SOP: Reference and Information Services Delivery

This SOP details the processes for **reference and information services delivery**, including client interaction protocols, information resource management, query assessment, effective information retrieval, data verification, user education, confidentiality and ethical guidelines, technology utilization, and feedback collection. The goal is to provide accurate, timely, and relevant information to meet user needs efficiently and enhance overall service quality.

1. Purpose

To outline standardized procedures for delivering high-quality reference and information services within the organization/library.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff responsible for providing reference and information services to users.

3. Definitions

- **Reference Service:** Assistance provided to users in locating information and using library resources.
- **Information Service:** Supplying users with factual information or data.

4. Responsibilities

- All reference staff must follow the steps outlined in this SOP.
- Supervisors are responsible for training and oversight.

5. Procedures

1. **Client Interaction Protocols**
   - Greet users promptly and courteously.
   - Maintain a professional demeanor.
   - Actively listen to understand user needs.
2. **Information Resource Management**
   - Maintain up-to-date and accurate information resources.
   - Regularly review physical and digital collections.
3. **Query Assessment**
   - Clarify the user's request to determine the level and depth of information required.
   - Use open-ended questions for in-depth clarification where necessary.
4. **Effective Information Retrieval**
   - Search relevant databases, catalogs, and reference materials efficiently.
   - Use Boolean operators and subject headings where applicable.
5. **Data Verification**
   - Verify facts across multiple reliable sources before providing information.
   - Document sources used in responding to queries.
6. **User Education**
   - Guide users on how to access and use information resources independently.
   - Offer workshops or guides as needed.
7. **Confidentiality and Ethical Guidelines**
   - Protect user privacy and treat queries with confidentiality.
   - Adhere to professional codes of ethics.
8. **Technology Utilization**
   - Leverage current technology (e.g., online chat, email, discovery tools) for service delivery.
9. **Feedback Collection**
   - Encourage users to provide feedback on services rendered.
   - Review feedback to identify areas for improvement.

6. Documentation

- Record all reference transactions in the appropriate log or system.
- Track statistics for service evaluation and reporting.

7. Review and Update

- This SOP will be reviewed annually or as required to comply with new standards, technologies, or organizational needs.

8. Appendices

Appendix	Description
A	Sample Reference Transaction Log
B	Feedback Form Template
C	Code of Ethics Excerpt