



International Federation of Library Associations  
and Institutions

# GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY/INFORMATION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS - 2000

Approved by IFLA's Section on Education and Training

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*Prepared by the Working Group on the Revision of the  
Standards for Library Schools, 1976 (Evelyn Daniel, Susan Lazinger and Ole Harbo).  
This version supersedes all earlier drafts.*

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## THE LARGER FRAMEWORK

### PREAMBLE

Library/information educational programs have a long and distinguished history. In the past, they have focused on developing physical collections of books and other materials in library buildings staffed by people who have learned to select, acquire, organize, retrieve and circulate these materials. Today library information programs extend beyond the physical collections and buildings to the virtual world of the Internet. Today the emphasis is on the individual practitioner and the concentration is on information provision in a variety of contexts. Educational programs are offered at the technical level, at the graduate and professional level, and at the research and doctoral level. The guidelines offered here primarily address the graduate and professional level.

**1.Context.** The library/information educational program's description and status (organizational level) should be comparable to that of other programs in the country that are engaged in vocational and professional education. For professional level preparation, the library/information educational program should be part of a degree-granting institution and instruction should be at the tertiary (university) level. Library/information programs should be eligible to offer doctoral level study on the same basis as other programs.

**2. Mission.** The library/information educational program's mission should be clearly stated in a publicly available formal document. The program's mission should address the purpose of the educational program in the larger political, social, economic and technical context and should be consistent with the non-discriminatory values of the profession. It should identify the constituencies being served and should be responsive to the needs of the country and, unless it is an independent, free-standing organization, should be consistent with the values of its parent institution. The LIS program should demonstrate awareness of related professions and disciplines.

**3. Goals and Objectives.** The library/information educational program should state its goals and identify specific objectives, derived from its goals, addressing philosophy, principles and methods of the program; areas of specialization; level of preparation provided; teaching, service and research values; and the perceived role of library and information services in society. The goals and objectives should be consistent with published educational policy statements from recognized official bodies (See number 7 below).

## **CURRICULUM**

**4. General.** The curriculum shall consist of a unified series of courses and other educational experiences based on the program's goals and objectives. It should provide students with a theoretical framework for research and practice in the library/information field. Opportunities to gain and demonstrate professional competencies should be a part of the educational program. An awareness of professional concerns should permeate the program.

**5. Public Document.** The curriculum should be stated clearly in a publicly available formal document, describing the aims, prerequisites, content, learning outcomes, and assessment methods for each course within the program.

**6. Breadth of General Education.** Students should acquire a broad general education (topics from other disciplines) as a significant preparatory component of the total educational program for the library/information professional.

**7. Core library/information coursework.** Programs should refer to educational policy statements issued by government or professional associations that identify important knowledge and skill components. (Examples of such statements include those issued by the Institute of Information Science (UK), the Library Association (UK), the Special Libraries Association (US), the Medical Library Association (US), the Association of Library Service to Children (US), the Australian Library and Information Association.)

**8. Core Elements.** Core elements include:

1. The Information Environment, Information Policy and Ethics, the History of the Field
2. Information Generation, Communication and Use
3. Assessing Information Needs and Designing Responsive Services
4. The Information Transfer Process
5. Organization, Retrieval, Preservation and Conservation of Information
6. Research, Analysis and Interpretation of Information
7. Applications of Information and Communication Technologies to Library and Information Products and Services
8. Information Resource Management and Knowledge Management
9. Management of Information Agencies
10. Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation of Outcomes of Information and Library Use

**9. Practicum, Internship or Fieldwork.** The program should incorporate appropriate means to allow students to appreciate the interplay between professional theories and their application in professional practice.

**10. Transferable Skills.** Methods of teaching and assessment should be designed to develop or enhance students' interpersonal communication skills, ability to work in teams, and time and task management skills. At the professional level, emphasis should be placed on developing students' analytical and problem-solving skills.

**11. Continuing Education.** In order to assist practicing librarians and information specialists to maintain competence in a changing society and to keep educators aware of issues and trends in practice, the program should either conduct suitable workshops and short courses for the benefit of practicing librarians and information specialists or partner with other agencies in doing so. If distance learning methods of course delivery are used, the quality of the educational experience should be comparable to similar experiences offered on site.

**12. Regular Review of Curriculum.** A process of formal curriculum review should take place on a regular basis. This review should be informed by input from employers, practitioners and professional associations, as well as students and faculty.

**13. Consultancy.** The program's staff should have the opportunity of offering consulting to libraries and information agencies to develop further interplay between the educational institution and practice.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

**14. Academic Staff.** The academic (teaching) staff should be sufficient to accomplish program objectives. The qualification of each full-time faculty member should include research-based competence in the designated teaching areas, technological proficiency, effectiveness in teaching, a sustained record of scholarship, and active participation in appropriate professional associations. For teachers of programs at the professional level, a sustained record of scholarship is expected comparable to that expected of university teachers in other disciplines.

**15. Faculty Appointment, Review and Promotion Policies.** The educational program should have stated policies and standards for appointment, review and promotion of full-time faculty equivalent to those in comparable units. All full-time faculty should hold degrees in relevant subjects from recognized academic institutions. There should be a clearly stated policy for the continuing education and professional development of the academic teaching staff, and for reviewing the currency and relevance of courses and teaching methods.

**16. Part-time faculty.** Part-time faculty should be appropriately qualified and should balance and complement the teaching competencies of full-time faculty. Inputs from part-time faculty should be coordinated with the program as a whole.

**17. Non-Academic Staff.** Non-academic (clerical, secretarial, technical) staff should have qualifications equivalent to those of persons in comparable units. The number and kind of staff should be adequate to support the faculty in the performance of their responsibilities.

## **STUDENTS**

**18. Academic Policies.** Recruitment, admission, financial aid, placement, and other academic and administrative policies for students should be consistent with the mission, goals and objectives of the educational program and should be explicitly non-discriminatory. The policies should reflect the needs and values of the constituencies served by the program. Policies should be publicly available.

**19. Admission.** Selection of students should be based on clearly stated publicly available criteria. Interest, aptitude, intellectual and educational backgrounds and diversity should be addressed in the criteria. Standards for admission should be applied consistently.

**20. Program of Study.** Students should have advisory assistance in constructing a coherent program of study to meet career aspirations consistent with the educational program's mission, goals and objectives. Evaluation of student achievement should be provided on a consistent and equitable basis. Student and alumni evaluation of the program should be undertaken on a regular basis.

**21. Completion Requirements.** A clear statement of the requirements of the educational program should appear in a formal document that is available to students and prospective students. On completion of requirements, students should be awarded a degree, diploma, or certificate suitable to their level of study.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

**22. Organization.** The administrators, faculty and staff of the library/information educational program should be aware of, and in communication with other related professions and disciplines within and outside the educational establishment. In addition, the program should occupy a distinct position in the administrative organization plan of the institution. It should have autonomy sufficient to ensure the intellectual integrity of the program is consistent with its goals and objectives.

**23. Head of Program.** The head of the program should have status and authority comparable to heads of similar units in the parent institution. The head of the program should possess both academic and professional qualifications comparable to those required of faculty and administrative ability and leadership skills.

**24. Governance.** Decisions should be based on clearly defined and publicly stated policies. Faculty, staff, student, alumni and employer participation in governance should be encouraged. Major decisions and activities should be documented.

**25. Financial Support.** The educational program should have adequate financial support to develop and maintain a library and information course of study consistent with the expectations of practice and comparable to similar programs elsewhere. An annual budget should be administered by the head of the program. The level of support should relate to the number of faculty, administrative and support staff, instructional resources and facilities.

**26. Planning and Evaluation.** The program should have a clearly developed, regular planning and evaluation process. The process should include an ongoing review of policies and procedures in light of anticipated changes in the library/information field and in the larger society. Faculty, staff, and students should be involved in the planning and evaluation activities. Employers and practitioners should be consulted as well. The program should meet such educational and/or professional accreditation requirements as are the norm in the

country.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES AND FACILITIES**

**27. Library Resources.** Library resources should be of sufficient depth, quantity and accessibility to support the courses offered by the educational program and the research efforts of the faculty. These should include monographs and serial publications, in print and in electronic formats; a range of bibliographical tools to support teaching and research; and other appropriate media. A procedure for access to additional resources from other locations should be in place.

**28. Information Technology Resources.** Computer hardware and software and multimedia resources should be available for students and staff and be sufficient for the level of use required for coursework and faculty research.

**29. Internet Resources.** Adequate connections to the Internet should allow ready access to Internet resources for faculty and students. A policy regarding acceptable uses of the Internet for teaching and research emphasizing the librarian's concerns for freedom of information should be formulated and publicized.

**30. Physical Facilities.** The educational program's physical facilities should provide adequate space for faculty, staff and students to accomplish its objectives.

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If you have questions or comments about these guidelines, please email [Evelyn Daniel](mailto:Evelyn.Daniel).

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