Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines

Multicultural Services Standard
July 2008

10.2 Multicultural Services Standard

Revised July 2008

10.2.1 Objective

To provide standards and guidelines for developing multicultural library services which provide equitable access, encourage participation and foster cohesion for Queensland's culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

10.2.2 Multicultural Services Standard

10.2.2.1 Standard for per capita collection and staff levels

Collection levels	
Populations of 2,500 or more speaking a particular language	The Local Government should provide its own collection of 2 items per capita for each language group.
Populations under 2,500 speaking a particular language	Libraries serving language groups under 2,500 population are eligible to make use of the State Library of Queensland's LOTE collection.
Staff levels	
Populations over 35,000	One of the qualified librarians should be a specialist position to suit the demographic needs of the community. This may be a Community Services position which includes responsibility for multicultural library services.

10.2.2.2 Standard for community profiling

Regular analysis of statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other relevant data should be undertaken to ensure current knowledge of multicultural populations and languages spoken in the Local Government area. This knowledge should inform the development of appropriate multicultural services.

10.2.2.3 Standard for staffing composition

All library staff should have an awareness of cultural sensitivity and a philosophy of inclusion, to encourage use of the library by culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

As far as possible, the composition of the library service's staff should reflect the broad demographic profile of the community. Ideally, key CALD groups will be represented either in the library's staff, on Council's staff or in volunteer groups.

For more detail on staffing for multicultural library services refer to the Public Library Staffing Standard, Section 2.3.5.

10.2.3 Guidelines

10.2.3.1 Guidelines for collections and resources

Collection resources should reflect the multicultural profile of the community. Dependent on populations, these resources may be provided locally or on a centralised or co-operative basis to ensure effectiveness and viability of services.

As far as possible, collections should be available in languages spoken within the community, and should include a similar range of resources and formats as the library's general collection. Collections should comprise, where available:

- recreational reading material (fiction and non-fiction) for all ages, including works by both indigenous and translated authors, and material published in non-Roman scripts;
- newspapers and magazines in other languages, both Australian and overseas titles;
- reference material including dictionaries for all languages spoken in the area or links to appropriate online resources;
- bilingual resources and parallel text resources;
- electronic resources such as databases, web sites, e-books and CD-Roms, including those available in non-Roman scripts. Libraries should also offer multilingual interfaces such as State Library of Queensland's *Multicultural Bridge* or the *My Language* national initiative (http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/lang; http://www.mylanguage.gov.au/cgi-bin/index.cgi) ;
- language learning resources and materials for students of ESL;
- resources to assist multilingual communities including government publications, health and community information;
- audio-visual resources including music CDs and DVDs;
- resources describing the cultural and religious diversity and recorded history of local communities.

Wherever practicable, the cataloguing of multicultural resources should be to the same standard as the general library collection and should be made available in non-Roman scripts where appropriate.

10.2.3.2 State Library LOTE collection

Libraries serving language groups of under 2,500 population are encouraged to make regular use of the central collection of LOTE resources held at the State Library of Queensland. The collection offers a cost-effective means of obtaining materials for smaller or widely dispersed language groups and ensures all communities have access to a wide range of resources.

Bulk loans of resources in over 40 languages are available to Queensland public libraries. The collection includes books and audio-visual materials but does not include magazines and newspapers. The collection is fully catalogued and requests may be made for specific titles.

10.2.3.3 Guidelines for community engagement and consultation

Effective community engagement and consultation on the needs of CALD communities can provide valuable input into the planning of multicultural library services and programs.

Working relationships should be established with a wide range of community, education, and government agencies, including neighbourhood centres. Methods of consultation should suit local circumstances, and may include:

- attending agency and community group meetings;
- inviting community representatives to address library and council staff;

- involving community representatives in focus groups, forums and planning sessions;
- forming advisory groups for regular feedback and input, and
- encouraging people from CALD communities to participate in library volunteer programs

10.2.3.4 Guidelines for programs and services

A wide range of services and programs should be offered to encourage and enhance library usage by CALD communities, celebrate cultural diversity in the local area and contribute to social cohesion. These may include:
- targeted events, displays and exhibitions designed to reach diverse audiences and demonstrate links with the library;
- celebrations for relevant key events such as Harmony Day, Citizenship Days, festivals for particular CALD groups and specific cultural holidays;
- library displays and information outlets across the community e.g. in shopping centres;
- bilingual story time sessions in the library;
- literacy and conversation classes;
- specific programs to appeal to targeted CALD community groups e.g. seniors in CALD communities, resettled refugee groups, migrant groups.

10.2.3.5 Guidelines for promotion and marketing

Best practice in multicultural library services highlights the need for good promotion of multicultural services and collections. Many CALD communities are unfamiliar with libraries and they may not be aware of services available within their new community. To raise awareness and encourage usage of library services, a variety of promotional techniques can be used, including:

- providing a welcoming physical and virtual environment utilising signage in universal symbols and/or relevant languages;
- offering library brochures and information sessions in languages appropriate to the community;
- utilising multicultural media outlets such as community radio stations and newspapers to promote the availability of services, resources and programs;
- organising exhibitions of materials promoting multicultural services and resources;
- ensuring library participation in specific festivals and events, and
- promoting computer literacy in relevant community languages, including multilingual online services such as the State Library of Queensland's *Multicultural Bridge* web pages http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/lang, and the *My Language* website http://www.mylanguage.gov.au/cgi-bin/index.cgi

10.2.3.6 Language services

Libraries with effective communication strategies that incorporate either bilingual staff or offer language services (interpreters or translators) will contribute more positively to the client's experience of that library. This demonstrates cultural sensitivity and improves service delivery to CALD communities.

While communication with people from diverse communities will be greatly enhanced by the presence of bilingual staff and cultural awareness training, the use of language services in complex situations is recommended. Multicultural Affairs Queensland can advise libraries on how to develop language services to best serve their clients. Further information is available at http://www.multicultural.qld.gov.au.

10.2.4 Performance indicators

- Regular analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics data to inform planning of services
- Provision of multicultural resources at the Local Government level for CALD language groups in excess of 2,500 people

- Provision of multicultural resources sourced from centralised collections for language groups under 2,500 population
- Cultural awareness training undertaken by library staff
- Effective promotional and community engagement programs and services for CALD communities

10.2.5 Definitions

CALD: Culturally and linguistically diverse.

Community engagement: Communication between governments and communities on a range of policy, program and service issues. Interactions may be formal or informal and range from information sharing to consultation, and sometimes active participation in decision-making.

Community languages: Languages other than English.

ESL: English as a second language.

Interpreter: An interpreter is a person who conveys oral messages or statements from one language into another language. In Queensland there are accredited and non-accredited interpreters. Wherever possible, agencies should request an interpreter accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).

LOTE: Languages other than English.

Multicultural: Multi-ethnic.

Translator: A translator is a person who makes a written transfer of a message or statement from one language into another language.