LIS professionals and para-professionals in Australia.

Chapter 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

A key finding of ALIA's *Professional Pathways Technical Report* (Hallam, 2022a) was the existence of “diverse areas of specialised practice, within and across library and information sectors, that are critical to the functioning of the sector”, and that “different specialisations require a range of approaches to support the development of the knowledge and skills needed for professional practice” (p. 265). As a result, ALIA commissioned the School Library Research Project in November 2021 to explore the specific nature of employment, education, and training in the school library sector. This project is unique in that it has examined all employee groups working in school libraries, which comprises a diverse range of teaching and LIS professional and paraprofessional positions servicing school communities across Australia. The findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in this report will help ensure that LIS professionals and paraprofessionals working in school libraries are clearly differentiated as part of the Professional Pathways Frameworks initiative, by identifying key issues and trends of this workforce, as ALIA works to create wider recognition of the role and importance of school libraries and the people who work in them. This report also identifies education, training, and professional learning challenges and opportunities for all employee groups working in school libraries, which should assist ALIA in defining clear learning pathways for all employee groups, including those non-LIS qualified teachers and library assistants working in school libraries who require information and encouragement in upskilling through LIS qualifications. Ultimately, achieving the above will not just help sustain and strengthen the quality of school library programs and services across education systems within Australia's states and territories, but contribute to quality education targets and long-term education benefits for Australian school students.

7.1 Key findings and conclusions

The school library context (Chapter 1) provides an overview of the role, function, and importance of school libraries in supporting the education of Australian children and young people based on decades of research. It also highlights the important role of qualified school library staff, and the emergence of greater diversity in backgrounds, positions, and roles of those working in school library teams.

Based on results from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' undertaken as part of this research project, Chapter 2 provides a snapshot of the nature and demographics of those currently working in school libraries in Australian schools. Of the 693 survey respondents, over one-third of the sample (38.8%) were employed as TLs, with just over two-fifths of the sample employed as library technicians (22.2%) and as library assistants (22.9%). Those employed as librarians comprised 13.7% of the sample, with only 16 teachers (2.3%) employed in a school library. Thus, the four main employee groups were well-represented in this sample to identify patterns or trends, particularly those working as TLs, library technicians and library assistants.

The survey sample highlighted the school library workforce as being predominantly female, far exceeding the national Australian average across all employee groups when compared to teaching and LIS workforce data from ABS, NSC and comparable school library workforce studies by ACER. Results also confirmed the ageing population of the school library workforce is significant, with a predominance of employees over the age of 40 years, with more than 60% aged 50 years or over, and only 15.6% of school library employees 39 years of age or less. Combined with the large number of respondents (over 85%) stating they are employed on an ongoing, permanent basis, the results suggest the majority of Australia's school library workforce (no matter what employee group) do come to employment in the school library sector later in their careers, and once they gain employment, the majority remain working in the school library sector until retirement. This has implications for movement of employees (or lack thereof) within the school library sector, with few opportunities for either qualified LIS or non-qualified LIS people to enter the sector at times and does raise issues regarding succession planning and sustainability for the school library sector into the future.

One area of concern regarding sustainability for a skilled school library workforce involved those working as paraprofessionals, with over three-quarters of library assistants working in part-time positions only and just over one-quarter (28%) of them being employed on either a fixed-term contract and casual basis. Therefore, a lack of full-time employment combined with a lack of permanency (along with other issues such as 'term-time only' contracts) could impact the number of these

employees actively seeking professional pathway options and/or willingness to invest in further education or training.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis of position title held by employees versus employee category (which best reflected their level of employment, the latter often commensurate with the salary or pay scale of an employee) found that a number of people working in school libraries, while being employed at the lower end of position/salary scale, are in fact being required to fulfill a library position with roles and responsibilities above their employment level. This was particularly prevalent for those working as Librarians, Library Technicians or Library Assistants and identifies an increased blurring of the lines between position titles, roles, and qualifications of school library employees, which suggests an increased chance of position creep occurring in school libraries. It also highlights how members of school communities find it difficult to understand and determine the difference between school library employee's position titles, awards they are employed on, their level of qualification, and their roles and responsibilities as a school library employee, which has been ever present as an issue for those working in school libraries as a qualified teacher librarian.

This led to an examination of qualifications and qualification pathways in Chapter 3, which provides an overview of existing LIS qualifications for those working in school libraries, presents a snapshot of findings regarding qualification-based trends, issues, challenges, and concerns for those working in school libraries employees, and then explores qualification pathways for each employee group. Holding a dual qualification in education and librarianship does differentiate TLs from other school library employees; however, the issues raised in Chapter 2 regarding under-employment of those holding a professional qualification and the blurring of the lines between position titles and roles and level of employment are undermining the professional status of qualified TLs in some school systems in specific states or territories. That said, qualified librarians represented in this study were identified as possibly being stretched the most (in comparison to fellow members of a school library team), with just under half of the qualified librarians working in school library positions below their qualification and remuneration, and with others fulfilling library management positions beyond their qualification and remuneration for the work

they are responsible for. Furthermore, for those living and working in regional or rural locations, people showed a willingness to gain employment within the school library sector, even if offered positions below a salary their qualification(s) could command. This is also contributing to the blurring of line issue and adding to the confusion within school communities regarding the qualifications, level of employment, and roles and responsibilities of individuals within a school library team.

There are few pathway options for those wishing to become a qualified TL, with the most efficient way (in terms of time and money invested in gaining a dual qualification) is to firstly complete an undergraduate teaching qualification followed by a postgraduate qualification in LIS with a TLship specialisation. As noted in Hallam's (2022) analysis of LIS education offerings by Australian universities, those currently wishing to train as TLs have little choice in either pathway or coursework options, and feedback from stakeholders stated they would prefer to study with a university within their own capital city or state/territory, which could allow for some F2F or blended learning opportunities as part of the degree program. In terms of level of qualification, feedback from stakeholders regarding the appropriate level of qualification that should be required for a person to train as a qualified TL confirmed their belief that TLship degree programs must be maintained at the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 9 - Masters Degree (DESE, 2013), as opposed to reducing the required qualification pathway to AQF Level 8 as a Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate. Teacher librarians also provided specific feedback on current course offerings available to those wishing to become a qualified TL, which can be used by higher education providers to review existing degree programs and design new coursework to better reflect more recent changes in the school library landscape and better meet the needs and preferences of prospective students.

The issue of trying to attract younger people into the TL profession was also identified as an essential element of any Professional Pathways program, with some stakeholders suggesting universities offer TL training as part of an undergraduate teaching degree (Bachelor of Education) with TLship as a teaching specialisation. In addition, stakeholder feedback suggests that a micro-credentialled pathway is seen as an attractive, practical and affordable way for professional learning coursework (that is assessable) to be used by school library employees, or those wishing to enter

the school library sector, to build towards the completion of a degree (or part thereof) or be eligible to gain credits into a degree program.

With the undergraduate LIS degree market shrinking in Australia, this certainly reduces the LIS profession's chance of attracting younger people to train as qualified librarians to work in a range of library settings, including the school library sector. Along with the ageing population of librarians (as presented in Chapter 2), there is an identified need to see the establishment of new qualification pathways for librarians, as well as the need to promote librarianship as a career path for school leavers. That said, with the only undergraduate program currently offered as online coursework, this is not attractive to the school leaver market who prefer learning on campus and experiencing university life as an undergraduate. For those who have completed TAFE level LIS study and seeking a pathway to become a qualified librarian, university bridging courses were seen as one pathway where prospective students (without an ATAR) complete short courses as prerequisites for admission to an undergraduate course of study. There is an established pathway for holders of a Diploma in Library and Information Services to enter the CSU Bachelor degree.

Given that many people in the school library sector, have come to work in a school library as a second, third or even fourth career, the sector comprises of employees coming to school library teams with diverse work experience and breadth of additional relevant knowledge and skills (beyond LIS). This is where Professional Pathways can help quantify and acknowledge expertise individuals bring to their position in the school library. That said, Professional Pathways also need to work for those currently working in a school library but seeking employment elsewhere. For example, a comparison between librarians, library technicians and library assistants showed that qualified library technicians and library assistants were less likely to use their employment in a school library as a stepping stone to work in other library settings as part of their career progression, while librarians working in schools were more likely to use their position as a stepping stone to find employment outside schools in the GLAM industry.

Another significant issue is the number of people being employed in the school library sector as library assistants without any LIS qualification or training to inform their position or role. What is more alarming from survey results is that nearly 40% of

these library assistants were working in positions with titles that requires some formal qualifications in librarianship, such as library technicians (requiring a TAFE Diploma qualification), or a librarian (undergraduate or postgraduate degree qualification), and some position titles also reflected library leadership or management roles with 37.6% selecting 'Library Manager' or 'Head of Library' as best reflecting their role. This suggests a significant proportion of employees 'managing school libraries' have no formal qualification, which was also reflected in the ACER Census of South Australian school library (Dix et al, 2020) where over one-third of those managing the school library were being employed as support officers (Library Assistants) with no formal library qualifications. While one might argue these school library employees could be a significant and untapped market for TAFEs to target in the future, one challenge is the average age of those with no LIS qualification currently filling these positions is aged 50 or over. A second challenge is that a significant number of these people already hold one or more qualifications in other fields or specialisations, which means they have already invested both time and money in further education in the past. This suggests that professional development may be a more effective strategy in upskilling a larger proportion of this employee group (which is examined in detail in Chapter 6). Further analysis of those working as library assistants who have aspirations for career progression, however, has identified that there is no one size fits all for this disparate employee group with a breadth of the courses being sought by these people, thus requiring a number of specific pathways to be mapped and articulated to assist those in reaching their respective goals.

This 'ALIA Professional Pathways: School Libraries Research Project' does show that the school library sector could provide far greater professional pathway opportunities for LIS workers in the future. Given we have an estimate of over 7,000 school libraries in Australia, the school library workplace setting could be used as a springboard for people to gain both LIS qualifications and experience, before seeking work in other library and information contexts.

Knowledge, skills, and competencies required of school library employees has been explored (Chapter 4), with a particular focus on points of differentiation between those working in school libraries and the broader LIS profession. In light of ALIA's Professional Pathways Board's recommendations in response to the Technical

Report to guide the next stages of the Professional Pathways initiative, the contents of this chapter has been written to inform the development of ALIA's proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour as per Recommendation 1 (Hallam, 2022b, p. 4) within the context of teacher and LIS professionals, and paraprofessionals, working in the school library sector.

The career-staged approach to knowledge, practice and engagement implemented by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL, 2022) with the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* is identified as one model that could be adopted by ALIA with the proposed new framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour to support the Professional Pathways initiative. While AITSL's Standards are organised into four career stages of graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead, it is suggested that an initial and first stage be included, using the label 'in-training' or similar, to accommodate the knowledge and skill development of those without an LIS qualification, who are receiving initial training on-the-job, by way of CPD and/or enrolled in a TAFE Certificate or Diploma. This would allow the development of level descriptors for each knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour statement within the framework to represent individuals' qualifications and career stage progression.

Ethics and professionalism within the context of the school library sector has been explored (Chapter 5) to identify a core list of ethics that brings together LIS and education ethical principles. Ethical practice is considered a core competency for both LIS and teaching professionals, so this certainly applies to those working in the school library sector, where professional ethics underpin a school library employee's practice, decision-making, and actions on a daily basis. Chapter 5 has drawn upon an extensive collection of national and international policy documents, guidelines and standards to establish a list of 43 ethical principles (as per Table A) that are specifically relevant to the school library context. While some of these might have greater application for those being employed as teachers, the majority of these ethical principles do inform the work of all employed in a school library team.

Professionalism and professional identity are also examined within the school library context (Chapter 5) by drawing upon results from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in

School Libraries Employee Survey' about school library employees' engagement with professional associations and networks. There is considerable breadth in qualifications and training across the five school library employee groups examined in this report, with two of the five groups employed as teachers and the other three employed as LIS professionals and paraprofessionals. The profession does, therefore, face some challenges with bringing all of these employee groups collectively 'into the fold' to help individuals (whether qualified, in training or unqualified) build a professional identity that reflects the knowledge, skills, values and ethics expected of those who choose to work in school libraries. Given the disparate backgrounds and nature of those currently working in the school library sector, ALIA needs to develop a strategy to better connect with those working in isolation in school libraries, particularly those who have not had the opportunity to undertake LIS education or professional development to help shape their understanding of their role in the school library. Fostering relationships with education systems, as employers of school library workers, is fundamental to a Professional Pathways initiative that targets school library employees.

There is considerable engagement of those school library employees who are TL- or LIS-qualified with professional associations and networks, with these individuals making conscious decisions about where they invest their time and money to support their professional identity and growth. While the Library Assistant employee group had the lowest percentage of ALIA membership, 21% had access to ALIA through their school library as an institutional member and this group also held more Personal Student and Personal General memberships. This shows that ALIA's programs and services are attractive to those working as library assistants if they are fortunate enough to have access to them. Again, ALIA could broaden its reach to by building stronger relationships with education systems as employers of school library workers.

School library employees are actively seeking professional networking via social media. Results from the survey show that Facebook is the most popular social media platform, with 77% of respondents using Facebook to support their work in, and professional learning about, school libraries. This was followed by Instagram (29%), Twitter (23%), and LinkedIn (20%). While other forms of social media were used by a

small minority of respondents (3.5%) for professional purposes, including platforms such as Yammer, TikTok, Discord, and blogs written by teacher librarians and public libraries, the significant popularity Facebook suggests that ALIA could potentially connect with more people via Facebook in each of these employee groups about school library-related issues and support in the future. Furthermore, given the number of people working in school libraries with little or no training, ALIA could utilise Facebook as a platform to support a Professional Pathways for School Libraries outreach program.

Professional associations and networks are essential contributors in supporting individuals achieve a level of 'active professionalism' (Szplif, 2020), and there are clearly opportunities for ALIA to work with those working in school libraries charting new pathways into the profession. Findings from the 'ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey' are useful in informing strategic directions of, and initiatives by, ALIA to specifically target the needs, interests, and aspirations of each school library employee group as part of the Professional Pathways program.

Regular engagement with continuing professional development is also a hallmark of 'active professionalism'. This report identifies the type of CPD school library employees engage in and their preferences for CPD delivery (Chapter 6). It also evaluates the content and delivery of existing ALIA CPD for school library employees, identifies areas of need for the provision of professional development for each employee group in the future, and suggests several CPD initiatives and strategies that ALIA could consider as part of Professional Pathway developments in the future.

In-school workshops or courses, library conferences or seminars, and education conferences or seminars were the most common activities undertaken by those participating in the survey. It should be noted that the period respondents were asked to report on was in Term 3/4, 2020 through to Term 1, 2022, which for some states and territories, school terms were heavily impacted by the COVID pandemic, thus opportunities for face-to-face CPD were limited, and more online CPD such as webinars and Zoom meetings were offered to compensate for this. Tls and teachers

also identified greater teacher-led CPD hours invested in professional reading, listening to podcasts and conducting research about specific topics during this time.

Survey results highlighted TLs, teachers, and librarians working in school libraries invested in more out-of-school hours to undertake CPD than during school hours, with only 2% of TLs stating they did not undertake any CPD during out-of-school hours. Conversely, a considerable number of library technicians and library assistants elected not to undertake any or very few hours of CPD out of school time. It is also clear that professional learning opportunities are fewer for library assistants employed in the school library sector compared to the other employee groups. CPD participation results also highlighted how diverse school libraries are as workplaces with some employees being given opportunities to undertake CPD during school hours, with some being able to complete a considerable number of CPD hours at school, compared to others who have had no or very few opportunities to undertake CPD during school hours.

In terms of ALIA's CPD offerings, a higher percentage of qualified librarians (43%) and library technicians (31%) had engaged with ALIA CPD activities in the past 18 months, compared to TL (24%) and library assistant (17%) respondents. Given access to F2F CPD has been difficult in the past two years with COVID, those employees who undertook ALIA CPD during the pandemic valued the convenience of undertaking ALIA online courses, and the provision of access to recordings of online events for those wishing to revisit content, as well as providing access to others to view after the event. Other ALIA services such as the *ALIA Weekly* email and *Incite* magazine are also valued by members, with the free weekly email being subscribed to by quite a few non-members (who appreciated access to a regular bulletin). Feedback from library assistants did raise the idea of ALIA being able to provide a membership level for a person working in a school assistant position (without an LIS qualification and who is not studying) with a level of membership that was more affordable based on a library assistant salary range (keeping in mind that many library assistants are being employed part-time). Detailed feedback per employee group is presented in Sections 6.1-6.5 of the report.

Chapter 6 also presents a list for each of the five employee groups regarding areas of need for CPD in the future. Each list details the top 20 areas (in priority order) for future CPD per employee group and Appendix D provides a comprehensive matrix of priority CPD topics and level of treatment (Introductory, Intermediate & Advanced) across employee groups. It should be noted that the majority of the CPD areas identified as a priority by librarians, library technicians and assistants were focused less on teaching and learning aspects of school library work, and more so on facilities, technology, and resource provision and services, with the latter two groups seeking more operational and technical aspects of school library work.

A number of the CPD areas identified by each employee group is already being addressed (to some degree) by existing ALIA CPD online courses (e.g., media literacy, copyright, designing library spaces, and readers' advisory); however, feedback across stakeholders stated that many of these areas could include greater treatment within the school library context. Other CPD areas were identified as needing development at an intermediate to advanced level (thus, building on those currently being offered at a basic '101' level) with more knowledge, skills and practice examined in school library settings.

While micro-credentialling was treated in detail in Section 3.1, stakeholder feedback was divided in seeing value in completing short courses that lead to credits for further education with some not interested in CPD with assessment requirements. This suggests that if ALIA offered CPD as a micro-credential, then it might be strategic for ALIA to provide two pathways with any micro-credential offerings. The first being a *CPD pathway* that might offer accrual of NESAs, TQI or equivalent accredited hours (this was particularly attractive for Tls and teachers), and the second being a *micro-credential pathway* where participants who choose this option are given assessable tasks as part of the coursework, which can then be used to meet university or TAFE credit-eligibility requirements. While a CPD pathway is attractive for those who are already LIS-qualified and have gained requisite employment at the level of that qualification, a micro-credential pathway is seen by those working in school libraries as an effective and efficient way for a person to leverage CPD to access credit for entry into an ALIA-accredited LIS course to gain a qualification and progress one's career.

Several priority CPD areas of school library work (presented in Chapter 6) could lend themselves to a series of short courses that contribute to both pathways, and findings demonstrate there is considerable scope for the development and implementation of a comprehensive ALIA CPD program to meet the needs of those working in, or those aspiring to work in, school libraries. Furthermore, Appendix D can be used by ALIA to inform discussions when seeking partnerships with other CPD and further education providers when targeting the professional learning needs, and further education needs, of school library employees.

The successful implementation of such a program, however, is dependent upon TAFE and universities' willingness to partner with CPD providers to establish a micro-credential pathway. Given ALIA is the accrediting body for LIS education providers in Australia, it makes sense for ALIA to begin conversations with existing LIS education providers, as well as explore opportunities for the establishment of new LIS courses at tertiary institutions who do not currently service the LIS sector, and more specifically the school library sector, given schools are among the largest employer of LIS professionals and paraprofessionals in Australia.

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions presented in this report and consider the ALIA Professional Pathways Board's recommendations in response to the Professional Pathways Technical Report (Hallam 2022b, p. 4).

Recommendation 1: Establish a Professional Pathways for School Libraries Working Party

It is recommended that ALIA establish a Working Party which consists of representatives across the four school library employee groups – teacher librarians, librarians, library technicians, and library assistants – to inform professional pathway initiatives address the context and needs of those working in, or aspiring to work, in the school library sector. For example, with ALIA's plan to develop a new "framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour that represents a sector-wide, whole-of-career resource", this Working Party could draw upon this report and

consult with employee groups within the sector to ensure the framework reflects the knowledge, skills and ethical principles required by those working in school libraries.

Recommendation 2: Clearly articulate professional pathways for the school library sector

It is recommended that ALIA clearly articulate existing pathways and identify new pathways for those working in, or aspiring to work, in the school library sector. Given the complex mix of teaching and LIS professionals and paraprofessionals working in school libraries, the disparate nature of school library employment within and across education systems, and with a considerable number of people being employed in school library sector without any LIS qualifications and training, the articulation and active marketing of pathway options is critical. While ALIA's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme works well for those who qualify for Associate and Library Technician membership, there is a need for certified acknowledgement of training by school library employee at different levels that can build towards certification recognition or gaining credit for further education. This would provide those working in school libraries with no formal LIS qualification to begin to chart their existing PD and training and establish a plan for their own professional pathway.

Recommendation 3: Work with educators to develop new professional pathways and contextualise accredited courses for the school library sector

It is recommended that ALIA work with educators to develop new professional pathway options at both the TAFE and university levels. For example, pursue the establishment of micro-credentialed programs for school library employees as a qualifications pathway for those wishing to become a qualified TL, librarian, or library technician. As the accrediting body for LIS education providers in Australia, ALIA needs to ensure that LIS coursework (particularly in generalist LIS programs) provides content that reflects school library settings and the nature of work undertaken by school library employees. ALIA should use findings and conclusions in this report to begin discussions with other tertiary institutions (who do not currently service the LIS sector) regarding opportunities for CPD provision, micro-credential pathways, and online, on-campus or blended offerings targeting the school library sector.

Recommendation 4: Develop an employer engagement strategy with school education systems

It is recommended that ALIA develop an employer engagement strategy targeting school systems as employers of school library workers to promote professional pathways, further education, and training. If ALIA could establish a stronger relationship with library coordinators or professional learning coordinators within these systems, and with teacher unions and public service unions, this could provide ALIA with a more direct channel to those school library employees seeking advice regarding career progression, further education, and professional pathways. Furthermore, in some states and territories, a significant proportion of school library employees do not hold an LIS qualification and do not have access to LIS CPD to inform their practice. There is a need for the provision of basic library training within some school systems, and ALIA could seek partnerships with school education systems to provide policy advice, greater provision of training for library assistants, and guidance regarding professional pathways available for those working in school libraries. In addition, ALIA could engage with school systems to achieve greater utilisation of VET traineeship programs within the school library sector, which could provide a professional pathway for younger people to enter LIS professions.

Recommendation 5: Strengthening professional identity and professional engagement of school library employees in Australia

It is recommended that ALIA establishes a suite of CPD targeting the school library sector to build core knowledge, skills, values and ethics of those working in school libraries. It is also recommended that ALIA consider some level of granularity based on career stages (similar to AITSL and ATA Standards) when developing the new proposed framework for knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5). Both of these initiatives will build core knowledge, skills, values and ethics of those working in school libraries, encourage greater engagement in sharing knowledge and skills between school library employee groups, and overall strengthen the professional identity (both individually and collectively) of those working in the school library sector.

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Appendix A: ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey



ALIA Professional Pathways in School Libraries Employee Survey

This survey is to be completed by only those people currently employed in a school library whether they be a Teacher Librarian, Teacher, Librarian, Library Technician or Library Officer/Assistant *

Please tell us about your current position and role in your school's context, as well your career aspirations, professional interests, and professional development needs as a school library employee.

This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

If you work in more than one school library, please complete this survey for the school library where you are employed for the majority of your time per week.

All responses are anonymous and only summarised results will be reported.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing this survey, please email education@alia.org.au

* Definitions for the purpose of this survey are informed by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Becoming a Library & Information Professional Guide:

'Library' or resource centre is used to refer to a managed centre of resources, programs, expertise and services accessible to a school community.

'Teacher Librarian' refers to a registered teacher who also holds a professional qualification in librarianship that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA.

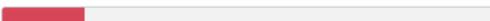
'Librarian' refers to a staff member holding a Bachelor or post-graduate qualification in librarianship that is eligible for Associate membership of ALIA.

'Library Technician' refers to a staff member holding a Diploma of Library and Information Services that is eligible for Library Technician membership of ALIA.

'Library Assistant' refers to a staff member who does not have a formal qualification in library and information services (that is eligible for Associate or Library Technician membership of ALIA).

Confidentiality: All information that is collected in this study will be treated confidentially. All data collected are kept strictly confidential as defined in the Privacy Act 1988. You may view ALIA's [Privacy Policy](#) for more detail. SurveyMonkey is being used to collect data for this ALIA School Libraries Professional Pathways Project. You may also wish to view SurveyMonkey's [Privacy Notice](#).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

1 / 6  17%





A. YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY SETTING

Please answer these questions to describe the school library setting in which you work.

1. Please select the state or territory you work in:

- ACT
- NSW
- NT
- Qld
- SA
- Tas
- Vic
- WA
- I'm currently not working in Australia (Please enter the country)

2. What school sector do you work in?

- Catholic
- Government
- Independent

3. What school type do you work in? Please select all that apply

- Pre-Kindergarten/Reception/Preparatory/Foundation (non-compulsory early learning year before Primary)
- K-6/R-6/P-6/F-6 (Primary)
- 7-10
- Other (please specify)
- 7-12
- 11-12
- K-12/R-12/P-12/F-12

4. What type of geographical area is your school located in?

- Metropolitan (capital city)
- Regional (small cities and regional towns)
- Rural
- Remote

5. What type of school library do you work in? Please select all that apply

- A physical library or resource centre within the school (i.e., may include multiple libraries)
- Single site library Pre-K/R/P/F
- Single site library K-6/R-6/P-6/F-6
- Single site library 7-12
- Single site library 11-12
- Single site library K-12/R-12/P-12/F-12
- Dual sites junior library and senior library
- A jointly managed school-community and public library
- A virtual library of school-managed online collections and resources (e.g., databases, e-books)

4. What type of geographical area is your school located in?

- Metropolitan (capital city) Rural
 Regional (small cities and regional towns) Remote

5. What type of school library do you work in? Please select all that apply

- A physical library or resource centre within the school (i.e., may include multiple libraries) Single site library K-12/R-12/P-12/F-12
 Single site library Pre-K/R/P/F Dual sites junior library and senior library
 Single site library K-6/R-6/P-6/F-6 A jointly managed school-community and public library
 Single site library 7-12 A virtual library of school-managed online collections and resources (e.g., databases, e-books)
 Single site library 11-12
 Other (please specify)

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B. YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY SETTING

Please answer these questions to describe your work as a school library employee.

6. What gender do you identify as?

- Female
 Male
 Non-binary
 I prefer not to say
 Other

7. How old are you?

- Under 20 50-59
 20-29 60-69
 30-39 Over 69
 40-49 I prefer not to say

8. On what basis are you employed at your school?

- Ongoing (permanent)
- Fixed-term (contract)
- Casual
- Other (please specify)

9. Which one of these employee categories best reflects your position in the school library?

- Teacher Librarian
- Teacher
- Librarian
- Library Technician
- Library Assistant/Officer

10. Which position title best reflects your role in the school library?

- Head of Library
- Library Manager
- Teacher Librarian
- Teacher in charge of library
- Librarian
- Library Technician
- AV/Digital Library Technician
- Library Officer/Assistant
- Other (please describe)

11. What library qualifications do you have as a school library employee? Please select all that apply

- Dual qualification in teaching and librarianship
- Qualified librarian (no teaching qualification)
- Qualified teacher (no library qualification)
- Other (please specify)
- Library Technician (Diploma qualification in library services)
- TAFE Certificate II, III and/or IV in library services
- Library Assistant/Officer with no formal library qualifications

12. What additional qualifications do you have other than a library qualification? Please enter all that apply and identify the field/specialisation, (e.g., Graduate Certificate in Digital Learning, Bachelor of Psychology, TAFE Cert IV in School Based Education Support)

Doctorate: please specify

Masters: please specify

Graduate Diploma: please specify

Graduate Certificate: please specify

Undergraduate Bachelor degree: please specify

Undergraduate Associate degree: please specify

Undergraduate Diploma: please specify

Undergraduate Certificate: please specify

TAFE Diploma: please specify

TAFE Certificate: please specify

Other: please specify

13. What fraction of time per week are you employed to work in the school library? Please select one

- 1.0 Full time equivalent (FTE)(5 days per week)
- 0.8-0.9 FTE (4-4.5 days per week)
- 0.6-0.7 FTE (3-3.5 days per week)
- 0.4-0.5 FTE (2-2.5 days per week)
- 0.2-0.3 FTE (1-1.5 days per week)
- Less than 0.2 FTE (less than 1 day per week)
- Other (please specify or add comment)

14. What aspects of library work are core to your role as a school library employee? Please rate the level of responsibility you have for each aspect, either:

- **'Lead'** means that the person is responsible for designing, managing and evaluating this aspect of library work
- **'Maintain'** means that the person is responsible for undertaking the majority of tasks related to this aspect of library work
- **'Assist'** means that the person is not responsible for managing or maintaining this aspect of library work but does help other library staff complete some tasks related to this aspect of work

OR

- **'No'** means that the person does not complete any tasks related to this aspect of library work

	Lead	Maintain	Assist	No
Acquisitions and processing resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessing and reporting on student learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assisting with loans of resources and/or equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assisting with web-based and library database searches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Attend year level and/or department curriculum meetings with teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend Executive meetings with school leadership team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Class group teaching outside the library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborative planning and teaching curriculum units with teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Covering, labelling and repairing resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data entry and general administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing and implementing action research and/or evidence-based projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Lead	Maintain	Assist	No
Designing and implementing cyber-safety and digital well-being units/lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing and implementing copyright/Creative Commons and ethical use of information units/lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing curriculum tasks and resource support via our school's Learning Management System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing learning and assessment tasks/assignments with teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing/creating library displays and signage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing, implementing, and evaluating literacy and reading programs (e.g., Sustained Reading, Wide Reading, Boys for Books, Read like a Girl)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing strategic plans and project proposals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital curation (e.g., LibGuides)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Enrichment learning (e.g., competitions, clubs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluating curriculum units/learning and assessment outcomes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fixing faults with equipment and managing equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Lead	Maintain	Assist	No
Liaise with other libraries or library groups in the broader community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining library resources, records, and systems through cataloguing and classification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing access to the school's resource collection (e.g., including digital and online resources)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing school library staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing school library volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing school library website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing specialist program/s across the school (e.g., literacy, STEM, coding, makerspace)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing the library's programs and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online teaching of classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparing budget submissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing fixed timetabled lessons in the school library with teachers and their class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Lead	Maintain	Assist	No
Providing fixed timetabled lessons in the school library with a class (without the teacher present)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing flexibly timetabled lessons in the school library with teachers and their class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing flexibly timetabled lessons in the school library with a class (without the teacher present)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing IT support for students and teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing one-on-one support according to student and teacher requests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing professional learning for teaching staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing professional learning for library staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing release time for classroom teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reader advisory service (helping students to find their next book)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reference and search queries of individual students and teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reshelving returned library resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Lead	Maintain	Assist	No
Resource support for teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resource support for students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School library presence on social media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selecting & evaluating Indigenous resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Selecting relevant, quality learning resources on behalf of the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small group instruction/support for students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Special events (e.g., Book Week, book fairs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stocktaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supervise the entire library team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supervise some library staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching research/inquiry skills, information, and digital literacy to students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please describe)

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C. PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Please answer these questions to describe your involvement with professional associations and organisations as a school library employee.

15. Are you a member of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)? Please select one

- Yes, I am a Professional Personal member (Associate)
- Yes, I am a Professional Personal member (Library Technician)
- Yes, I am a Professional Personal member (Allied Field)
- Yes, I am a Personal Student member
- Yes, I am a Personal General member
- Yes, my school library is an Institutional member
- No, I am not a member of ALIA (Please provide your reason for not seeking ALIA membership, if any)

16. Are you a member of other professional associations/unions/groups that support your work in, and professional learning about, school libraries? Please select all that apply

I am a member of an international professional association: please specify

I am a member of a national professional association: please specify

I am a member of a state- or territory-based professional association: please specify

I am a member of a regional professional association or group: please specify

I am a member of an education union: please specify

I am a member of a public sector/service union: please specify

17a. Are you a member of other professional networks (either face-to-face or online) that support your work in, and professional learning about, school libraries? Please select all that apply

I am a member of an international discussion list/online forum: please specify

I am a member of a national discussion list/online forum: please specify

I am a member of a state- or territory-based discussion list/online forum: please specify

I am a member of a regional networking group: please specify

17b. Are you a member of other professional networks on social media to support your work in, and professional learning about, school libraries? Please select all that apply

- I network with others via Facebook
- I network with others via LinkedIn
- I network with others via Twitter
- I network with others via Instagram
- I network with others via WhatsApp
- Other (please explain)

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67%



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D. FURTHER EDUCATION AND CAREER PROSPECTS

Please answer these questions to describe your intentions for further education and aspirations in terms of career prospects as a school library employee.

18. Do you plan on undertaking further education to inform your current work as a school library employee?

Please select one

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

If YES, please tell us what qualification(s) you aspire to complete

Doctorate: please specify

Masters: please specify

Graduate Diploma: please specify

Graduate Certificate: please specify

Undergraduate Bachelor degree: please specify

Undergraduate Associate degree: please specify

Undergraduate Diploma: please specify

Undergraduate Certificate: please specify

TAFE Diploma: please specify

TAFE Certificate: please specify

Other: please specify

19a. Do you intend to further your career within a school library setting in the future? Please select one

- Yes (please continue to Q19b and then complete Q19c and Q20)
 No (please continue to Q21)
 Not sure (please continue to Q21)

19b. If YES, please select which of these employee categories best reflects the role you aspire to being employed as in the school/school library?

- School Leader (Principal/Deputy/Assistant Principal)
- School Leader (Head of Dept/Head Teacher)
- Teacher Librarian
- Teacher
- Librarian
- Library Technician
- Library Assistant/Officer

19c. If YES, please select which of these position titles best reflects the role you aspire to being employed as in the school library?

- Head of Library
- Library Manager
- Teacher Librarian
- Teacher in charge of library
- Librarian
- Library Technician
- AV/Digital Library Technician
- Library Officer/Assistant
- Other (please describe)

20. What additional qualification do you expect you will need to gain employment in the school library position you aspire to? Please select all that apply

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Education (EdD)
- Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship)
- Master of Library/Information Studies
- Master of Education/Teaching
- Graduate Diploma in Library/Information Studies
- Graduate Certificate in Library/Information Studies
- Undergraduate degree in Education/Teaching
- Undergraduate degree in Library/Information Studies
- TAFE Diploma in...
- TAFE Certificate in...

- OTHER - please specify what qualification you will need, other than those listed above. If you have selected TAFE Diploma or Certificate (above), could you please identify what specialisation you will need, e.g., TAFE Certificate IV in Information Technology (Web-based Technologies), TAFE Diploma in Graphic design, TAFE Microsoft Office Specialist: Associate Certification (Office 365 and Office 2019)

21. Do you intend to further your career in a library setting other than a school library in the future? Please select one

- Yes (please continue to Q22)
- No (please continue to Q23)
- Not sure (please continue to Q23)

If YES, please select all that apply

- Public library
- TAFE library
- University library
- National or State library
- Business or corporate library
- Government library
- Special library
- Museum or gallery
- Records, archives or cultural service
- Other (please describe)

22. What additional library qualification(s) do you expect you will need to gain employment in one or more of the above library settings that you aspire to?

Doctorate: please specify

Masters: please specify

Graduate Diploma: please specify

Graduate Certificate: please specify

Undergraduate Bachelor degree: please specify

Undergraduate Associate degree: please specify

Undergraduate Diploma: please specify

Undergraduate Certificate: please specify

TAFE Diploma: please specify

TAFE Certificate: please specify

OTHER: please specify (or if you are unsure of what qualification you will need, type 'Unsure')

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E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Please answer these questions to describe your engagement with professional development activities as a school library employee.

23. During the last 18 months, did you participate in any of the following kinds of professional development activities?

Please select all that apply

- In-school workshops or courses
- Education conferences or seminars
- Library conferences or seminars
- State- or system-sponsored network meetings
- Coursework (contributing to a formal qualification program, e.g., certificate, diploma, degree)
- An ALIA professional development activity
- Mentor program as a mentor
- Mentor program as a mentee
- Observation visits to other school libraries
- Industry-specific short courses
- On the job training by a library team member
- Other (please specify)

24. On average, how much professional development would you undertake each year during school hours?

Please select one

- None
- 1-2 hours
- 3-4 hours
- 5-9 hours
- 10-20 hours
- 21-30 hours
- 31-40 hours
- 41-60 hours
- 61-80 hours
- 81-100 hours
- More than 100 hours

25. On average, how much professional development would you undertake each year out of school hours? (i.e., at night, on weekends, during school holidays) Please select one

- None
- 1-2 hours
- 3-4 hours
- 5-9 hours
- 10-20 hours
- 21-30 hours
- 31-40 hours
- 41-60 hours
- 61-80 hours
- 81-100 hours
- More than 100 hours

26a. Are you interested in completing skill-specific short courses as part of a microcredential^{s*} program that could be used to gain credit towards subject completion in a university or TAFE qualification?

* (Microcredentials are short courses offering degree-level learning that can be used for credit towards a qualification)

Please select one

- Yes (please continue to Q26b)
- No (please continue to Q27)

26b. If YES, please select which degree levels you would prefer to gain credit

- Masters
- Graduate Diploma
- Graduate Certificate
- Undergraduate Bachelor degree
- Undergraduate Associate degree
- Undergraduate Diploma
- Undergraduate Certificate
- TAFE Diploma
- TAFE Certificate
- Other (please specify)

27. Please identify those areas of school library work that you are seeking professional development in during 2022-2023 by selecting the knowledge/skill level you require when learning about each aspect, either at an 'Introductory', 'Intermediate' or 'Advanced' level. Please select all that apply

	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced
Acquisitions & processing resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessing library management systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cataloguing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Collection development issues & challenges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collection evaluation & stocktaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer service in the school library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Copyright	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing assessments & rubrics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing blended & online learning modules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing curriculum units that integrate AC General Capabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designing library displays & signage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced
Designing library spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital curation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital preservation, historical collections & archives for school libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effective search strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Genrefication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graphic novels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selecting & evaluating Indigenous resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information/digital/media literacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information ethics for school libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IT skills for library staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced
Library data & learning analytics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library staffing protocols & practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing digital collections & databases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing programs & events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing technologies, devices & media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Marketing library collections, programs & services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Media & digital video production	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New & emerging technologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
OHS & risk assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Policies, systems & procedures for school libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced
Readers advisory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading & literacy in schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research, evidence-based practice & program evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Role of the school library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Role of the TL in teaching across the curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School library visits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media for school libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Web design & development for school libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing proposals, grant applications & budgets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

28. Please provide any additional information about your current school library position and role, your career aspirations, professional interests, and/or professional development needs as a school library employee, that you think will help inform ALIA's Professional Pathways Initiative regarding school libraries and school library employees.



Thank you for completing ALIA's Professional Pathways in School Libraries survey!

We greatly appreciate the time you have invested in completing this survey.

Future announcements about the findings of this study will be published at

<https://www.alia.org.au/about/news>.

If you would like to be involved further in this project, please email education@alia.org.au and we will be in touch about possible opportunities.

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Submit your answers now

Appendix B: Modified Monash Model (Geographical Remoteness)

Modified Monash Category (MMM 2019)	Description (including the Australian Statistical Geography Standard – Remoteness Area (2016))
MM 1	Metropolitan areas: Major cities accounting for 70% of Australia’s population All areas categorised ASGS-RA1.
MM 2	Regional centres: Inner (ASGS-RA 2) and Outer Regional (ASGS-RA 3) areas that are in, or within a 20km drive of a town with over 50,000 residents. For example: Ballarat, Mackay, Toowoomba, Kiama, Albury, Bunbury.
MM 3	Large rural towns: Inner (ASGS-RA 2) and Outer Regional (ASGS-RA 3) areas that are not MM 2 and are in, or within a 15km drive of a town between 15,000 to 50,000 residents. For example: Dubbo, Lismore, Yeppoon, Busselton.
MM 4	Medium rural towns: Inner (ASGS-RA 2) and Outer Regional (ASGS-RA 3) areas that are not MM 2 or MM 3, and are in, or within a 10km drive of a town with between 5,000 to 15,000 residents. For example: Port Augusta, Charters Towers, Moree.
MM 5	Small rural towns: All remaining Inner (ASGS-RA 2) and Outer Regional (ASGS-RA 3) areas. For example: Mount Buller, Moruya, Renmark, Condamine.
MM 6	Remote communities: Remote mainland areas (ASGS-RA 4) AND remote islands less than 5kms offshore. For example: Cape Tribulation, Lightning Ridge, Alice Springs, Mallacoota, Port Hedland. Additionally, islands that have an MM 5 classification with a population of less than 1,000 without bridges to the mainland will now be classified as MM 6 for example: Bruny Island.
MM 7	Very remote communities: Very remote areas (ASGS-RA 5). For example: Longreach, Coober Pedy, Thursday Island and all other remote island areas more than 5kms offshore.

Appendix C: List of 55 aspects of library work used in Q14 of questionnaire

Please note this list is not meant to be comprehensive nor exhaustive. These aspects were identified as aspects of library work that *could* be indicative of an employee being responsible for, or undertaking, work tasks that *may* or *may not* be considered within the scope of their employee category.

Acquisitions and processing resources
Assessing and reporting on student learning
Assisting with loans of resources and/or equipment
Assisting with web-based and library database searches
Attend year level and/or department curriculum meetings with teachers
Attend Executive meetings with school leadership team
Class group teaching outside the library
Collaborative planning and teaching curriculum units with teachers
Covering, labelling and repairing resources
Data entry and general administration
Designing and implementing action research and/or evidence-based projects
Designing and implementing cyber-safety and digital well-being units/lessons
Designing and implementing copyright/Creative Commons and ethical use of information units/lessons
Designing curriculum tasks and resource support via our school's Learning Management System
Designing learning and assessment tasks/assignments with teachers
Designing/creating library displays and signage
Developing, implementing, and evaluating literacy and reading programs (e.g., Sustained Reading, Wide Reading, Boys for Books, Read like a Girl)
Developing strategic plans and project proposals
Digital content curation (e.g., LibGuides)
Enrichment learning (e.g., competitions, clubs)
Evaluating curriculum units/learning and assessment outcomes
Fixing faults with equipment and managing equipment
Liaise with other libraries or library groups in the broader community

Maintaining library resources, records, and systems through cataloguing and classification

Managing access to the school's resource collection (e.g., including digital and online resources)

Managing school library staff

Managing school library volunteers

Managing school library website

Managing specialist program/s across the school (e.g., literacy, STEM, coding, makerspace)

Marketing the library's programs and services

Online teaching of classes

Preparing budget submissions

Providing fixed timetabled lessons in the school library with teachers and their class

Providing fixed timetabled lessons in the school library with a class (without the teacher present)

Providing flexibly timetabled lessons in the school library with teachers and their class

Providing flexibly timetabled lessons in the school library with a class (without the teacher present)

Providing IT support for students and teachers

Providing one-on-one support according to student and teacher requests

Providing professional learning for teaching staff

Providing professional learning for library staff

Providing release time for classroom teachers

Reader advisory service (helping students to find their next book)

Reference and search queries of individual students and teachers

Reshelving returned library resources

Resource support for teachers

Resource support for students

School library presence on social media

Selecting & evaluating Indigenous resources

Selecting relevant, quality learning resources on behalf of the school

Small group instruction/support for students

Special events (e.g., Book Week, book fairs)

Stocktaking

Supervise the entire library team

Supervise some library staff

Teaching research/inquiry skills, information, and digital literacy to students

Other (please describe)

Appendix D: Matrix of Priority CPD Topics and Treatment Across Employee Groups

CPD Topics	TLs	Ts	Ls	LTs	LAs
Acquisitions & processing resources		Intro-ADV			InterM-ADV
Assessing library management systems		Intro-ADV			
Cataloguing		Intro-ADV			InterM-ADV
Collection development issues & challenges	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV
Collection evaluation & stocktaking				InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV
Copyright	InterM-ADV	Intro-InterM	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV
Designing blended & online learning modules	InterM-ADV				
Designing curriculum units that integrate AC General Capabilities	InterM-ADV				
Designing library displays & signage		Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV
Designing library spaces	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV
Digital curation	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Digital preservation, historical collections & archives for school libraries			Intro-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Diversity, inclusion & equity in school libraries	InterM-ADV		Intro-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-ADV
Effective search strategies	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV			
Genrefication			InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	
Graphic novels		Intro-ADV			Intro-ADV
Information ethics for school libraries		Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	
Information/digital/media literacy	InterM-ADV		InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	
IT skills for library staff		Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV
Library data & learning analytics	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Managing digital collections & databases	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Managing programs & events		Intro-ADV			
Marketing library collections, programs & services	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
New & emerging technologies	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Policies, systems & procedures for school libraries			InterM-ADV		
Readers' advisory	InterM-ADV			Intro-ADV	
Reading & literacy in schools	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV	InterM-ADV	
Research, evidence-based practice & program evaluation	InterM-ADV				
Role of the school library		Intro-ADV	InterM-ADV		InterM-ADV
Role of the TL in teaching across the curriculum	InterM-ADV	Intro-ADV			
Selecting & evaluation Indigenous resources	InterM-ADV		Intro-ADV	Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Social media for school libraries	InterM-ADV			Intro-ADV	Intro-InterM
Strategic leadership	InterM-ADV				
Web design & development for school libraries			InterM-ADV		Intro-InterM
Writing proposals, grant applications & budgets			InterM-ADV		



PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS



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