

Glossary of terms

This glossary includes definitions of terms, expressions and acronyms used by chapter authors but warranting explanation for readers from outside Australian information systems (IS) academia. We hope that these definitions will make the chapters more accessible to non-IS readers, and readers outside the region.

It is also recognised that there is a lack of consistency in the terminology employed by universities in Australia (and around the world). For example, the terms ‘unit’, ‘subject’ and ‘course’ can apply to the same entity at different universities. The glossary below also includes brief descriptions for those terms.

Term	Meaning
AAIS	See ‘Australasian Chapter of the Association for Information Systems’
ACIS	See ‘Australasian Conference on Information Systems’
ACPHIS	See ‘Australian Council of Professors and Heads of Information Systems’
ACS	See ‘Australian Computer Society’
ACT	The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is the capital territory of the Commonwealth of Australia. It is home to Australia’s national capital, Canberra.
AIS	See ‘Association for Information Systems’
AJIS	See ‘ <i>Australasian Journal of Information Systems</i> ’
ANCCAC	See ‘Australian National Committee on Computation and Automatic Control’
ARC	See ‘Australian Research Council’
ARC Discovery grant	External competitive funding for research activities obtained by university staff, and awarded by the prestigious Australian Research Council (ARC).
ARC Linkage grant	External competitive funding for research activities undertaken with industry partners, awarded by the prestigious ARC.
Association for Information Systems	The Association for Information Systems (AIS) founded in 1994, is a professional organisation whose purpose is to serve as the premier global organisation for academics specialising in information systems (http://home.aisnet.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=3).
Australasia	In this study, the term Australasia is used to refer to the combination of Australia and New Zealand (though in more common usage, it also includes New Guinea and the islands of the South Pacific Ocean, and sometimes extends to include all of Oceania).
Australasian Chapter of the Association for Information Systems	AAIS is a regional chapter of the Association for Information Systems (AIS). The AIS was founded in 1994 as a world-wide professional organisation for academics in information systems (IS). AAIS began in 2001 to support AIS members working in or with an interest in the Australasian IS community.
Australasian Conference on Information Systems	The Australasian Conference on Information Systems (ACIS) is the premier Australasian conference for information systems academics, covering technical, organisational, industry and social issues in the application of IT to real-world problems. Conferences have been held since 1990.
Australasian Journal of Information Systems	<i>AJIS</i> is an international-quality, peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles contributing to information systems theory and practice. It was founded in 1993 and is the academic organ of the Australasian Association for Information Systems (http://dl.acs.org.au/index.php/ajis).
Australian National Committee on Computation and Automatic Control	The Australian National Committee on Computation and Automatic Control (ANCCAC) was formed in 1958. It ran a series of successful computing conferences and represented Australia internationally. In 1969, the ACS replaced ANCCAC as the Australian representative body within IFIP and ANCCAC was dissolved, handing over all its assets to the ACS (http://www.acs.org.au/media/docs/mcli/ACSfinal.pdf).

The Information Systems Academic Discipline in Australia

Term	Meaning
Australian Computer Society	ACS is the recognised association for information and communications technology (ICT) professionals in Australia, attracting a large and active membership from all levels of the ICT industry. A member of the Australian Council of Professions, the ACS is the public voice of the ICT profession and the guardian of professional ethics and standards in the ICT industry, with a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of ICT (http://www.acs.org.au/index.cfm?action=show&conID=aboutacs).
Australian Council of Professors and Heads of Information Systems	ACPHIS is the peak body established to represent Australian information systems academics in matters of national and international importance (http://www.acphis.org.au/).
Australian Research Council	The Australian Research Council (ARC) is the main advisor to the government on research policy and the allocation of funding to support research. Its core responsibility is to develop and maintain a broad foundation of high-quality, internationally competitive research across a range of disciplines (http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/highered/otherpub/greenpaper/chapt8.htm).
CAIS	See ' <i>Communications of the Association for Information Systems</i> '
College of Experts	The College of Experts members assess and rank ARC grant applications submitted under the National Competitive Grants Program, make funding recommendations to the ARC and provide strategic advice to the ARC on emerging disciplines and cross-disciplinary developments. Its members are experts of international standing drawn from the Australian research community: from higher education, industry and public-sector research organisations. College of Experts members are approved by the minister for appointment of periods of between one and three years (http://www.arc.gov.au/about_arc/expert.htm).
Communications of the Association for Information Systems	The primary role of a professional society is to facilitate communications among its members. The journal <i>Communications of the Association for Information Systems</i> carries out this role for the AIS by publishing articles on a wide range of subjects of interest to the membership (http://cais.isworld.org/).
Core body of knowledge	The core body of knowledge or the knowledge base for information systems covers research and teaching methods and standards, a unique symbol set, key research and teaching topics (knowledge topics) and laws, rules and evidenced guidelines (knowledge types).
Course	The term 'course' varies in meaning from place to place (for example, in many places this term is used to refer to a subject, while in other places it refers to a degree program). Within this book, the term refers to a complete body of prescribed studies. It is a coherent set of units that leads to the granting of an award registered by the university—for example, BA (Bachelor of Arts) is a course; PYB205 Social Psychology is a unit within that course.
Dawkins reforms	A series of Australian tertiary education reforms instituted by John Dawkins, the Education Minister (1987–92). The reforms were aimed at improving the efficiency and international competitiveness of Australian universities. These reforms included the introduction of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), the conversion of all colleges of advanced education (CAEs) into universities and a series of provisions for universities to provide plans, profiles, statistics and so on to justify courses and research (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dawkins_Revolution).
Degree of professionalism	In professionalised disciplines, activities are routinised and there is high task certainty and division of labour. Disciplines that are not highly professionalised, however, have high task uncertainty, decentralised control of work process and limited routinisation of tasks; derived from Whitley (1984b).
DIMIA requirements	The requirements of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), as they impact on the entry and stay of information systems students.
ECIS	European Conference on Information Systems
EFTSU	An abbreviation used in Australia to denote equivalent full-time student unit.
GITMA	Global Information Technology Association World Conference
HECS	The Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) is a charge that eligible domestic students are liable to pay towards the cost of their university tuition. Contributions are deferrable and can be made through the taxation system once income rises above a certain threshold.
HICSS	Hawaii International Conference on Information Systems
Impact of local contingencies	The effect of local events and conditions.

Term	Meaning
Information systems	Note that wherever we refer to 'IS', unless a more specific explanation is provided, we mean the 'information systems academic discipline' inclusive of research and teaching.
Information Systems Board	A board of the Australian Computer Society (http://www.acs.org.au/index.cfm?action=show&conID=acsis).
Institutional Research Grants Scheme	A research funding grant scheme awarded internally within a university that offers modest amounts of money for research projects, designed to train researchers to obtain ARC funding.
IRMA	Information Resources Management Association conference
IS	See 'Information systems'
IS'95	Guidelines for information systems (IS) undergraduate IS curriculum published in <i>MIS Quarterly</i> September 1995.
IS-in-Oz	An abbreviation for 'IS in Australia'
IS-in-PA	An abbreviation for 'IS in the Pacific Asia Region'.
Key research and teaching topics	The information systems (IS) knowledge domain; these are the important knowledge topics for IS that cover teaching and research areas.
Laws, rules and evidenced guidelines	Different forms of theory that cover the spectrum from formal theory to guidelines used by practitioners.
Mechanisms of control	The social mechanisms that create a discipline, including journals, conferences and academic departments.
Meta-analysis	A closing article reflects analysis across all study evidence, including the multiple states case study, and any sub-studies.
Methodological action research	Methodological action research (MAR) refers to an action-research approach to studying the process of research; it is a reflexive process of progressive problem solving led by individual researchers, possibly working with others in a team, to improve the way they address research issues and solve research problems. MAR is conducted above and behind the main research activity, with the researcher, on this second level, observing themselves (and their team) and their experience of the research process, the intent being to better understand and improve that process and to document related methodological learning.
Nelson reforms	The reform package of then education minister Dr Brendan Nelson, which passed the Senate in 2003, introduced a series of radical changes to Australia's higher education system, simultaneously imposing more direct government control over the management of universities while allowing them to earn more revenue by charging higher fees to students. It permitted the introduction of Domestic Undergraduate Up-Front Fees (DUFF) by universities in addition to HECS places, and allowed universities to increase their HECS rates by 25 per cent (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Union_of_Students_of_Australia).
Oracle certification	Credentials offered by the software company Oracle Corporation, which are recognised by industry.
PA	See 'Pacific Asia'
Pacific Asia	The AIS (see 'AIS') recognises in its governance structure three international regions, representing: 1) the Americas; 2) Europe, the Middle East and Africa; and 3) Asia and the Pacific. The third region is often referred to as Region 3 or Pacific Asia. Each region has two regional representatives on the council and a president of the association is chosen from a particular region on a rotating basis.
Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems	PACIS is the conference recognised by the AIS as its Asia-Pacific regional conference (Region 3).
PACIS	See 'Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems'
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification Technology
Region 3	See 'Pacific Asia'

The Information Systems Academic Discipline in Australia

Term	Meaning
Research Quality Framework	The Research Quality Framework (RQF) was a 2004 Australian government initiative intended to 'provide a consistent and comprehensive approach to assessing publicly funded research', which would 'encourage researchers and research organisations to focus on the quality and impact of their research' (http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/issues_paper.htm). In December 2007, the new Rudd government announced that it would cease implementation of the RQF and would implement a new approach to research quality assurance.
Research and teaching methods and standards	The methods and standards that are accepted in a discipline—for teaching and research (that is, knowledge gain plus knowledge transfer).
Research Fields, Courses and Disciplines (RFCD) classification	A classification scheme of the ARC that is intended to allow research and development activity and other activity within the higher education sector to be categorised. The categories in the classification include recognised academic disciplines and related major sub-fields taught at universities or tertiary institutions, major fields of research investigated by national research institutions and organisations and emerging areas of study (http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/codes.htm#RFCD).
RFCD	See 'Research Fields, Courses and Disciplines classification'
Service teaching	Delivering information systems (IS) teaching at a university to students enrolled in a non-IS program.
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
State report	The main report produced from the state case study.
Subject	See 'Unit'
Sub-study	Refers to each of the component studies of the IS-in-Oz (or IS-in-PA) studies, including the retrospective, the framework, the information systems research survey and each of the state case studies.
Thematic analysis	Analysis of themes that emerge from textual data.
Unique symbol set	The existence of a dedicated and accepted symbol system for a discipline.
Unit	A unit is a coherent set of learning activities (including lectures, tutorials and workshops), which is assigned a unit code. A unit is usually taught across a semester. Many universities adopt the term 'subject' rather than 'unit'.
Vignette	In this context, a short biography of an academic who is significant to the information systems discipline in a particular region.
Intrastate reviewer	An individual with special knowledge of the information systems (IS) academic discipline in a given state, who offers critical comment on draft reports of the IS discipline in that state.