

Library and Information Service

INFORMATION LITERACY GUIDELINES

1 Purpose

It is the policy of the NWU Library Services to provide access to cutting-edge and relevant resources and services. This allows the Library to fulfil the academic expectations of its user communities in a professional, creative, and innovative manner. Information Literacy (IL) empowers users by equipping them with skills that enable them to use the Library resources optimally. In pursuit of its commitment to provide access to the relevant resources, the Library provides leadership in developing and fostering the essential IL knowledge, skills and understanding for its community. Information Literacy skills promote critical thinking, which equips individuals with a foundation for lifelong learning. In partnership with academia, the Library creates a learning environment which supports the core business of teaching, learning and research. Besides training responsibilities, Information Literacy also ensures the marketing of all campus library services and event planning. Furthermore, the NWU Libraries should engage with other national and international libraries, in order to fulfil the academic expectations of its community to the best of its ability.

2 Definitions

Information Literacy refers to a set of skills that empowers individuals to recognise their informational needs. It develops critical thinking and fosters the ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use information. Information Literacy leads to self-directed and independent individuals who are lifelong learners.

Terms which are referred to in this policy, are explained below.

- **Information resources:** this refers to any material that can be a source of possible information. These resources can be divided into three main categories, namely:
 - print resources, including books, periodicals, magazines and newspapers;
 - electronic resources, such as compact discs (CDs), videos, audio-tapes, digital versatile discs (DVDs), read-only compact discs (CD-ROM), and e-books, e-journals, e-theses, and so forth;
 - online resources, including electronic materials found on the internet or on the library website, such as e-books, e-journals, theses, and so forth.
- **Information Literacy:** the Information Literacy Initiative is based on the assumption that an information literate person can recognise the need for information, and access this information efficiently and effectively by evaluating information and its sources critically. An information literate individual should also be able to incorporate selected information into their knowledge base, and use information effectively to accomplish specific purposes. They understand the economic, legal, social and ethical concerns regarding the use of information.

3 Goals

The purpose and goals of the NWU Library Information Literacy policy are set out below.

- Developing, educating and empowering students through an innovative and high-quality teaching-learning programme which aims to create well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically. These attributes are crucial when NWU graduates offer their services to the country, the continent and the world.
- Supporting the development of high-quality, relevant and focused research support that is aligned with national priorities.
- Supplying innovative solutions to challenges faced by the scholarly community in South Africa and the world.
- Implementing our expertise in teaching-learning and research, both commercially and community-directed, to the province, the country, the continent and ultimately the world.
- Establishing the NWU as an accountable, effective, well-managed, financially viable and innovative institution, with a strong focus on clients, an emphasis on enhancing the quality of the core business of the University, as well as ensuring sustainability.

The NWU is committed to the principle of delivering equitable library information services to all patrons. It will therefore plan to promote this on the different campuses, by using various modes of delivery to conduct courses. The libraries on the three campuses also co-operate to ensure that users have reasonable cross-campus access to library information services.

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