Australian National University

Scholarly Information Services

Review of Academic Competencies & Digital Capabilities

Review Panel Report

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Background

ANU has a strong commitment to delivering excellence and equity in education. The 2021-2025 Strategic Plan records 'Delivering a student experience equal to the world's best' as one of the four goals, while another is 'Being a standard-bearer for equity and inclusion'.

In order to achieve a world-class education that supports equity and inclusion, support services are provided across the University, including through the Scholarly Information Services (SIS) Division. Within the SIS Division, services for the educational support of all students (undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG) coursework and higher degree research (HDR)) cross all areas, including Libraries, Digital Scholarship, Communications and the ANU Press. As set out in the SIS 2021 Plan on a Page, the Divisional team's purpose is to 'provide knowledge services to the University for research, education, world class impact through dissemination of knowledge and to inspire scholarship throughout the world'.

This review of support services for academic competencies and digital capabilities has been instigated to develop a holistic, high-level assessment of issues and needs in the context of operationalising the ANU 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, with a view to evaluating SIS's contribution to:

- creating a physical and digital campus that is inclusive, supportive and nurturing;
- offering an outstanding campus life and residential experience;
- providing seamless services from pre-entry to graduation and alumni membership; and
- overcoming barriers to admission created by disadvantage and assuring educational experiences are accessible to all students with the talent and potential to succeed.

The ambitions of the ANU Strategic Plan 2021-2025 are supported by a new Digital Master Plan (which commits to transforming the digital environment of the ANU and making 'digital literacy the cornerstone of our digital journey'), the recent Orientation and Transition Framework and Implementation Plan, the Student First program and the contemporary development of ANU Graduate Attributes and a new ANU Learning and Teaching Strategy. Other new initiatives were also mentioned to the review panel that will impact SIS's future remit, including: the introduction of a post Enrolment Language Assessment (PELA) in 2022; a new learning management system; and the possibility of SIS assuming responsibility for the ANU College remit for English language and wellbeing support. In short, SIS will be expected, and should continue, to play a central role in supporting the learning and teaching transformation envisaged by the University, leveraging its expertise and working closely with the student body and other areas across ANU, particularly: the Centre for Learning & Teaching (CLT); the Office of the Dean Higher Degree Research; the Statistical Support Network; the Halls of Residence; the Academy; the Access and Inclusion Office; and Careers and Employability.

SIS's current array of core student support service activities is funded through recurrent expenditure and includes: individual consultations; training activities (online, face-to-face and through designed information online); digital resource development; and special programs such as Academic Integrity Week. Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) funding is obtained annually for: the Peer Writing Service; Writing Coaches; and Let's Speak English conversation groups. The review panel was advised that the budget for 2022 allows for the same staffing and services as were offered in 2021 and 2020.

In January 2021, the SIS services were enriched with the inclusion of Academic Skills into the Division. Academic Skills has combined with the Library's Digital Literacy Team now to form a new area – Academic Competencies and Digital Capabilities (ACDC) – situated in the Chifley Library. As set out in the *Academic Competencies & Digital Capabilities & ANU Library Teaching Self-Evaluation Paper* ('Self-Evaluation Paper') prepared for this review (2022, 1)

> The core goal of the [ACDC] team is to provide outstanding services related to academic competencies and digital capabilities for both academics and students at the ANU. The team is responsible for designing, delivering and evaluating training and resources made available to the wider ANU community, particularly to students, researchers, and the ANU Colleges. The team comprises of five Learning Advisers [5 FTE], two Digital Literacy Trainers [1.8 FTE], one Administrator and the Manager, with additional teaching collaboration occurring between subject specialist librarians throughout the ANU Library.

The ACDC team also oversees the three SSAF funded initiatives mentioned above.

In addition to the teaching and research support services delivered by ACDC, other areas across SIS also engage in teaching and one-to-one consultations in their specific areas of expertise. In this regard, and as also referenced in the 2022 Self-Evaluation Paper, staff in the ANU Library's Client Service Stream 'provide a range of information services, including reference services and designing and presenting information literacy programs and classes to students and researchers' (2022, 5). These support services include (2022, 5-6): 'Library Learning'; 'In Curriculum and Subject Specific Library Teaching'; 'In Depth Research Consultations'; 'Library Instruction and Orientation'; 'Digital Literacy Skills Instruction'; and 'Asynchronous Teaching Content'. ANU Archives, Digital Scholarship and Carto GIS also provide support and one-to-one consultation activities. The Self-Evaluation Paper records the many support service contributions that are made by each of ACDC and these other areas, from the perspective of each of them, across the UG, PG coursework and HDR domains.

For ANU, it is timely to conduct a strategic review of SIS's support services for students around academic competencies and digital capabilities, given: the recent merger with Academic Skills; the most recent institutional strategising for clearer identification of the University's direction and priorities for learning and teaching beyond the COVID emergency; and the fast evolving pace of pedagogical change in the higher education sector.

From the SIS Divisional perspective, there are also three particular reasons for this review to occur now. The first is due to the incorporation of Academics Skills into SIS and the opportunity this presents to reassess holistically SIS's provision of support services in the context of the changing needs of the University, particularly the need for enhanced digital delivery and to meet the needs of a diverse academic and student community. The second is the changing models of service delivery due to the pandemic, which required rapid transformation to support online education and student needs. As the pandemic unfolded, many support offerings and classes were moved fully online from what had been predominately face-to-face modes, with videos and synchronous delivery of many sessions made available to provide equitable access for the support for all students. This included: digital literacy classes; the transition of embedded library activities within courses; and many academic skills courses and consultations also delivered online. Assessing best practice, the lessons from this significant pivoting of face-to-face practice, together with the contemporary need for long-term digital transformation, will provide important insights that should inform future service delivery models that balance the University's commitment to an on-campus experience and evolving client expectations. Thirdly, it has been some time since there has been a review of this type of service within SIS. Information literacy was identified as a need in the late 2000s, under a review led by Professor Robin Stanton, then Pro Vice Chancellor E-strategies. The last SIS Division review was led by Mr Andrew Wells in 2014, then University Librarian, University of New South Wales. Since that time, services and practice have continued to evolve. This review provides the opportunity to call on and benchmark good practice from around the globe in order to inform a better understanding of the needs of the ANU and the future strategic directions of SIS services to support students' contemporary academic and research skills' development most effectively and efficiently.

As SIS reflects on past success and considers its future contributions, this review presents SIS with an assessment of current issues and needs and advice for building an institutional

consensus around how its services might be best organised, presented and delivered in alignment with the ANU strategic objectives for world-class education and an equitable and inclusive student experience. Front and centre in such a revisioning should be the imperatives to support both the diversity of students (across the demands of location, background, access, inclusion and transition phase) and the diversity of student need across research, teaching, learning and new pedagogies for digitally enriched learning experiences beyond COVID.

The panel members for the review are:

Professor Sally Kift – President, Australian Learning & Teaching Fellows; Vice Chancellor's Fellow, Victoria University; and Adjunct Professor: JCU, QUT and La Trobe University.

Professor Annemaree Lloyd – Professor of Information Studies, Department of Information Studies, University College, London (UCL).

Mr Michael Gonzalez – University Librarian, University of Technology Sydney.

The panel is very grateful to Ms Megan Easton for the exemplary secretrait services and support she provided to the panel members over the course of the review and in the compilation of the review report.

22 February 2022

Process

The panel was provided with a portfolio of information as background to the review. This included:

- The SIS service review proposal: Review of support for academic competencies and digital capabilities (including the terms of reference). The terms of reference for the review appear in Appendix A;
- *Academic Competencies & Digital Capabilities & ANU Library Teaching Self-Evaluation Paper*, including an overview from the Director of Scholarly Information Services;
- Timetable for the Review; and
- Submissions received.

A copy of the review timetable across 27 and 28 January 2022 appears in Appendix B. This includes details of the stakeholders with whom the panel met.

A call for submissions went out across the ANU on 15 December 2021. Submissions closed on 12 January 2022. In total six submissions were received. A list of the submissions appears in Appendix C. Two further confidential submissions were received during the conduct of the review over 27-28 January, at which time a large amount of other supporting documentation was also provided to the panel.

The panel was requested to provide to report to the University Librarian, against the terms of reference, including:

- An objective view of the assessment of the University's needs, achievements, best practice and strategic directions;
- Commendations in areas where the Division has achieved outstanding outcomes or made significant progress towards doing so;
- Recommendations in areas where improvements can be made. When making recommendations, the panel was asked to take into account the University's strategic objectives, as outlined in the ANU Strategic Plan and associated Executive Plans.

Post-review process: The report will be considered by the Library Advisory Committee and relevant stakeholders. The University Librarian and Associate Director, Libraries will prepare an implementation plan, which will include actions, timeframes and persons responsible against each of the recommendations or comments where appropriate.

Executive Summary

It is clear that there are significant expectations of the enabling role the Scholarly Information Services (SIS) Division will play in delivering the bold ambitions that The Australian National University (ANU) has set for itself in its Strategic Plan 2021-2025 – *ANU by 2025* – particularly as regards its alignment to the ANU Strategic Plan pillars of 'Delivering a student experience equal to the world's best' and 'Being a standard-bearer for equity and inclusion'. This articulation demands that SIS assures the seamlessness of its provision of research and educational support services to enable an inclusive educational environment, in which all students are supported to work, learn and research. Adapting the words of the Strategic Plan (2021, 20), SIS now has an even more central role in 'Creating a campus environment – including a digital environment – that treats ANU students as individuals, builds on the collective capability of the students, nourishes their intellectual curiosity, supports their success, and protects their welfare'. The terms of reference for this review echo similar ambitions, directing the panel's attention to interrogating SIS's provision of 'research and educational support services to develop academic capabilities of students, including academic integrity, assessment writing skills, information skills and digital literacies' and to reviewing 'the changing needs of the University in this area, including the need for digital delivery and meeting the needs of a diverse academic and student community'.

SIS has a proud and sustained history of delivering research and educational support services that are valued by the student and academic community. The incorporation of Academic Skills into SIS in January 2021, the changing models of service delivery required over the pandemic as fully face-to-face support services without digital equivalents were moved quickly online, and the length of time since these vital services were last reviewed, have provided the primary impetus for the review. The institutional context is now also changing rapidly as the University considers international trends and best practice to set its post-COVID direction and priorities for learning and teaching beyond the immediate pandemic emergency. Important questions for SIS as it moves into the next phase of supporting student-centred learning and academic needs are: what support for information literacy, information skills, digital literacy and academic literacies and skills (hereafter 'information, digital and academic literacies and skills') is needed for the next generation of ANU undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG) coursework and higher degree research (HDR) students; and how best might that support be organised and delivered in a service model that ensures inclusion and equity across face-to-face and digital enabled learning spaces?

In addressing the terms of reference, this review makes a number of commendations and recommendations and, as requested, offers advice on the future strategic direction of SIS support services, paying particular attention to the distinctive educational priorities of the ANU as expressed in its Strategic Plan, associated Executive Plans and recently announced initiatives.

The panel commends SIS's leadership, the Division's sustained commitment to student support across a broad remit and the central role SIS has played in the distinctive ANU context. The service continuity that has been maintained through periods of change, and particularly the flexibility and creativity of SIS in its delivery of support services throughout the COVID period, have been greatly appreciated by academic staff and students alike. The review panel also particularly commends the willingness and professionalism of SIS colleagues to engage in frank, robust and constructive conversations over the course of the review, which have evidenced their obvious commitment to continual service improvement and enhancement.

The panel considers there is considerable opportunity for SIS to improve and streamline its student support provision for the next generation of ANU learners, leveraging its existing strengths. Particular opportunities include: integrating the Academic Skills team; leveraging

new models of service delivery developed over the pandemic; the proposed expansion of SIS's support remit; and the context of a new ANU Strategic Plan and associated Executive Plans, including a refreshed ANU Learning and Teaching Strategy that focuses on a high quality, primarily on-campus student experience, comprehensively enriched by an equally high quality digital learning and support ecosystem. In this regard, the review panel recommends that SIS takes advantage of the review's timing to establish a culture and ethos of an integrated **'One Division/ Library - One Team - One Culture'** (or similar) to support the University's aspirations for world-class, digitally enabled, on-campus experiences with agility and flexibility. The various, relatively siloed support service areas that currently operate across SIS (at least as they were presented in the Self-Evaluation Paper with which the panel was provided) should be brought together into a seamless, student-centred whole for sustainable and responsive approaches to meet the ongoing and future needs of the ANU. An integrated information, digital and academic literacies and skills framework, co-developed within SIS to underpin its future support services model, would provide all members of the ANU community with clear definitions, understanding and shared language for the development and embedding of generic and contextualised literacies and skills into the curriculum and the broader student experience over the various student lifecycles stages. Once clearly articulated in such a framework, the range of SIS's expert services can be communicated and promoted to the rest of the University community and enmeshed in the University's planning documents.

Specifically, the panel envisages that this important re-imagining and alignment of SIS's support service provision would be done comprehensively and in a sequenced way as follows:

- Developing a [SIS] co-produced, **integrated information literacy practice framework** to guide and support service provision, including definitions for information, digital and academic literacies and skills, taking into account the need to scaffold and support student transitions into, through and out of their University education (UG, PG coursework and HDR). The integrated framework is envisaged as a mechanism for connecting SIS to University initiatives that have been recently developed and are currently under consideration: for example, interdependencies with and between the Strategic Plan, the Digital Master Plan, the Student First program, ANU Graduate Attributes, the new Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Orientation and Transition Plan, the introduction of a PELA from 2022 and so on.

- Mapping existing SIS service delivery across the entirety of the student literacies and skills landscape – information, digital and academic literacies and skills. Such mapping should then be extended to take account of relevant, related support service provision across the rest of the University. In undertaking such a comprehensive audit of existing practice, which records all relevant digital and face-to-face support provision from a student-centred perspective, it should be possible to: identify and reduce current duplication; streamline services; harness synergies; and identify gaps. This process is envisaged as the first step in conceptualising and situating SIS's role and responsibilities in whole-of-institution support service provision, as against the integrated framework developed.

- Implementing the integrated framework across the institution, particularly by way of embedding the framework in curriculum, across learning, teaching and assessment, and across the broader student experience.

- Developing a SIS service model, post COVID, that is fit-for-purpose for a digitally enabled on-campus University offer; one which is responsive to the evolved needs of students transitioning in, through and out of their individual programs of study and disciplines. Necessary considerations in this context will include matters such as: clear roles

and responsibilities within the SIS integrated team; the mix of services; alignment with other services across the University; service equity to ensure that all necessary identified literacies and skills are supported appropriately; the balance between online, face-to-face and hybrid service delivery and engagement; and the balance between, and mix of, generic and discipline-specific support. Specific consideration should be given to allocating resources to *whole-of-degree* curriculum embedding of relevant literacies and skills, in addition to the current practice of 'embedded teaching' and individual course embedding. Consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders to assure appropriate prioritisation of effort to meet students' needs in their discipline learning in these various regards will be required (and is also raised under the need for more targeted engagement in a further dot point below).

- Improving the clarity, coherence, reach and impact of SIS's communications to ensure that its remit and 'one team' purpose, focus and support service provision are well understood, both internally within the Division and externally across the rest of the University community (staff, students, Halls of Residence, management and academic/ discipline areas). Communications should be focussed, tailored, and delivered from a student-centred perspective (to be compared with communications from siloed organisational areas). Improved branding, coherent messaging and enhanced visibility of the one SIS integrated team, in terms of both its physical and virtual presence, will be important for re-setting a 'library first' support services approach. It was also suggested to the review panel by a number of interviewees that the 'ACDC' nomenclature should be reconsidered as it does not capture or represent well the support services this particular area provides (if retained in its current configuration).

- Refreshing and enhancing SIS's engagement with other areas of the University as a reimagined and integrated support services team, in tandem with improved communications and in the context of implementing the integrated framework developed. Areas of particular interest for considering enhanced engagement, in order to assure strategic alignment and learning and teaching resource prioritisation, include: the Academy (for example, to ascertain the discipline needs of Colleges and Schools for support service contextualisation and to work on embedding literacies and skills in curriculum (in addition to current embedded teaching and course embedding)); the Halls of Residence; other service areas (for example, CLT, the Access and Inclusion Office, Careers and Employability; those responsible for institutional student communications); the Office of the Dean Higher Degree Research; and the Statistical Support Network. In pursuing its engagement strategy in this regard, SIS may wish also to consider and rationalise its approach to representation and engagement on cross-institutional committees and working parties to assure effective and efficient two-way communication between it and other organisational areas and to assure information provision in cross-divisional communications.

- Establishing appropriate and agreed success measures (both quantitative and qualitative) across SIS, against which implementation of the integrated information literacy practice framework (to be developed) can be measured, and congruent with other high-level institutional planning documents. Specific regard should be had to enabling the collection of accurate, consistent, actionable and comprehensive data around SIS performance, engagement, satisfaction and impact. Such data collected can then be used for ongoing service delivery monitoring, improvement and enhancement. The collection of robust and relevant data, that can be analysed to determine the efficacy and reach of support services provided to different disciplines, different students (UG, PG coursework, HDR and by equity cohort also), different Colleges, Schools and Residences, and across different lifecycle

stages (orientation, engaging with learning, and transitioning out to the world of work or further study), should also help to improve the 'external narrative' of SIS's contribution to institutional strategy and will provide important insights into gaps in service provision. Consideration should also be given to appropriate benchmarking within the sector (for example, with other Group of Eight universities and acknowledged leaders in SIS-equivalent areas in other universities).

Observations and Findings

The review panel commends the willingness of SIS colleagues to engage in the frank, robust and constructive conversations for service improvement that it witnessed throughout the review process. The panel further commends the demonstration of a clear and strong commitment to delivering and supporting an equitable and inclusive student experience 'equal to the world's best'. It was evident that the services provided from within SIS, and via departments such as the newly constituted Academic Competencies & Digital Capabilities (ACDC), are appreciated by staff, students and senior management across the institution.

Moreover, it is clear that SIS has a critical and central role to play in delivering on the strategic vision of the ANU generally and the institution's reimaging of learning and teaching beyond the circumstances of the pandemic specifically. SIS should be confident and enabled in the deployment of its expertise in this regard and work collaboratively with other service areas, the Halls of Residence and the Academy to deliver the range and variety of face-to-face and digital support – generic, contextualised and embedded – required now and into the future. Specific regard should be had to ensuring that support service provision is delivered seamlessly across the institution, in student-centred and student-facing ways that are clearly communicated and iteratively evaluated for efficacy and continual improvement. The development of a range of suitable success measures in this regard (both quantitative and qualitative, and leveraging existing ANU and national data) will be important, in addition to conducting appropriate benchmarking. SIS is also strongly encouraged to work in close partnership with students (for example, the ANU Student Association (ANUSA) and the ANU Postgraduate Students Association (PARSA)) to assure that student voice is authentically engaged in ongoing quality improvement in SIS's service delivery.

The panel has framed their observations and findings around the review terms of reference.

1. Evaluate the current performance of Scholarly Information Services in providing research and educational support services to develop academic capabilities of students, including academic integrity, assessment writing skills, information skills and digital literacies

As the panel reflected upon the self-evaluation, submissions, interviews and other information provided, it was evident that the SIS services have some areas of excellence, some areas that are not functioning at peak performance and some areas which are subject to a lack of cohesion and leadership.

The panel **recommends** that SIS take the opportunity now to establish a culture and ethos of 'Scholarly Information Services (SIS) - One Division/ Library - One team - One culture' (or similar) on which to base the provision of a seamless and cohesive experience for all students.[1] In so doing, the SIS Division and its staff should also develop an enabling and shared understanding about roles, responsibilities, processes and expectations.

It was evident that the complex environment thrown up over the last two years by the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the on-boarding of the Academic Skills team that occurred in early 2021and the integration of its functions. With lockdowns and remote working, it was unfortunate that there was a lost opportunity to build a new team culture, to establish norms and a shared ethos for ways of working. It was evident during the review that considerable associated work remains to be undertaken to build an integrated framework to underpin integrated practice and to ensure the development of shared language, purpose and goals. SIS should work collaboratively and constructively together to refocus and align all of its groups, including the Academic Skills and Digital Literacy Team (now ACDC), as a single team to address student-learning needs

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[1] Recommendation 1

across the student lifecycle – the transition into, through and out – across the relevant UG, PG coursework or HDR learning engagement. This is to ensure that current silos become integrated in seamless support service provision, in a sustainable approach to practise, and taking into account the University's expectations for an enlarged SIS remit (for example, as regards the introduction of a Post Enrolment Language Assessment (PELA) in 2022).

The panel **recommends** that SIS develop a robust integrated, information literacy practice framework, and that this framework include definitions for information literacy, information skills, digital literacy and academic literacy and skills (hereafter 'information, digital and academic literacies and skills'), which are mapped against student transitions in, through and out of their University education (UG, PG coursework and HDR)[2]. The panel noted that ANU has identified issues that need to be addressed around maths and statistical support, especially for undergraduates.

In conjunction with the integrated framework to be developed, the panel **recommends** that SIS undertake a mapping of existing support service delivery in relation to the student literacies and skills landscape – information, digital and academic literacies and skills – across the whole of SIS and across the University more broadly.[3] As the recommendation outlines, this process should take into account relevant and related support service provision across the whole of the University, including in the Academy and the Halls of Residence, thinking about what digital and physical support is available from a student-centred perspective. Conducting such an audit of existing support services will assist in conceptualising SIS's role in whole-of-institution support provision. The meta concept of information literacy practice should be closely explored and mapped through the provision of information, digital and academic literacies and skills to ensure that UG and PG, including HDR, students engage with SIS delivered training that develops the critical literacies and skills necessary to scaffold their transition in, through and beyond academic learning and the digital spaces which are central to it.

Once such a comprehensive audit of existing practice has been undertaken and all digital and face-to-face support provision has been recorded from a student-centred perspective, it should be possible to: identify and reduce current duplication across SIS and the University; identify gaps (such as maths and statistical literacy); streamline services and create capacity for agile service approaches (when gaps are identified); and harness synergies with other support service delivery areas. This process is envisaged as a critical step in conceptualising and situating SIS's role and responsibilities in whole-of-institution support service provision and should enable clear communication of roles and responsibilities within the Divisional structure in the first instance and then across the institution more broadly, providing opportunities for service coherence and effective SIS branding across the University.

2. Review the changing needs of the University in this area, including the need for digital delivery and meeting the needs of a diverse academic and student community

The panel heard strongly from members of the University Executive and ANU students that there are many emerging strategic priorities that SIS will need to address in 2022 and beyond. The University Strategic Plan sets out institutional commitment to 'Delivering a student experience equal to the world's best' and 'Being a standard-bearer for equity and inclusion', aligned to clear plans to diversify the student body. The Digital Master Plan, the Student First program and the proposed Learning and Teaching Strategy all outline bold aspirations for a digitally enabled on-campus experience, to which an SIS information literacy practice framework can contribute.

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[2] Recommendation 2
[3] Recommendation 3

The panel **recommends** that, once SIS staff have internally co-developed the integrated information literacy practice framework that has been recommended, this then be harnessed as a mechanism for connecting SIS planning and prioritisation to the broader University strategic and policy landscape. The panel was made aware of current ANU strategic planning and other interdependent activities under development, being designed in combination to deliver on *ANU by 2025*, such as: the Digital Master Plan, the Student First program, the proposed ANU Graduate Attributes, the new Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Orientation and Transition Plan, the introduction of a Post Enrolment Language Assessment (PELA), and the potential move of the resources previously provided by ANU College to SIS.[4] The issue of support referrals consequent on early intervention identification was not raised with the panel, but may also need to be addressed and connected into the SIS support service provision framework.

Particularly, once a framework has been developed, there needs to be exploration of embedding the framework in curriculum, across learning, teaching and assessment, and in the broader student experience. The panel heard a strong desire from students and staff for embedded and contextualised delivery of information, digital and academic literacies and skills in course offerings. Following on from the recommendations that SIS consolidate its 'One team - One culture' identity and that it develop an integrated framework for information literacy practice, the panel **recommends** the development of an SIS service model that supports the operationalisation of the framework, for the post COVID, digitally enabled on-campus context.[5] The new service model should be capable of meeting student support needs across the student lifecycle and speak to student transitions into, though and out of ANU.

Specifically, the new SIS service model should consider matters such as: clear roles and responsibilities within the SIS integrated team; the mix of services; the balance between online, face-to-face and hybrid service delivery and engagement; the balance between, and mix of, generic and discipline-specific support; and the resource allocation to be prioritised to embedding literacies and skills in curriculum, across learning, teaching and assessment. The panel **recommends** that specific consideration should be given to allocating resources to *whole-of-degree* curriculum embedding of relevant information, digital and academic literacies and skills, in addition to the current practice of 'embedded teaching' and individual course embedding.[6] Consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders to assure appropriate prioritisation of effort to meet discipline-specific student needs in these various respects will be required. The panel also **recommends** that SIS reviews as part of this approach its service equity: it was evident that currently some literacies and skills are supported to a different extent (for example, maths and statistical literacy support for undergraduate students) and that some Colleges received a higher level of service than others.[7]

The panel **recommends** that SIS develops consensus and understanding regarding how its delivery of support services fits into holistic student service provision across the wider University, from a student-centred or student-facing perspective, and further considers the appropriateness of the ACDC nomenclature in that exercise.[8] It was suggested to the panel by a number of interviewees that the 'ACDC' nomenclature should be reconsidered as it does not capture nor represent well the support services this particular area provides (if retained in its current configuration).

Given the array of disparate student support services currently on offer via SIS and other areas, there is a critical need for coherence, co-ordination and comprehensiveness in the delivery of student support services across the University, both face-to-face and digitally, to ensure flexible and just-in-time support delivery that meets the diversity of student needs. SIS is

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[4] Recommendation 4
[5] Recommendation 5
[6] Recommendation 6
[7] Recommendation 7
[8] Recommendation 8

ideally placed to provide the support services leadership to develop such an integrated and cohesive approach that connects all relevant ANU literacies and skills support for the benefit of all ANU students.

3. Consider the international trends and best practice in this area

This component was more difficult for the panel to assess - the Self-Evaluation Paper contained no benchmarking and the panel is only able to reflect anecdotally on its members' own experience, knowledge and understanding in this regard. Consideration of international trends and best practice has informed the review panel's observations and findings and the development of the commendations and recommendations contained in this review.

The panel has already recommended under previous terms of reference that, as part of formulating its integrated approach to support service delivery, SIS should consider the balance between face-to-face and digital delivery, with evident opportunities in this regard to provide scalable, reusable support responses that can then be contextualised to specific discipline or other requirements (for example, through the provision of short 'snapshot' videos that are generic and then contextualised to discipline-specific requirements). This leads to consideration of whether an education designer or learning designer function would complement the work of the SIS team. The panel makes no specific recommendation in this regard; there are many possibilities for either including those skills in the current SIS service mix, or accessing them via partnership with skilled colleagues from another area of the institution.

There are many examples of national and international good practice available for consideration by an integrated SIS team, particularly directed at whole-of-degree embedding of information, digital and academic literacies and skills development in an integrated and incremental fashion for assurance of learning acquisition at the requisite Australian Qualifications Framework level on graduation. For example, a recent conceptualisation of a whole-of-institution approach is evident at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) for the explicit development and assessment of students' academic language acquisition within their degree programs.[9] UTS also has academic learning tools integrated into their student focused Design Your UTS program.[10] RMIT has developed a suite of '10 Digital Literacy microcredentials (Creds)' as part of the RMIT Library suite of micro-credentials that can be embedded in degree programs in a sequential way to scaffold students' digital literacy learning acquisition over the course of their program learning. These Digital Literacy Creds include 'Academic Integrity Awareness' and 'Information Literacy: Key Concepts'.[11] Griffith University has developed an Academic Skills Model to inform the work undertaken by the Griffith Library in partnership with the academic community to embed information, digital and academic literacies and skills for Griffith's coursework cohorts.[12] La Trobe University has developed an integrated Digital Literacies Framework that is used in service development and delivery.[13] The professional networks and associations of the expert support services staff within SIS provide further and continual access to best practice exemplars and relevant opportunities, which should also be leveraged.

In the material examined for this review, and over the course of its meetings with ANU staff, it became evident to the panel that good practice suggests that there is much that could be done to improve internal (to SIS) and external (to the rest of the University) communication practices,

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[9] See: Edwards, E., Goldsmith, R., Havery (formerly San Miguel), C., & James, N. (2021). An institution-wide strategy for ongoing, embedded academic language development: Design, implementation and analysis. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, 15(1), 53-71. Retrieved from https://journal.aall.org.au/index.php/jall/article/view/745.
[10] See: https://www.uts.edu.au/current-students/support/student-learning-hub/design-your-uts).
[11] See: https://rmit.libguides.com/library_creds.
[12] See: https://www.griffith.edu.au/library/teaching/academic-skills-model-online
[13] See: https://www.latrobe.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/995963/digital-literacies-framework.pdf

so that single source and consistent messaging are delivered authoritatively from one (SIS) team regarding the purpose and focus of the whole reimagined team. In SIS's Self-Evaluation Paper, and in interviews with the panel, the issues of visibility to staff and students via physical and virtual presences and the question of branding were raised a number of times. Students in particular are generally unaware of internal area/ department names and structures but said they would rather approach the library looking for 'help'. In this regard, and in accordance with good practice, the panel **recommends** that SIS should leverage the mapping and framework development work that has been recommended under previous terms of reference to improve the clarity, coherence, reach and impact of SIS's communications to ensure that its 'one team' purpose, focus and support service provision is well understood, both internally within the Division and externally across the rest of the University community (staff, students, Halls of Residence, management and academic/ discipline areas).[14] Communications should be timely and focussed, with a student-centred perspective (to be compared with communications from siloed organisational areas). Improved branding, coherent messaging, and enhanced visibility of the one integrated SIS team, via both its physical and virtual presence, will be important for re-setting a 'library first' support services approach to deliver on its meta conceptualisation of integrated information literacy practice.

4. Identify recommendations to improve performance; and

The Division engages reasonably well, though from somewhat siloed perspectives, in its support services delivery across the university. The panel **recommends** improvement in SIS engagement both internally (within SIS) and externally (with the rest of the University), informed by the integrated framework to be developed and the SIS 'One Division/ Library - One Team - One Culture' ethos that has been recommended. This should include review and rationalisation of SIS's approach to representation and engagement on cross-institutional committees and working parties for greater efficacy and two-way flow of information.[15] Enhanced engagement will also be supported by the recommended improvement in internal and external communications as a reimagined and integrated support services team. It is particularly important that SIS engages with the Colleges in the context of the proposed new integrated framework, to assure strategic alignment in its approaches across the institution and to ascertain, prioritise and deliver support services according to the discipline-specific College and School needs (for example, to work with disciplines to contextualise and embed information, digital and academic literacies and skills in degree curriculum (in addition to current embedded teaching and course embedding)). Such engagement will require relationship-rich collaboration with learning and teaching leadership and other embedded support services staff in the Academy, and suggests opportunities for staff development for both academic and professional staff colleagues. Optimal cross-institutional engagement will also require collaboration and cooperation across a number of other student and staff support areas, such as: the CLT; Access & Inclusion; Careers and Employability; the Residential Halls; the Office of the Dean Higher Degree Research; the Halls of Residence; and the Statistical Support Network.

The panel heard that equivalent and complementary literacies and skills support is also provided via roles in the Colleges (resourced by them). This presents a positive opportunity for SIS to develop a whole-of-institution community of practice across roles with similar remits, in an informal 'hubs and spokes' model of concerted support service provision in partnership with Colleges, Schools, disciplines and other areas. The panel also heard that opportunities exist to engage with the Halls of Residence in support service provision, with the potential to enlarge

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[14] Recommendation 9
[15] Recommendation 10

the development of an inclusive community of practice further (for example, with positions such as the Program Lead, Residential Experience Academic Initiative).

In pursuing its refreshed engagement strategy in this regard, SIS should also review and rationalise its approach to representation and engagement on cross-institutional committees and working parties in order to assure effective and efficient two-way communication between it and other organisational areas and to assure timely and collegial information exchange in cross-Divisional communications. Redefining roles and responsibilities as mentioned above should also assist in this prioritisation and engagement exercise.

Another opportunity for performance improvement for the Division is evident in its current data collection and reporting practices. The panel noted that the methodology used to report on ongoing activities and support service provision differs across areas within SIS. For example, the panel was advised that:

- Academic Skills reports on students who book into courses and those who enrol in the subjects that offered embedded training;
- Individual consultations with students are counted twice by Academic Skills – once as a consultation and also as a training event; and
- Digital Literacy reports only on those who attend events.

It is clear that a consistent definition of 'service use', as well as categories of engagement, would be useful for future reporting and service evaluation and that more robust data collection and analysis for impact beyond service access and student satisfaction, which is of course also of interest, would be valuable. The panel was also advised that it has not been possible in the past to breakdown data collection by Colleges or Schools, or across particular student cohorts, to assess whether there are gaps and/ or areas for potential improvement.

The panel **recommends** that SIS establish appropriate and agreed success measures (both quantitative and qualitative) across the Division against the integrated information literacy practice framework (to be developed) that are also congruent with other high-level institutional planning documents.[16] Specific regard should be had to enabling the collection of accurate, consistent, actionable and comprehensive data around SIS performance, engagement, satisfaction and impact. Such data collected can then be used for the monitoring, improvement and enhancement of ongoing support service delivery. The collection of robust and relevant data, that can be analysed to determine the efficacy of support service provision to disciplines, across different student cohorts (UG, PG including HDR and, for example, equity groups) and different Colleges, Schools and Residences, should help to improve the 'external narrative' of SIS's contribution to institutional strategy and will also provide important insights into gaps and/ or improvements in service provision. The panel was not provided with any benchmarking data for comparison with similar support service areas in other universities. In this regard, the panel also **recommends** that consideration should be given to appropriate benchmarking within the sector (for example, with other Group of Eight universities and leading SIS-equivalent areas in other universities)[17].

5. provide advice on the future strategic direction of these services, including education priorities, program direction and resourcing, noting developments within the University, relevant academic disciplines, wider industries and professions and the broader community.

The future need for SIS to articulate its holistic contribution to the prosecution of the ANU strategic directions has been mentioned above. The University priorities identified to the panel include: the Strategic Plan; the Digital Master Plan; the proposed ANU graduate attributes; the

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[16] Recommendation 11
[17] Recommendation 12

proposed new Learning and Teaching Strategy; the Student First program; the Orientation and Transition Plan; the introduction of a Post Enrolment Language Assessment (PELA); the focus on academic integrity; enhanced early intervention for student success; and the potential relocation to SIS of the support services previously provided by ANU College. Many of these institutional priorities were mentioned in the Self-Evaluation Paper, though some were not.

Though also not mentioned in the Self-Evaluation Paper, the panel noted that there is opportunity for SIS to collaborate with the Tjabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre and other areas of the University to contribute to the development of Indigenous cultural competency, the understanding of Indigenous information culture, Indigenous research protocols and information flow, and the embedding of Indigenous knowledge, perspectives and content in core curriculum and the broader student experience.

As regards the future strategic direction of the SIS services themselves, the panel is of the view that SIS has a clear, critical and central role to play in delivering on the ANU strategic vision and the institution's reimaging of learning and teaching beyond the circumstances of the pandemic. There is obvious, deep and relevant expertise residing in SIS. The Division should be confident and enabled in the deployment of its expertise in this regard and work collaboratively with other service areas, the Halls of Residence and the Academy to deliver the range and variety of face-to-face and digital support required (generic, contextualised and embedded) for learning, teaching and research now and into the future. The development of refreshed and focused communications and engagement approaches, in tandem with persuasive evidence of SIS impact gleaned from a range of suitable success measures (quantitative and qualitative, local and national data sources), will cement the evidence and impact narrative. The student representatives with whom the panel spoke are keen to work in partnership with SIS to inform effective and efficient support service delivery and its continual improvement.

The panel **recommends** that SIS continues to work on assuring its strategic alignment and resource prioritisation for support services delivery in accordance with, and cascading from, the ANU Strategic Plan and associated executive planning and initiatives, both existing and currently under development.[18]

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[18] Recommendation 13

Academic Competencies and Digital Capabilities - Moving Forward

Moving forward the panel has recommended that SIS conduct a program of work (of framework development, mapping, service model development, communications and engagement refresh and articulation of success indicators) to assure that its integrated and streamlined provision of support services will meet the changing needs of the University and the needs of a diverse academic and student community. It should do this in the first instance by establishing a Divisional ethos of 'One Division/ Library - One Team - One Culture' (or similar). The objective is to present an integrated, comprehensive and accessible account of the purpose and focus of SIS's support service provision, formulated around a shared language and framework, which allows for flexibility and agility in the delivery of its support services remit. The timing – with the sector coming out of the pandemic and as the University re-imagines its learning and teaching strategy for an on-campus, digitally enriched experience, could not be better and the opportunity exists for SIS to enmesh its expertise and support service provision within the high-level planning now being developed and implemented. Interviewees generally placed significant expectations on the breadth and scale of SIS services into the future, highlighting the importance of ensuring service delivery that is flexible, scalable and above all cohesive.

In particular, SIS's vision for and articulation of the meta concept of information literacy practice, which encompasses information, digital and academic literacies and skills , is fundamental to student success across the student lifecycle as each student transitions into, through and out of their University education (UG, PG coursework and HDR). Each of these areas of capability development is also a key employability and 21st century skill and perhaps should be positioned as such in all future institutional planning. The framework that has been recommended provides a mechanism for joining-up all of these crucial interdependencies and for ensuring that SIS's contribution is explicitly connected to the broader University agenda. There is also the opportunity for SIS to model good practice in institutional data intelligence, evidence gathering and analysis in its ongoing evaluation of the efficacy of SIS engagement, service delivery and impact.

The review panel wishes SIS, its dedicated staff and management team every success in this exciting next phase of their development. The Division is a vital plank in the realisation of the ambitious agenda of the ANU and is central to the delivery of a positive and supported student experience. The panel is confident that the observations and findings, commendations and recommendations set out in this review report will provide the platform for SIS to achieve both its own and the institution's evolving vision for the Division's critical contribution.

Commendations

The panel would like to thank all those involved in the review process and commends:

- ➢ SIS leadership and the central role SIS has continued to play in the particular context of the ANU.
- ➢ SIS's service continuity through change, which has clearly been appreciated by academic staff and students. The review has highlighted the sustained commitment to student support provided across SIS.
- ➢ Colleagues' willingness to engage in frank, robust and constructive conversations and their commitment to continual service improvement throughout the review process (via engagement with the review process and the review panel).
- ➢ The flexibility and creativity of SIS to deliver services throughout the COVID period, including in particular staff's agility and ability to pivot in the COVID environment.

Consolidated List of Recommendations

1. The panel recommends that SIS take the opportunity now to establish a culture and ethos of 'Scholarly Information Services (SIS) - One Division/ Library - One team - One culture' (or similar), to provide a seamless and cohesive experience for all students.
2. The panel recommends that SIS develop a robust integrated, information literacy practice framework, and that this framework include definitions for information literacy, information skills, digital literacy and academic literacy and skills, which are mapped against student transitions in, through and out of their University education (undergraduate, postgraduate and HDR).
3. In conjunction with the integrated framework being developed, the panel recommends that SIS undertake a mapping of existing service delivery in relation to the student literacies and skills landscape - information, digital and academic literacies and skills - across the whole of SIS and across the University more broadly.
4. The panel recommends that, once SIS staff have internally co-developed the integrated information literacy practice framework that has been recommended, this then be harnessed as a mechanism for connecting SIS planning and prioritisation to the broader University strategic and policy landscape.
5. Following on from the recommendations that SIS consolidate its 'One team - One culture' identity and that it develop an integrated framework for information literacy practice, the panel recommends the development of an SIS service model that supports the operationalisation of the framework, for the post COVID, digitally enabled on-campus context.
6. The panel recommends that specific consideration should be given to allocating resources to *whole-of-degree* curriculum embedding of relevant information, digital and academic literacies and skills, in addition to the current practice of 'embedded teaching' and individual course embedding.
7. The panel also recommends that SIS reviews its service equity: it was evident that currently some literacies and skills are supported to a different extent (for example, maths and statistical literacy) and that some Colleges received a higher level of service than others.
8. The panel recommends that SIS develops consensus and understanding regarding how its delivery of support services fits into holistic student service provision across the wider University, from a student-centred or student-facing perspective, and further considers the appropriateness of the ACDC nomenclature in that exercise.
9. The panel recommends that SIS should leverage the mapping and framework development work that has been recommended to improve the clarity, coherence, reach and impact of SIS's communications to ensure that its 'one team' purpose, focus and support service provision is well understood, both internally within the Division and externally across the rest of the University community (staff, students, Halls of Residence, management and academic/ discipline areas).
10. The panel recommends improvement in SIS engagement both internally (within SIS) and externally (with the rest of the University), informed by the integrated framework to be developed and the SIS 'One Division/ Library - One Team - One Culture' ethos that has been recommended. This should include review and rationalisation of SIS's approach to representation and engagement on cross-institutional committees and working parties for greater efficacy and two-way flow of information.
11. The panel recommends that SIS establish appropriate and agreed success measures (both quantitative and qualitative) across the Division against the integrated information literacy practice framework (to be developed) that are also congruent with other high-level institutional planning documents.

12. The panel recommends that consideration should be given to appropriate benchmarking within the sector (for example, with other Group of Eight universities and leading SIS-equivalent areas in other universities).
13. The panel recommends that SIS continues to work on assuring its strategic alignment and resource prioritisation for support services delivery in accordance with, and cascading from, the ANU Strategic Plan and associated executive planning and initiatives, both existing and currently under development.

Appendices

Appendix A

Terms of reference

The terms of reference are to:

- evaluate the current performance of Scholarly Information Services in providing research and educational support services to develop academic capabilities of students, including academic integrity, assessment writing skills, information skills and digital literacies

- review the changing needs of the University in this area, including the need for digital delivery and meeting the needs of a diverse academic and student community

- consider the international trends and best practice in this area;

- identify recommendations to improve performance; and

- provide advice on the future strategic direction of these services, including education priorities, program direction and resourcing, noting developments within the University, relevant academic disciplines, wider industries and professions and the broader community.

Appendix B

Agenda

ACDC Review

MEETING NO.   Day 1

DATE / TIME   27 January 2022, 9:30 am - 5:00pm

VENUE   Zoom

Agenda item

1. **9:00am** - Welcome

2. **9:45am -** Introductory session with Roxanne Missingham (Director SIS and University Librarian), Heather Jenks (Associate Director SIS) and Terra Starbird (Manager of area)

3. **10:30am** - Morning tea

4. **10:45am** - Meet with ACDC Team

5. **11:45am -** Follow up with Roxanne Missingham, Heather Jenks and Terra Star Bird

6. **12:45pm** - Lunch

7. **1:45pm** - Meeting with student leaders - ANU Students Association, Postgraduate Students Association
Attendees from ANUSA: PARSA individual names to be advised:
ANUSA: Ben Yates - General Sec; Grace King - ANUSA Welfare Officer, Beatrice Tucker - Education Officer; Rania Teguh - CBE Rep, Christian Flynn - Vice president.

8. **2:45pm** - General discussion - individual appointments:
2:45 - 3:05 Prof Royston Gustavson, Dean, Academic Quality
3:10 - 3:30 Prof Grady Venville, DVC Academic;
3:35 - 3:55 Prof Maryanne Dever, PVC Digital Education

9. **3:55pm -** Afternoon tea

10. **4:15 - 5:00pm -**wrap-up

ACDC Review

MEETING NO.   Day 2

DATE / TIME   28 January 2022, 9:30 am - 5:00pm

VENUE   Zoom

Agenda item

1. **9:30am** - Recap

2. **9:45am -** Meeting with
   ~~Susan Helyar, Director Residential Experience~~
   Tanya Colwell program lead, Residential experience academic Initiative

3. **10:30am** - Morning tea

4. **10:45am** - Any other individual appointments
   10.45 Meet with Roxanne Missingham
   11.15 Meet with Terra Starbird
   Report: key issues identified and outline prepared

5. **12:45pm** - Lunch

6. **1:45pm** - panel discussion of findings

7**. 2:45pm** - Discus
   Debrief with Roxanne, Heather Jenks (Associate Director) and Terra Starbird (Manager of area)

9. **3:30pm - 5pm**
   Panel discussion and report preparation

Appendix C

Review of support for academic competencies and digital capabilities

Submissions received:
- Matthew Kerby, School of Politics and International Relations
- Keith Dowding, School of Politics and International Relations
- Evelyn Woodberry, Chair, ALIA Book Industry and Elending Advisory Committee, Chair, Public Lending Right Committee of Australia.
- ANUSA (Undergraduate Student Association)
- Carolyn Hendriks, Associate Dean (Education) College of Asia and Pacific
- Anna Cowan, Deputy Dean, College of Science & College of Health and Medicine
- Two confidential submissions.