Transforming the Library’s impact in the curriculum: Reconceptualising the Library’s Contribution to Students’ Research Skill Development.

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Information Literacy and Academic Libraries

- Successfully, firmly and sustainably embedding information literacy within faculty curricula is still a challenge for academic libraries.
- Extensively debated in the literature for the past 2 decades.
- Academic structures & hierarchies disconnect rather than connect educational professionals.
- Perceptions & misconceptions of the library’s role for student learning.
- Who owns the curriculum?
In assuming responsibility for a broad spectrum of skills development for students, the library’s vision was to take a holistic student centred approach to providing a high quality, visible and accessible services, resources and programs that meets students’ learning needs and inspire them to actively participate in the learning process.”

Smith, 2011, p. 249.
Research and Learning Skills at Monash

Librarians

Clarifying research requirements
Finding & navigating information
Evaluating resources
Organising & managing information
Academic integrity
Ethical use of information

Learning Skills Advisers

Academic English skills
Study methods & Exam preparation
Listening & note taking
Problem solving & critical thinking
Reading strategies
Essay, report, project & thesis writing
Oral communication & presentation

The Research Skill Development (RSD) framework: A platform for collaboration

- RSD introduced to staff in 2010
- The pedagogy of research and learning
- To develop students’ research skills
- Reveal the skills curriculum
- Finding common ground and build trust between professional groups
- Underpins collaboration between librarians and learning skills advisers
- A platform to build collaboration with academics
- Strengthen the impact of the Library educational contribution
## Extent of Students’ Autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1 (Prescribed Research)</th>
<th>Level 2 (Bounded Research)</th>
<th>Level 3 (Scaffolded Research)</th>
<th>Level 4 (Student-Initiated Research)</th>
<th>Level 5 (Open Research)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly structured directions and modulating from educator prompt student research</td>
<td>Boundaries set by and limited directions from educator channel student research</td>
<td>Scaffolds placed by educator shape student independent research</td>
<td>&quot;Generate questions/aims/hypotheses framed within structured guidelines&quot;</td>
<td>Students research within self-determined guidelines that are in accord with discipline or context</td>
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### a. Embark & Clarify
- Respond to questions/tasks arising implicitly from a closed inquiry. Data is provided structural approach to clarify questions, terms, requirements and expectations.
- Respond to questions/tasks required by and implicit in a closed inquiry. Choose from several provided structures to clarify questions, terms, requirements and expectations.
- Respond to questions/tasks generated from a closed inquiry. Choose from a range of provided structures or approaches to clarify questions, terms, requirements and expectations.
- "Generate questions/aims/hypotheses framed within structured guidelines".

### b. Find & Generate
- Collect and record required information/data using a prescribed methodology.
- Collect and record required information/data using a prescribed methodology from a prescribed source in which the information/data is clearly evident.
- Collect and record self-determined information/data from self-selected sources using one of several prescribed methodologies.
- Collect and record self-determined information/data from self-selected sources, choosing or devising an appropriate methodology based on structured guidelines.

### c. Evaluate & Reflect
- Evaluate information/data and reflect on the inquiry process using simple prescribed criteria.
- Evaluate information/data and reflect on the inquiry process using given criteria.
- Evaluate information/data and the inquiry process using criteria related to the aims of the inquiry. Reflect insightfully to improve own processes used.
- Evaluate information/data and the inquiry process comprehensively using self-determined criteria developed within structured guidelines. Reflect insightfully to refine others’ processes.

### d. Organise & Manage
- Organise information/data using prescribed structure. Manage linear process provided.
- Organise information/data using a choice of given structures. Manage a process which has alternative pathways.
- Organise information/data using recommended structures. Manage self-determined processes within multiple possible pathways.
- Organise information/data using student-determined structures, and manage the processes, within the parameters set by the guidelines.

### e. Analyse & Synthesise
- Analyse and synthesise information/data to reproduce existing knowledge in prescribed formats. "Ask emergent questions of clarification curvature*.
- Analyse and synthesise information/data to reorganize existing knowledge in standard formats. "Ask relevant, researchable questions emerging from the research*.
- Analyse and synthesise information/data to construct emergent knowledge. "Ask rigorous, researchable questions based on new understandings*.
- Analyse and create information/data to fill knowledge gaps stated by others.

### f. Communicate & Apply ethically
- Write, present and perform the processes, understandings and applications of the research, and respond to feedback, accounting for ethical, social and cultural (ESC) issues.
- Use mainly lay language and prescribed genre to demonstrate understanding for listener/teacher as audience. Apply to a similar context the knowledge developed. Follow prompts on ESC issues.
- Use discipline-specific language and genres to demonstrate scholarly understanding for a specified audience. Apply to different contexts the knowledge developed. Specify ESC issues in initiating, conducting and communicating.
- Use discipline-specific language and genres to address gaps of a self-selected audience. Apply innovatively the knowledge developed to diverse contexts. Specify ESC issues in initiating, conducting and communicating.
- Use appropriate language and genre to extend the knowledge of a range of audiences. Apply innovatively the knowledge developed to multiple contexts. Probe and specify ESC issues that emerge broadly.

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Developing staff capacity: learning through a Community of Practice

- Initiative supported by Library Directors
- Encouraging formal and informal discussion
- Personal agency – when the time is right
- Bring a Friend (BAF) workshop/s
- Identifying RSD library “champions”
- Taking a ‘risk’ – moving to partnership approaches
- Development of an RSD module for the GCHE
- Developing evaluation tools and methods
- Cross faculty collaboration
Monash Strategic Plan, 2011-2015
“To embed RSD framework across all faculties”

Initiate
2010-2011

Enlisting support
Library
Directors
Faculty Team Leaders
Librarians
Learning Skills Advisers
Academics

Adopt
2011-2012

Existing library structures
Identify champions
Novice-expert
Personal Agency
Professional risk taking
Peer Learning – formal and informal
Pedagogical approaches for skill development
Cost-neutral
Community of Practice

Implement
2012-current

Sustainable strategies
Workshops (BaF)
RSD module GCAP
RSD Symposium 2012
Involvement in OLT, ALTC research projects
Curriculum review & renewal, skills mapping, skills audits
RSD informed curriculum design & delivery
Assessment-rubrics workshops
Sharing the RSD at National & International workshops

An organic Community of Practice

“...a democratic and professional path to improvement that builds from the bottom, steers from the top, and provides support and pressure from the sides...committed and capable of creating deep and broad teaching and learning, it builds powerful, responsible and lively professional communities...”

Hargreaves and Shirley, p. 107).

“The workshops were invaluable for introducing a different way of thinking about research itself, and about research methods - as a cycle of continual learning and development, and as a framework of skills. What students learned most was about seeing themselves as researchers, a point we often forget to make in teaching on research methods.”

Academic, Faculty of Arts, Monash University.
Mapping Research Skills: An Assessment Task Example

A. Ability to formulate own research questions
B. Use of search strategy
C. Depth and breadth of coverage of topic
D. Range of sources
E. Critical analysis of literature
F. Clarity, accuracy and precision
G. Identification of central issues and concepts
H. Headings and sections
I. Explanation of techniques to examine topic
J. Development of valid case or argument
K. Abstract
L. Introduction
M. Logical order and path
N. Conclusion
O. Illustrations and tables
P. Length
Q. Clarity and succinctness
R. Style
S. Grammatical conventions
T. Statements supported by referencing
U. Appropriate referencing style and bibliography
The RSD: Organisational and Professional Benefits

Educational Partnerships
- Opens doors for collaboration
- Demystifies perceptions of professional roles
- Overcomes barriers to work in the curriculum
- Provides a common language

Transforming Practice
- Service model to a partnership model
- Enables the contribution of library expertise
- Shared educational objectives

Curriculum Innovation
- From pathways to graduation
- Informs educational strategies – Graduate Attributes, employability skills, AQF
- A pedagogy for the skills curricula

Building Staff Capacity
- New approaches to skill development
- Taking risks to innovate
- Confidence building
- Leadership
- Transformational learning
- Shift in professional identity
Evaluating Effectiveness

“The RSD has been particularly helpful for me as a framework for thinking about the research process and learning in the university. It helps me to unpack assessment tasks and marking criteria for students when they come to the Research and Learning Point. It also provides a context within which to create Library sessions. Understanding research skills as a dynamic interaction between the facets of inquiry and the levels of autonomy has helped me provide more focused rather than ‘just in case’ sessions”.

Subject Librarian, Faculty of Arts, Monash University Library.
The RSD: Reconceptualising Practice
Adopting the RSD from the ground up: starting small

- One assessment task
- Skills audit
- Review learning objectives against the RSD
- Identify the skills students’ require to engage successfully with the task
- Make the skills explicit in the learning objectives
- Include the skills in the corresponding marking rubric
Questions?

Thank you