

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES EDUCATION

Library and Information Studies and Human Resource Utilization*

A Statement of Policy Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association, January 23, 2002.**

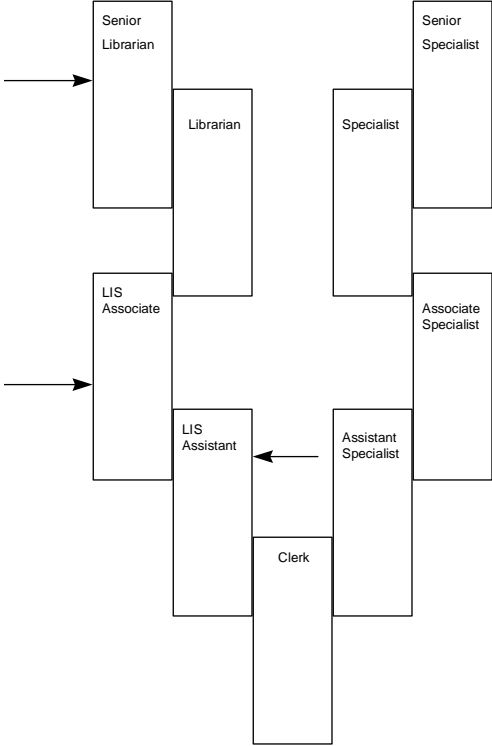
*The policy statement adopted by ALA with the title Library Education and Manpower. In the spring of 1976, the Office for Library Personnel Resources Advisory Committee edited this statement to remove sexist terminology. This version of the statement includes changes recommended by the Library Career Pathways Taskforce in January of 2002 and is offered to the ALA Council for their adoption at the 2002 Midwinter meeting. From January through December 2001, the statement was offered to the library community for comment.

**Throughout this statement, wherever the term "librarianship" is used, it is meant to be read in its broadest sense as encompassing the relevant concepts of information science and documentation; wherever the term "libraries" is used, the term refers to public, academic, corporate, medical and other special libraries; current models of media centers, learning centers, educational resources centers, information, documentation, and referral centers are also assumed. To avoid the necessity of repeating the entire gamut of variations and expansions, the traditional library terminology is employed in its most inclusive meaning.

1. The purpose of the policy statement is to recommend categories of library personnel, and levels of training and education appropriate to the preparation of personnel for these categories, which will support the highest standards of library

libraries which are part of such a system can often maintain the local service with building staff at the Associate level.

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library-related skills—in preliminary bibliographic searching for example, or utilization of certain equipment or technology—the performance of whose duties seldom requires a background in general education.

16. The Associate categories assume a need for an educational background like

advanced status and financial rewards without being forced to abandon for administrative responsibilities their areas of major competence.

Implications for Formal Education

21. The academic degree (or evidence of years of academic work completed) is recommended as the single best means for determining that the applicant has the background required for the position. If an ALA-recognized Master's degree or state or provincial certification is unavailable, examinations may be valid and reliable tests of equivalent qualification.

22. In the selection of applicants for positions at any level, and for admission to programs of library and information studies, attention should be paid to personal aptitudes and qualifications in addition to academic ones. The nature of the position or specialty, and particularly the degree to which it entails working with others, with the public, or with special audiences or materials should be taken into account in the evaluation of a prospective student or employee. Importance should be placed on the education and employment of individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds who are multilingual and, additionally, on those who possess a multicultural perspective. When language translation is required in individual job assignments, the proper educational background to be able to write and communicate in a given language is necessary.

23. As library services and technologies change and expand, as new audiences are reached, as new media and technologies take on greater importance in the communication process, and as new approaches to the handling of materials are introduced, the kinds of preparation required of those who will be employed in libraries will become more varied. Degrees in fields other than librarianship will be needed in the Specialist categories. For many Senior Librarian positions, an advanced degree in another subject field rather than an additional degree in librarianship, may be desirable. Previous experience need not always have been in libraries to have pertinence for appointment in a library.

24. Because the principles of librarianship are applied to the materials of information and knowledge broader than any single field, and because they are related to subject matter outside of librarianship itself, responsible education in these principles should be built upon a broad background in education which includes the humanities, the sciences, and the social sciences, rather than a narrowly specialized background.

25. Emphasis in the two-year Technical Assistant programs should be more on skills training than on general library concepts and procedures. In many cases it would be better from the standpoint of the student to pursue more broadly-based vocational courses which will teach technical skills applicable in a variety of job situations rather than those limited solely to the library setting. These programs should combine a strong general education component, library technical specialty courses, and courses related to the library technical specialty program.

Career Development and Continuous Learning

33. Career development and continuous learning is the shared responsibility of the individual, the employer, formal education providers, and professional associations. Continuous learning is essential for all library and information studies personnel whether or not they seek advancement.

34. Employers are responsible for providing training that supports the work of their organization. This can take the form of planned staff development activities or less formal activities such as committee assignments and special projects.

35. Employers are responsible for providing support for individual career development and continuous learning. Examples of support include release time, sabbaticals, tuition reimbursement, and mentoring programs. Such support is essential in hiring and retaining an excellent workforce.

36. Education providers are responsible for developing and making available learning opportunities that reflect the needs of the library and information studies profession. To address individual learning needs and styles, these must be available in multiple formats and in a variety of locations.

37. Professional associations are responsible for providing learning opportunities that meet the needs of their membership. These may take the form of workshops,