# Response – Future Humanities Workforce

The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) is the peak leadership organisation for university libraries in Australia. CAUL members are the University Librarians or equivalent of the 39 institutions that have representation on Universities Australia and the 8 members of the Council of New Zealand University Librarians (CONZUL).

CAUL's vision is that society is transformed through the power of research, teaching and learning. University libraries are essential knowledge and information infrastructures that enable student achievement and research excellence.  CAUL makes a significant contribution to higher education strategy, policy and outcomes through a commitment to a shared purpose:

> **To transform how people experience knowledge –
> how it can be discovered, used and shared.**

University libraries and library organisations broadly play a leading role in enabling fair, affordable and open access to knowledge. They are also instrumental in building society's capacity for digital dexterity – fluency in the use of digital technology, skills and essential literacies.

CAUL is grateful for this opportunity to provide a response to the Australian Academy of the Humanities consultation paper on the Future Humanities Workforce. Our response addresses questions four and five posed by the consultation paper: What are future knowledge, skills, and capabilities that humanities researchers will require? And what can the humanities contribute to the data and digital literacy agenda over the next decade?

The concept of Digital Dexterity, which has been a key focus of CAUL's work over the past two years[1], offers insight into the knowledge, skills and capabilities that the future workforce will require. Having these capabilities will allow graduates in all disciplines, including the humanities, to contribute to the data and digital literacy agenda and meet the social, economic and environmental challenges of the future.

The concept of Digital Dexterity builds on 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"[2].

CAUL has extended 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. A framework[3], based on the Jisc Digital capabilities framework[4], outlines the skills and capabilities that students will need to succeed in the workforce of the future.

We encourage the Academy to adopt the Digital Dexterity concept and framework when recommending solutions for training Australia's humanities workforce. We would also welcome the opportunity to work with the Academy to explore how university libraries can collaborate with the humanities in this endeavour.

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[1] https://www.caul.edu.au/about-caul/communities/digital-dexterity-community-practice
[2] https://www.gartner.com/doc/3084618/defining-digital-dexterity--core
[3] https://www.caul.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/digital-dexterity/digdex2019framework.pdf
[4] http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6611/1/JFL0066F_DIGIGAP_MOD_IND_FRAME.PDF