Information literacy is increasingly a significant component of program learning outcomes and course learning objectives. We expect students to be able to locate the information needed to support their learning and to be discriminating in making selections from the overwhelming amount of information available. This assessment resource provides a way of supporting students in developing competence in the ways they access, select and apply information from various sources.


Introduction
Information literacy is defined as …a set of abilities requiring individuals to ‘recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information’. (p. 2)

It is argued that … Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. An information literate individual is able to:

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally. (pp. 2, 3)

In addition to providing background on the development of the Information Literacy Competency standards, this booklet addresses the following aspects of information literacy

- Information Literacy and Information Technology
- Information Literacy and Higher Education
- Information Literacy and Pedagogy
- Use of the Standards
- Information Literacy and Assessment

Standards, Performance Indicators, and Outcomes
The main part of the booklet describes performance indicators and outcomes for each of five standards that demonstrate increasing levels of attainment in aspects of information literacy.

Standards 1 and 5 are included below as examples of progression in competency.
STANDARD ONE

The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.

Performance Indicators:
1. The information literate student defines and articulates the need for information.

Outcomes Include:
   a. Confers with instructors and participates in class discussions, peer workgroups, and electronic discussions to identify a research topic, or other information need
   b. Develops a thesis statement and formulates questions based on the information need
   c. Explores general information sources to increase familiarity with the topic
   d. Defines or modifies the information need to achieve a manageable focus
   e. Identifies key concepts and terms that describe the information need
   f. Recognizes that existing information can be combined with original thought, experimentation, and/or analysis to produce new information

2. The information literate student identifies a variety of types and formats of potential sources for information.

Outcomes Include:
   a. Knows how information is formally and informally produced, organized, and disseminated
   b. Recognizes that knowledge can be organized into disciplines that influence the way information is accessed
   c. Identifies the value and differences of potential resources in a variety of formats (e.g., multimedia, database, website, data set, audio/visual, book)
   d. Identifies the purpose and audience of potential resources (e.g., popular vs. scholarly, current vs. historical)
   e. Differentiates between primary and secondary sources, recognizing how their use and importance vary with each discipline
   f. Realizes that information may need to be constructed with raw data from primary sources

3. The information literate student considers the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information.

Outcomes Include:
   a. Determines the availability of needed information and makes decisions on broadening the information seeking process beyond local resources (e.g., interlibrary loan; using resources at other locations; obtaining images, videos, text, or sound)
   b. Considers the feasibility of acquiring a new language or skill (e.g., foreign or discipline-based) in order to gather needed information and to understand its context
   c. Defines a realistic overall plan and timeline to acquire the needed information.

4. The information literate student re-evaluates the nature and extent of the information need.

Outcomes Include:
   a. Reviews the initial information need to clarify, revise, or refine the question
   b. Describes criteria used to make information decisions and choices

STANDARD TWO
STANDARD THREE
STANDARD FOUR

STANDARD FIVE

The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.
**Performance Indicators:**

1. The information literate student understands many of the ethical, legal and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology.

**Outcomes Include:**

- a. Identifies and discusses issues related to privacy and security in both the print and electronic environments
- b. Identifies and discusses issues related to free vs. fee-based access to information
- c. Identifies and discusses issues related to censorship and freedom of speech
- d. Demonstrates an understanding of intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of copyrighted material.

2. The information literate student follows laws, regulations, institutional policies, and etiquette related to the access and use of information resources.

**Outcomes Include:**

- a. Participates in electronic discussions following accepted practices (e.g. “Netiquette”)
- b. Uses approved passwords and other forms of ID for access to information resources
- c. Complies with institutional policies on access to information resources
- d. Preserves the integrity of information resources, equipment, systems and facilities
- e. Legally obtains, stores, and disseminates text, data, images, or sounds
- f. Demonstrates an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism and does not represent work attributable to others as his/her own
- g. Demonstrates an understanding of institutional policies related to human subjects research.

3. The information literate student acknowledges the use of information sources in communicating the product or performance.

**Outcomes Include:**

- a. Selects an appropriate documentation style and uses it consistently to cite sources
- b. Posts permission granted notices, as needed, for copyrighted material.

**Application of the standards**

The intention of the resource is that …Faculty, librarians, and others will find that discussing assessment methods collaboratively is a very productive exercise in planning a systematic, comprehensive information literacy program. This assessment program should reach all students, pinpoint areas for further program development, and consolidate learning goals already achieved. It also should make explicit to the institution’s constituencies how information literacy contributes to producing educated students and citizens (p. 7).

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This series of briefs on assessment topics has been prepared by the UQ Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI) for UQ teaching academics. “UQ ASSESSMENT BRIEFS” of journal articles, book chapters, reviews, websites, reports etc are distributed to Faculty and School Teaching and Learning Chairs in a form designed to encourage wider distribution.

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