

A Comparative Study of LIS Accreditation Frameworks in Australia, New Zealand, United States, and Canada

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As Library and Information Science (LIS) educators, we teach our students about the changing and evolving role of the information professional in the twenty-first century. For many educators around the world, accreditation of LIS programs also shapes and legitimizes curriculum. This comparative study of the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand seeks to identify similarities and differences in accreditation frameworks. This research shows that similarities and differences exist in programs, course designs, delivery methods, accreditation models, program specializations, and engagement with information science as a discipline. In conclusion we ask five critical questions about Australian LIS education and propose three areas for future research, including evaluating the purpose of accreditation.

Keywords: accreditation, Australia, comparative study, LIS education, United States

As twenty-first-century Library and Information Science (LIS) educators, we teach our students to apply and adapt foundational LIS principles and standards, to engage in learning multiple literacies, and to become part of a global information practice. We ask our students to invest in and listen to the local communities that they serve, and to explore the ethics, impact, role, and potential of information technologies in supporting access to and use of information. LIS curriculum is guided by professional practice and standards, discipline-based theory, and the multiple complexities of a changing society. In this paper we explore the role accreditation plays in LIS education by comparing accreditation frameworks from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States.

Professional accreditation is promoted as a quality assurance tool that ensures the recognition and status of LIS qualifications (Tammaro, 2015). However, accreditation models are generally bespoke, combining various elements such as

KEY POINTS

- Accreditation models vary, although there are shared elements, including retrospective evaluation and prospective strategy and planning.
- Differences in library, archives, and records educational approaches for each country appear closely tied to the relevant professional associations' structures and accreditation processes.
- The complexity around how GLAM fits into LIS education warrants much closer investigation for all countries examined in this study.

- “checkbox style,” identifying a list of minimum requirements or criteria;
- self-evaluation;
- external review;
- establishment of innovation and excellence in a school or program;
- assessment of student learning outcomes and competencies;
- identification of individual achievements;
- demonstration of employability; and
- subject benchmarking. (Tammaro, 2015, p. 171)

In 2000, researchers working for the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) found that accreditation is a subjective process and was not implemented in many countries (Dalton & Levinson, 2000). Accreditation is a very powerful instrument that controls, shapes, and legitimizes curriculum and LIS programs within academia and the profession (Cox, 2010).

The purpose of this paper is to document similarities and differences in the accreditation frameworks of the selected countries and to identify gaps and opportunities, particularly for Australian LIS education. The research is designed from an educator's point of view, with the goal to set an agenda for future research and discussion. The paper begins by examining the literature on the role of accreditation in LIS education. The methodology section follows the literature review. Data taken from the public websites of LIS professional associations and organizations were analyzed to identify and explain the key elements of each country's accreditation and education frameworks.¹ Content analysis techniques were used to identify trends, themes, and differences. Findings are then presented showing data about accreditation frameworks and accredited programs. The discussion section explores several key issues that arose from the data, including the potential value of a GLAM curriculum.²

Literature review

In our exploration of the literature, the focus was on the role and status of, and changes in, LIS accreditation. This work revealed five overlapping themes:

1. tensions between LIS practitioners and educators on who knows best in the balance between education and training, and skills and knowledge embedded in accreditation;

2. how accreditation supports or does not support change in the LIS discipline, with specific reference to an information knowledge base and the rise of the iSchool movement;
3. the role of accreditation, standardization, and a shared body of knowledge to support the internationalization of LIS qualifications;
4. a lack of clarity and identity for LIS specializations in archives and records in accreditation and especially in relation to international recognition of qualifications; and
5. the impact of technologies on the skills and competencies of new disciplines such as digital curation and the absence of research into the impact of this phenomenon on accreditation.

Grounded in these themes is a historical body of literature discussing the professional status of librarians and archivists, the identification of a core curriculum, and tensions between LIS educators and professionals that extend beyond a discussion of accreditation. Central to any discussion of changes in LIS programs are educational institutions and requirements; however, a discussion of their impact is beyond the scope of this paper but can be found in Hallam (2013) and Cox (2010).

The role of accreditation in LIS education

Much of the ongoing discussion and research into the role of accreditation is imbued with tension over professional identity and who knows best. Cox (2010, pp. 272–273) voices concern about the purpose of accreditation and its potential to stifle innovation and diversity in LIS programs. Saunders's (2015) research identifies a lack of practitioner perspectives within the education and curriculum environment. LIS educators describe accreditation standards as emphasizing traditional library skills and knowledge rather than supporting the needs of a broader information sector (Cortez, 2017; Eden, 2018). In Australia, Harvey (2001) challenges the purpose of library technicians and undergraduate degree accreditation, arguing that it creates a murkiness around professional identity. Weatherburn and Harvey (2016) and Pymm (2012) emphasize the need to investigate how accreditation assesses quality and how professional associations can work with LIS educators.

Research into the development, power, and impact of accreditation models is generally under-researched, although a few studies from the United States exist (Hicks & Given, 2013; Saunders, 2008). Most evaluation and discussion of accreditation is represented in professional (grey) literature such as reports, workshops, and working papers (Hallam, 2013). Nonetheless, discussion from educators and practitioners regularly includes the need to evolve key skills and competencies in response to a changing information and technological environment (Hu, 2013; Kim, 2016; Kules & McDaniel, 2010; Nonthacumjane, 2011).

Information science and iSchools

A focus on technologies and information (and data) as a primary knowledge base has led some LIS educators to advocate for a “single information discipline, profession and program” to express the need to “embrace the converging concerns of all information traditions” (Burford, Partridge, Brown, Hider, & Ellis, 2015, p. 1). IFLA’s updated *Guidelines* (2012, p. 2) acknowledge the emergence of an “iSchool philosophy” yet place it in competition with traditional library educational approaches. In Australia, a major report on LIS education in 2011 charged educators with the need to be “aware of and alert to” evolving international trends and movements in the information disciplines (Partridge et al., 2011, p. 15), including the rise of iSchools. The report goes on to say that Australia’s LIS education and professional future needs to engage with the iSchool shift away from “library’ education to focus more on the broader information environment” (p. 86).

The iSchool movement, founded in 2005, focuses on information as the primary knowledge base.³ As a membership-based consortium, iSchools is not an accrediting body; however, many iSchools members have grown from and include accredited LIS programs. Eden (2018) calls the existence of LIS and iSchools a “dichotomy” (p. 46) and sees the impact on accreditation as a separation into two “camps”:

1. LIS programs “prepar[e] students to work in the LIS profession, in its broadest and deepest interpretation”;
2. iSchools focus on “the information profession, not on libraries, and [the fact] that libraries are the past and iSchools and their curriculums are the future.” (p. 52)

The influence of the iSchool movement on LIS programs is a theme in the US-based literature (Cox & Larsen, 2008; Dillon, 2012; Leazer, 2016; White & Gilliland, 2010), yet its impact on accreditation is under-researched.

The internationalization of LIS qualifications

Since the 1990s, accreditation has been presented as a way to support the “mobility of LIS professionals,” who, like information, should be able to cross borders and work anywhere in the world (Dalton & Levinson, 2000, p. 73). Dalton and Levinson’s (2000) comparative study on accreditation frameworks undertaken on behalf of IFLA reports on the complexities of global accreditation practices. Key insights from the report include the absence of professional accreditation in many countries, ambiguous criteria, subjective processes, and already existing reciprocal recognition of qualifications.⁴ Dalton and Levinson also point to the ALA and the flexible approach it takes in applying standards for accreditation by acknowledging that there are many ways to achieve excellence (p. 77).

In 2009, IFLA implemented a draft guidance document for transparency, equivalency, and recognition of qualifications to support the internationalization of LIS education, supported by its *Guidelines for Professional*

Library/Information Educational Programs (Weech & Tamaro, 2009). In 2012, IFLA's Education and Training Section updated its *Guidelines* in response to changing needs in twenty-first-century library and information services (Smith, Hallam, & Ghosh, 2012). The updated guidelines highlight the need to embrace the digital environment and to embed capital Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum.

Records and archives studies

The role that specializations such as records and archives play in accreditation is unclear. Specialization does not refer to special libraries but rather to distinct disciplines or domains of knowledge that exist within LIS (Hjørland, 2002). Additionally, scant information about international equivalency is published on archival association websites in Canada, the United States, Australia, or New Zealand. Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIMPA, 2018a) does recognize members with international accreditations from ARMA International, giving members professional, certified RIMPA status. Cox and Larsen (2008) suggest that iSchools, rather than traditional LIS schools, could be a better place to educate archivists interested in the intellectual challenges brought about by technologies. In 2013, educators in the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the United States explored the development of an international archival curriculum (Anderson, Bastian, & Flinn, 2013).

An earlier international research collaboration between the United States, Australia, and China examined the need for pluralized archival education that acknowledges complexities and sensitivities inherent in diverse ways of knowing in local, community, and global contexts (Gilliland et al., 2007). Utilizing collaborative workshops, the researchers sought to enact change in accreditation by developing a "statement of principles for inclusive, transformative recordkeeping and archival education" for professional associations to include in accreditation (p. 15). This work later was evolved in collaboration with the Archival Education and Research Institute in 2009, utilizing further workshops to propose a model of pluralization and to advocate for systematic change, particularly via professional associations and the function of accreditation (Archival Education and Research Institute [AERI] & Pluralizing the Archival Curriculum Group [PACG], 2011).

A need for convergence

Diversification of LIS and the need to address technical skills resulted in specialized digital competencies in emerging areas, such as digital curation (Kim, 2015; Tibbo, Hank, & Lee, 2008). Tibbo and Lee (2010) cite a need to create a converged curriculum to support libraries, archives, and museums professionals as part of GLAM. Australian educators also discuss GLAM convergence in LIS curriculum (Given & McTavish, 2010; Howard, 2015). As is the case with archives and records, how these newer specialized areas are included in accreditation is unclear. Cox (2015) questions

his earlier enthusiasm (Cox & Larsen, 2008) for placing archival education in iSchools. He muses that the future of archival education is heading toward a new discipline of digital stewardship and that professional associations will morph in response (Cox, 2015). Research into what convergence means for LIS accreditation is noticeably absent from the literature, as are the voices of the G and the M of GLAM.

Methodology

This research was designed as a comparative study with the goal to discover similarities and differences in accreditation frameworks and explore the issues raised in the literature review across countries, as well as to identify gaps and opportunities including areas for further research. The following questions guided this study:

1. What are the current professional accrediting frameworks that support LIS education in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand?
2. What are the key similarities and differences?

The four countries were chosen for the following reasons. Both authors have taught LIS in the United States and Australia. We are aware that the American Library Association (ALA) accredits LIS programs in the United States and Canada and acknowledge the existence of tension between iSchools and LIS accreditation. New Zealand was also chosen due to its close proximity to Australia, and there exists previous discussion on Australian and New Zealand LIS education contexts showing similarities (Chawner, 2015).

Historical research data-collection methodology was used (Morgan & Wildemuth, 2016; Wildemuth, 2016) to identify various artifacts (unstructured data), including public reports, documents, and web pages created by accrediting bodies and the iSchools Consortium. See the Appendix for a table of data sources. Data were collected from August to December 2017 and analyzed from December 2017 to January 2018. Data collection and analysis were performed and checked by the authors.

The collected artifacts were analyzed first using basic statistics to identify quantitative values about the overall number of programs, types of programs (degree levels), accredited programs, and iSchools. The content of the collected artifacts was then analyzed to identify the following:

1. accredited programs;
2. iSchools that are also LIS-accredited;
3. qualification and degree names, including post-masters certificates and joint degrees;
4. program specializations, documented as written;⁵
5. specific specialization in records, archives, and other cultural training offered within degrees.

The content analysis used words that already existed within the dataset (as written). The only code applied was “other cultural training,” used to identify any specialization offered within the accredited dataset that mentioned history, museums, cultural heritage or specific work with artifacts.

Findings

Research findings are grouped into two areas: (1) professional organizations and accrediting bodies; and (2) educational institutions and trends. Each area has geographic subsections looking at Australia and New Zealand first and then the United States and Canada.

Professional organizations and accrediting agencies

Australia and New Zealand

In Australia, there are three accrediting entities for LIS programs: the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA), and the Records and Information Management Professionals of Australasia (RIMPA). Each association accredits (or formally recognizes in the case of RIMPA) programs separately, so each program can be accredited by all three or by only one or two. ALIA has a complex system of accreditation, which includes *Core Knowledge, Skills and Attributes* (ALIA, 2014), and *Foundation Knowledge, Skills and Attributes Relevant to Information Professionals Working in Archives, Libraries and Records Management* (ALIA, 2015), as well as Red and Gold levels⁶ (ALIA, 2018b). ALIA’s course accreditation process aims to foster excellence by ensuring the quality and relevance of programs to current and emerging library and information practice by engaging external assessors and measuring quality against specific criteria (ALIA, 2018c).

ALIA’s two core foundation documents above (ALIA, 2014, 2015) are used to accredit programs (degrees) at the bachelor’s, graduate diploma, and master’s levels, as well as library technician programs (diplomas) delivered at technical and further education (TAFE) institutions. TAFE institutions are primarily for vocational education and training (VET) and exist as an alternative pathway from high school and/or into university and higher education. Graduates from a TAFE diploma program are eligible for a different status of ALIA membership (ALIA, 2018a).

The ASA and RIMPA use a joint *Statement of Knowledge for Recordkeeping Professionals* to accredit courses (ASA and RMAA Joint Education Steering Committee, 2006).⁷ The statement is based on the International Records Management Standard (AS ISO 15489) and the *BSB01 Business Services (Recordkeeping) Training Package*.⁸ The ASA and RIMPA accredit university programs at the bachelor’s, graduate diploma, and master’s levels. RIMPA also accredits records management courses at TAFE as well as individual courses. RIMPA accredits programs and courses with an instrument that draws from the Joint Statement and has 28 criteria (RIM Professionals

Australasia, 2011b) and also uses an assessment instrument that explicitly links to the Statement and contains 44 criteria (RIM Professionals Australasia, 2011a).

The New Zealand library and archives educational environment is similar to that of Australia. The Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) functions as the professional association for practicing librarians and offers a professional registration scheme that recognizes qualifications from the three New Zealand–based library and information studies programs (Chawner, 2015; Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa, 2018). Like Australia, New Zealand has a “sub-degree library qualification” (Chawner, 2015, p. 19), similar to TAFE programs, that is reviewed by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). While it is not clear if LIANZA accredits programs directly through review and evaluation as is the case in Australia, the recognition of graduate students’ professional status is the same. RIMPA accredits records programs delivered in Australia and New Zealand (RIM Professionals Australasia, 2018b). The New Zealand association representing archivists—Archives and Records Association of NZ Te Huinga Mahara (ARANZ)—is not an accrediting body.⁹

United States and Canada

The American Library Association (ALA) is the library and archives accrediting body of North America and accredits LIS programs in the United States, Puerto Rico, and Canada (ALA, 2018). The ALA’s standards include “recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use,” thus encompassing records and archives (ALA, 2015). The ALA’s focus on accreditation in higher education is explained as being a collegial process based on self- and peer assessment for public accountability and improvement of academic quality. Accreditation serves to ensure educational quality, judged in terms of demonstrated results in supporting the educational development of students by focusing on five standards on which all school-based programs are evaluated (ALA, 2007).

The Society of American Archivists (SAA), while an active professional association, is not an accrediting body but offers guidelines for archival graduate education (SAA, 2018b). The Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) also provides only guidelines (Association of Canadian Archivists, 2017). In North America, independent examination and certification are available, and archivists can become certified if they meet tests of their competencies, skills, and knowledge. These certifying organizations, including the Academy of Certified Archivists, the Institute of Certified Record Managers (ICRM), and ARMA International, do not involve themselves in LIS education accreditation (Academy of Certified Archivists, 2018; ARMA International, 2018; Institute of Certified Records Managers, 2018).

Table 1: Current education environment, Australia and New Zealand

	Australia	New Zealand
VET	16	1 (this institution also teaches undergraduate)
Tertiary	10 (one institution teaches VET and undergraduate)	3

Educational Institutions and Practices

Australia and New Zealand

In Australia and New Zealand, LIS is taught at 27 educational institutions, including higher education providers and TAFE or equivalent VET providers. All institutions in Australia and New Zealand are accredited in some way, although, as noted in the previous section, New Zealand’s accreditation works somewhat differently. In Australia, not all programs are accredited by all associations. For example, RMIT University’s Master of Information Management does not have ASA accreditation but does have ALIA and RIMPA accreditation (Australian Library and Information Association, 2018e; Australian Society of Archivists, 2008; RIM Professionals Australasia, 2018c). TAFE organizations training library technicians constitute the majority of the education providers for LIS education, as shown in Table 1.

Of the 13 institutions teaching LIS at a higher degree level, five offer bachelor’s degrees and eight offer postgraduate degrees at various levels, including graduate diplomas, master’s degrees, and PhDs. Two institutions offer a Master of Education for teacher librarians. There are several programs “teaching out,”¹⁰ including the University of Canberra; Edith Cowan University; University of Technology, Sydney (undergraduate program only); and the Queensland University of Technology (these are not included in the table).

The iSchools movement in Australia has had a small uptake, and as of 2018, Charles Sturt University (CSU) and the University of South Australia are the only LIS-accredited schools. Additionally, CSU is also the only “School” where information studies is taught in Australia, whereas others are titled as departments or discipline areas. Australia and New Zealand have a range of degree names, particularly in the higher education sector, as seen in Table 2. Some of the undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degrees have double majors related to library studies or information.

United States and Canada

In North America, there are 84 programs at higher-degree educational institutions, as shown in Table 3. Of these, 61 programs (72%) are accredited by the ALA. Universities that deliver bachelor’s programs also offer master’s programs. Post-master’s certifications and professional continuing

Table 2: Qualification names, Australia and New Zealand

VET qualification	Undergraduate degree	Graduate degree
Advanced Diploma of Recordkeeping	Bachelor of Applied Science	Graduate Certificate in Information Studies
Certificate III in Recordkeeping	Bachelor of Arts	Graduate Diploma in Digital Information Management
Certificate in Cataloging (Level 5)	Bachelor of Information Studies	Graduate Diploma in Records Management and Archives
Certificate in Literature and Library Services for Children and Young People (Level 6)	Bachelor of Library and Information Management	Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Studies
Certificate IV in Recordkeeping	Poutuārongo Puna Maumahara (Bachelor of Information Management)	Graduate Diploma of Information and Knowledge Management
Diploma in Information and Library Studies (Level 5)		Graduate Diploma of Information Management
Diploma in Information and Library Studies (Level 6)		Master of Arts
Diploma in Records and Information Management (Level 6)		Master of Business Information Systems
Diploma of Library and Information Services		Master of Commerce & Administration
Diploma of Recordkeeping		Master of Digital Information Management
		Master of Education
		Master of Information Management
		Master of Information Studies
		Postgraduate Certificate in Information Management
		Postgraduate Certificate in Information Studies
		Postgraduate Diploma in Information Studies
		Postgraduate Diploma of Information Management

Table 3: North American LIS education environment

Program offered	US		Canada	
	ALA-accredited		Not ALA-accredited	
Bachelor's ^a	16	1	0	0
Master's	53	8	23	0
Post-master's certificates	32	6	1	0
Other certificates (graduate/ continuing education)	26	0	5	0

^a Bachelor's and associate degree programs in the United States are similar to the technician program in Australia and New Zealand in that they produce library support staff. However, the key difference is that a graduate from a bachelor's program in Australia and New Zealand graduates as an accredited and fully qualified librarian, not an assistant, associate or technician.

education are also available, with 55 (65%) institutions offering extended studies. Of the 61 accredited LIS programs, 42 offer archives and/or recordkeeping. Of those institutions that are ALA-accredited, 28 are also iSchools (46%). The United States has 39 recognized iSchools.

Many institutions offer dual or double degrees at the bachelor's and master's levels, where students can graduate with joint qualifications. These are offered with other disciplines such as history, English, education, anthropology, political science, book studies, law, public administration, resource and environmental management, business administration, and government. Of the 23 non-ALA-accredited universities offering LIS programs, several offer public history degrees, one offers museum studies, and others offer various computer studies programs.

The SAA website lists archival education programs offered in the US and Canada (SAA, 2018a). While this list is not an official endorsement, it acts as a proxy authority on archival programs. Eight history departments offer public history or archival programs, some of which are accredited by the ALA. The location of archival studies in history departments is likely a legacy of archival education traditionally being taught in the history discipline in the US (Gilliland, 2014).

Table 4 lists master's programs that are accredited by ALA. While it was noted above that archives and records education is accredited under ALA standards, 17 accredited programs also offer museum studies or cultural heritage information management as part of their LIS degree, as seen in Table 5.

Discussion

Research findings show various similarities and differences among the four countries' LIS accreditation frameworks. Overall similarities include the value placed on accreditation by professional associations, engagement

Table 4: Master's program names, North America

Graduate degree (master's)	Programs offered across 61 universities
Maîtrise en sciences de l'information (Master's Degree in Information Science)	1
Master of Archival Studies	3
Master of Arts	9
Master of Information	1
Master of Information Science	5
Master of Information Sciences	1
Master of Information Studies	2
Master of Library and Information Science	17
Master of Library Science	6
Master of Management	1
Master of Professional Studies	1
Master of Science	16
Master's Degree in Archives and Records Administration (MARA)	1

in the iSchools movement, and strong library identity for future careers, as evidenced on the library association websites. Differences point to the availability of double master's programs, recognition of the master's degree as the professional level, single versus multiple accrediting processes for LIS programs, and the inclusion of diverse areas of specialization, including museum studies. The following sections examine some of the similarities and differences from a thematic approach. The two key themes are accreditation and course offerings.

Accreditation

Several ALA-accredited LIS programs are also iSchools. In Australia, there are three iSchools, with two being accredited by ALIA, ASA, and RIMPA.¹¹ No New Zealand LIS institutions have iSchool membership. With only two Australian iSchools out of 10 LIS programs, this is a 20% uptake. The iSchools movement links into the notion of a globalized LIS profession and education and a focus on information as the primary knowledge base. Connected to this finding is the difference in degree titles. There is little mention of "library" or "librarianship" in the titles of degrees in Australia and New Zealand in comparison to the United States and Canada.

While a more detailed comparative study is needed, ALA and ALIA models of accreditation are different. The ALA model potentially presents an excellence model, with a focus on retrospective evaluation and

Table 5: Master's programs with additional cultural heritage specializations

University Name	School/Title program	Additional Specializations
University of Iowa	Graduate College, School of Library and Information Science	Book Arts
Dalhousie University	School of Information Management	Cultural Heritage Information Management
Queens College, CUNY	Graduate School of Library and Information Studies	Cultural Heritage Information Management
San Jose State University	Applied Sciences and Arts, School of Information	Cultural Heritage Information Management
University of South Carolina	College of Information and Communications, School of Library and Information Science	Cultural Heritage Information Management
Wayne State University	School of Library and Information Science	Cultural Heritage Information Management
Simmons College	School of Library and Information Science	Cultural Heritage Information Management
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	School of Information Sciences	Cultural Heritage Information Management
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	School of Information and Library Science	Cultural Heritage Information Management
University of Texas, Austin	School of Information	Cultural Heritage Information Management
University of Toronto	Faculty of Information	Cultural Heritage Information Management
Catholic University of America	School of Arts and Sciences, Department of Library and Information Studies	Cultural Heritage Information Management
University of Michigan	School of Information	Cultural Information Management
Pratt Institute	School of Information	Museum Libraries, Cultural Heritage Information Management, Art Librarianship
Kent State University	School of Information	Museum Studies
Florida State University	College of Communication and Information	Museum Theory and Practice
St John's University	St. John's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Division of Library and Information Science	Public History joint degree

evidence of prospective strategy, planning, and rigorous self-assessment. The ALIA model appears to present a criteria-driven model that also engages in retrospective and prospective evaluation. The function of the joint ASA and RIMPA model is unclear, although the RIMPA accreditation tool shows a retrospective checklist indicating what elements of a program meet expected requirements. The number of accrediting associations is very different: the ALA undertakes accreditation to cover all LIS education in North America; in New Zealand, LIANZA and RIMPA are the accrediting bodies, whereas in Australia there are three, each representing different parts of LIS.

In Australia, ALIA and RIMPA represent a broader interpretation of an information professional in their names, whereas the ASA represents only archivists. However, it is not clear what types of accredited information professionals ALIA and RIMPA represent. Weatherburn and Harvey (2016) criticize the need to accredit discipline-specific qualifications in Australia, such as the graduate diploma in information and library studies. A changing market demands professionals who are competent across information fields and who establish themselves as leaders in “positions of power” (Weatherburn and Harvey, 2016, p. 254). Therefore, professional associations and the qualifications they accredit must also change (Weatherburn & Harvey, 2016). Weatherburn and Harvey present an agenda for enacting change; however, theirs is neither the first nor the only voice in calling for radical reform in LIS education in Australia (Yu & Davis, 2007).

Acknowledgment of diversity is a key difference between the ALA and Australian accrediting standards, something that also highlights the difference in models. The ALA standards (ALA, 2015) adopt a broad and inclusive stance on incorporating diversity by stating that the “nature of a demonstrably diverse society” must be incorporated as part of “framing goals and objectives, designing curricula and selecting and retaining faculty and students” (p. 3). ALIA’s *Core Knowledge, Skills and Attributes* standard (ALIA, 2014) acknowledges the existence of diverse professional environments, cultures, and workforce within the profession and the services. The ALIA/ASA/RIMPA *Foundation Knowledge, Skills and Attributes* statement (ALIA, 2015) does not mention diversity at all. The ASA/RIMPA joint *Statement of Knowledge* refers to a diverse recordkeeping profession (ASA and RMAA Joint Education Steering Committee, 2011). A more detailed analysis of each standard needs to be undertaken; however, the outcomes and actions from the PACG and AERI research workshops (AERI & PACG, 2011) appear to have had little uptake by Australian professional associations.¹²

Course offerings

In the United States in particular, there is a prevalence of joint master’s degree programs, which are not commonly offered Australia. Additionally, these joint degrees, along with specializations brought together as part of

an LIS program, appear to deliver a greater range of skills and knowledge than is offered in Australia. However, further investigation into the diversity of Australian LIS education is required.

The inclusion of museum studies and cultural heritage information management in US programs is an interesting point of difference from Australia. The ALA, by accrediting programs that include museum studies, is clearly validating museum studies as part of LIS. (G)LAM integration is not a new topic in North America (Marty & Twidale, 2011; Ribeiro, 2007; Tibbo & Lee, 2010). The potential for GLAM education has been raised previously in Australia as part of a call for more research into knowledge, skills, and competencies (Howard, 2015) and as part of an Australian Government-funded Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Records and Museum (GLARM) Workforce Development Strategy project (Innovation and Business Skills Australia, 2013). The Australian Government has also invested in research to develop GLAM innovation and strategy, especially around generating data and utilizing networked digital technologies (Mansfield, Winter, Griffith, Dockerty, & Brown, 2014). The complexity around how GLAM fits into LIS education warrants much closer investigation for all countries examined in this study.

While the ALA's accreditation standards specifically mention "recorded information," ALIA's *Core Knowledge, Skills and Attributes* document (ALIA, 2014) does not. The joint ALIA, ASA, and RIMPA standard published in 2015 covers archives and records, but it is unclear where and how this standard is applied or, further still, how it assesses quality (ALIA, 2015). Even with the joint standard between the three accrediting bodies in Australia, it is clear from the degree titles and accreditation processes that there are three distinct professional identities in records, archives, and library education in that country. This tension also exists in the United States and Canada, but it is not as explicit. In North America, archives and records are not always represented or accredited in LIS-accredited programs and are often considered a specialist program.¹³

Recommendations and future research

In this section we come back to problems of the role that accreditation plays in the education of LIS professionals in a changing world. Key questions that arose from the discussion include the following:

1. How clear and interpretable are Australia's LIS standards? What exactly are they being used for? Who is researching their value and use?
2. How exactly do archives and records fit into LIS? What are the expectations of all stakeholders?
3. How does a pluralistic approach to information contexts translate to a globalized and standardized LIS field?
4. How can the wider or meta-level focus on information as a global phenomenon also support localized knowledge? And how does this

translate into LIS education and accreditation standards? Does it need to?

5. Is there a need for GLAMR education? Who needs it? What would it include?

We propose three areas for further examination based on opportunities raised in the research:

1. Explore and discuss why Australian LIS educators should interact with the iSchools movement. Involve relevant stakeholders, and particularly professional associations.
2. Examine the various accreditation standards and processes in Australia to identify what role they play in the quality, design, and delivery of LIS education. In particular, examine whether all needs are being met by all accredited degrees. Involve all relevant stakeholders, including current and recently graduated students.
3. Identify the opportunities and value of an integrated and knowledgeable GLAMR education. Collaboration between each part of the GLAMR acronym is essential.

Limitations

Data-collection methodology from websites was limited to the information made publicly available. The members-only information was not included in this study, since it was not possible for the authors of this study to be members of all groups reviewed. Additionally, the history of how the professions evolved in each country is not discussed in this paper, as it is addressed well by others (Carroll, Kerr, Musa, & Afzal, 2013; Hallam et al., 2004; Wertheimer, 2017; Wilson, Kennan, Willard, & Boell, 2010). Our objective is to build a foundation upon which to better understand these complexities and how they connect to support both a globalized and adaptive LIS professional and our role as educators.

Conclusion

This research highlights the similarities and differences between the accreditation frameworks of North America (Canada and the United States), Australia, and New Zealand. Similarities include the value placed on accreditation by professional associations; the engagement, even if limited, in the iSchools movement by LIS programs; and the strong library identity for future careers that is demonstrated on library association websites. Findings also suggest that the underlying structures of the professional associations and accreditation processes have contributed to the differences in library, archives, and records educational approaches for each country. These differences include the availability of double master's programs; recognition of the master's degree as the professional level; single versus multiple accrediting processes for LIS

programs; a different model of accreditation; and the inclusion of diverse areas of specialization, including museum studies in the United States, that are not clearly represented or readily identifiable in Australia and New Zealand. The analyses in this paper are not meant to be a judgment of the of current educational structures, issues, or associations in any country but rather a starting point for conversations about the reciprocity, identity, and globalization of LIS education. How professional knowledge, skills, and competencies are conceptualized and evaluated is an area of future research and discussion.

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Notes

1. For the purposes of this study, "accreditation framework" refers to the professional associations, accreditation processes and standards, and the types and structures of the educational programs or qualifications they accredit.
2. The acronym GLAM stands for Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums and is used to promote and describe an integrated sector of cultural memory institutions. Use of LAM is more common in North America, while GLAMR (including records) is gaining traction in Australia.
3. The iSchools Charter states that it is "a consortium of information schools incorporated as a non-profit corporation . . . formed under the District of Columbia Non-Profit Corporation Code, . . . [which] takes it as a given that expertise in all forms of information is required for progress in science, business, education, and culture. This expertise must include understanding of the uses and users of information, the nature of information itself, as well as information technologies and their applications" (iSchools, 2014).
4. The American Library Association (ALA) has recognized qualifications from the United Kingdom and Australia since the 1990s.
5. The ALA list of accredited programs includes lists of specializations for each institution. This information is not offered on Australian accrediting body websites.
6. The website describes the difference in terms of Gold status allowing for a Reaccreditation Panel visit after completing the first accreditation five-year process. However, this does not clearly explain the actual difference between Red and Gold options.

7. The ASA and RIMPA (formerly RMAA) have at least three different versions of the *Joint Statement* on their separate websites. The ASA publishes the 2006 PDF version (cited here), while RIMPA publishes a 2011 PDF version, a 2011 Word version, and a 2012 Word exposure draft version. There is also mention of a 2013 version, but that could not be found.
8. TAFE qualifications are very rigidly managed under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and must adhere to national competency standards that are delivered through standardized training packages. The training package used for the Statement of Knowledge can be found at <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/BSB01>. The AQF is an Australian federal government quality initiative that dictates program levels; a TAFE diploma sits at Level 5, an undergraduate bachelor's degree at Level 7, a graduate diploma at Level 8, and a master's degree at Level 9 (the PhD is at level 10) (Office of the Australian Qualifications Framework, 2013).
9. See <http://www.aranz.org.nz/>.
10. "Teaching out" refers to a program that is no longer taking new students and in which only existing enrolled students will be able to obtain the degree.
11. The Australian iSchools are Charles Sturt University's School of Information Systems, the University of South Australia's School of Information Technology & Mathematical Sciences, and the University of Melbourne's School of Computing and Information Systems. The latter is the only Australian iSchool that does not have an LIS program. In 2018, Monash University and Curtin University, who both have LIS programs, indicated (anecdotally) that they intend to apply for iSchool membership. In 2019, Monash is now part of the iSchool consortium.
12. There does exist a series of policy statements from ALIA related to diversity in providing information services (ALIA, 2018d); however, the focus in this research is accreditation standards or instruments.
13. In the early 2000s, LIS accreditation in the US was in the spotlight (although the ALA had been accrediting formally since the 1950s), and a task force was created to examine an external (to ALA) accreditation process along with exploring accreditation of undergraduate and library technician programs. The task force included various specializations such as the SAA and the American Society for Information Science (currently called ASIS&T, the name having been changed in 2013 to the Association for Information Science and Technology, reflecting its growing international membership) but also within-libraries specialist groups such as law librarians, as well as the Canadian Library Association. The task force was dismissed in 2002, and the ALA accrediting committee faced accusations of secrecy (Hallam, Partridge, & Mcallister, 2004). In Australia, and within LIS education, archives is generally considered a specialization. Archives have also

been contextualized by ALIA as being relevant to specialist libraries such as record keeping in school libraries, and archival collections in academic and libraries, rather than institutions in their own right (see Partridge et al., 2011).

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Appendix

Sources for data collection

Jurisdiction	Name	Context description	Accessed
Australia	Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)	The national professional organization for the Australian library and information services sector.	https://www.alia.org.au/employment-and-careers/accredited-courses Accessed 13 August 2017
Australia	Australian Society of Archivists (ASA)	The principal professional body for archivists in Australia.	https://www.archivists.org.au/learning-publications/accredited-courses Accessed 13 August 2017
Australia	Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIMPA)	The principal organization for the records and information management profession in Australasia and the largest in the southern hemisphere.	http://rimpa.com.au/professional-development/courses-available/ Accessed 13 August 2017
International	iSchools	A consortium of Information Schools dedicated to advancing the information field.	http://ischools.org/ Accessed 13 August 2017
New Zealand	Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ)	An incorporated society, established in 1976, with the aim of promoting the understanding and importance of records and archives in New Zealand.	https://www.aranz.org.nz/Site/resources/education/default.aspx Accessed 13 August 2017
New Zealand	Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA)	A vibrant non-profit and membership-based organization that advocates on behalf of library and information professionals within the sector.	https://lianza.org.nz/profession/getting-qualified/education-providers Accessed 17 August 2017

(Continued)

Jurisdiction	Name	Context description	Accessed
United States	Society of American Archivists (SAA)	Founded in 1936, the SAA is North America's oldest and largest national professional association dedicated to the needs and interests of archives and archivists.	https://www2.archivists.org/dae Accessed 17 August 2017
United States & Canada	American Library Association (ALA)	The oldest and largest library association in the world.	http://www.ala.org/CFApps/lisdir/directory_pdf.cfm Accessed 13 August 2017
