Tip Sheet for Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents

This Tip Sheet provides general guidance for the required structure of Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents and outlines the recommended process for creating such documents, including establishing collaborative relationships with other groups, organizations, associations; involving faculty; gathering comments; resolving conflicting suggestions; and obtaining approval from the ACRL Information Literacy Frameworks and Standards Committee (ILFSC), ACRL Standards Committee (SC), and ACRL Board.

This Tip Sheet is intended to provide flexibility and to reduce ambiguity and confusion about procedures, improve the efficiency in the process for all involved, and provide consistency among and credibility for the final products created by various ACRL units. It is important to note that groups wishing to update their documents should address their needs in a format most appropriate to their topic, concept, or field. Groups revising or developing documents connected with a specific discipline should review the Tip Sheet for Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents.

This document is organized in three sections: Guidelines for Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents; Procedures; and Document Structure. This Tip Sheet will be maintained by the ILFSC, a subcommittee of the Standards Committee.

1. Guidelines for Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents

   A. Relationship to the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education

   In an introductory statement, the companion documents should address the relationship between the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education and the companion document.

   B. Relationship to Learning Standards

   The companion document should also articulate a relationship with any learning standards that relate to the topic, concept, or field. Because non-disciplinary companion documents may be broader, connecting to a variety of learning standards or framework documents may be important. If there are no relevant learning standards, the companion document should be placed in context of a broader dialogue on teaching
and learning issues related to the topic or concept the document addresses (e.g., primary source literacy, visual literacy).

C. Role of the ACRL Information Literacy Frameworks and Standards Committee

As the first step in developing the Framework Companion Documents, the ACRL unit will notify the ACRL ILFSC of their intention to revise or create such a resource. The ILFSC will appoint a committee member to serve as a liaison to the ACRL unit.

Upon completing the draft document, the ACRL unit will send the document to the ILFSC to conduct a review of the document. The ILFSC will provide any comments to the ACRL unit to consider for possible changes before the document is submitted to the SC for review and transmittal to the ACRL Board for official approval. It is important to note that the ILFSC’s comments will be limited to process or procedural steps the group should take as they continue to develop their companion document.

If a non-disciplinary companion document is being developed in collaboration with another group, organization, or association, they may have an entity similar to the ILFSC in ACRL’s organizational structure. While the ACRL Board must approve in advance any such collaborations, the development process and resulting document should comply with that collaborative organization’s procedures.

D. Role of the ILFSC liaison

Members of the ILFSC are assigned as liaisons to ACRL units developing information literacy framework documents or standards. The liaisons convey information regarding ILFSC and/or SC policies, respond to questions, attend meetings of the committee or section (as needed), and provide support through the process of preparation or review of the document. ILFSC liaisons may contact the ILFSC and/or SC chair as needed for additional guidance.

E. Role of ACRL Standards Committee

The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education and any companion documents are conceptual structures for learning and teaching rather than standards for the profession. As such, the SC review of companion documents pertains to the non-content editorial reviews and process used to develop the documents, not the
content of the documents themselves. The SC receives the companion document and comments from the ILFSC and submits its recommended actions to the ACRL Board, ILFSC, and the ACRL unit that created the document.

F. Role of ACRL Board

If a committee, working group, or task force undertakes the creation or revision of a non-disciplinary companion document to the Framework, the ACRL Board must approve any collaborative partnerships with bodies outside of ACRL in advance of such work beginning. Groups interested in this process should review the ILFSC’s Checklist for Non-Disciplinary Companion Documents for specific steps in this approval process.

Once a non-disciplinary companion document has been created or revised, the ACRL Board reviews it, along with recommendations from the SC and the ILFSC, to make an official decision whether to approve the companion document.

2. Document Structure

Non-disciplinary companion documents should be drafted in a manner that articulates the relationship between the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education and any other relevant documents and language related to the topic, concept, or field.

A Framework Companion Document should:

- Include an introduction and/or appendix that generally describes:
  - scope and purpose of the document
  - topics or concepts addressed
  - students addressed (e.g., undergraduates, distance learners, etc.)
  - intended audience for the document
  - relationship of the companion document to the Framework
  - special challenges related to information literacy in the topical or conceptual context
  - entities consulted in the document development process
  - sources used in preparation of the document
  - brief description and timeline of the development process.
  - measurable assessment strategies, as appropriate, or steps that can be taken by others to develop meaningful assessments in diverse contexts.
3. Procedures

The procedures that follow are descriptive of the recommended approach to developing Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents. Some deviation from these procedures is anticipated because different ACRL units have their own internal workflows; collaborating organizations may have specific processes for development and review of documents; and working with faculty or associations demands flexibility on the part of librarians and ACRL.

A. Procedure to Initiate the Process

ACRL units wishing to develop Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents should complete these actions as the first steps:

- Contact the chair of the ILFSC and state their intention to begin work on Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents, including the scope of the planned document and information about partnerships to holistically represent the topic or concept under development. If these documents are being co-developed with an outside entity, the ACRL board must approve any plans before a body/organization/group undertakes such a creation/revision process. The Chair will assign a committee member who will serve as a liaison to the ILFSC and advise and answer questions regarding procedures and timelines. The ILFSC will refer the unit to the Checklist for Developing Framework Companion Documents which will help to track the steps involved in this process.

- The committee or task force may also include faculty representatives as advisors or consultants, as appropriate. The ACRL Liaison Activities website provides information about established relationships ACRL has with other organizations that may be helpful for outreach purposes.

B. Recommendations for the Development Process

The following components are recommended for the development process but may vary by the needs of the ACRL unit and/or discipline:

- Review the literature about the topic or concept to identify key issues; relevant faculty needs or issues in the appropriate subject areas; existing or developing learning outcomes, frameworks, or threshold concepts that are conceptually related and any accreditation standards for the relevant programs.
Consult with any additional library associations that may have a vested or relevant interest in the document (e.g., Medical Library Association, American Association of Law Libraries, American Chemical Society’s Chemical Information Division, and various sections of the Special Library Association) or appropriate units elsewhere in ALA.

Consult with faculty and associations, particularly leaders of relevant teaching/learning focused committees or task forces within such organizations.

Submit draft document(s) for initial review by the ACRL unit’s leadership (e.g., a Section’s Executive Committee).

Distribute a draft of the companion document broadly and solicit comments from librarians, other library organizations, from faculty and organizations (e.g., through C&RL News, ACRL Insider blog, a Section’s discussion list, Section’s website, and/or Section’s newsletter, etc.), as well as any other channels recommended by partnering or collaborating groups.

C. Procedure for Review and Approval

The Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents need to obtain approval from several ACRL groups as follows:

- The leadership of the appropriate ACRL section or interest group with which the committee, task force, or working group is affiliated
- The ACRL Information Literacy Frameworks & Standards Committee (ILFSC)
- The ACRL Standards Committee (SC)

The ACRL unit, as the group with appropriate expertise, will provide the primary review of the substance and content of the document. Once approved by the ACRL unit, the document should be forwarded along with the “Transmittal Sheet for Draft Standards and Guidelines” to the ILFSC. The ILFSC reviews the document paying particular attention to the structure as outlined above, readability of the content of the document, and for conformity to the processes in this Tip Sheet.

The ILFSC may seek additional information from the ACRL unit submitting the document or may provide suggestions or recommendations for the ACRL unit to consider. If no revisions are needed, the ILFSC will forward the document and transmittal sheet with a recommendation to the SC.

The SC will review the document for conformity to the overall processes for development of standards, guidelines, and frameworks and other relevant ACRL and
ACRL unit policies. They will submit their committee’s review, the ILFSC’s review, and a final recommendation to the ACRL Board for its action.

The ACRL Board has the authority to approve or deny approval to a set of Framework Companion Documents. The ACRL Board will convey its decision to the ACRL unit initiating the document, the ILFSC, the SC, and the ACRL staff responsible for the Standards and Guidelines website. If approval is denied, the ACRL unit and the ILFSC may choose to meet to discuss how to address the concerns, and the ACRL unit may choose to revise and resubmit the document for approval.

In addition to this approval process, groups working on Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents in collaboration with other organizations or entities may need to seek approval through their defined processes. Task forces or committees developing or revising such documents should investigate necessary approval channels outside of ACRL.

D. Procedure for Publication and Announcement

Once approved by the ACRL Board, the Framework Companion Documents may be officially announced. Possible avenues include:

- Publishing the document on the unit's web site.
- Creating a link to the document on the ACRL Standards and Guidelines Web page as a sub-listing underneath the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.
- Submitting a short news article with the URL to C&RL News.
- Presenting a program at an ALA or ACRL conference
- Submitting a short news article to other relevant professional organizations.

Again, groups working on Non-Disciplinary Framework Companion Documents in collaboration with other organizations or entities may need to publicize resulting documents through specific channels outside of ACRL. They should investigate such channels as appropriate.
E. Procedure for Endorsements

Other professional organizations may be interested in endorsing the Framework Companion Documents at any point in the process. ACRL is interested in obtaining endorsements from other professional and education-related organizations. Following the ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures, units need to obtain ACRL Board approval before initiating or approving any related endorsements. Contact the ACRL Executive Director to discuss how to handle external requests or proactively initiate the process.