



**Library and Information Association
of New Zealand Aotearoa**
Te Rau Herenga O Aotearoa

LIANZA Submission to RoVE

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this Review of Vocational Education (RoVE).

The Aotearoa New Zealand Library Association Inc. (LIANZA) is the national organisation supporting organisations and professionals working in library and information services throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. LIANZA represents 369 institutions and 1260 individuals. From census figures there are about 6000 people working in libraries in NZ. About 1300 of them are members of LIANZA.

Founded in 1910, the Association serves and promotes the interests of the Aotearoa New Zealand library and information industry. It advises and advocates on developments in libraries; promotes excellence and quality in librarianship with a range of awards and recognition. It has a partnership with Te Rōpū Whakahau, and is a member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).

Executive Summary

We have four key messages.

1. Libraries in polytechnics currently play a very important student support role, usually integrated with other student support services. Their contribution to the knowledge infrastructure of working New Zealand is absolutely critical, delivered face to face in cities and in the regions.
2. The current library education provided by distance by the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand works well for the profession where learners are mostly in work at a range of organisations throughout New Zealand. Flexibility, distance education and responsiveness to the profession's needs are important to LIANZA and are well served by the current arrangements. This must be retained whatever structural arrangements the review recommends.
3. LIANZA acts as a key industry advisor for employers of librarians and library assistants and we wish to stay in this role with direct access and influence to the provider(s) of library education. As we are part of the 25% of industries not represented by ITOs, we are not clear what is proposed for our ongoing relationship with our education providers. Our intention is that the new arrangements will continue to see us working in partnership with professions we feel an affinity with, such as museums, archives and galleries.
4. We see some opportunities through the creation of NZ Institute of Skills for innovation and collaboration both across the ITP libraries and in library education.

Impact of vocational education changes on New Zealand's knowledge infrastructure

5. LIANZA is aware of the submission from the ITP Library Managers and supports it.
6. Polytechnic libraries have all faced considerable change over the last five years, with a number of institutional mergers, internal restructures and amalgamations to provide an integrated student focused service. These amalgamated units are important in delivering face to face services to students, teaching information and digital literacy, and providing a place that is engaging and supportive to the student community. These on-site services are critical to students and should remain in the regional facilities.
7. There are benefits to be gained from centralising digital collection services across New Zealand such as improved access to a wider range of materials available to all New Zealanders wherever they choose to study. In addition there is potential for further cost savings from a centralised approach building on the highly collaborative approach NZ polytechnic libraries have already taken in their subscriptions to digital materials. This may be offset by the increase in subscription costs from the greater numbers of students enrolled at the NZ Institute of Skills.
8. The delivery of face to face services is particularly critical to effective learning support for the priority group learners of Māori and Pasifica students, and other groups of primarily oral learners who frequently have a preference for social learning in groups.
9. As vocational education becomes more of a lifelong learning journey where workers move in and out of formal education and vocational training throughout their working lives, the need for ongoing access to knowledge resources is a challenge within our current arrangements and funding levels. This creates an opportunity to join up access to information resources for working New Zealanders, whether they are currently enrolled in formal education or not.

Vocational training for librarians and related professionals

10. Vocational training and development for library and information management professionals works well for the profession with three education providers delivering an appropriate range of choice and emphasis to meet the diverse and evolving needs of the profession. There is no ITO in our profession and LIANZA wants to ensure that we have an appropriate level of influence on educational providers. The current situation is described in more detail below.

Education providers

11. Vocational training and development for library and information management professionals is currently available through three educational providers:
 - Open Polytechnic of New Zealand is the main provider of undergraduate education for the libraries, archives, records and information sectors (referred to as LIS). Courses include certificates, diplomas and the undergraduate degree in library and information studies delivered by distance to learners who are mostly in work, either full or part-time.
 - Victoria University of Wellington provides two masters degrees, also taught by distance, and a doctorate programme.
 - Te Wānanga o Raukawa provides a diploma and degree in information management with a particular focus on Māori knowledge.

The Open Polytechnic

12. The Open Polytechnic began delivering its Bachelor of Library and Information Studies (BLIS) in 2018, with transitional provisions in place for students in earlier degree programmes. The BLIS degree was developed after extensive consultation and is well supported within the sector for its breadth and currency. There are steady numbers of students undertaking professional education and good pipeline growth from sub-degree diplomas and certificates into the Level 7 qualifications.
13. NZQA evaluated and approved all five qualifications in Library and Information Studies. Stakeholders at the panel visit spoke in support of these qualifications and the processes through which they were developed. Employer representatives commented on the relevance of the programmes to current and evolving topics in the library, records, archives and wider information contexts.
14. There is an opportunity provided by the proposed regional structure of the NZ Skills Institute to incorporate some face to face teaching into the distance education programme working in partnership with industry in the regions. This would be an excellent initiative but needs to be sufficiently flexible to provide consistency (for example: workshops and sessions recorded and available online to those who are unable to attend). Distance education is seen as vital as the primary mode of delivery for the equity of access, flexibility for working learners and those making a career change.

Industry advice

15. The Open Polytechnic currently receives industry input on its qualifications from:
 - a. LIANZA as the lead professional association.
 - b. A stakeholder advisory group consisting of representatives from LIANZA, major public and tertiary libraries, Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia, Archives and Records Association of New Zealand, Te Rōpū Whakahaui (the organisation of Māori information professionals), the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) and the School of Information Management at the Victoria University of Wellington.
 - c. Industry practitioners and leaders who contribute to the writing and review of courses.
16. As well as personal members and registered professionals, LIANZA is the voice for the range of employers of library professionals. Employers of library and information workers come mainly from the local and central government sectors, with another significant group who are education providers in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.
17. LIANZA provides accreditation for educational providers and runs its own professional registration scheme which is internationally recognised to enable the recognition of competency among countries operating equivalent professional registration schemes.
18. LIANZA's view is that the current arrangement works effectively and we want to ensure that there continues to be appropriate influence and direct access to our education providers. We would be very concerned were the specific needs of our industry to be dominated by a new ISB grouping focused on Information Technology or some other aspect of 'information' not truly aligned to the information management expertise provided by librarians. We are more naturally

aligned to archives, museums, records managers, galleries and content managers. We also have alignment with educators, community development professionals and customer service/customer experience professionals.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this review of vocational education.