



**QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FACULTY**

Professional Practice

Fieldwork Placement Journal

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Details of Fieldwork Placement.....	4
3. Review of the host organisation	5
4. Your experience	9
5. Your Reflections	11
6. Student's evaluation of fieldwork.....	13
7. Supervisor's report on student performance	Error! Bookmark not defined.
8. Supervisor's evaluation of work practice program ...	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1. Introduction

Congratulations! You have arranged your first fieldwork placement and now you are ready to embark on the experience. In this unit you are required to complete 100 hours of fieldwork placement. It is entirely up to you how you structure this time. For example, you could decide to complete all 100 hours in a specific library context or you may choose to divide the time up into 3 day parts and spend each part in a different type of library context. The choice is yours. Whatever you decide you will need to complete a **Fieldwork Journal** for each context you go to.

This Fieldwork Journal consists of:

- the details of your placement (Section 2).
- a review of the host organisation (section 3). This will prompt you to think about the organisation you are working in and to consider the issues involved in the planning, management and information practices of the organisation, and to consider its strengths and weaknesses to face the future.
- your journal (Section 4). This enables you to keep a record of your activities during the fieldwork and, importantly, prompts you to reflect on the new experiences you are having.
- your reflections (Section 5). This will help you to think about your own personal and professional growth and to possibly formulate plans about your future career; and highlight the importance of both discipline knowledge and generic capabilities in the workplace;
- your own evaluation of the fieldwork placement (Section 6). Your feedback is valuable to help us respond to any concerns and to help us continue to improve the arrangements with our industry partners.
- your industry supervisor's report (Section 7). This should provide you with feedback about your performance in the workplace – this can also be discussed during the exit interview.
- any feedback from your supervisor about their involvement in the fieldwork program (Section 8).

QUT contact information:

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2. Details of Fieldwork Placement

Fieldwork organisation:	Crown Law Library
Address:	Crown Law, State Law Building, 50 Ann Street, Brisbane Qld 4000
Manager/Team leader:	Mari McGuire
Industry supervisor (if different from manager):	
Email:	mari.mcquire@crownlaw.qld.gov.au
Phone:	(07) 323 96064

Dates of work practice:	First day 11/01/2016 Last day 19/01/2016 Total days 7 Part-time arrangements NA
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3. Review of the host organisation

3.1 Its mission and objectives

Provide details about the mission of the organisation you have been working in. How is it expressed? Where and how is it promoted/published? How does it fit into the planning/reporting mechanisms of the organisation? What is the relationship to the parent organization, if it is a subordinate body?

The Crown Law represents the QLD government in all areas of law affecting the public sector. This is written at the bottom of their websites homepage in bold writing. As they work for the government all work must be transparent i.e. manager in library approves payments but someone else makes the payments. Also there is a lot of reporting and budget planning. Crown Law and the library have the parent organisation of Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG). They are responsible for administering justice in QLD and Crown Law supports this.

3.2 The client profile and the service requirements of the clients?

Think about the range of clients who use the information centre – in person on through remote access. Do different groups have their own specific individual needs? How well do you think their needs are being met?

The clients of this library are from Crown Law and also all the departments of DJAG. They mostly require legal information however as there are so many departments to cater for the legal information is also broad. They have online request forms for research and loan queries and are also available on the phone during business hours. This is good for clients who are unable to come into the library whether this is due to time constraints or they are not situated within the same building. The library also has access to a broad range of legal resources both online and in print. If a client is asking for something not within this library the librarians can almost always get it elsewhere from another library often through ILL. I think they meet their client's information needs very well.

3.3 Are there any legislative or external policy requirements that must be applied? List these here and comment if you wish.

e.g. privacy, copyright, FOI, purchasing, budgeting, contracts, design

Copyright issues for books, budgeting requirements from the manager and also inter-departmentally as library services and databases are often charged to clients. Privacy is also required, particularly Chinese walls, when finding information for 2 clients on opposing arguments.

3.4 What information standards are used in this information centre?

Explain how and where they are applied. Examples may include standards for document delivery, MARC, AS4390, XML, AACR2, ISO11620, Z39.50. Has the organisation developed any of its own in-house standards?

Information standards used appear to be in house. They have a simple catalogue and manually put in new records with basic fields – title, author, publication date,

subject headings, call number and abstract/table of contents. Their call numbers are created in house too from Moys Classification and Thesaurus for Legal Materials.

3.5 Promotion and marketing

Provide details on the techniques and programs used to market the service: how are users informed about services? Do you think these methods are effective - how good is the marketing and promotion? Do you think it could be improved? How?

Weekly emails go out advising clients of new cases and articles they can request from the library. This is an effective technique marketing library services. Also, notice bulletins can be used on the company intranet however these are rescripted by DJAG and do not accurately reflect the tone of the library. Also, each new employee does library training which allows the library to show them what it can offer them. This is good as it means new staff are comfortable using the library and knowledgeable about its services. The library manager, Mari, wants to increase marketing and promotion by creating the libraries own newsletter to send out. I think this would improve the promotion of the library and allow users to see more about what the library can offer them, more than books and cases. More training offered, particularly to staff who have been here longer would be beneficial as they may have forgotten how to use databases, or not used new ones and also allows the library to refresh them on what they can offer.

3.6 Information literacy initiatives

Discuss the initiatives taken by the organisation to support their clients' information literacy, including development of information skills. Are there special needs in this specific community? How well do you think this organisation is addressing this issue? How do the staff respond to this role for information professionals? Do you have any ideas to help this organisation develop new strategies?

The library is developing online subject guides to help their clients with online research. They are also trying to renew their training guides to be more effective and fit their new brand requirements. The library staff are keen to develop more up to date resources such as videos to help their clients. As aforementioned they train all new staff in the libraries databases and resources which is good. However I have not noticed it extended past staff's induction. They also do not have resources available to support special needs. There is a blind employee within their client base but none of their resources or tools cater to his needs, it is assumed he has support already with his own technology. However, it could be beneficial to create resources that he could access as easily as another, such as podcast training or videos with transcripts.

3.7 Human resources

Discuss the staffing structure in your host organisation? Can you consider the different educational qualifications the staff may hold? Do you feel they regard themselves as 'information professionals'? How important is the concept of professional development in this organisation? Do you feel that management supports and encourages the professional growth of their staff? What do the staff do about their own professional development?

The staffing structure within the library is the Library Manager as the supervisor and all other staff sit directly below her. Each staff has different qualifications ranging from Masters LIS, Grad Dip Library Studies, Law Degrees. All have an LIS qualification of some description. The staff with more legal knowledge are the reference librarians. Each staff member goes through the Performance Planning Review annually where professional development is noted. However, staff have all been working here for 10+ years so there is not much professional development implemented, but they do get to go to conferences if they are interested and is approved by HR. Also, cross skilled training is important due to the small team and helps upskill staff.

3.8 Performance measures

How is the performance of the information centre measured? Are certain evaluation measures used for services, products, programs or staff, eg statistics, key performance indicators (KPIs), benchmarking? What happens to the data that is collected? Does it feed into the budgeting or planning processes?

Is there any way to determine the value of this service to the parent organisation? What contribution do you think it makes to the productivity or profitability of the parent organisation?

Statistics are gathered from all interactions with clients. They are recorded as either ready reference (under 6 minutes), advanced reference (6min – 2 hours) and research (2+ hours). Each query that comes through it is also noted what department they are from. This is important as the library charges fees for service to some departments. Also, walk ins and borrowing statistics are recorded daily as well as how many documents are sent to clients. These statistics are collated and used in a monthly report that goes to all the managers in the building to show what is happening at the library and who is using it. The statistics are also important for the budget as some services are charged to departments and this directly impacts the library budget. The report is useful as it shows the value of the library to DJAG and Crown Law as it highlights how much their staff use the library services and how much time the library has saved their staff from researching thus increasing their own productivity.

3.9 Professional networking and cooperation

Were you aware of strategies in place that support collaborative activities or resource sharing? How do the staff interact with professional colleagues, either within the larger organisation or with those in other organisations?

The Inter Library Loans Librarian is in charge of resource sharing with other libraries. This is done very successfully using Libraries Australian and Gratis Net. There is also another Law Library (Supreme Court Library) a block away where resources can be borrowed/copied from. Staff are on very good terms with this library to ensure smooth borrowing can continue. Library staff interact with professional staff really well, very professional but friendly and welcoming into the library. They know many of their names and have easy conversations with them, this allows professional staff to return to the library and feel comfortable asking for help/information.

3.10 System or service innovation

Are you able to provide details about a particular process, procedure or software application, or a particular service that is distinctive or innovative? Explain why it is innovative. What benefits can be identified as a result of the innovative practices?

Their records management system is distinctive. It is a bit old but it still functions well for their needs. It is distinctive because this is where they record all their queries and because clients can request things directly through the system. The Librarians can also add queries in manually allowing phone and walk in queries to all be recorded in the same place. The system also allows them to send emails and attach documents to the emails in order to respond to queries. It is most distinctive for me as it automatically recognised my IP address and allows me access to the system. Also, anyone who is granted access (controlled by my Information Resources Librarian) can see the same thing. This is very beneficial to the reference team as they regularly take turns on the reference desk and it allows them to update each other and pass on queries easily.

3.11 The future

Use this page to provide a summary of the issues that you think will confront the organisation within the next 2-3 years. Some of these issues may include staffing levels, the need for skills and training, system replacement, customer change, legislation, funding... How is the service facing these issues? Can you identify specific strengths and weaknesses, opportunities or threats that may have a significant impact? How are they going about planning for the future? Do you think they are responding appropriately to the challenges placed before them? Do you feel they are proactive or reactive? Is there anything that you feel could be approached in a different way?

Budget constraints may be an issue in the future. This topic is often brought up, not necessarily by the library but in relation to it. This could affect resources and staff which would really impact client services. The library is facing this issue by trying to improve their marketing and promotion in order to continue to bring in additional funds and also by keeping accurate statistics to prove the libraries worth and need for a strong budget.

The catalogue is also being looked at for an upgrade/replacement. This would be beneficial as their current catalogue is old and looks outdated. It does not invite users to utilise it and it does not fit seamlessly with the main library website. The library manager is currently investigating alternative options for this potential replacement.

All staff are very up to date with their own skills, I don't think anything will face a big need to improve their own skills. Perhaps, only in the area of creating more current training materials for online such as videos. However, the team is small I would estimate only one or two people would need to be trained in this.

Overall I think the Crown Law Library is responding proactively to change. They see in the future changing needs of their users and are already preparing to meet these needs. This is particularly seen in their plans for videos and creating online subject guides.

4. Your experience

4.1 Names and positions of staff with whom you have contact

Mari McGuire – Library Manager
Janice Ma – Digital Services Librarian
Sandra Burgess – ILL and Legislation Librarian
Jennifer Jordan – Reference & Research & Training Librarian
Wendy O'Meara – Research & Reference Librarian
Barbara Flowers – Research & Reference Librarian

4.2 Your objectives for this placement

What do you hope to gain from this placement – both in terms of professional knowledge and skills and personal development opportunities?

Consolidate and apply learnings from the legal researching unit I just completed. To see how small, special libraries are run. To build up a network with law librarians.

4.3 List the main activities you have worked on during the placement.

Updating training guide (Word Doc), updating subject guide (online), and responding to legal reference enquiries. Also, helped with stocktake and cataloguing books and annual reports.

4.4 Were there activities you saw being performed during the period that you have not been introduced to previously at QUT? If so, please describe them and your reactions, etc.

Sandra looks after the user accounts for LexisNexis. She arranges for them to be set up then is in control of passwords and security for the accounts. This is to tighten security and for licensing reasons. I have not seen this done at QUT where the Librarian, as opposed the vendor, takes ownership of these details. It is good for clients as they know the person they can contact for any queries relating to LexisNexis. However, they are not able to immediately fix anything themselves i.e. if they forget their password, they cannot reset it as they don't know the answer to the security question. They must contact Sandra. It is good that they do not have to deal directly with the vendor as this can sometimes be a frustrating experience for users.

4.5 Have any incidents or responsibilities helped you to understand what it means to be an information professional?

The work I was given to do was similar to work I have done in my Library Adviser role at QUT. It was interesting to see that the same work was needed to be done i.e. creating subject guides and training materials for databases. I think this shows that even though the user groups and libraries are quite different the needs arising are the same, more online access, quick access and autonomous online training materials such as short videos are wanted. To me this means information professionals can really go into a lot of different industries and still add so much value to their user groups, not just with books and journals but with training solutions and online tools to better access information.

4.6 Were there areas where you were expected to perform, but in which you encountered difficulties? How did you try to resolve these?

The first research query I was given was a bit difficult as I didn't understand the subject matter entirely. In order to resolve this I was given some advice on where to start my search, Halsbury's. From here I was able to navigate and utilise the knowledge I had gained from the Legal Researching course to find suitable cases for the client. I also checked in with Wendy at the end to make sure my answers were suitable and I had followed all the correct researching steps. Wendy gave me positive feedback and said I had done what she would have done in answering the query.

5. Your Reflections

Think and write (300-500 words) about how the fieldwork placement has influenced your appreciation of yourself and your approach to being a professional.

The following questions may help you explore this:

1. What questions arise for you about yourself or the profession?
2. Is there any aspect of the fieldwork that you experienced or observed that you wish to explore further?
3. Were there any emotional reaction/ hunches that you had during the placement?
4. Did you experience any confusion?
5. Could you analyse any disagreements you encountered?

One important area that you should consider as you reflect is the importance of **generic capabilities in the workplace**. Generic capabilities include the skills, attitudes and attributes which are integral to your own self-development, so extend beyond the discipline knowledge you have gained through the academic units you have studied during the course. They encompass capabilities such as oral and written communication, teamwork skills, critical thinking and problem solving, information literacy, ethical behaviour, social responsibility, understanding of the corporate and political environment in the workplace and personal self-management.

Please include some thoughts on:

6. Your impressions about the current level of your own generic capabilities as you embark on work as a new professional.
7. Did you find that your workplace experiences led to you drawing on some of these generic capabilities? If so, think about the context and think about your personal response to the situation you found yourself in. Did anything come as a surprise to you?
8. Were you able to observe these capabilities in the day-to-day work activities of your colleagues in the workplace? Think about the relationship between these attributes and the expectations of clients and other colleagues.
9. Did you find that you had the opportunity to further develop some of these capabilities during your fieldwork placement? If so, think about how this happened and whether they have made any difference to your own understanding about your role both as a person and as a professional.
10. Are there any generic capabilities that you would like to develop further in the future? How do you think you may be able to do this?

Your reflections...

While working at the Crown Law Library, I learnt many things. Initially there was trepidation as my only legal experience was the completion of the Legal Researching course at QUT. Whilst I had really enjoyed the course and learnt a lot, I still felt that my knowledge of the law and its resources somewhat lacking. However, the team I worked with were very kind and generous to my lack of legal research experience. They helped me build up my confidence and knowledge by showing me around their complete collection both physical and digital. They also allowed me to shadow the reference services to get a feel of the general queries they get. Soon enough I was able to answer written enquiries myself and be successful at locating the particular legal resources required. I was able to pick this up quickly by using my generic information literacy and retrieval skills that I have developed throughout my Masters and my work experience at QUT Library. By the end of my time I was confident with answering written queries and my manager was pleased with how quickly I had picked things up.

Another skill that I utilised was how to best present information to users. This was in the form of creating two training guides for users of the library's online information resources such as LawNow Legislation. I had to use formatting and style guidelines as dictated by the organisation and present easy to follow and appealing training guides. This was a great exercise and made me think about how to best present the information to engage with the clients and also keep in line with the organisations expectations.

Whilst cataloguing, I also had to use attention to detail quite rigorously. This was important as I had learn how to use their record management system and ensure each new item was catalogued correctly in order for users to find them easily and accurately. This also brought into play my information management skills as I had to determine which information was relevant to include in cataloguing such as determining call numbers.

What I felt I gained the most from the experience was seeing a different type of library. As a specialised library, all the librarians have quite in depth knowledge about the law. I believe if I were to work there longer my knowledge too would increase as it is so specific. The library team was also a lot smaller, only six people within the whole library and they do all the tasks such as cataloguing, ordering, loose-leaf and reference queries. Compared to QUT who have entire teams dedicated to each of these tasks, it was interesting to see how important it was for each staff member to be cross trained in each other's skill sets. As they are a small team if someone was to be absent, someone else must be trained in how perform the absentees role as all have essential library functions. It was also interesting to see how a government library is run. Talking with Mari, the Manager, I was able to understand more about statistics for the library, reporting and how a lot of their correspondence to their clients has to be run through others. It can be frustrating for some of their correspondence to be changed before issued to their community as some of the library's discourses are skewed.

Overall, my work experience was a great opportunity for me to utilise and solidify my new found legal researching skills. I was able to use information literacy, attention to detail and information retrieval skills.

6. Student's evaluation of fieldwork

This evaluation should be completed at the conclusion of your placement.

Student: Madelin O'Sullivan.....

Name of Organisation: Crown Law Library

Dates of Fieldwork: from: 11/01/2016 to: 19/01/2016

Please complete each of the statements set out below by checking one of the boxes. Add any comments or explanation beneath if necessary.

1. The knowledge and skills learned during fieldwork with the agency was:

Outstanding	Moderate	Average	Adequate	Inadequate
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....
.....

2. In relation to my own goals/accomplishments the fieldwork was:

Highly relevant	Moderately relevant	Average	Moderately irrelevant	Totally irrelevant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....
.....

3. Work supervision (i.e. support & feedback) provided in this organisation was:

Extremely helpful	Quite helpful	Moderately helpful	Not very helpful	Unsatisfactory
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....
.....

4. The level of job satisfaction of the fieldwork experiences provided was:

Excellent	Very	Satisfactory	Somewhat	Totally
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	satisfactory		unsatisfactory	unsatisfactory
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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5. The period I spent on the fieldwork placement was:

Too long	About Right	Too short
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....

.....

6. The features of my fieldwork that I considered **most** valuable were:

Answering legal research queries and getting a better understand of the law librarian profession

7. The features of my fieldwork that I considered **least** valuable were:

All the work and knowledge I gained in my fieldwork was valuable. However, the initial training completed by IT was the least valuable as I was not a permanent employee.

8. Fieldwork might be improved for me (e.g. academic/career relevance, potential for professional growth, degree of challenge etc.) by:

I don't think it could be improved as it is highly relevant to my degree and work.

9. Knowledge, skills or attitudes that I believe have improved by fieldwork:

Legal researching, legal knowledge, cataloguing and more knowledge about budgets and billing of the library.

10. Knowledge, skills or attitudes that I would like to develop further:

(in particular, any comments arising from exit interview with supervisor)

I would still like to develop my legal researching skills but I think this will come with time and practice. I would like to develop further as a library trainer.

11. I consider that work practice **should** continue to be a component of IFN620 Professional Practice.

Self-evaluation

1. The quality of my work has been:

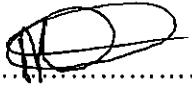
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. The quantity of my work has been:

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Therefore, overall I would evaluate my work performance at this time:

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Student signature:  Date: 3/3/16

