



Te Rau Herenga O Aotearoa | Library and Information Association of New Zealand

**Professor Nic Smith**  
**Vice-Chancellor**  
**Victoria University of Wellington Te Herenga Waka**  
[Wellington](#)

**June 12, 2023**

E te rangatira e Professor Smith, tenā koe,

We are writing to express concern about the current review of the Information Studies programmes within the Wellington School of Business and Government Ōrauraki at Victoria University of Wellington Te Herenga Waka.

Te Rau Herenga o Aotearoa Library and Information Association New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) has provided leadership to the wider library and information profession for more than 122 years. With a strong national and international network, active member communities and an established profile, LIANZA spans all parts of the diverse library and information sector. This includes public, school, tertiary, health, prison, law, government and other special libraries and information services.

Throughout the long history of the library and information sector, qualifications and capability building within the profession have been of crucial importance. LIANZA established the first library certificate course in 1942 and the New Zealand Library School for graduates in 1946.

Victoria University of Wellington Te Herenga Waka has been a key player in providing library and information management education since 1980 when the Department of Librarianship was established to offer the Diploma of Librarianship. In 1991 it was renamed the Department of Library and Information Studies with greater emphasis placed on information technology and distance education. The Master of Library and Information Studies was offered from 1996 and the Master of Information Studies from 2010 with a specialisation in library science (LIBS) or archives and records management (ARCR).

LIANZA and the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) have offered tertiary grants since 2022 to enable people to gain library and information qualifications. A significant number of grant recipients have received tuition and study costs to undertake the Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Master of Information Studies. The closure of the information studies programme would be a huge setback to our goal of ensuring the library and information sector is qualified and future-ready.

The National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa has recently developed [Te Tōtara Capability Framework](#). This framework was developed under the New Zealand Libraries Partnership Programme (NZLPP) to ensure a knowledgeable, flexible and diverse workforce that can support inclusive, resilient and thriving communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Post-graduate qualifications play an essential role in strengthening workforce capability and promoting professionalism. The Postgraduate Diploma and Master of Information Studies also enable graduates to gain LIANZA Professional Registration, which recognises a commitment to professional standards, and to developing and enhancing competence.



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The Master of Information Studies is the only master's programme offered in Aotearoa New Zealand and prepares graduates for a range of professional information positions in the nation's cultural heritage organisations, government departments and ministries, and other key civic institutions ensures that it has deep and meaningful connections with information and cultural heritage organisations in Aotearoa.

The programme's emphasis on Māori and other Indigenous-focused content is integral to the values that our profession holds relating to mātauranga Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi issues - core competencies of our body of knowledge. This knowledge can only be learnt in Aotearoa, and the programme makes a significant and unique contribution to the indigenisation and decolonisation of our institutions.

Librarianship and information management is a rapidly developing field. With increased information resources, information and digital technology demands and changing information landscape, qualified information professionals are required to ensure New Zealanders are equipped in an age of misinformation and artificial intelligence. The programme educates professionals who are at the forefront of preserving, organising, and making information accessible to all.

The ability of the programme to offer distance learning, combined with its close connection with key civic institutions, National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, Parliamentary Library Pāremata Aotearoa, Archives NZ Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga and government ministries, has aided Victoria University to be acknowledged as a leader in information management qualifications. Aided by the flexibility of this programme, many library and information professionals study part-time while working in the sector.

Now, more than ever, LIANZA believes that the post-graduate Information Studies programmes at Victoria University hold immense significance. The programmes are instrumental in nurturing highly skilled information professionals who make substantial contributions to organisations and communities across Aotearoa.

Nāku iti nei, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Taunga".

Kim Taunga  
LIANZA President

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ana Pickering".

Ana Pickering  
LIANZA Executive Director

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**Cc Professor Jane Bryson**, Dean Wellington School of Business & Government  
**Information Studies**