Valuing knowledge and expertise:  
Using evidence to improve the professional development program in an Australian academic library
Introducing Leanne Levinge – in Brisbane!
Overview

• Introduce key aspects of an evidence-based review of staff development in QUT Library
• Outline some of the recommendations from the 2010 QUT Library Staff Development Review
• Highlight some of the practical responses to these recommendations
• Provide a progress report to describe some of QUT Library’s improvements, changes, and initiatives to date
• Consider the future work to be done
The contemporary environment of academic libraries

Changes in the academic library workplace mirror those of other workplaces in the new millennium. Following the nature of work, the organisation of the institution is constantly shifting, requiring staff in all areas to perform a greater variety of tasks. The operations daily become more automated and more technical. The workforce becomes more diverse. The pace quickens. The budget tightens. And tensions mount.

QUT Library Staff Development Review

- January 2010:
  - QUT Library commissioned a review of staff development policy and practice
- State of play at QUT Library:
  - Strong commitment to staff development (SD)
  - Dedicated role of SD Officer
  - Staffing Issues Advisory Committee (SIAC): a forum for staff to have a say in SD
  - Extensive range of internal training activities offered each year
  - Training events well attended
  - Library staff contribute to and participate in significant external events, eg national forums and conferences

- However – to date there had been no formal review of the SD program
Objectives for the review

• To gauge the quality and effectiveness of the current SD program
• To determine whether the opportunities for learning and development were effectively reaching all staff across the Library
• To establish the extent to which the SD program was aligned with the organisation’s strategic priorities
• To evaluate the administrative and financial perspectives of the program
• To determine whether strategies for improvement could be developed to ensure that the Library was well placed to face the challenges of a dynamic academic environment
The review process: January - June 2010

• Staff Development Review Reference Group was convened
• Five stages of data collection
  – Literature review
  – Document discovery
  – Survey of Library staff
  – Series of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders
  – Investigation into the feasibility of a vocational skills program
• Final report with commendations, affirmations & recommendations

• High level of engagement with the review:  
  – Staff survey response rate 68%
  – 15 stakeholder interviews conducted
What did the research tell us?

• High level of confidence in the Library’s SD activities
• Awareness that recent training events were aligned with the Library’s:
  – Strategic direction
  – Operational needs
    • eResearch
    • Learning support
    • Integrated helpdesk arrangement
• But… SD events seen to be:
  – Offered on an ad hoc basis
  – Not well planned or coordinated
• Untapped opportunities for cross-divisional skills development
• More research required in terms of vocational skills programs
Areas of concern

• Lack of formal training in:
  – Software applications
  – Information management practices
• Sense of disconnect between staff training and the Performance Planning & Review (PPR) process
• Staff were keen to undertake more training than they currently did, but there were problems in scheduling events:
  – Working week was already full
  – Percentage of staff working non-regular hours
• Need to review the role of the Staff Development Officer
  – To reduce the administrative burden
  – To encourage initiative and creativity to develop innovative practices
  – To improve feedback mechanisms
  – To develop a central information resource for SD
• Scope for a new focus for the Staffing Issues Advisory Committee (SIAC)
Into the implementation stage

• Implementation plan developed based on evidence presented in the 2010 QUT Library Staff Development Review
• Some actions represent long-term initiatives; others being addressed relatively quickly
• QUT’s Library Workforce Advisory Committee (LWAC) has taken responsibility for many initiatives, and is progressing them via the group’s 2011 Action Plan this year
• Initiatives will continue to mature and evolve, be tested in practice, and then evaluated in 2012
Current initiatives

- Staffing Issues Advisory Committee (SIAC)
- Staff Development Officer role
- Staff Development Framework
- Performance Planning and Review training
- Professional Development Plans
- Record keeping
- Information resources
- Communication
- Reporting
- Mentoring / peer partnering
Review of Staffing Issues Advisory Committee

Recommendation:

- that the “role, membership and terms of reference for the Staffing Issues Advisory Committee (SIAC) are reviewed with the goal of establishing a structure that ensures staff development contributes directly to the achievement of the strategic goals of QUT Library.”
Review of Staffing Issues Advisory Committee (cont)

Response:
• Review of the Staffing Issues Advisory Committee (SIAC) undertaken
• Now Library Workforce Advisory Committee (LWAC)
• Terms of Reference and annual Action Plan will ensure staff development contributes directly to the achievement of the strategic goals of QUT Library
Staff Development Officer role

Recommendation:

- that the “role and responsibilities of the Staff Development Officer (SDO) are reviewed, with the goal of identifying two distinct areas of activity: the creative generation of ideas to inspire and drive the staff development program, and the efficient administration of staff development activities.”
Staff Development Officer role (cont)

Response:
• Increasing administrative support from administrative staff
• SDO undertook a QUT Professional Development Program (PDP) in April 2011
• Improvements already arising
Staff Development Framework

Recommendation:

• that a “defined staff development program be established” with a “planned, themed and coordinated program of activities scheduled for the year.”

• The Review also suggested staff development ‘streams’
6 Staff Development Streams:

1. Career Development, Leadership and Performance
2. Learning and Teaching Development
3. IT Literacies
4. Policy and Compliance
5. Research Support
6. Client Service

## New QUT Library Staff Development Framework

### 5. Research Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.1 Research Support Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Responsibility:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary audience:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary audience:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Support Skills Seminar series – 2010 workshops included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Data Management @ QUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bibliometrics 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collaboration Tools &amp; Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Publishing &amp; Grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Computation &amp; Visualisation (workshops for staff will not be offered in 2011 except for one in February)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Endnote training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUT:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Office of Research <a href="#">workshops and seminars</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Research Students Support Centre <a href="#">workshops</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- JISC Scholarly Communications Handbook (Independent Learning Resources on SharePoint)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ERA website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What informs development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developments in the broader research environment, changes to internal policies and procedures, new roles and responsibilities of staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff Development Framework (cont)

Response:

- Staff Development Framework developed to provide an overarching framework
- Based on six key ‘streams’ aligned with the University’s *Staff Development Catalogue*
- For each stream, relevant factors are articulated:
  - learning objectives
  - ownership
  - audience/s
  - activities and events
  - evaluation strategies
  - ideas for development
- Framework can be developed into an interactive, online tool
Performance Planning and Review (PPR) training

Recommendation:

- that “QUT Library encourages managers, supervisors and all staff to participate in a program to further develop their understanding of the process and potential of Performance Planning and Review (PPR).”
Performance Planning and Review (PPR) training (cont)

Response:
- Refresher training for all Library supervisors undertaken in 2010
- Refresher training for all Library staff during 2011
- New Staff Development Framework is a useful tool for staff and supervisors to use during PPR discussions to prompt discussion of staff development opportunities and options
- New Professional Development Plan will also prompt discussion
Professional Development Plan

Recommendation:

• for staff to “work with their manager/supervisor, through the PPR process, to develop a career development or professional development plan and to monitor and record their progress.”
# New QUT Library Professional Development Plan Form

## Professional Development Plan

**Name:**

**Position Title:**

**Supervisor:**

On 

- PPR Planning Discussion
- PPR Interim Review
- PPR Annual Review

An Interim Review is to be held on 

An Annual Review is to be held on 

### Development Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Stream</th>
<th>Activity Details</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Insert extra rows as required for additional activities included in this category—refer to Staff Development Framework for information&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning and Teaching Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. IT Literacies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Policy and Compliance</td>
<td>Safe Manual Handling, Safe Computer Use, Parent @ QUT, EOP Online, General Evacuation Drills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tick those required this year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Research Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. Professional Development Events

<Detail any identified conferences or other activities that the staff member would benefit from attending this year.>

### 5. Other Development Activities

<Consider including activities such as committees membership (internal to Library or externally), taking on evaluative roles such as Peer Writer, Welker Ambassador, etc. Consider also professional development opportunities—e.g., presenting at Library forums or in the Libraries commissioner conference.>

---

**Signatures:**

**Supervisor:**

---

The Library's **Staff Development Program Framework** provides options for development activities for each of the Staff Development Streams above. On completion of this form, these options should be discussed and finalized with the staff member, and the supervisor and the Staff Development Office.

The staff member shall record attendance at identified activities as well as noting any additional activities attended in the relevant section. The form itself serves as a personal record of training and development activities attended.

Supervisors should retain a copy of the form centrally to track progress of team members.
Professional Development Plan (cont)

Response:
• Professional Development Plan form developed: simple form for staff members to plan, record and monitor professional development
• Pre-populated with Library’s Staff Development streams; directly presents ideas, and specifically refers to necessary compliance training programs
• Other discussion prompts include ‘professional development events’ (eg. external conferences) and ‘other development activities’ (eg. committee memberships; professional association (ALIA) involvement)
• Currently being trialled by the Collection Access Team to plan, record and track progress and reflect on achievements, to then move to the next cycle of development
Recordkeeping

Recommendation:
• that “improved recordkeeping processes are introduced to track staff attendance at training and development events…”
New QUT Library Conference Attendance Request eForm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Start Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event End Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Host</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early bird closing date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you intending to submit a presentation/paper/poster?</td>
<td>Are you intending to submit a presentation/paper/poster? (Yes/No) Please ensure a copy of the abstract/proposal is lodged on the Staff Publications SharePoint site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor’s supporting statement</td>
<td>After entering your supervisors name, please click ok to complete the form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recordkeeping (cont)

Response:

• Commissioned development of a SharePoint eForm to replace paper ‘Request to attend conference’ form. The eForm will be processed and approved electronically
• Information will populate a database which can be used for reporting purposes.
• The beta version is currently being trialled
• Professional Development Plan form will also contribute to improved recordkeeping for both the individual staff member and the organisation
Information Resources

Recommendation:

- that the Library’s Staff Development Resources SharePoint site “continue to be developed as a comprehensive central information resource to support the program of activities.”
QUT Library Staff Development Resources site

Welcome to the QUT Library Staff Development SharePoint site. This site aims to provide convenient access to a range of materials and resources designed to support...
Information Resources (cont)

Response:
• Staff Development Resources SharePoint site has continued to mature and grow and is now well-used
• The Staff Development Officer visited all Library sections to do a ‘roadshow’ of the site
Communication

Recommendation:

- that “effective communication strategies are introduced (eg. e-newsletter or blog) to regularly inform staff about internal and external training and development activities, focusing on opportunities that are low cost and cost neutral.”
New QUT Library Staff Development eBulletins

March-April 2011

LIBRARY STAFF DEVELOPMENT

For details or further information on any item included in this update, visit the Staff Development Resources SharePoint site.

Upcoming events

Safe Computer Use – 6 March (KG)
Safe Manual Handling – 15 March
TechWatch #1 – 18 March
Social media in and out of the uni

Conferences

Current EOI s
RAILS 7 – deadline for requests is

Feedback

Come to the Conference Feedback and see presentations by your co practices highlighted at the Info
Australasia conferences

May/June 2011

LIBRARY STAFF DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

For details or further information on any item included in this update, visit the Staff Development Resources SharePoint site.

Upcoming events

SALT Forum: ‘Generic Program’ the first SALT forum of 2011 (SALT was formerly known as ILAT)
24 May, V714 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Better Sleep through ‘switching off skills’: the first in a series of four seminars being presented by Assure Programs
26 May, 1:30 – 2:30, A330 KG

Conferences

0 – 10 May RAILS 7 Conference – Caroline Gauld, Stephanie Bradbury, Paula Callan, Kate Harbison, Craig Milne and Helen Woodman will attend, (QUT Gardens Point)
11-13 May mLibraries Conference – Caroline Gauld and Brendan Sinnamon are attending, Caroline will be giving a presentation titled: “Discovery in the Mobile Environment”, (Brisbane Convention Centre)
Communication (cont)

Response:
• Now, a monthly eBulletin with current information about:
  – Conferences (upcoming and recent)
  – Training programs
  – Reminders
  – Key dates
• Plans for a staff development blog to encourage staff to contribute their own ideas and views
Reporting

Recommendation:
• that “evaluation and reporting processes are formalised for all aspects of staff development, to feed back into QUT Library’s strategic and operational planning”
New QUT Library Staff Development Quarterly Reports

Staff Training and Development Events

Quarterly Report – Quarter 1, 2010

Prepared by: Deb Warren
Created: 29 February 2011

Events - Internal

The following Staff Development events were held between 1 January and 31 March 2011:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Staff Cohort</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/2/2011</td>
<td>Asking Client Borrowing</td>
<td>Client Service</td>
<td>Client</td>
<td>Library Staff</td>
<td>25 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2/2011</td>
<td>Research Support Strategy Workshops</td>
<td>Research Support</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Library Staff</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/2/2011</td>
<td>Library &amp; Research Desk Training (full day)</td>
<td>Client Service</td>
<td>Client</td>
<td>Library Staff</td>
<td>27 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/2/2011</td>
<td>Library Collection Access Client Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/3/2011</td>
<td>Millennium Program Regulation</td>
<td>Test</td>
<td>Library Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training & Development - External

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Staff Cohort</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Conferences and Seminars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number attended</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Skills &amp; Beyond Workshop</td>
<td>UNSW</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Ethics</td>
<td>ANU</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media In and Out of the Classroom</td>
<td>QUT</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rorting the Copyright Infringement</td>
<td>ADIA</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Management for Beginners</td>
<td>CITC</td>
<td>Wollongong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Development Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number attended</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Health and Safety Training – Staff Completion Rates to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Safe Manual Handling</th>
<th>Safe Computer Use</th>
<th>EOD Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Safety</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRIOCRU</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERC</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Library</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reporting (cont)

Response:

• Trialling ‘pre-post-later’ evaluation methodology to assess impact of professional development activities for individual, team and organisation

• Example: Assisting Client Borrowing training (mandatory for all staff on the new Learning and Research Desks, conducted in February
  – Pre - before the session to gauge expectations of participants’ learning
  – Post - after the session to gauge participants’ learning – or their immediate impression of it, at least
  – Later – in June - conducting a follow up evaluation survey to gauge the impact of the session and whether it – in practical terms – improved participants’ knowledge; improved their performance; or affected their behaviour in some way (later)

• SDO now presents Library Leadership Team (LLT) and LWAC with Quarterly Reports
Mentoring / peer partnering

• **Recommendation:**
  • that “Staffing Issues Advisory Committee investigate the introduction of a mentoring program to support individual staff development and knowledge transfer within QUT Library”

• **Response:**
  • Informal mentoring relationships established for Direct Client Contact program
  • Peer Partnering paper written by Liaison Librarian / Academic Skills Adviser also prompted a program of peer development
  • Further investigations on mentoring to get underway shortly
Future work

- Continuing to implement and embed the new initiatives and processes
- KPIs – currently ‘participation rates’ – but these are not meaningful. Trialling impact evaluation methodology; if successful, a KPI on impact can be developed
- Consider ways to ensure “greater use of digital technologies”
- Investigate how to “optimise opportunities of QUT Professional Development Program (PDP) scheme and other sources of funding for development (eg. scholarships, awards and bursaries)”
Future work (cont)

- Exploratory work and planning so that “QUT Library articulates its vision of being a learning organisation ...”
- Consider strategies for “…adequate funding for the development of all staff, including library professionals, specialist technical staff and support staff”
- Explore “…opportunities for benchmarking staff development policy and practice are encouraged within the consortium of Libraries of the Australian Technology Network (LATN)”
- Ongoing evaluation of improvements and initiatives arising from the 2010 QUT Library Staff Development Review
Conclusion

• The QUT Library 2010 Staff Development Review adopted an evidence-based approach to evaluation, with the goal to achieve continuous improvement.

• The review activities served to:
  – Raise staff awareness about the value of SD and about the genuine interest of senior management to endeavour to ‘get it right’
  – To articulate the message that the staff themselves are of paramount importance to the success of QUT Library

• This can in itself raise staff expectations for the future – and increase the responsibility of senior management ensure that notable changes are made

• QUT Library is using the evidence it has collected to build the culture of a ‘learning organisation’
Conclusion (cont)

• The review has helped:
  – Establish the linkages between the individual and organisational outcomes of training and development
  – Build stronger connections between workforce planning, training needs analysis, PPR and SD – basically ‘to join the dots’
• A significant number of new initiatives have already been implemented, and many more are being planned
• In 2012, there needs to be further review and evaluation to measure the improvements that may have been made – real EBLIP in practice!
Thank you

Comments? Questions?

Contacts

Gillian Hallam  
Adjunct Professor  
Faculty of Science & Technology  
Queensland University of Technology  
Brisbane, Australia  
g.hallam@qut.edu.au

Leanne Levinge  
Workforce and Infrastructure Manager  
Library Services  
Queensland University of Technology  
Brisbane, Australia  
l.levinge@qut.edu.au