Editorial

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Contents

Welcome to C&I 175.

Here we focus on career development, with articles which describe ways to develop skills and obtain professional qualifications and recognition within the sector. We begin by looking at how an optional Cataloguing workshop on the LIS course at City University, London, successfully developed these work-related skills. We also have articles which offer useful insights into both the Chartership and Revalidation processes. We have a number of articles from practitioners who outline how their career in Cataloguing has evolved as well as articles from newly qualified cataloguers. There are challenges facing newcomers to cataloguing and the lack of training and work experience opportunities are discussed. We also have a report from Kristine Chapman, who was sponsored by CIG to attend Umbrella 2013, describing the spotlight session, "Future skills, future roles".

We hope these will inspire you to pursue new challenges and persuade you that Cataloguing is not now, and never has been, a dead-end.

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Learning cataloguing as part of an LIS course: the City University London experience

Deborah Lee, Tim Arscott, Kathryn Drumm, David Bawden

On the teaching of cataloguing / David Bawden

As we all know, the question of how, why, and even whether to teach cataloguing in Masters courses has been a much discussed and rather vexed issue. At City University London, we see it as an example of a wider question: how to teach specific work-related skills within the framework of our library/information Masters courses. There are a number of problematic issues. These courses are academic, though with a vocational focus, and it is therefore a requirement that most material is at 'M level', which poses problems for including a substantial component of skills training. The curriculum is crowded, so that it is difficult to find time for extensive skills training sessions. The academic staff may not be best placed to teach such material. And we are well aware that for any particular topic, there are likely be some students who are very keen on learning the skills and others who are entirely uninterested.

Our approach, encouraged by the advice we have received from employers and recruitment agencies, has been to focus on principles and practice, giving our students a very solid grounding so that they will be able to learn specific skills as needed, and continue learning throughout their career. We therefore cover the principles of cataloguing, with examples, as part of a general coverage of resource description for information organization. But we have been aware that some students would like the opportunity to learn specific skills in a variety of topics, to complement the academic studies; and cataloguing is often mentioned as one topic of interest.

One solution which we have adopted is to offer optional and unassessed intensive skills training sessions, typically in the 'reading weeks' when other classes are suspended, and generally led by expert practitioners. Cataloguing training has been offered in this way for the first time this year; other sessions have covered such skills as use of Twitter for marketing services, and expert-level use of financial data systems.

For cataloguing, we have been particularly fortunate to have Deborah Lee as our trainer, with an unusual combination of academic and professional expertise, plus training experience. We have been very pleased at the enthusiasm shown by the students; the uptake for the training was greater than we had expected, so that additional sessions had to be arranged. The success of these sessions means that we will certainly seek to offer this kind of cataloguing training as a feature of our courses in the future.

Robinson, L. and Bawden, D. (2010), Information (and library) science at City University London: fifty years of educational development, Journal of Information Science, 36(5), 618-630

A cataloguing teacher's view / Deborah Lee

I recently had the pleasure of designing and teaching practical cataloguing workshops for students on the MA/MSc courses in information science, at City University London. As a firm believer that cataloguing should be an integral part of LIS curricula, I was delighted to help City add even more cataloguing content to their well-received module "Information resources and organisation". Some comments and thoughts about the workshops are shared below.

The first thing to note was that the workshops were entirely voluntary and were run in reading week; yet, virtually all the students signed up. I found this fact particularly poignant at a time when some degree programmes are reporting falling numbers in cataloguing classes – for instance, this was a point of discussion at a panel session on knowledge organization education at the recent ISKO 2014 conference. So the high demand for these workshops is a testament to the enthusiasm and dedication of City's students, but also demonstrates that there is certainly interest in cataloguing from LIS students. Not only did the students attend the workshops, but they appeared to be highly engaged with the material. For instance, I had to remind students to leave at the end of one workshop, as they were too engrossed in their practice catalogue records to notice it was time to go home! There was also a strong sense of collaborative learning; for example students were keen to ask questions and to share with the group how their new-found skills in cataloguing related to their own experiences in a cornucopia of previous or current information environments.

Designing teaching materials for cataloguing within an LIS setting proved a complex and fascinating task. The goal was to enable students to feel confident in knowing how to approach cataloguing an item, and to have some familiarity with the codes and standards associated with bibliographic cataloguing. One particular challenge was designing training that as far as possible was "universal"; in other words, the training was not specific to any particular library management system, nor muddled general cataloguing rules with local ones. This is the salient goal: students will hopefully enter a myriad of different sectors and organisations upon graduation, so their cataloguing knowledge must be as universal and flexible as possible. System-neutral cataloguing was to some extent straightforward to achieve: cataloguing practice took place using such obsolete items as pens and paper.

However, overcoming issues to do with teaching a "generic" cataloguing was far more complex, and only partially achievable using RDA. At frequent intervals, RDA requires "decisions" to be made: for instance, which option to follow, whether to use an omission or not and how far beyond the "core" requirements the cataloguer should venture. To compound this, there are certain sections of the RDA guidelines which cause real ambiguity in the cataloguing community and appear to have various "valid" interpretations – illustrative content and colour content are particularly problematic areas. Therefore, I found that it was impossible to teach students truly "generic" cataloguing. So, at points where it was critical to use a policy, the "LC-PCC

PS" (Library of Congress and Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Statements) and British Library policies (gleaned from the BL WEMI workflow) were followed. Where, for training purposes, more information or a different policy was more useful, I drew upon policies I had devised for my own work place – the Courtauld Institute of Art. In all cases, the source of the policy was given explicitly to the students, and the interaction between the RDA text and the policy(ies) explained. Therefore, although the Utopian training ideal of production of a "generic" catalogue record was not possible as part of City's cataloguing teaching, perhaps an even better alternative was given: a real-life experience in producing real-world records and an understanding that cataloguing, like life, was a world of complexity and interpretation.

On learning to catalogue / Tim Arscott

As I began my studies at City University London I was certainly aware of cataloguing, but looking back it was a very superficial awareness. I knew it was something librarians did, but not what is involved and certainly not how much effort it required to do at even the most basic level. I can demonstrate my ignorance of what cataloguing involved by quoting a list of duties I mentioned in an email I sent to a library about volunteering: 'shelving, cataloguing, stamping stuff'. I know now that one of those things is not like the others.

However, I did have some experience of using metadata to help information be found. After finishing my undergraduate degree I found myself performing a marketing role for a tech company. Here I was expected to understand (and care about) terms such as search engine optimization or content targeting, and ways in which we could go about utilising them. In short, we were using metadata to make users see what we wanted them to, rather than what they wanted. In hindsight, maybe my decision to enrol on the Library Science course at City reflected an awareness that these powers could be used for good.

As part of the Information Resources and Organisation module (known as IRO to anyone who has to say it more than once), City LIS students were invited to take part in cataloguing workshops during our Reading Week in March. These were run by cataloguer and City PhD researcher Debbie Lee. The workshops were a new addition to the course, which had previously not had any hands-on cataloguing training. This had not been a surprise to me as one of the reasons I chose to study at City was that the course focussed on the theoretical knowledge and methodology that underpins librarianship rather than acting as a vocational training program, but the chance to learn cataloguing first hand was still a valuable opportunity. The workshops were intended to give us a basic overview of a few of the key parts of a standard RDA catalogue record and to understand the difference between RDA and AACR2.

By this point I had already gained a little experience with cataloguing. Firstly I had helped to download catalogue records for the Feminist Library, a volunteer-run collection of journals and books relating to

feminism and women's movements near my home in South London. This experience led to me gaining work downloading catalogue records for King's College London's Information Resources team; finding, checking and editing suitable records for large book donations that could not realistically be catalogued from scratch. Having this experience helped me to gain a familiarity with the basic fields, what they might contain and when they might be used.

The sessions themselves provided my first opportunity to catalogue from scratch and covered a surprising amount for a day's work. We explored the RDA guide, answering exercise questions whose answers could be found by looking in the appropriate places. This gave us a base to understand that no matter what we needed to record, the appropriate method in which to do so had been laid out in the guide to learn from. No one could possibly remember the entire scheme and so the ability to look up the correct information is an essential one for cataloguing. We also learnt about FRBR, and the differences between works, manifestations, expressions and items. Though it can at first seem like merely an academic exercise, unpicking these differences and navigating between these different tiers really helps to get a better understanding of different documents and the way that cataloguers and other information professionals can relate to them.

Next we learned how to fill in the 245, 264 and 300 fields, along with the correct subfields, indicators and punctuation. We practised each of these individually using photocopies of title pages, title versos etc (some unnecessary pages were included just to see if we would take our information from the correct place). Doing this helped me to appreciate that the rules and standards to cataloguing aren't just arcane pedantry, but a necessity for the realities of information retrieval. Punctuation instructs systems as to what information they will read next, this is machine readable cataloguing after all.

The sessions concluded with everyone choosing books from a number of piles (ranked by their trickiness to catalogue) and completing the fields we'd learnt for each one. It capped off what had been an enjoyable day of developing our professional skills and learning more about the way information is organized. While I do not know how likely I am to continue with cataloguing as a specialization, the workshops have provided me with a better understanding of how cataloguing is done and the thinking that lies behind the methods.

Where I see these cataloguing skills coming in useful is in understanding what is and isn't achievable with informational retrieval systems. Working in my local public library I often encounter members of the public, and sometimes staff, who do not realise what it takes to effectively find the resources they need. They may not use the right search terms and miss out relevant results, or be too vague and have to sift through masses of unhelpful material. Understanding what data is stored on a catalogue record has enabled me to understand how best to extract the required information from the catalogue and assist patrons.

My cataloguing training has been useful and dare I say it quite fun. Even if it is not a discipline I take any further in the near future it represents a valuable tool for helping users find the resources they need and is crucial to any understanding of librarianship. While aspects of it may be routine and repetitive, there are also moments that require real understanding of what users will be looking for, what should be recorded and in what form. A good catalogue record stands out from a bad one with surprising ease once you know what to look for, and the wealth of bad catalogue records out there suggests this is not a skill we can afford to collectively forget.

Coming to cataloguing later in life / Kathryn Drumm

In one of our Information Resources and Information (IRO) lectures at City University London, we were presented with a quote from John Bowman's Essential Cataloguing (2007). "What makes a good cataloguer? Carelessness will not do... You will not be the one who writes 'forward' when the book says 'foreword', or 'organisation' when the title has 'organization'. You will thrill to the difference between the abbreviations 'no' and 'no.'. If you are not prepared to make the effort then you are not suited to be a cataloguer." Whilst the quote was presented humorously, it struck a chord with me.

To understand why, I have to say that I have recently changed career. Before starting my MSc in Information Science at City, I spent nearly 20 years working in the broadcast industry, subtitling television programmes for the deaf. This involved transcribing the soundtrack – speech, sound effects and music – and editing it into carefully timed subtitles that complied with a style guide. The spelling of every name or word of specialised vocabulary in the programme had to be checked before the subtitles went to air. If there is another group of people for whom the difference between "organisation" and "organization", "no" and "no." was a pressing concern, it is my ex-colleagues. In the past, we have had heated discussions on the use of hyphens and whether we could drop the additional "e" used to represent the German umlaut that our system didn't support. In my previous life, I put together a four-page guide on how to use double and single quotes in subtitles and even ran a workshop on it for colleagues. So this lecture gave me an inkling that cataloguing might appeal to me, and when we were offered the option to attend a day's introduction to RDA by Deborah Lee, I jumped at the chance.

We had been covering aspects of cataloguing throughout the course, touching on aspects of RDF in our Digital Information module, covering the history of cataloguing in Library and Information Science Foundation and considering the unique challenges faced by specialist music, art or medical librarians in Information Domains. However, this did mean that the theory behind cataloguing did remain just theory for me. Until the day with Deborah, I had never catalogued a book in my life.

One of the aspects of the course at City, which has been both a benefit and challenge to me, is that there is no requirement to have previously worked in a library, archive or similar setting in advance. I left my job on a Friday and started lectures on the following Monday. A number of my classmates were in a similar situation, having worked in areas as diverse as banking, teaching, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. While we were initially worried about our lack of experience, as the course progressed, we were able to see how information organisation had been a part of our previous careers even if we hadn't been aware of it at the time. While we were picking up valuable insights from our fellow students who had or were still working in libraries, museums and archives, we were able to give an alternative perspective on how aspects of information science were also relevant to the wider business world.

But this did make me wonder how I would cope when I was faced with a pile of books at the end of our day's cataloguing training and asked to create a catalogue record for them. Should I have expected our course to offer a module specifically covering cataloguing? Would I feel confident cataloguing when I start my first job in the industry? Again I thought back to my previous career and my experience of recruiting new subtitlers. As far as I'm aware, there is no qualification in subtitling for the deaf, though some institutions offer training on foreign-language subtitling. There are some subtitling programs that are common to more than one company, but the software tends to be adapted to match each business's requirements. And although we sometimes employed subtitlers who had worked at another company, each firm has their own style that has to be learned. This meant that when we were recruiting staff, what we looked for was an understanding of the concepts behind subtitling. Interview questions covered topics such as how to subtitle Shakespeare or a quiz show. I didn't expect people to know what the guidelines were for each of these genres, but I wanted people who could understand that when you are subtitling a quiz, you don't put the punchline in the same subtitle as the question, and that if you were subtitling Romeo And Juliet, you wouldn't edit a subtitle down to read "Romeo, where are you?" I also looked for people with an aptitude with language and an awareness of the audience's needs. If they had these qualities, they could be trained to use the software, follow a style guide and adapt to the department's processes.

I think there are parallels with starting a career that involves cataloguing. No course can teach you to use every cataloguing system, and what are the chances that you end up working for an organisation that uses a system in exactly the same way you have been taught? Instead City concentrates on helping you to develop an understanding of the concepts behind cataloguing, of how the standards have developed, and what the challenges are that face the contemporary cataloguer. If you have studied the concepts behind cataloguing, you can adapt to the specific requirements of a particular job.

I suspect that one of the reasons I was asked to contribute to this article is that I ended up bombarding Deborah with questions about cataloguing. How would she deal with anonymous or pseudonymous works

where the real author is now known? Is the author of the first edition of Jane Eyre catalogued as Currer Bell or Charlotte Bronte? Had she had to deal with the same troublesome umlauts that had concerned me? In our discussions, I recognised one of the other parallels between subtitling and cataloguing. The reason getting things right matters is not to satisfy our inner pedantry, but because we know we are ultimately doing this for an end user. If we catalogue or subtitle carelessly, we are helping to frustrate library and archive users as they try to find what they were looking for, or we are spoiling the enjoyment of a programme. If we do our jobs properly, we are helping students to further their education, or allowing a deaf person to share the same TV as everyone else.

Although I can't claim that a day's introduction to RDA has qualified me to start working unsupervised as a cataloguer tomorrow, my previous work experience plus my studies at City have prepared me to be in the best position to continue learning and developing my cataloguing skills.

Reference:

Bowman, J. (2007), Essential cataloguing, Corrected edn., London: Facet

My A and O of cataloguing

Outi Pickering, Warneford Library, Oxford Health Library Services, Oxford

I qualified as a librarian in 1998, obtaining the equivalent of a library diploma at Åbo Akademi, a small university in Turku, Finland. I had already been in working life for many years – mainly in adult education, but also in library supplies – and had a postgraduate degree in English.

At Åbo Akademi, modules amounting to 35 credits were required for qualification as a professional librarian; those studying for a degree in Library and Information Studies needed a further 15 credits in advanced studies. Document Description and Content Analysis was valued at 5.5 credits and included classes in theory and practice as well as an end-of-term examination. The module was divided into courses in Cataloguing, Classification and Indexing. For Cataloguing, this meant 12 hours of lectures for 8 weeks – 1.5 hours per week – to run partly concurrently with 24 hours of practice[1].

Since my career had been mainly as a teacher in adult education, it was very interesting to find myself at the receiving end of instruction! The lecturer who taught cataloguing was not satisfied with simply delivering information even in the theory lectures; she gave us little tasks to find certain cataloguing rules and teach them to the class the following week. I remember I had to explain how to deal with misprints; another week I was allocated the rule governing patronymics and Icelandic names. We were also taught the different stages involved in creating a catalogue entry, starting with checking that the supplier had sent the correct items!

When my husband – an Englishman – retired, we moved to the UK. I obtained my first ever library job in January 2000 in an NHS Trust staff library, and I'm still in that post, though my responsibilities have changed quite a lot and now focus on our bibliographic services. Our library service is part of SWIMS, a library network which covers the NHS libraries in the South West and South Central regions. I'm a member of the SWIMS Cataloguing Group, so I'm asked to train new regional colleagues every now and then (mainly in using the shared catalogue, but this sometimes expands into general cataloguing questions), as well as for help with one-off problems.

Going back to cataloguing so many years after my initial training was not a problem; I simply needed to refresh my knowledge. I also knew that each library service was likely to have certain in-house rules, so adjusting was not difficult. If there were any problems, they were terminological and arose at the beginning of my career, since my library studies had been in Swedish, Åbo Akademi being the only university in Finland which uses Swedish (rather than Finnish) for all purposes of teaching and administration (and was at that time the only university accessible to me which offered a course in Library and Information Studies).

I had heard that cataloguing was not much taught in the UK, but even so I was surprised to see how hesitant

some graduates seemed to be about the subject. Cataloguing, classification and indexing are all needed for building a catalogue, since cataloguing describes the origin and physical form of the item and classification and indexing describe its content. What happens if these subjects – these skills – are no longer properly taught? Where will you find people who know how to create the catalogue entries which can then be shared by others in your regional network or possibly world-wide? It reminds me of old crafts which die out because there is no longer anyone who masters the skills and can pass them on. It may not matter if you don't know how to churn your own butter, but library catalogues can't be picked off the supermarket shelf like tubs of butter. Rationalisation of work is one thing, extinction of a species (the cataloguer!) is another. Besides, if you intend to rationalise your workload, you don't want to spend almost as much time amending a downloaded record as you would have needed to create it yourself.

What kind of problems, then, does the cataloguer encounter if he/she is not thoroughly trained, and how much do those problems matter? Personally, I'm something of a nit-picker, which has proved useful when I have to pay attention to catalogue detail. When I create or edit entries on our shared catalogue, I occasionally get fed up when I come across typos or missing details which other people should have noticed. These moments of frustration can be downright existential: does it really matter whether the author's initials read J S or J.S., and will it actually make a difference if the height of a book is omitted from the physical description? Could it be that it all simply boils down to aesthetics, or is there some other, deeper reason besides?

Try to imagine a catalogue with thousands of title entries where each cataloguer takes short cuts as they please or as their knowledge of rules allows, or perhaps leaves a trail of typos behind. Such a catalogue would look sloppy and would make a bad impression on users. Moreover, there are some omissions and typos which affect retrieval or identification, such as leaving out the author or mistyping the name. But how do we decide what matters and what doesn't? If you take the route of short cuts, how do you know which short cuts are safe?

I've always accepted the fact that cataloguing follows certain rules and conventions. This is not so different from, say, conventions of punctuation taught at school, or systems of referencing needed for writing essays. In publishing you have to follow the publisher's house style, and in your university education, your department expects you to do your referencing according to a particular style. Your cataloguing teacher might have taught you to put a full stop after ill meaning 'illustrated', whereas your regional shared catalogue might have a rule – agreed perhaps by a committee or steering group – which says that ill should not be followed by a full stop. In that case, you have to follow the local rule. Sometimes the software behind your LMS requires a certain convention for retrieval of items, and full stops and spaces therefore are no longer a question of mere pleasant aesthetic orderliness.

The rules which govern the order and content of fields are of primary importance; if they are followed consistently, then the user can – paradoxically perhaps – ignore them when reading the catalogue entry, and

concentrate on the information presented. If those rules follow an international standard, it helps to interpret catalogue entries in a foreign language; I once managed to use a catalogue on a Spanish website simply because I could figure out the order of the fields.

So, this is the A (for Åbo, where I learnt the trade) and O (for Oxford, where I now apply what I learnt) of my career as a cataloguer – the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. Advice? Well, if anyone is actually considering taking up cataloguing - rather than being put into that role by their library service – I'd say don't do it if your forte is visions and big sweeps; you'll be better occupied in some other role. I've had to back down from my perfectionist tendencies a little, but in general I do think you have to have an eye for detail if you want to make a good and quick cataloguer. Of course we all have our bad days and moments, so ask a colleague to check your work if at all possible (this is something I learnt when working for a library supplier: we routinely checked each other's catalogue entries for typos and omissions). Needless to say, proper training is a must if you can get it… Last but not least, make sure your library has a copy of a good, sensible guide e.g. Bowman, Essential cataloguing.

By the way, I've just heard from my old department at Åbo Akademi; cataloguing is still included in the syllabus albeit to a lesser extent than before, but students find the course useful[2]. Keep up the good work, ÅA!

References

1   Figures retrieved from my study notes.

2   Information provided by Anna-Karin Tötterman, Åbo Akademi.

Prologue

In all of my positions, my chief responsibility has been cataloguing, an area of librarianship that I find challenging, intellectually demanding and absolutely vital to the operation of any library information service. Learning how to catalogue in one institution and then using the skills in another one can be tricky. Learning how to catalogue in one country and then applying it abroad is even more testing. But what they have in common is a transfer of skills. When cataloguers change their settings, they have to adopt and revise their expertise to suit different user audiences. The change might be reflected for example in the way that cataloguing is executed. In this short article, I would like to share how I learnt cataloguing in Hungary and what changes I face in England. The setting and teaching were indeed very different by the River Danube and I had to regularly embrace and reconsider the way my skills are used here by the River Thames.

Learning to catalogue in Hungary

Ever since I can remember, I had a strong desire to work in libraries. I volunteered at my grammar school library, I worked part-time at my university one, after graduation I was offered a Library Assistant position in higher education and two years later I joined a research library as an Assistant Librarian. But I was introduced to cataloguing more than 15 years ago when I started my library school. The curriculum back in that time was very different to the current one; on the road to become part of the European Union and through the Bologna Accords, Hungary has since adopted a higher education system more compatible with the European Union. Before implementing the Lisbon Recognition Convention, the Hungarian education system, and indeed many other Eastern-European ones, was based on Soviet traditions and significantly different to the British one. For example, there was no credit system, only double-major courses existed and undergraduate degrees were awarded after four years of attendance. Following a 'college' degree, there were opportunities to continue for an additional two years to achieve 'university' qualifications if one was good enough. Subjects were taught five days a week, six-seven hours a day. Due to the amount of time we spent in seminars and lectures, it was possible to gain substantial theoretical knowledge of librarianship and grasp practical aspects of different theories. In my first year I had weekly lectures and seminars on the following subjects: History of Libraries, Information Society, Introduction to Information Technology, Cataloguing, Information Technology, Collection Management and Information Retrieval. The Cataloguing module itself was taught approximately 3.5 hours a week in the first year. This allowed us to learn how to create 'old-fashioned' paper card catalogues, have an

understanding of Panizzi's Rules, discuss Lubetzky and Cutter's ideas, dip into the history of IFLA and the Paris Principles. We were also taught about the necessity of controlled authority files, different MARC standards (even Dublin Core) and evaluated various OPACs. Our knowledge of AACR2, DDC and UDC was examined on a monthly basis via written exams. The chief aim of the module was to give us a strong theoretical background of cataloguing and provide opportunities to exercise the theory in practice.

Using my skills in Hungary

Thus I had no difficulties nor needed special training when cataloguing new acquisitions at my first job. Everybody was a qualified person in the team, still a common situation in Hungary where librarians have the same job title and qualification, and we shared the processing of new acquisitions equally. Records were chiefly copied from the Hungarian National Bibliography, a fortnightly publication of the National Library of Hungary, which listed the bibliographic descriptions of all those titles that were published in Hungary and had been received by them. Given the fact that the National Library is a legal deposit library, it included many of our purchased titles. Our main responsibility was to amend these records according to local rules and process in-house university publications. Although the classification was overseen by the only senior librarian, most titles were supplied with UDC numbers and subject headings downloaded from the National Library. I did not have to significantly embellish my cataloguing skills either when I led a retrospective cataloguing project at my second job. Here I managed the conversion of our card catalogues and was responsible for a fair amount of original cataloguing of new acquisitions published in a range of Slavonic, Eastern-European and other European languages. Apart from new acquisitions, half of my cataloguing time was dedicated to retrospective cataloguing. In my first professional years, I was successfully able to apply my cataloguing skills that I learnt during my time at my library school. Then the scenery changed when I moved to London for further experiences in 2005.

Using my skills in England

After some exciting times, I joined a national museum where I worked for six and a half years, eventually departing as Librarian (Acquisitions and Cataloguing) and currently I am an Assistant Librarian at a private London-based university. I described myself as a confident cataloguer when I accepted these positions, but soon I realised that things are done here slightly differently. Due to the vast amount of publications produced in the UK market, bibliographic descriptions are either not available immediately from external databases or very skeletal. Although my job description required me only to download records, I was able to use my skills and

re-edit many entries. The real difficulty was not me spending time on amending bibliographical descriptions but the fact that it was not reflected in my timetable. Few senior managers understood that some downloaded records were poor quality and needed to be re-catalogued. Their argument was that if the budget were to be allocated for external bibliographic databases then I would no longer need time for cataloguing. My previous cataloguing experience from Hungary luckily came to rescue me and assisted to handle the challenge. Due to the specific subject areas the museum library covered, in many cases I stubbornly created high quality original catalogue records to AACR2 standard because my records of exhibition catalogues, museum publications and company pamphlets were shared via OCLC. I had to learn a painful lesson and re-evaluate my time given to other tasks. It was also difficult to accept that some of my superiors were keener to focus on promoting the collection rather than allocating appropriate time for actually cataloguing it. This confused me because I always firmly believed that without fully catalogued holdings, very limited outreach can be done. As I said once in a meeting: OPACs would never fetch uncatalogued monographs. On the other hand, the opportunity allowed me to be involved with talks and visits, something I was never able to contribute to in Hungary as a cataloguer. Outreach today is an important part of my professional life, something I would never give up, mainly because it is a great excuse to meet users of my catalogue. Finally a last point to make: at both of my workplaces in England, significant parts of the cataloguing process have been delegated to Library Assistants who have no librarian qualification. While they do a terrific job, I find training them on advanced cataloguing challenging, especially when I use librarian terminology such as chief source and title page or descriptive cataloguing and access points. Should I expect them to pick up the specific language that I was learning for years? Revising skills was the answer to me once again. I proposed a different approach and instead of sharing the process of new acquisitions equally, I broke the task into small pieces. Certain parts of the cataloguing workflow are perfectly suitable for those who might not have a strong understanding of cataloguing standards and other bits can be kept for me. I never thought that leading a team of enthusiastic colleagues and introducing them to the magic of cataloguing could be so inspirational.

Conclusion

Over the years, I not only swapped institutions but also a country. I learnt how to catalogue in one and my skills faced challenges in the other. In order to continue being a successful cataloguer, I revised my set of skills and adopted new approaches. And although there are differences between the institutions and countries I worked, the change helped me to take on more opportunities. Today I am much better at time management, frequently contribute to outreach activities and am fortunate enough to line manage some of my colleagues. Adjusting and embellishing my cataloguing skills made my professional life definitely more exciting.

Unusual as it may sound, I was keen on cataloguing from the moment I decided to become a librarian. Having studied Fine Art for my first degree I also knew that I wanted to specialise in art libraries. I learned to catalogue in practice through volunteering in various institutions, prior to and after qualifying as a librarian in 2010.

I was first introduced to cataloguing at a very basic level whilst working as a volunteer at the Women's Art Library/MAKE, Goldsmith's University. I later expressed my interest in cataloguing whilst on my graduate trainee year at the University for the Creative Arts at Canterbury. I was encouraged by the staff there who taught me the many acronyms and oversaw my work.

As part of my MA in Library and Information Studies at UCL, I opted for the Advanced Cataloguing and Classification module, on top of the core module which is taught. The course itself was largely theoretical, with only a small element of practice, which was often on paper. I decided to continue to volunteer in order to gain experience.

After meeting the Librarian at the Royal Academy of Arts at a networking event, I contacted him to ask about the possibility of cataloguing voluntarily. Whilst studying, I worked on retrospectively cataloguing their British Schools Collection one day per week, overseen by the Assistant Librarian. My first library based job post-qualification, was as a Library Assistant at Christie's Education. Cataloguing there was part of the role requirement. Although both Christie's Education and the Royal Academy of Art adhered to cataloguing principles, neither of their library management systems were MARC based. They were great places to work, and have been valuable experience, but I feel that a using a MARC based system would have been better practice and enabled me to hone my skills.

I started at Tate Library and Archive in October 2013, and this is my first professional post. Up until recently there was a division between the cataloguers and acquisition librarians at Tate but, following a restructure last year, cataloguing is now an aspect of my role as a Liaison Librarian. As I am gaining familiarity with collections and the system, I am growing in confidence and able to make decisions about how to tackle the trickier items (which art publications often are!). I feel immensely grateful to be in a supportive team where I can defer to my colleagues' experience and opinions when I need help. Tate plans to implement RDA in the future, but for now we are looking to others' experience, trying to keep abreast of developments, and seeing where things will go from here.

Personally, I have benefitted from volunteering and would recommend it to anyone who can afford the time and commitment. I would suggest contacting smaller institutions, particularly ones with collections that are of

interest, and going to speak to the librarian about what you can offer, and what you are hoping to learn. I found it was a great opportunity to make contacts and decide whether this career path was one I wanted to pursue.

Cataloguers Wanted

Need some cataloguing guidance? Looking for advice? Let CIG put you in touch with professionals able to help.

CIG receives many requests for help and advice about cataloguing practice and issues. We've decided to open up the discussions about these to our members in order to mine your collective knowledge and experience.

Watch out for a new addition to our blog in the form of a Cataloguers Wanted page. If you have any cataloguing questions or specific issues that you would like to discuss then please get in touch via email or Twitter and we will add the question to our blog for you. Others will then be free to comment and offer help.

Disclaimer: This is not a formal mentoring relationship and is not connected with the CILIP qualifications process. The site should not be used to advertise jobs and/or request employment. All posts will be moderated.

Future skills for future roles: exploring continuing professional development at Umbrella 2013

Kristine Chapman, Principal Librarian, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

Thanks to a bursary from the Cataloguing and Indexing Group I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the Umbrella 2013 conference in Manchester. It was my first time attending Umbrella, and I was very grateful for the opportunity to attend so many interesting and inspiring sessions.

The tagline for the conference was 'Discover, Connect, Achieve', and this was particularly well illustrated in one of the spotlight sessions I attended called 'Future Skills for Future Roles', which focused on some of the ways librarians are pursuing continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities. There were four presentations in this slot, and all were really fascinating, I could have happily listened to longer presentations from all of them.

Spotlight on solos: how one-person librarians in Ireland manage their own professional development in order to serve their communities

First up was Eva Hornung discussing research from her recent PhD looking at training provisions for solo (one-person) librarians in Ireland. Her research questions asked what CPD meant to solo librarians in Ireland and which types of CPD worked best for them.

Eva's findings indicated 5 different categories of CPD that solo librarians were engaging in, with motivation varying from a need to improve skills for their organisation, to developing personally or to meet the roles of their job. Within those categories were two distinct styles of learning - formal and informal. The formal learning included training courses, seminars, professional courses and conferences, whereas informal learning tended to take the form of online training, email lists, webinars, and journal and newsletter subscriptions.


Slide from Eva's presentation 'Spotlight on solos', available on the CILIP website

She explained how difficult it can be for solo librarians to attend training events due to cost and work constraints, but how useful online resources, such as the 23 Things for Professional Development programme, have been in helping keep up CPD.

This particularly appealed to me because, although I am not a solo librarian, I do work as part of a very small team, and finding the time and resources to attend training can be an issue. I have taken part in a number of online courses, such as the 23 Things programme mentioned above, and am currently enrolled on a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), so I am a big fan of online learning's ability to supplement attendance at workshops and short courses.

Research data management for you

Next up were Andrew Cox and Barbara Sen from the University of Sheffield introducing the RDMRose system developed by the universities at Leeds, Sheffield and York (the White Rose consortium). RDMRose was funded by JISC with the intention of providing free CPD materials covering Research Data Management (RDM) and aimed at information professionals. The purpose of the course is to assist library staff who may find themselves supporting researchers as part of their role, by helping them to learn more about research and research data, and so feel more confident to offer support to researchers or contribute to policies.
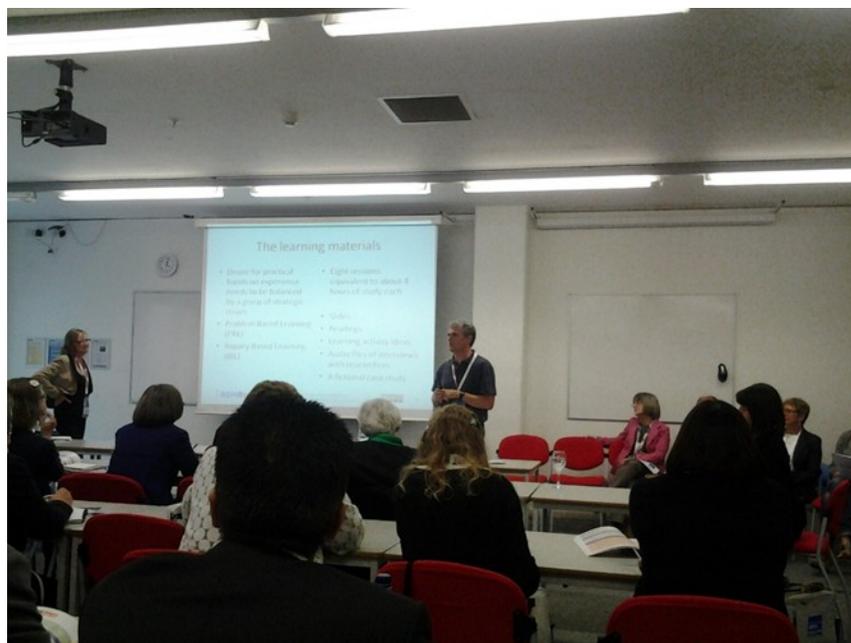
The course is specifically designed to allow for independent working, with a focus on reflection, so that you can apply what you are learning to your own workplace. It is divided into 8 modules, with each module estimated to take up no more than about 4 hours of study time. Like the 23 Things course discussed by Eva, they show the value of freely available self-directed short courses for library staff to develop their CPD, which could cover a

wide range of different information topics. The RDMRose project has been running for nearly a year now, and the developers are keen for people to use it and feedback their thoughts.

RDMRose Learning Materials

On this page:

- Session 1: Introductions, RDM, and the Role of LIS
  - Session 1.1: Introduction to the RDMRose module
  - Session 1.2: RDM basics
  - Session 1.3: The LIS role in RDM
  - Session 1.4: Reflection and reflective writing
- Session 2: The Nature of Research and the Need for RDM
  - Session 2.1: The social organisation of research
  - Session 2.2: Research, information practices and data
  - Session 2.3: The RDM agenda
  - Session 2.4: The research data interview and audit
  - Session 2.5: Reflection on research
- Session 3: The digital curation lifecycle
  - Session 3.1: Exploring the lifecycle
  - Session 3.2: Data Management Plans
  - Session 3.3: Stakeholders in RDM
  - Session 3.4: Reflection
- Session 4: Key Institutions and Projects in RDM
  - Session 4.1: Mapping the DCC website
  - Session 4.2: RDM training for researchers
  - Session 4.3: Designing Library web pages with RDM support for researchers
  - Session 4.4: Investigating a researcher 2
  - Session 4.5: Reflection on the learning process
- Session 5: What is data?
  - Session 5.1: Researchers and their data
  - Session 5.2: Looking at data
  - Session 5.3: Open data
  - Session 5.4: Reflecting on research and research data
- Session 6: Managing Data
  - Session 6.1: Practical data management

ABOUT RDMROSE
RDMRose is a JISC funded project to produce taught and continuing professional development (CPD) learning materials in Research Data Management (RDM) tailored for information professionals.

GIVE US FEEDBACK
If you have used any of the RDMRose learning materials, be it for your own use as self-supported CPD or as an educator, we would greatly welcome your feedback. Please fill out this evaluation form. It will help us further enhance the learning materials!

Evidence, empowerment and the matrix: a skills portfolio for practitioners

The third presentation was from David Parkes and Alison Pope about the in-house training they have been doing with library staff at Staffordshire University. They discussed the creation of a 'skills matrix', which included a framework of competencies that staff could grade themselves against. The matrix had similarities with the CILIP Professional Skills and Knowledge Base – it included areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values. They had used job descriptions to distil a list of 10 key skills for staff, who could then score themselves against the list as part of a skills audit. Areas included learning and teaching; resource management; enquiry and services delivery; project management and professional awareness, to name a few.

The grading system they used was a five-step approach, as it gave a wider range of skills levels than a simple yes or no system. Staff could grade themselves as having a basic understanding of an area through varying levels of understanding and competency up to the highest level - the ability to innovate.

From there it was possible to create a visual record of the results, making it much easier for them to identify areas for improvement, and then act on them. However, the framework was not intended to be a static

thing, instead it was assumed people's grading in particular areas could alter, going up or down depending on what they had been working on, or courses and learning opportunities they had taken part in.
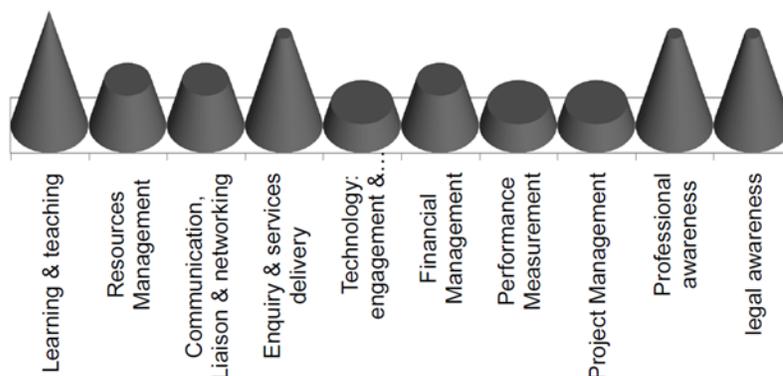
Slide from the presentation available on the CILIP website

Skills audits are becoming increasingly popular as a tool for staff appraisals, as they encourage a more participatory approach from the appraisee, but they are also useful as a means of identifying your own personal development. Although the skills matrix that Staffordshire University created was designed primarily for academic library staff, it could easily be tailored to match the range of skills required in any library sector. Additionally they can be used as a means of focusing in on the skills you need to acquire for your 'ideal' job, particularly if you want to move across sectors, and help you to build the skills and experience necessary to your professional development. Staffordshire University are keen to share the template they have created with other information professionals who may wish to use it as a basis for designing their own.

Public library skills programme

Finally Audrey Marshall and Abigail Luthmann discussed a more formal training scheme that the University of Brighton had developed for the public library staff in East Sussex. The course was divided into 10 day sessions, delivered over a year and incorporating presentations, group work and homework assignments. Those taking part are required to sign up to a 'contract', an agreement of their intention to pursue the course to its conclusion. Aspects covered included leadership and communication; web 2.0; search structure and strategies; and community development.

Slide from 'Public library skills programme' presentation, available on CILIP website

Feedback from those who have taken part has indicated that not only do the participants feel the benefit, but the academics and practitioners delivering the modules find it useful to come together and learn from each other's experiences. It was an excellent example of information and library staff coming together across their sectors to jointly develop the skills and training of staff in their area.

Conclusion

All four of the presentations in the session highlighted the many ways that information professionals are seeking to update and develop their skills. It can be costly to undertake qualifications or training courses, but a commitment to professional development can be beneficial to both employee and employer. Some of the options discussed in the session provided solutions to help combat the problem of accessing CPD. Online toolkits; wikis; MOOCs; webcasts; e-forums; Twitter chats; collaborative working and free events such as Library Camps and TeachMeets were all highlighted as great ways to refresh your skills, learn new things and interact with colleagues.

If you are interested in learning more, presentations from all the speakers are available on the CILIP website, and all the participants were eager to share what they have learnt. You can also read more about some of the projects in the following publications:

Cox, Andrew. 'Realising our role in research data management'. *CILIP Update*, March 2013, pp. 36-38

Hornung, Eva. 'On your own but not alone: one-person librarians in Ireland and their perceptions of continuing professional development'. *Library Trends,* 61 (3) Winter 2013, pp. 675-702

Marshall, A., Chyrsostomou, L. & Luthmann, A. 'Walking on air: an approach to training public library staff'. *CILIP Update*, July 2013, pp. 40-41

Parkes, David. 'Future librarians, future skills: skilling librarians for the 21st century' Sconul e-publication http://www.sconul.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/12_10.pdf

CIG Conference 2014 - Metadata: Making an Impact

Booking is now open for the biennial CIG Conference, which is to be held at the University of Kent, Canterbury and will run between 2:00pm on Monday 8th September and 1:00pm on Wednesday 10th September.

Details of the conference programme can be seen at http://www.cilip.org.uk/cataloguing-and-indexing-group/events/cig-conference-2014.

Conscious of the challenges facing many organisations' development and training budgets, the CIG Conference Sub-Committee have worked to ensure that prices are similar to those for the 2012 conference with significant discounts for both CIG members and early-bird bookings.

The word Chartership often strikes unnecessary fear into the hearts of librarians. The whole process seems to have acquired a kind of mythical status which is completely unjustified. You don't have to be some sort of CPD-wonderkid to complete Chartership, you just have to have an interest in developing yourself professionally. Many of the cataloguers I've met over the years do this as a matter of routine, for example if you're reading this edition of C&I it means that you're interested in learning more about the cataloguing world which counts as CPD! There's nothing to be afraid of with the Chartership process and it can have many benefits, both expected and unexpected.

Ringing the changes

Although the Chartership regulations have recently changed it's important to remember that the overall aim of the process remains the same – to demonstrate your continued professional development. The changes have been made in response to feedback from candidates and are designed to make the whole process more straightforward.

One of the most important changes is that Chartership is now open to all, rather than just following the traditional path of a library degree. For more detailed information about the changes contact your local candidate support officer or consult the CILIP website (http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/jobs-and-careers/qualifications-and-professional-enrolement).

So, what do you actually have to do?

Whilst it's true that the Chartership process involves hard work it's important to remember that it's as hard as you make it. Working on Chartership doesn't have to involve a massive lifestyle change but rather a chance to formalise the CPD you already do. As mentioned at the start of this article professional reading such as C&I counts as CPD, as does following blogs or professional discussions on Twitter. This all shows engagement with the profession and a willingness to learn about new developments. Workplace training can also be considered as CPD since it addresses a training need. Beyond this, Chartership involves a chance to develop some new skills that might be out of the scope of your current role. This can be particularly useful if you work in a traditionally back office role such as cataloguing. I certainly viewed the process as a chance to explore other areas of information work that interested me at the same time as gaining concrete skills that I could demonstrate to both my current and future employers.

Even though I submitted under the old regulations I did make use of the new PKSB (Professional Knowledge

and Skills Base) document. The PKSB allows candidates to conduct a skills gap analysis by scoring themselves on a scale of one to four. Completing this analysis showed me where I had a good understanding of the required skills and where I needed to develop. I used this analysis as the basis of my Chartership portfolio and focused on a mixture of skills relevant to my current role and those that I wanted to work on.

The introduction of RDA was timely for me. I was able to use Chartership to solidify my knowledge of the new standard, something obviously important to my current role. In addition to helping me develop a greater knowledge about RDA this aspect helped me to justify the Chartership process to my employers. I was able to incorporate my workplace RDA training into my portfolio at the same time as using the introduction of RDA to develop unexpected new skills. I was made responsible for creating and updating my department intranet pages on RDA which meant that I had to learn about HTML and I helped to create the Cambridge RDA blog as a way of sharing our training with the cataloguing community, another useful piece of evidence for the portfolio. Beginning to catalogue in RDA also gave me a valuable chance to develop my teaching skills. Being one of the first in my institution to have access to comprehensive training meant that I was in an ideal position to pass on my knowledge to others and I was able to use this to my advantage. Teaching skills are highly prized by many library employers but are not always easy to develop in a cataloguing role so this is one area where the Chartership process has impacted positively on my career.

I also developed other skills outside the scope of my current role. Most people understand the importance of networking but many also fear it. Some people think that cataloguers are stuck in a back office all day and whilst this is far from the case anymore it can be hard to make an impact with people beyond the cataloguing department. Talking to people from other departments or sectors about what they do is an important part of advocating for cataloguing as a profession so I made it my goal to get out of the cataloguing echo chamber. I have to say that developing my networking skills wasn't as daunting as I thought it would be. I did some background reading and then put things into practice. I then blogged about my experiences which turned into an article for C&I, helping to develop my written skills in the process.

Another area that I wanted to work on was my reader service skills. I'm sure that many people undertake reader services work as part of their role but even if this is the case it might not be as extensive as they would like. Employers often look for demonstrable experience in this area so it's an important skill to have. In my current role I'm very much a cataloguer which means that in practice I spend a lot of time in my own department. I used Chartership to shadow colleagues in other departments and even visited other libraries to see how they did things. This experience taught me a lot about reader services work and not only do I feel more confident now when working on an enquiry desk but I am also able to help out reader services staff when they have cataloguing queries which makes for a better service for the end user.

Chartership encourages you to explore the wider professional context in which you work. As I've mentioned I visited other libraries to get some experience and this has made a real difference to the way I work. Cambridge has a complex system with many libraries and through Chartership I gained a new appreciation for how all the services they offer work together. I also visited some libraries outside the academic sector and looked at cataloguing in a number of different environments. This really helped me to get an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in cataloguing and has definitely given me some ideas for the future.

Do I really need to Charter? What's in it for me?

Whilst at the time of writing I'm still waiting to hear if my submission was successful, I'm already starting to see the benefits.

There may be increased job prospects as a result of completing Chartership. Not all employers or roles ask for Chartered status but it does show that you're committed to CPD and take your future development seriously. Even if it's not a formal requirement for a role it provides another way to set you apart from the other applicants. It's also worth investigating if it's a known requirement for your future dream job. There's no time like the present to get a jump start!

Even if it's not something your employer asks for don't underestimate the achievement that Chartership shows. There has been a lot of talk recently about the value of the traditional library degree and although this is really something for a separate discussion it is relevant to Chartership. Whatever you think about the value of the degree no one can deny the value of experience and this is where Chartership can help. Whilst the degree concentrates very much on the theoretical side of things, Chartership is your chance to put this into practice, even outside the remit of your current role. As I've discussed, I used it to develop skills that have nothing to do with cataloguing and this has led to many opportunities as well as helping to make me better at my current job.

The Chartership process provides you with a chance to challenge yourself, both personally and professionally. If you want to get involved with an area of librarianship but don't know how to begin then Chartership can provide you with a framework to do this. These challenges can also lead to an increase in professional confidence, as it has done for me with public speaking. I seriously lacked confidence about speaking in any sort of public situation and this was impacting negatively on my future job prospects. I'm not just talking about presenting at a formal event but things such as speaking up in meetings or giving training to users. Thanks to Chartership I had a reason to push myself to develop these skills and I'm very glad I did. Now teaching and training are a regular part of my role and I enjoy them so much that I am thinking of taking an introductory teaching qualification. I have also become an orientation tour leader at work and I've just submitted my first conference proposal! Undertaking Chartership gave me the push I needed to work on my

public speaking and I've acquired a valuable transferable skill because of it.

The final benefit of Chartership that I want to highlight is how it can help you with your professional development beyond your registration period. Chartership itself helps you to get your CPD efforts recognised in a formal way which you can show to potential employers. Completing the portfolio also taught me the importance of undertaking structured CPD rather than just attending everything on offer. It may sound like common sense but I think sometimes library professionals can be overwhelmed by the amount of CPD opportunities out there. The Chartership process helps you to learn about setting goals for your professional development which in turn makes you more selective about what you do in terms of CPD. Of course you can update your goals as your professional needs and interests change but Chartership certainly helps you to focus. It also teaches you the importance of recording your achievements, something which can come in handy at job interviews or during a work review.

So now what?

Whilst Chartership has many benefits I won't deny that it is hard work. There will times when you have a crisis of confidence and wonder why you ever started this in the first place! This happens to everyone who goes through the process but remember that if you do decide to take the plunge then you're not alone. You will have a mentor and it's important to make use of them as a sounding board, especially when things get tough. The new CILIP VLE has facilities for you to talk to others doing Chartership or any of the other qualifications or you could even find others in your local area who are in the same position as you and arrange a meet up. Never underestimate the power of moral support! There are also the regular Chartership chats on Twitter (watch out for the #Chartership tag) to help with questions and keep your motivation going and a dedicated mailing list for candidates (https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=lis-cilip-reg).

It's important to remember that you don't stop developing when once you've Chartered. CILIP are looking at making yearly revalidation compulsory for all Chartered members but it's a good idea to keep your skills up to date regardless. Chartership and the PKSB give you a solid range of tools and a meaningful place to log your CPD so use them.

Remember that the new Chartership regulations are designed to make the process simpler and more inclusive so now really is the time to give it a go. I promise that you will get so much more out of it than a piece of paper!

[Editor's note: Since writing this article, Claire has been awarded her chartership. Hurrah for Claire!]

Changes in Revalidation, a step in the right direction

Dunia Garcia-Ontiveros, Head of Bibliographic Services, The London Library

Continuing professional development hasn't always been one of my priorities. Like many other professionals, I suspect, at the beginning of my career I was completely focussed on finding work and, having secured my first professional post, all my energy was devoted to learning enough to do that job well. Then, as soon as I felt the work was no longer stretching me I began to look for the next challenge, ideally with a nice increase in salary to go with it. This pattern repeated itself a few times and CPD was just something that happened, a sort of side-effect that resulted from the climb up the career ladder rather than something I planned. It was only when I began to feel more settled and secure as a professional that I began to appreciate its importance and started to record, evaluate and, sometimes, even plan it.

My career in librarianship began in 1995. I had recently embarked on a 4 year, combined honours degree at UCL in Archaeology, Classics and Classical Art. Money was very tight and to earn some extra cash I started to work as a casual shelver in the university library during term time. When the summer holidays started a friend told me there was full-time work available and I joined the 'chain-gang' the library employed to move periodicals around its various branches in the sweltering heat. By this time I had given up the dream of becoming a history teacher and my heart was set on training as a museum curator but I failed to get a place on an MA in Museum Studies so I became one of the UCL's library graduate trainees instead. After a few adventures, including a disastrous and very brief spell as a gallery attendant in a national museum in a final bid to get into museum work, I went back to libraries and to UCL and in 2001 I completed my MA in Library and Information Studies.

Soon after gaining my first professional post as Assistant Librarian at one of the branches of the College of Law for England and Wales I began to hear people talk about chartership and half-heartedly registered with CILIP as a chartership candidate. A year later, when I moved on to take up a post as Cataloguer at the Courtauld Institute of Art I met some colleagues who had become chartered recently and said it was really worth doing and this gave me the impetus I needed to complete my submission. To be honest, at the time I was really just thinking about what becoming chartered could do for my career prospects rather than what it could do to make me a better-rounded, more competent, focussed, engaged, informed, confident and self-aware professional. And yet, as I was to discover later, that was where the real benefit of the process lay. Becoming chartered in 2003 took quite a bit of work and certainly didn't do my career any harm but I do believe that I was able to move on to a job with a lot more responsibility not because my CV then mentioned that I was a chartered member of CILIP but because my prospective employers saw the positive effects of the process in me.

A few years further down the line things changed, the Library Association and the Institute of Information Scientists merged in 2002 to form CILIP and I believe it was in 2005 with the launch of the *Framework of*

Professional Qualifications that our new professional body introduced revalidation. At first I wasn't too keen, I could remember all the work I put into my chartership portfolio only too well, and I wasn't convinced of the potential benefits. I have to confess that I only became interested when I discovered that revalidation could be a path towards fellowship. I had always aspired to become a fellow but I was sure it was out of my reach. It seemed to me – rightly or wrongly – that only those who had made an outstanding contribution to the profession would ever be awarded fellowship. Yet, here it was now, within my grasp. After three successful revalidations (or two for exemplary candidates), each taking three years, candidates could be awarded fellowship. In other words, the only thing standing between me and the highest level of professional membership was nine years of documented professional development. By now I felt I had rested on my chartership laurels long enough and the prospect of attaining fellowship was so enticing that I embarked on my first attempt at revalidation.

Under the old regulations revalidation was almost as daunting – in terms of the workload – as chartership. Nevertheless, in 2010 I successfully revalidated for the first time. If anything, I found the process even more useful than chartership. It forced me to take stock of everything I had done since becoming chartered in 2003 and to give myself credit for all that I had accomplished. This proved invaluable when later that year I was made redundant and had to compete for a post in the new structure because I was able to use my track record to persuade the selection panel that I was the right person to lead the new team.

I enrolled for my second revalidation straight away but then the challenges of my new job took over and I wasn't able to devote much time to planning CPD activities. An awful lot of things were happening very fast and the best I could do was to make mental notes of how all this new work could be used for my second revalidation portfolio. Then, just as I was catching my breath and thinking of trying to pull things together to make my second submission in 2013, everything changed again. Revalidation was to become a yearly event, there was talk that it would no longer be a question of choice and, most revolutionary of all, it would all be done in some strange (to me), virtual learning environment! Those of us who had already enrolled could opt to submit under the old regulations provided we sent our portfolios in by the end of September. Otherwise, from November onwards we would only be able to submit in the new style! It took me about half a second to decide that I would stick with what I knew even if it meant rushing things. In retrospect, that may have a been a mistake because although I attended a workshop to get my mind back into revalidation mode I still had to throw everything together at the last minute and didn't feel as focussed or had as much chance to reflect as in 2010. Fortunately, the considerable task of preparing a submission in record time was not entirely wasted and I passed again. I then accepted that I couldn't put it off any longer…I would have to get to grips with the new format…

To that end I attended an event on 16 May at the University of Southampton where Candidate Support Officer, Franko Kowalczuk, talked us through the changes. Under the old regulations candidates were expected to post

three copies of their submissions. These had to include an up-to-date CV, a CPD log for the third year of the three year period covered (the previous two would have been submitted when they were completed), a CPD audit sheet (inclusion was optional but it was recommended that we completed it), a personal statement on the reflection and evaluation of learning outcomes (taking up no more than one side of an A4 sheet), another personal statement summarising what the candidate had learned and how they had applied it (maximum 500 words), a portfolio of evidence with cross references to the personal statements, a supporting letter from the candidate's line manager and a table of contents to help the assessors navigate through all the separate sections. It is hardly surprising that the number of CILIP members undertaking revalidation was quite low and something clearly needed to be done to make what is a very useful exercise much less onerous.

A glance at the People News sections of recent issues of Update shows that the changes have already caused a dramatic rise in the numbers of members revalidating. So what are these changes that have encouraged so many people to revalidate?

First of all, the rumours about annual revalidations were true. Instead of revalidating every three years candidates will now be expected to revalidate every year. This may seem frightening at first but on the one hand it means that submissions will only cover a shorter period of time and on the other hand CILIP have simplified the process to make these annual submissions much less arduous. That brings me to the next big change and that is the format. From now on, instead of putting together a small mountain of paper and sending it in triplicate to the assessment panel the submission is made via the new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Candidates need to register on the CILIP website, if they haven't already done so, in order to access this VLE where there are a few videos providing guidance to help candidates get started. Not only is submission now paper-free but it has been streamlined so that all we have to do is clock up 20 hours' worth of CPD in a year and add an evaluative statement of 250 words. The assessment criteria across the board, that is for certification, chartership, fellowship and revalidation have also been simplified and are now much clearer. There are three key areas, personal performance, organisational context and the wider professional context, where the candidate will have to demonstrate a varying level of understanding depending on which level of professional registration they're aiming to achieve or, in the case of revalidation, retain. There is now also a new tool, the Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB), which candidates can use to assess their expertise – or lack thereof – in certain areas in order to plan their professional development. At the end of any period of CPD the candidate can return to the PKSB to see whether the CPD has had the desired effect. Use of the PKSB is not obligatory for revalidation but it can be useful. Another change is that revalidation is now free. In 2010 I paid £25 to have my revalidation submission considered by the panel and in 2013 the fee had gone up to £35 and while these are not exorbitant fees they can certainly be off-putting.

I haven't completed a revalidation submission in this new format yet but I have started to put one together and I confess to having mixed feelings about the changes. Certain elements are, in my opinion, a huge improvement. Making it annual so that there is a lesser risk of taking a long break from CPD after a submission makes sense. It also means the evaluative statement, which has been reduced to 250 words, doesn't need to cover so much ground. Setting a simple target of 20 hours of CPD a year, which can include a whole variety of activities, is also very helpful. Making it clear that as we mature professionally we should gradually progress from an awareness of to actually effecting improvements not only in our own performance, but also that of our organisation and eventually that of the wider professional context helps to give candidates a clear direction. I also think the PKSB has great potential for putting candidates in the driving seat when it comes to drawing a professional trajectory by tailoring their development in accordance not only with the needs of their current roles but also as a way of preparing for future ones. And making the submission free is another great incentive.

However, my impression so far is that other things still need work. Despite having grown up in an analogue world I feel very comfortable with technology and yet I struggle with the use of the VLE. The layout doesn't feel very intuitive to me and the guidance is scattered throughout rather than structured and clearly signposted. In other words, the idea of a VLE for recording CPD activities in line with what other professions have had for years is very good, but the execution, particularly when we consider that organising information and producing metadata is at the heart of what we're about, is not so great. A good example of this is the PKSB, which exists both as a PDF that members can download from CILIP's website and as a spreadsheet in the VLE. I was very keen to use the spreadsheet in the VLE but it wasn't where I expected it to be. The VLE homepage has a section called 'Course categories' under which there are six headings. One of these heading is 'PKSB' and that is where I expected to find it but instead all I found there where resources for it rather than the thing itself. Instead, the spreadsheet is at the bottom of a page about recording CPD activities within the Revalidation 'course' section! Having found it, I then discovered that using it wasn't very easy either. The spreadsheet, designed to be used for gap analysis, has headings with no explanatory notes so I found I had to download the PDF version, which does contain notes, as well and had to keep moving between both versions. Even then, and after reading the explanatory notes I found some headings difficult to understand or distinguish from other headings and clearer explanatory notes or even examples of what was meant would be very welcome. Having said that, I think that the VLE is still very new and it feels as though much of it is still under construction so there are bound to be teething problems.

I am also disappointed that there is no longer a straightforward path to fellowship and that it has reverted to being left to the candidate to decide when they may deserve it. The official line is that 'if you're a Chartered member, hold a senior position in your organisation, or have made a significant contribution to the Information Professions, it is appropriate for you' but while I am chartered and hold a relatively senior position in my organisation I don't feel that I have made a significant contribution to the profession and probably never will. We

are a helping profession, not given to singing our own praises - no matter how deserving in many cases - and I suspect that will prevent most from applying for fellowship. Maybe that's as it should be but I wonder whether the percentage of our members who attain fellowship is comparable to that of other professions or whether we lag behind and if that is the case CILIP should rethink the path to fellowship.

All things considered, I think the changes represent a step in the right direction. I hope they will encourage many more members of the profession to take advantage of what CPD has to offer.

Why not write for the next issue of Catalogue and Index?

We are looking for contributions around the topic of Project management, so if you have any interesting experiences to share around this theme, please get in touch. If you have undertaken formal project management training and can talk about the benefits it provides, we would be pleased to hear from you. In addition to talking about projects, you might also like to write about setting up a new service, system or workflow. If you have an idea for an article, please get in touch.

Helen Garner, (h.j.garner@shu.ac.uk) and Heather Jardine (heatherjardine402@hotmail.com).

The cataloguing brick wall

Alan Nash, Library Supervisor, London Borough of Bromley

Based on a few online forum postings, and requests for help and advice, I have been asked to write a short piece about my attempts to further my career through unpaid work experience. I have been, for some time, looking to increase my knowledge of cataloguing and build on the foundations of my Librarianship qualification. Working in public libraries, this has proved a very difficult task, and although at first the signs were encouraging, as time passed I found that the resources and enthusiasm coming from my employers began to diminish.

I began my career as a customer services assistant, but after a couple of years moved up to senior level, and am currently in a temporary post as a public library supervisor.

When I qualified as a librarian in the early 2000s, there was already talk of a decline in public libraries, and in hard copy books generally, but the profession was still strong enough to warrant the local authority paying for my tuition, and at that time they had a detailed scheme in place designed to help potential professionals gain the knowledge they sought.

Such schemes are no longer provided, and councils across the country are cutting back on their support for professional employees. Due to this, it is extremely hard to convince anyone 'in-house' to provide help with career development. One of the main problems is that the technical aspects of the job are contracted out to large companies, taking the skills away from back-office librarians in stock services. Thus, even if I were to be offered work there, there is little to do in the way of cataloguing.

Given the current situation with public libraries, I do not see this improving. It is cheaper to use contractors for all aspects of the job, and extra money will not be spent bringing work back into the organisation.

My only option was to look for experience outside of my workplace. I was aware this would be unpaid, but was prepared to add this to my current 36 hour week, in order to gain further knowledge and hopefully move up in the profession.

I applied to many London libraries, and even some outside London, and although some were very helpful with advice, I did not have any offers of work or training. I'm not sure if this is due to there simply being no room to fit me in, or if librarians are protecting their knowledge and positions from outside people. As technology moves on, many parts of the job will be automated and not require human knowledge, so maybe librarians will be pared down to the bare minimum, making requests for such help a danger to those already employed.

Interestingly, the institution that showed the least amount of interest (i.e. not replying at all) was the British

Library. I understand they must receive a lot of correspondence, but it would not have taken long to send me a quick email explaining why they were unable to help.

I still retain the hope of gaining some practical cataloguing experience, but as a last resort it is back to the books and being self-taught. However, this has its limitations.

There are many books on such subjects as AACR2, MARC21 and RDA, and although it is possible to pick up the theory from them, the practical application is impossible.

Yes, it would be possible to use my own collection, or even the items where I work to do this, but without being in an environment where the systems are implemented and used properly, gaining enough knowledge of them to help in job applications is not feasible.

Further to this, most books on these subjects are extremely expensive, and sometimes not worth the limited access they provide to cataloguing schemes.

One thing I have always hoped for, is that someone will set up a free website on which the practical application of cataloguing is taught, with some online help from experts. I'm sure this would not be beyond the capabilities of CILIP, or other library organisations, and would provide those with existing qualifications the chance to better their skills and improve their job prospects. Sadly this is not a project which seems to be forthcoming.

Outside the cataloguing arena, there are a few more opportunities to be had in the Reader Development sector, but this area still lacks the support it needs from local authorities to make it a viable option for a long career. Not as much technical knowledge is required, but more resources are.

With the changing face of public libraries, many workers on the front line will be thinking of increasing their skills in a bid to retain employment. Local authorities will not renege on their crusade to build DIY libraries, so those with many years to go before retirement will need to look elsewhere for a secure job, and I envisage this happening to many over the coming years and decades. Once upon a time it was possible to work for your entire career as a public librarian or customer services assistant; soon this will no longer be the case, and I feel that the library profession should respond to this coming need by providing a means of access to those wishing to gain new skills and build on those they already have. Gaining qualifications is one thing, but putting them into practice is just as important. At the moment there is no way of doing this unless you are already employed in such a post. Yet without being employed, you cannot gain the experience. What many institutions seem to forget is that a host of public librarians will soon be crying out for work, and they already have 99% of the skills required to do the job. They will require minimal training, and probably be more reliable employees.

I am aware that there are a few apprenticeships available in the profession, but these are mostly for

unqualified, or just-qualified, youngsters, and do not pay a wage suitable for more mature librarians.

I am in my late thirties, and have been unable to find anything which suits the position I am in that does not require a drastic pay cut.

This may sound like one big rant to many, but it is the position I find myself in after a long time trying to find a way into a profession which is, on the whole, a very insular one (and I am a qualified librarian!).

Why not open the world of librarianship up, and give people a chance to pick up skills that will keep the profession alive? Real or virtual, items will still need to be catalogued, found, and cared for.

Alan Nash

Librarian

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On the topic of managing volunteers, here is an interesting response from Dunia Garcia-Ontiveros:

When I first joined the London Library as Head of Retrospective Cataloguing I had more time on my hands to train and supervise so I was more open to the idea of taking on inexperienced volunteer cataloguers. It seemed a fair exchange since they would get hands-on experience and we got some help with our enormous retro project. We took on two new professionals who then went on to secure jobs that involved an element of cataloguing. At that time we were also able to offer our graduate trainees substantial cataloguing training with a chance to do quite a bit of practice so they'd arrive at library school - usually UCL - with a strong cataloguing foundation they could then build on.

Three years ago our current and retro cataloguing teams merged and as Head of Bibliographic Services I now manage the whole cataloguing and classification operation, not to mention doing a lot of collection promotion work so I have zero time left to train and supervise anyone other than new paid cataloguing staff. This means that our graduate trainees now get the most basic theoretical introduction to cataloguing and classification and I have to turn down offers from inexperienced volunteer cataloguers. A couple of years ago I made an exception with one of our graduate trainees who was really passionate about cataloguing so I agreed to train and supervise her in my own time. It was the only way I could do it.

I currently have only 2 volunteers who each work about 2 days a week, both of which are retired professionals. One was a senior rare books cataloguer and is helping us with the retro cataloguing of our older material and the other one is Norwegian and she is retro cataloguing our Scandinavian collections. I understand the point about taking on unpaid staff to do work that should be paid for but the reality is that we cannot afford to take on more paid retro cataloguers at the moment and we need all the help we can get to accelerate a project estimated to take another 20 years to complete. Our paid cataloguers are swamped and do not see the volunteers as a threat so I don't think there is any danger of a dispute.

I hate not being able to help new professionals who want to get into cataloguing but both I and my cataloguers are stretched to breaking point and we simply cannot invest the time in training and supervising volunteers who may not stay with us long enough to make the investment worthwhile. I really wish things were different.

Dunia Garcia-Ontiveros

Head of Bibliographic Services

The London Library

What became of the cataloguer in the digital age?

Maria-Jose de Esteban, Information Specialist, British Film Institute

Asked by the economics commentator for The Financial Times, Martin Wolf, about the impact of new technologies on the workforce, one of his interviewees responded thus: do you and your computer make each other more valuable, or do you feel as if you were competing with the computer? If the latter, your prospects are not so bright[1].

I think this question reflects to perfection the state of anxiety cataloguers and indexers have been in for many years now. When I look carefully at the changes I have gone through in my short career I find arguments to support both parts of the question. So perhaps it is down to whether one is an optimist or a pessimist. After all, as another guest in the programme puts it, being replaced by a computer or a robot is easier said than done, and even if it is inevitable, we are still a long way from that.

I never contemplated the idea of becoming a cataloguer or indexer. My jobs in libraries have always been a way of killing two birds with one stone: paying the bills, and taking advantage of being surrounded by the books I needed to study in order to obtain whatever qualifications I had set myself up to gain. The first library I worked in was at the University of the Basque Country, where I was studying for my BA in Journalism. Most of my time there was spent shelving. Meaningful shelving requires the structuring of content, and can be boring if you are organising books that don't move you. But if you have a little interest in their subject matter, shelving becomes a very stimulating task: why is this book here and not there? If I was researching this subject area, where would I expect to find this title? What is the best way for a book to reach its researcher?

Many years after my stretch of shelving, I was lucky enough to be taught how to catalogue and classify by Sue Batley at the London Metropolitan University. Her enthusiasm was contagious and I realised whilst studying for her module that in some ways cataloguing and classifying requires many of the skills you need for news reporting: you have to be clear, precise and accurate. You also need to have an eye for detail and be a perfectionist or, as Gabriel García Márquez put it, have very little tolerance of errors[2]. As in journalism, where one wrong fact can discredit the entire work, a cataloguing mistake in the description of a title could condemn an author to oblivion or prevent a researcher from locating crucial information.

My first, and so far only, job as a cataloguer and indexer began at the BFI library in 2007. We would chiefly catalogue printed materials, subject index journals and, on a rota basis, explain to researchers in the reading room how to get the best out of our various, mostly unfriendly, databases. The first thing that hits you when helping researchers is how fruitless it is to try and organise information if there is not a high degree of consistency both over time and between the different cataloguers and indexers. That is when the importance of

international standards, in-house guidelines and training becomes obvious: like an orchestra where each musician needs to tune up to the same note to perform the music, cataloguers and indexers need to tune their analytical skills to consistently identify, analyse, describe and classify resources. This is the best way to help people to find information as quickly and as effectively as possible.

Like many other specialised libraries, the BFI's developed within the context of the organisation as a whole - that is, in parallel to, but separate from, the film and television archive, and the special collections department. Each of these departments used to have different, non interoperable collections management systems and followed different standards. None had responsibility for the whole. This all changed in 2009, when as a result of an organisational restructure, fresh ideas about managing the information and knowledge were introduced.

A team of Information Specialists is now at the centre of all the data-related work generated across the three departments mentioned above. The creation of this team is a good example of how our traditional cataloguing and indexing skills can be re-shaped to the needs of a knowledge organisation. The BFI collections include moving image, audio tapes, photographs, posters, production designs, documents, scripts, ephemera, books and other printed materials. As has been detailed elsewhere[3], around 2009 the integration of all systems and records began in earnest. This left us with nightmarish quantities of legacy data in need of cleaning, disambiguation and enrichment. Equally, the daily creation of new records to identify and describe such a wide range of materials by both cataloguers and non cataloguers makes the need for guidelines, training and quality checks paramount. I was lucky again, when I had the opportunity to work closely with Gabriele Popp, now Head of Collections and Information. She launched the Information Specialists team, and encouraged me to develop my skills so I could move with confidence from cataloguing and indexing a few books and articles, to providing information management expertise for the documentation of all BFI collections and knowledge resources.

I hardly ever catalogue or index these days, but in many ways those skills that I learnt at college and used in my first job at the BFI library are the same skills I am still using and honing now as an information specialist. To illustrate this, I will explain in more detail how I employ two of the crucial skills on which traditional cataloguing and classification relies: the analytic and the organisational.

The description of the content of the BFI's moving image, photographs and books collections used to be made using different vocabularies. Sharing them was technically impossible so they grew in an unsystematic and uncontrolled manner. The new Collections Information Database (CID) today contains two thesauri (one used by the film and television archive and the other by the photographs collection), one UDC scheme (to classify the books at the library) and a list of subjects (to index periodical articles in the library). As a result of this amalgamation, our shared vocabulary has serious structural issues that need to be resolved if it is going to be of any use. Furthermore, our ambition is to connect our vocabularies to other relevant knowledge organisation systems via linked open data projects. This will generate unexpected and dynamic access points to our

collections in the web space and attract new users. So a considerable part of my role now is to analyse and identify ways of making this vocabulary of over 65,000 terms user-friendly and interoperable with others. For example, the list of subjects used to index articles from periodical publications contains over 9,000 headings, which consist of strings of single and compound terms followed by the 'topic', 'geographical' and 'period' subdivisions. These flat and post-coordinated headings need to be integrated into the main list of headings, which uses a pre-coordination format and has two types of relationships. To ensure a successful integration we first need to systematically analyse their elements and features, and then organise them in meaningful groups so we can start to see what kinds of approaches and rules we need for mapping. This requires a significant understanding of how highly-structured vocabularies work and how they are created and maintained. Who is in the best position to understand it and come up with solutions? Our technical colleagues and their friends, the computers, cannot do it alone.

Our knowledge and skills are not just useful to deal with the legacy data migrated from clunky systems. Let's look again at the shared vocabulary mentioned above in connection with one of the main provider of access points to cultural heritage; geographical locations. Sharing a collection management system means that our traditional subject headings, which contain everything from nouns to proper names of both people and places, are given a domain, but this domain is just one domain among many others which may also contain names of places (e.g. country, geographical location, place domains, etc). This creates extraordinary and complex disambiguation challenges which cannot be solved without specialised knowledge of the different types of vocabulary systems used for information retrieval. To illustrate this, I would like to give an example based on a piece of work I am currently undertaking. We have got a particular controlled list for Place names, with over 20,000 terms, which is linked to 18 fields across the different sub-databases (e.g. place of publication for books, birth and death locations for people, etc). The majority of those terms also exist in the subject domain because a significant part of the content of the BFI non-fiction moving image collection has traditionally been described using Places names too (e.g. Bristol as a birth place term in the authority file of actor Cary Grant, and Bristol as a subject heading for the 1902 film Panorama of the River Avon to Portishead which is a travelogue about Bristol). Is this duplication of the Place name Bristol necessary? Should we keep them in two separate lists and simply lock down the terms to avoid domain pollution? Do we need [Bristol] and Bristol as two different terms or can we get rid of [Bristol]? How do we distinguish Beer, the place in Devon, from beer, the alcoholic drink? Should we prevent indexers from entering nouns in their singular form even if they are the best way of describing photographs about a single beer? Computers may one day be able to deal with strong semantic connexions and subtleties, but they are not there yet.

It is now widely acknowledged that the documents and records generated within an organisation are a crucial source of internal information and knowledge. Last year, the BFI acquired SharePoint to improve the way we save, share, retain, retrieve and dispose of information, but so far it has not been used widely or consistently.

This is about to change, at least within the Collection and Information department, where a Knowledge Manager has been recently recruited and tasked with that responsibility. As we know, business classifications schemes are a vital part of any records management process, and so this is another area where our analytical and organisational skills are also relevant: do we organise documents, files and folders by departments and sub-departments or by the business' functions and activities? Do we use a flat list of pre-defined terms or a hierarchy? How do we label the files and folders? How do we manage them in a consistent way? I have now been asked to draft a fileplan to be used as a starting point for the development of a lasting structure that will help us to manage information in a consistent manner. Which resources will I use the most? 'SharePoint 2010 for Dummies' by Microsoft, or 'Thesaurus construction' by Aitchison and Gilchrist? If SharePoint for Dummies was the answer, my colleagues in the IT department would have managed to make the Microsoft application popular across the BFI by now. The fact that this has not happened shows that our cataloguing and indexing skills are still very much needed.

The ways in which all kinds of knowledge and information can be structured and linked as a collection of data in a database, Intranet or the web space have created unimaginable possibilities for relating content. But these connections are intrinsically messy, ambiguous and inconsistent. Information and knowledge need to be organised if we want to show people what we've got, if we want users to find, identify, select and obtain what they want as effectively as possible. So my answer to the question at the beginning of this piece is this: we are not competing with computers, we work with them to do what we have always done: intelligent analysis and courageous structuring. Our future can be bright too.

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