

Most people assume every school has a teacher librarian. Yet there is no national mandate.

As Australian students' digital and information literacy plummets, the dual qualified teacher librarian, an expert in these fields, is becoming extinct.

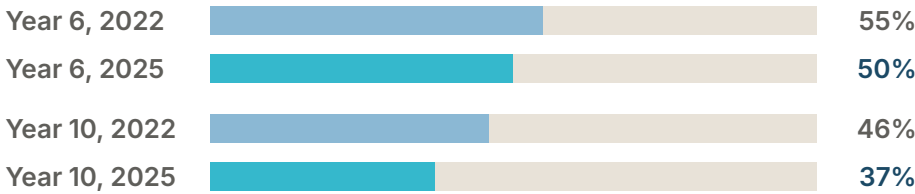
01 THE NATIONAL RESULT

37%

of Year 10 students met the proficient standard for digital literacy in 2025.

The lowest result since national testing began in 2005.

AT OR ABOVE THE PROFICIENT STANDARD



Sample: 5,498 Year 6 and 4,753 Year 10 students (Friedman et al., 2026).

02 USE IS NOT UNDERSTANDING

77%

of Year 10 students have five or more years of experience with digital tools.

81%

use internet search daily or almost daily at school.

Operating a search engine and judging what it returns are separate skills. Fluency with the first is mistaken for the second.

03 · WHAT THE MACHINE RETURNS

39%

of Google AI Overview responses were both correct and fully supported by the sources they cited.

Roughly nine in ten looked accurate. The failures are quiet ones: context removed, complexity flattened, partly correct answers presented as settled.

60 per cent of Year 10 students already use AI tools to generate written work monthly. Misinformation ranks as the leading short term global risk for 2026.

04 THE REMEDY IS ALREADY EVIDENCED

-  Three decades of studies link strong school library programs to higher achievement and graduation rates.
-  Those gains hold independently of a student's socio-economic background.
-  A decade of international evidence ties professionally led libraries to literacy and wellbeing.

05 ASSUMPTION AGAINST PRACTICE

WHAT IS ASSUMED

- Every school has a qualified teacher librarian.
- The teacher librarian role is just about managing the circulation of books.
- Students have digital skills and can find everything they need online.

WHAT IS THE CASE

- The position is discretionary in most systems and is at risk every budget cycle.
- Teacher librarians foster a culture of reading, wellbeing and information and digital literacy.
- Access to the internet does not equal the capacity to research and learn with information effectively.

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Every student and teacher deserves a well resourced school library led by a qualified team of school library professionals. It's not just nice to have. It's essential.

Raise your voice. Sign the petition.



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