

Lib Prov gets the figures wrong

Dear Editor,

By flourishing handfuls of statistics, including those about the supply of dentists, the Library Provocateur asserts that there is an excess of 'library schools' in Australia. The research is flawed in several respects. (*inCite* October 2010)

Unfortunately the LP's statistics completely overlook the fact that all Australian universities are more dependent on funds from overseas students than they are from any other source. Thus library schools are part of organisations which do not cater primarily to domestic needs; they are providing export commodities on a very large scale. If your readers are in any doubt, my university proudly announces that it achieved the status of Victoria's 'Exporter of the Year'.

In one breath LP regrets that there are insufficient research students, whilst in another LP suggests that we need fewer university courses.

In addition, LP ignores the fact that the research students who undertake higher degrees of all sorts, many of which - not specifically labelled as 'library studies' - will not show up in LP's official statistics as such. Thus I supervise students researching under the rubric of 'Master of Information Technology (Research)' and 'Doctor of Philosophy (Information Technology)', even though they are studying libraries and librarianship. Their work is extremely valuable to all of the information professions.

LP concludes by suggesting that ALIA liaise more closely with universities for PD purposes. As I understand it, each party is content with the current multifaceted relationships which function as full partnerships, if not as marriages.

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Farewell to a "towering figure" in library and information profession

Well known British Librarian Maurice Line has died in England. Maurice made several visits to Australia and will be well remembered by his professional contemporaries in this country. I remember him as a stimulating colleague and valued friend and mentor.

Derek Fielding

[*Editor's note:* Many will remember Maurice's humorously but effectively titled publications, including *How golden is your retriever?* and *Ignoring the user: how, when and why: the bonfire of the author's vanity*. The British Library plans a celebration of his achievements in the profession, however details were not confirmed in time for publication.]

Note to Members

We welcome letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector. It is important to note that the opinions expressed in *Letters to the Editor* are those of the authors and not necessarily the official policy of the Australian Library and Information Association.

Deadline for letters is available on the website and they should be no longer than 250 words. Please include your name and postal address as anonymous correspondence will not be reproduced.




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