Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) Position statement on Digital Dexterity

Introduction

Digital dexterity is a fundamental aspect of the mission of university libraries, now and for the foreseeable future. Digital dexterity is more than digital literacy. It is a critical component in the success of digital societies: digital dexterity encompasses the "cognitive ability and social practice needed to leverage and employ various types of media, information and technology for advantage in unique and highly innovative ways that optimise personal and business value" (Gartner 2015, p.3). CAUL extends this definition to include active participation in all aspects of work and life in a digital world, so that people develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to help them live, learn and work in a digital society.

CAUL encourages Australian and New Zealand universities to recognise the importance of digital dexterity in accomplishing their missions. Universities and their libraries have a unique opportunity and are ideally placed to equip Australians and New Zealanders with the skills and higher-order knowledge required to thrive in a world in which the future fields of work are as yet unknown.

CAUL's 2016 document, *Principles and Guidelines for Australian Higher Education Libraries*, addresses the role of university libraries in providing support for developing DD skills, including providing "educational programs and training to enable stakeholders to build contemporary research, academic and digital literacy skills" (CAUL 2016, p.9).

Digital Dexterity principles

1. Society is transformed through the power of research, teaching and learning, all of which occur in a digital context. University libraries are instrumental in building society's capacity for digital dexterity, transforming how people experience knowledge through discovery, use and sharing.

2. University libraries are essential elements of digital knowledge and information infrastructures, enabling student achievement and research excellence.

3. Australian and New Zealand graduates have access to resources that will enable them to develop the digital skills to thrive in a global work context and to become effective global citizens.

4. A proactive approach to lifelong learning is a key component of digital dexterity, and businesses should facilitate employee learning in partnership with education institutions, including libraries.

5. CAUL supports the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, including the importance of digital inclusion and citizenship in achieving those goals.

Website: www.caul.edu.au
Email: caul@caul.edu.au
Facebook: CAULalert
Twitter: @CAULalert

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Goals

CAUL will take a proactive approach towards digital dexterity and will work to address gaps in the following ways:

1. Provide a framework for universities to draw on to underpin the development of digital dexterity skills in their staff and students.
2. Facilitate the ability for CAUL members to advocate within the profession and across their institutions.
3. Work collaboratively with industry partners to provide opportunities for capability development of CAUL members.
4. Provide a web presence to enable sharing and distribution of open and accessible resources.

References

CAUL (2016) *Principles and Guidelines for Australian Higher Education Libraries.* Retrieved from https://www.caul.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/best-practice/principles-guidelines2016public.pdf

Gartner (2015) *Defining Digital Dexterity - the Core Workforce Resource for the Digital Business.* Retrieved from https://www.gartner.com/doc/3084618/defining-digital-dexterity--core

Jisc (n.d.) *Building digital capabilities: the six elements defined.* Retrieved from http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6611/1/JFL0066F_DIGIGAP_MOD_IND_FRAME.PDF