

**EDUCATION FOR LIBRARY AND
INFORMATION SCIENCE IN GREAT BRITAIN
— A FEW RANDOM OBSERVATIONS**

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I. Introduction

Generally speaking, schools of libraries and information studies are in a period of contraction in the United Kingdom as is the case in the USA and Canada. Enrollments are either stable, or dropping, and faculty size is the same, that is, declining, or holding its own.

Beyond this generalization, however, one must note that it applies in differing degrees to different schools and different programs. For example, enrollment at one large multi-program polytechnic (Leeds) has remained constant since 1969 but the program mix is now different. Whereas it was formerly entirely an undergraduate program, this course has now declined somewhat and the post-graduate diploma and Masters Degrees have come on the scene and are representing an increasing part of the enrollment. Enrollment at the largest of the greater London schools, the Polytechnic of North London, has dropped rather substantially and the school has suffered the loss of ten full time faculty and all of its associated faculty in recent years.

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II. Types of Schools

In attempting any survey of the library and information science education scene in Britain, it might first be useful to designate the types of institutions producing librarians in that country. Broadly speaking, there are two types, these being the universities, each holding a royal charter of its own, and responsible only to itself and the University Grants Commission for its academic program. The second is the polytechnics, which are largely a development of the post World-War II period, although some of the segments which went to make up these newer institutions pre-date 1945. The polytechnics do not have individual charters, but derive their authority to great degrees from the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) which examines and validates the programs offered by schools and departments in the polytechnics. The CNAA holds the Royal Charter for this function (validation of degrees) and their examination of the courses of the polytechnics probably comes about as close as anything in British library education to accreditation of library science programs in the sense that we are accustomed to without Committee on Accreditation of the American Library Association.

There are other types of institutions of higher education in Britain, but in relation to librarianship these two are by far the most important, with the polytechnics producing the greatest number of graduates. Generally speaking, the universities may be said to be more research oriented than the Polytechnic schools, but here, one must be wary of too facile generalization. The Polytechnic of North London and Leeds Polytechnic (speaking only of those that I visited) both have research centers, research programs, and research oriented faculty. For that matter, the Ealing College of Higher Education has a small research program, as well, and although it does not carry the designation of "polytechnic," it has the characteristics of one, and derives its validation of programs from the CNAA.

Another generalization that can be ventured is that the prin-

ciple of tenure seems to be more firmly established in the universities than in the polytechnics although it exists in the latter and apparently is quite strong. The situation varies, however, from one polytechnic to another depending on the local agreements, since the polytechnics are to a great extent responsible to local and regional authorities. More on the matter of tenure later.

III. Degrees, Qualifications

Another matter relating to British library education which sometimes causes confusion is the matter of degrees awarded. The British and those countries influenced by British educational patterns often refer to these academic credentials as "qualifications." and perhaps it would be best to utilize this term because some of the "qualifications" are not degrees. What are some of these credentials? First, starting at the bottom, we should mention the two year-non-degree program, which is really a "non-credential." It has almost gone out of existence, but must be mentioned for historical perspective. This program, once widespread and intended to prepare candidates for the examinations of the Library Association, is now not offered in many places and taken by few students as the LA has ended its program of external examinations and almost all students will enter a three year bachelor's degree in Librarianship or a diploma course.

The Bachelor's Degree, usually a B.A., and the Diploma are the two main, "bread-and-butter", or initial credentials offered by British Library Schools. The Bachelor's Degree programs are generally full-time, and may be either devoted to librarianship and information studies, very broadly interpreted, or may take the form of a dual major. Loughborough Technical University offers both types of Bachelor's, and Newcastle offers both the Bachelor's in Librarianship and in Education. The Polytechnic of North London gives only one integrated Bachelor's integrated in the

sense that subject material from such fields as sociology, communications and economics is a part of the total program.

There has been a tendency of late for part-time study at this level to decline as the percentage of chartered professional librarians with degrees increases. With lessening demand, Newcastle is phasing out this program.

The diploma has, nominally, no North American equivalent but is perhaps the closest of all the British credentials to our MLS, or MSLS, in that it is an initial, post-graduate qualification that seeks to pack into one year, either academic or chronological, the core of library and information service work, plus some specialization. Ealing College of Higher Education and the University College's diploma requires an academic year (approx. 9 months, as here) while Polytechnic of North London requires almost a full chronological year, (January until the end of November). The Diploma, like the Bachelor's Degree, has been usually a full time program of study, but more accommodation is now being made for the part-time student. Loughborough University gives this first graduate credential, but calls it an MLS, Master of Library Studies. A feature of the Diploma course is that schools will specify an experience requirement for acceptance. This requirement is one that the schools feel is useful both for demonstrating a person's commitment to the field and for helping them cope with the intensive and compacted course work.

The Masters degrees, whether Master of Arts, or Master of Science, tend to be considered as continuing education degrees in the United Kingdom in that they are usually second credential (an exception would be Loughborough's MLS) which almost invariably carries with it an experience requirement. Again one must beware of generalizations, however, as there are programs which are wholly graduate, as at Sheffield, where the first credential may well not be in librarianship. The general assumption seems to be, however, that a person will have some substantial background in library and information service work and probably formal study before entering an M.A. or M. Sc. program.

The variations in the programs tend to be infinite once one gets beyond the basic two credentials of the B.A., B. Sc., or Diploma.

Note should be made before leaving the Masters Degrees of the M. Science programs at City University of London, Loughborough, and Sheffield. These programs are intended to produce information scientists for work in special libraries, and require for admissions a good honours degree in science, technology, or in some cases a social science. Even within this sub-division, there are variations. Experience is required for all these programs, but this requirement is sometimes waived or modified, partly because of the small number of applicants. Research is very much a part of the Masters Degree, whether M.A. or M. Sc., with a substantial project or essay being required which in some cases can take up to a third of the student's time in the program.

There are no doctoral programs, in the sense that North Americans think of a program, in the library schools that visited. Rather, the Ph.D. is awarded for a period of independent study under the direction of one or two tutors culminating in a dissertation. Prospective students are expected to discuss, outline, and defend their proposed area of research before an advanced study committee of the school, and if admitted, to begin immediately upon their study. They are admitted to work for the Master of Philosophy Degree and if all goes well, later to candidacy for the Ph.D. Six of the eight schools visited offer study at this level. Sheffield, Loughborough University, City University of London, University College — London, Leeds Polytechnic, and Polytechnic of North London. The Advanced Study Committee of the school, or whatever other designation it may bear, considers in particular the applicants' academic background, motivation, and research interests. It also considers the research interests of faculty qualified to direct the student

IV. The Student Perspective

Having set a broad framework for library education in Britain, let us now look at some salient points relating to students, faculty, and curriculum. Starting with the students, we can safely generalize that many of the problems existing are those faced by our own students. Considering first the end of the student's formal tie with the school, that of graduation, we come to the problem of placement. Here, comparisons with North America are difficult, due mainly perhaps to the cloudy and diverse picture presented by the much larger population one encounters in the USA and Canada. In Great Britain, one point is clear, and that is that the placement picture is getting worse. At each school, it was reported that whereas in former years, placement had not been much of a problem with most graduates (70-80%) from whatever program, Bachelor's or Diploma, being placed in professional positions within three or four months after graduation; now the percentage not placed is higher. A complete report could not be made as of late November and early December, the time of my visits, but every school indicated a tightening job market. This phenomenon, one has the impression, is a recent one in Britain, and possibly accounted for by the fact that the British did not expand their library education system as excessively as the Americans did. While expansion certainly occurred in the United Kingdom, perceptions of reality concerning the job market did not go quite so awry. This may possibly be due to the closer ties that generally speaking, the British library schools have maintained with the field than is the case with at least some American schools. For the moment, we may summarize by saying that placement is, according to all contacted fair, not good, and getting worse as the effect of central government cutbacks and the recession impact on higher education. Job opportunities are apparently contracting in both public libraries and academic libraries.

Moving to the beginning of a student's experience with the school, admissions and the related matter of financial aid, one also

sees signs of contraction. Financial aid, or receipt of a government grant for study, is especially significant for British students. These grants, the nearest equivalent to which for us would probably be our Title II-B Fellowships, (or perhaps the subsidized fees charged to in-state students at American public universities) have been much more widespread, however, than our fellowship programs.

Grants for first degree study are mandatory. Ironically, however, grants, for graduate study, i.e., at the Diploma or Master's level where the greatest need for education is seen, are being cut back drastically. Every school reported a decline in number of grants awarded at this level which means, inevitably fewer students applying for the graduate programs.

Admission is still very competitive at all the schools I visited. Ealing College of Higher Education reports accepting only forty students for its Diploma program out of 250 applicants. Places like Sheffield and City University have fewer applicants but their known high standards discourage casual applicants. The British schools make much more use of interviews for screening applicants than we do. Almost all applicants are interviewed. Loughborough requires students to come to campus, which usually means an overnight stay so they can get a good look at the place and the faculty can evaluate them.

There are some indications of easing of admissions criteria in answer to "market" conditions, such as the increased interest in accommodating part time students. Another is the tendency for even prestigious schools like Sheffield and City University to modify or waive their experience requirement for the M. Sci. in information science if a person meets the main criterion of a good Honours Degree in a scientific or technical field and passes the interview hurdle. As is the situation with us, there is great difficulty in attracting students with "hard science" backgrounds to librarianship and information studies. Much discretion is also used, apparently, by the schools in making allowances for what they refer to as the "mature" student, whom they define as anyone 23 years of age or older if that person's academic back-

ground doesn't quite fit the usual mold. Experience in a library with references from employers are of importance in this situation, along with the ubiquitous interview. Nevertheless, standards of admission seemed to be high at all the schools that I visited. Librarianship is apparently seen as an attractive field in the United Kingdom.

Concerning the background of the students in the programs as we have implied, most of them come to a library science program with a humanities background. There seems to be a problem in maintaining enrollment in the programs devoted to training information specialists for industry and government. The programs are small, and, as mentioned above, the experience requirement of at least a year tends to be modified at both Sheffield and City University if the candidate presents the requisite Honours Degree credential and passes the interview.

Independent Study

Another characteristic of the life of British library school students is the stress placed upon independent study and projects under the direction of tutors. This is true even of undergraduate students where in their third year an independent student project is often required. This project, requiring field research, is in place at the following Bachelor's programs: Ealing College of Higher Education, Leeds Polytechnic, Loughborough University, and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne (Honours Bachelor's only). The graduate programs at the Diploma level at Ealing College of Higher Education and Leeds Polytechnic require a research project, usually of a practical, on-site nature in a library. Newcastle has made theirs optional at this level. While it might seem strange that a graduate qualification is less likely to require a research project than the Bachelor's level, one must keep in mind that the Diploma, and Loughborough's Master of Library Studies, is the equivalent of our MLS, and most American library schools dropped the masters essay requirement many years ago because of the concentrated nature of the program and the feeling that additional classroom

study of a modular nature was more desirable than a special study on a narrow topic.

The Masters programs at City University (London) the University College – London, the University of Sheffield, Leeds Polytechnic, and the Masters programs at Loughborough other than the MLS (the Diploma equivalent) require an essay, or extensive research project. Of course, the Master of Philosophy and Ph.D. courses are entirely research.

In addition to formal course requirements, there is apparently a strong influence exerted upon students to get them into examination of the real world of librarianship through papers and projects as a part of their regular "course work." As a generalization, one may conclude that British library school students are rather heavily involved in independent study as compared with their American counterparts. Students at all levels work closely on their projects or essays with their tutors or advisors, who apparently take this work as a serious and major part of their responsibility.

Curriculum – Main Trends

No attempt at summarizing the picture of curriculum at British library schools would be complete without some word concerning practice work, or internships in libraries, and this phenomenon will serve as a natural bridge from student concerns to the broad topic of curriculum. We have mentioned that experience in libraries is almost universally posed as an admission requirement for the graduate qualification programs showing the somewhat greater emphasis the British place on experience than we do. It also seems to be almost universally agreed that practice work as a part of the curriculum is highly desirable and that the only exception to this rule that can be justified is that of a very compact, tightly scheduled program where there just isn't time to fit in work experience. This, obviously, is most likely to occur in the post-graduate Diploma courses or masters courses that are

confined to one year. However, even here there is some stress upon obtaining first hand library or information service work. The City University Master of Science program, which prepares for information service work in government and industry, farms out its students for work experience for much of the last three or four months of the program; that is, after two semesters of intensive classroom and tutorial study. The University College of London assigns their Diploma and Masters students to a two week work experience in December of each year, even though the Diploma course runs only an academic year and the Master of Arts a chronological year but with the last four months of this year being devoted to writing the essay. Leeds requires a week of practice work of its diploma candidates and the required student projects have a pronounced practical bent which forces the students to become involved with libraries and/or information centers.

Other schools, such as the Ealing College of Higher Education, make heavy use of field trips to libraries as a device to introduce students to practice. These are apparently taken almost weekly. The Director of this School, expressed himself as being dissatisfied with this arrangement and hoped to be able to institute practice work even for the Diploma level students.

In the bachelor's programs, Loughborough requires two summer placements in their three year program. Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Polytechnic places their first level Bachelor's students in a four week practice work situation in that city or region. They require their second year students to undergo a one week observation period in a primary school library and to participate in a one week study tour to libraries and information centers in London. In their third and final year, the students work for three weeks in a library of the type in which they are interested in seeking employment. This placement may be anywhere in Britain. Thus, work experience tends to be almost universally required either as part of a program, or as is the case with post-graduate qualifications, a prerequisite to entry. This situation may be

contrasted to that in the United States, where practice work, or internships, tend to be, if not actually discouraged as taking time away from presumably more valuable class time, of an optional nature. Exceptions to this generalization would be some Canadian schools which require a summer placement between the two academic years of their programs, and the teacher-librarian programs which require practice work or student teaching of some sort.

A word should be said covering the administration of these programs. Since the procurement of practice work assignments is such a large task, involving in some cases hundreds of students per year, an administrative officer or faculty member is sometimes assigned this as his or her principal duty. For example, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Polytechnic has a full time placement officer who finds positions for students for their three levels of experience (first year four week local or regional experience, second year primary school observation, and third year three week placement). She also arranges and supervises the one week study tour to libraries in London for second year Bachelor's candidates. For the practice work placements, she makes at least one visit to each site, no matter whether it is within the Tyne region or elsewhere. Leeds Polytechnic has had to drop their London study tour for economic reasons. The placement officer at Newcastle has some assistance from faculty members in their tutorial capacity in regard to practice work but by and large it is the best example of a centralized system for handling this part of the curriculum.

At the opposite extreme, the Polytechnic of North London is a prime example of decentralization of practice work assignments where faculty tutors are primarily responsible for finding placements for their ten or so advisees. Some central administration support is given, however. Leeds and Loughborough fall somewhere in the middle with both having someone administratively responsible for assignments but with faculty very much involved with student placements.

Evaluation of practice work experience is handled in very

much the same way that it is in North America. That is, the supervising librarian will send back a report on the student, usually more than one if the experience is over an extended period of time. The student is not graded on the work experience, but if his or her work is unsatisfactory, this is noted and reflected in references for employment. In effect, the student is graded "satisfactory-unsatisfactory."

The student also "grades," or evaluates the experience situation, writing a report concerning the value of the work assigned. This report is seen by placement officers and tutors, who, as indicated, seek to provide suitable assignments that will give the students the broad experience the schools want them to have.

Relating to the matter of satisfactory assignments for student practice work, achieving these assignments, according to all the schools visited, is becoming more and more of a problem. The reason for this is that libraries, both academic and public, are being faced with staff cutbacks, and since supervision of student workers is usually not one of their top priorities, library directors are increasingly reluctant to take on this task. Good, supervised experience is thus becoming more difficult to obtain since often the period of placement is for a relatively short time and the library can thus achieve little in the way of return for providing varied training as opposed to performance of some routine task.

Nevertheless, the schools are persevering in their endeavor to provide work experience for their students, an endeavor in which they are strongly supported by the Library Association which takes a great interest in assuring that the education given in the schools is related to current practice and is not unduly theoretical or too heavily oriented toward information science. The schools assiduously pursue contacts with libraries and librarians to keep opportunities open for the students.

Looking at curriculum overall, there is a pronounced trend toward integrating traditional "library science" into both an informational and a societal context. By an informational context

is meant the adaptation of education for librarianship from training for specific jobs in libraries to emphasis upon the accumulation, organization, and delivery of information. It is somewhat along the lines of the approach taken at American library schools such as Syracuse, Drexel, and Southern California where information is the overall umbrella perspective under which the curriculum develops.

There is also stress on the study of the library or information center as a part of the communications network of society at large. Possibly because of the success of the citizens advice bureaus, public libraries have taken a great interest in information services for their patrons with consequent interest on the part of the schools. While the Citizens' Advice Bureaus are not part of the library system, they are very typical of the type of government position in which the library schools are seeking to interest their students. The CAB's are staffed by, for the most part, trained amateurs whose educational background would be less than that of a professional librarian. This type of position, however, illustrates the curricular trends cited above, the emphasis on information handling as opposed to type of position in library training, and also the role of the library in society. Portrayal of the library, or information center as a part of the communications process, whether in an industrial firm, a government agency, an academic institution, or a public library in its community, is very much a part of the British educational science.

A third major area of concentration in training for librarianship and information services in the UK is that of emphasis on management. The British have come to the conclusion, as many American library educators have, that most librarians will during their careers be exercising supervisory roles of some sort and should therefore be well-grounded in management skills. This is reflected in all the curricula that I examined, where a substantial "track", or segment of time in the general program is devoted to management studies.

Perhaps the best way of providing a more concrete view of

the curriculum of British library schools would be to look at a couple of examples which would illustrate different approaches. To some extent we have addressed this issue in regard to the degrees and the general structure of the programs, which are general, and overarching, rather than modular and specific as ours are. A distinction can be made in the British programs, however, between the segmented ones where library and information science is studied separately, at least in terms of structure, from other subjects; or, where different subjects within the field are studied more or less independently in much the same manner that we do; and, those programs where the totality of the student's experience is integrated.

Perhaps the best example of the latter would be the Bachelor's and Diploma programs of the Polytechnic of North London. Here, the bulk of the student's work is concentrated in two main segments of curriculum which are team taught. "Core stream A," as it is called, deals with the nature and development of systems created to deal with the problems of access to information, retrieval of information, and the management of libraries. Within this context, major bibliographic systems are studied, types of classification of information, and networking or systems of libraries. This sounds like familiar material, and it is, but the arrangement and delivery of the subject matter is considerably different from that in most of the North American schools, although not perhaps so different from the introductory "bloc" programs at American schools such as Drexel, North Carolina and South Carolina.

North London's "Core Stream B" is called Community Studies, and according to their prospectus "emphasises people and their information requirements." Here the student chooses four communities from two substreams, "communities by environment," such as social services, or higher education, and "communities by subject," such as history, or computer science. The practical skills and techniques of the librarian are taught in this second stream of team taught lectures, seminars, and tutorials.

Reference work and information retrieval come out in the subject "communities" and the services of libraries and library management are emphasized in the sub-stream relating to communities by environment. Service to people is most strongly emphasized in this whole large segment of the program relating to community studies.

In addition to these two main segments of the three year Bachelor's course, a third stream requires students to take two "tool skill" courses, the first being an introduction to computers taken in the first term of study, and the second a basic statistics course. A second part of "Stream C" is what are called "optional studies", optional in the sense that the student chooses two courses (referred to as "short courses") from a list of subjects which includes children's literature, local history, psychology of reading, reprography, and several others.

This is the Bachelor's program of North London; the Diploma course is much the same except that it must be compacted into one chronological year whereas the Bachelor of Arts covers three years of study.

Perhaps the easiest contrast to this general type of program with librarianship being integrated into a lot of other sociological and economic subject matter would be the Bachelor's programs offered at the University of Loughborough. Here a variety of options are available and the library science "courses" are arranged more in the way that ours are, in modules. In the basic program, BA or bachelor of Science (Honours) in Library Studies, students in their first two years will take four basic "core courses," "indexing and data processing," "sources of bibliographical information," "libraries and civilization," and "library administration," and an "associated subject" taken from a broad selection of options ranging from "Asian Studies" to "Computer Studies" to "Transport Technology." Students are also required to study a foreign language. In their final year students choose four courses from a long list of options including such topics as Serial Publications, Medical Literature and Libraries, Children's Literature,

Non-Book Media and many others. An important task of this final year, however, is the preparation of a major project and report which is to be in the range of seven to ten thousand words.

Another option at the Bachelor's level at Loughborough is to work for a joint qualification in librarianship and another subject. Students may choose among seven other subjects including Creative Design, English, History, and Physical Education and Sports Science. The latter reflects the fact that Loughborough is a big physical education school. This course may be three or four years. The Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Education and Library Studies is a variant of this but with a substantial part of the third year of the required four being devoted to practice teaching. This degree qualifies for both library and teaching positions.

There is yet another Bachelor's degree offered at Loughborough, the Bachelor of Science in Information Science, which consists of courses in information storage and retrieval and information systems; mathematics, including statistics, and the history of science in society, but enough has been said to show the contrast between this type of modular program and the integrated type of program at North London. The other Bachelor's programs tend to fall somewhere in between these schools on the spectrum. Ealing College of Higher Education and the polytechnics at Leeds and Newcastle all have integrated, overall programs that are closer to the curricular arrangement at North London but without going to that extreme of integration.

What about the arrangement of the other qualifications, including the Diploma? Here perhaps enough has already been said in regard to degrees to indicate that the Diploma covers the same ground, generally as the Bachelor's programs, but in a much more concentrated way since although it is a first professional qualification, it is crammed into one year, (In one case, that of University College — London, it is taken in one academic year). The Masters degrees vary in their emphases and arrangement and are generally considered to be a continuing education degree; that

is, a second professional qualification. These qualifications require coverage of a core of library and information science areas and some degree of specialization. As indicated previously, some sort of practice work or experience is somehow attached, if not built into this level of study.

Some idea of the diversity of Masters Programs may be gathered from the following: Loughborough in addition to its MLS, which is the equivalent of a Diploma, gives a Master of Arts in Archive/Library/Information Studies and Education which is primarily intended for those planning to teach librarianship in developing countries. They also give a Master of Science Degree for those intending to pursue careers in special libraries, primarily scientific or technical, in government, industry or academia. This is like the Master of Science program at the City University and that of the University of Sheffield.

The University of Sheffield has three regular Masters programs plus an option for independent masters level study for mature practitioners. The first, and largest, is the Master of Arts in librarianship, a general course catering largely to humanities majors who will be employed in public and academic libraries. The program is what might be described as "advanced — general," with study in the fields of information sources, information storage and retrieval, computers and information, and management and systems. Students specialize by type of library starting in their second semester (this is a three semester or chronological year masters degree), relating their work to the community they will serve, whether academia, the general public, or some special clientele. Students are required to take two optional courses in addition to these core areas, choosing from among such subjects as "public relations and promotion," "advanced computer programming" and approximately seven others. They also must take a combined statistics — research methods course. In addition, visits to libraries and a study tour to London or Edinburgh are mandatory.

The Master of Arts in Information Studies (Social Sciences)

is very similar except that students are required to have a good Honours degree in a social science or law for entry. The Master of Science in Information Studies requires students to have a good Honours degree in science or engineering or technology for entry. As one might expect, this program emphasizes, after introducing students to the "core", the subjects that we include in the category of information science. As is the case with the City University Master of Science degree, it is anticipated that the graduates will find placement in special libraries in government, industry, or higher education.

In summarizing the Masters Degree programs at Sheffield, one must note that they are first qualifications, and thus are similar to our programs and the Loughborough MLS. Students are, however, expected to carry out research projects and studies in their regular course work and not just passively absorb lectures or piece together "term papers" from library materials. However, no masters essay is required, and the school is in the process of phasing out their comprehensive examinations, feeling that with the high quality of student that they insist upon, they can satisfactorily evaluate on the basis of course work and avoid losing the time now placed on comprehensive examinations.

Education for Library and Information Science in Great Britain — A Few Random Observations

Let us, before leaving the topic of curriculum, look at the attempts of the schools to develop, and keep up in the field of information science, including data processing equipment. If one may generalize from the eight schools visited, one could probably say that they are a little ahead of the average library school in the United States. All schools have a micro-computer, and all have terminals connecting to some central computing facility. None of the schools however, have portable terminals. The facilities available for computer instruction seem in some cases (and I was

unable to see all) somewhat crowded, but then so are ours at times. All students, whatever the program, Bachelor's, Diploma, or Masters, are apparently required to obtain some familiarity with computers, computing, and data bases, and their application to library and information center work. Because of the degree of homogenization of library education enforced by the CNAAC, which seeks to keep the curriculum of the polytechnics up to university level, one might venture the guess that most students obtain more of information studies than ours do. Certainly at a place like Sheffield this would be the case. In any case, a strong push is on in British library schools to ensure that graduates will have a good background in information science, including, familiarity with technology.

Faculty Issues

In considering the faculty of library schools in the United Kingdom and some of their problems, if there is one generalization that can be made in comparing the faculties of British and American library schools, it is the very strong emphasis on work experience that is evident in the former. Most faculty have or did have, until recently, the FLA, or Fellowship of the Library Association, a credential obtained through preparation of a substantial dissertation and five years of responsible and substantial service in libraries. Now the proportion of faculty having higher academic credentials such as the Ph.D. or a Masters Degree is growing. This fact is not seen as entirely salutary, as one director commented that the newer, younger faculty with the degrees do not have the excellent experience that the older faculty had.

One of the interests of the writer in this study was the mobility of faculty in the library schools of the United Kingdom. I found that essentially, there is none. Due to the situation of contraction, movement in teaching positions is extremely rare, and what there is is back and forth between the schools and good positions in the field. This lack of mobility has a number of

implications among the most important being the growth of an older, tenured faculty, which in some cases I found described as "set in its ways" and unreceptive to innovation. This problem may be mitigated in Britain by the comparatively close ties to the field, but apparently still poses a difficulty. In a situation of contraction, people hold to the positions they have and the schools are left with coping with budget cuts through attrition and encouragement of early retirement. Tenure is very strong in the universities in Great Britain, at least as strong as in the best American universities. It is almost equally as strong in the non-university schools, the polytechnics and colleges of higher education. The situation in regard to tenure in the latter tends to vary, however, depending to some extent upon the local or regional agreements that have been worked out. Generally, once a lecturer has completed one year of satisfactory service, he or she has tenure for life. In two schools that I visited, the time mentioned as a probationary period was three years rather than one. To get a faculty member declared "redundant", to use the British term, against his wishes and before his or her normal, chosen retirement date involves prolonged negotiations usually involving litigation. A settlement which would cover both continuation of salary for a specified period of time (the periods mentioned ranged from one year's salary up to five years), plus building up the person's retirement fund would be required. While several people mentioned the possibility of forced closings of schools, citing the precedent of the closing of several teacher training institutions in recent years, another director made light of this possibility, saying that the people who feared closings of schools were those who had suffered enrollment declines and were unduly sensitive to the issue. Another commented that two of the weakest institutions who might seem to be logical choices for closure were schools which had very strong support for their continued existence. A "political" factor thus enters the decision-making process. Also concerning school closings, it was also pointed out that at the time of the closure of the teacher's colleges, displaced faculty had been

treated very humanely, with apparently substantial settlements or the provision of other employment. The pattern would be much in line with the settlements worked out at Michigan State University where only a few months ago it appeared that over a hundred tenured faculty members would be dropped due to financial exigencies. Now, however, a mutually satisfactory settlement has apparently been worked out with every one of those people, either through positions being vacated through normal attrition, through voluntary early retirement, or alternative employment in the university. With the costs involved, it is no wonder that directors of schools in Britain are hoping that funding cuts will be small enough to be able to be covered through normal attrition due to deaths, retirements, or departures to other jobs, leaves without pay, etc.

This has been occurring in several schools. Ealing College of Higher Education is down from sixteen to fourteen full time faculty, one vacancy having occurred due to death and the other due to an early retirement related to a health problem. Both positions had been taken away from the school. The Polytechnic of North London had been especially hard hit, being down to a mere thirty full time faculty from forty and also having lost all their adjunct or part time faculty. (Apparently most of the schools make heavy use of adjunct faculty for special courses). Leeds Polytechnic, perhaps the best "positioned" of the polytechnics in that their enrollment has been stable, lost a position but was able to regain it after a hiatus of a few months. The person that left had taken a position in the field.

Among the universities, the faculty at University College — London were breathing a sigh of relief because they had been recently assured that Brian Vickery's position as director would not be taken from them when Vickery retires after next year. They have six full time faculty, but many adjunct people, approximately twelve in number, used to cover their impressive array of specialized courses. The Director of the City University of London bemoaned the fact that he was being asked to drop a

faculty member when he felt he could spare no one, and that all his staff were top quality people. Loughborough has held steady at 20 full time faculty. They had been able to replace a faculty member who had retired with a new person from the field. Sheffield also was steady at eleven full time faculty (for 55 masters students and six full-time and twelve part-time doctoral students) and had been able to replace one person who retired, but only after some argumentation with the University administration.

In general, the situation may be summed up as being one of wary anticipation since the full impact of budgetary cuts is only now being felt. Tenure however, is very strong in British higher education. Unionism is also apparently quite strong at least at the polytechnics. Any administration attempting to cut faculty arbitrarily would be faced with prolonged litigation with the probable outcome of substantial compensation being given to the faculty member. It is no wonder therefore, that much is being done in the way of encouraging voluntary early retirement in the fifty to sixty age group through building up pension benefits. These are the fruits of a situation of contraction.

Evaluation of Programs of Library Education

While the subject of evaluation of programs has been alluded to, it would be desirable at this time to summarize the procedures involved in this critical process. First of all, in the library schools of Great Britain, a program in library and information science will be scrutinized by its own institution whether this be a university or a polytechnic. This process does not seem to be too different from what we are familiar with here in North America. More worthy of note would be the scrutiny of the Council for National Academic Awards, the body which is chartered to evaluate the academic programs of the polytechnics to ensure that their standards in the area of curriculum are as high as those of the universities in the same subjects. This body, which is supported

by a fifty pound fee paid by the institution for each student, is a non-governmental agency. Its boards and officers approve academic programs before they are offered by the school. Generally, CNA A approval is given for a period of five years. Standards are enforced through site visits, at which time a particular program, for example, a bachelor's program in library science, would be looked at by a visiting committee of approximately ten people. The Committee would include other educators, practitioners, and representatives of the CNA A staff. The visit is usually only for one day. The visiting team examines all aspects of the particular program, faculty, curriculum, students, and facilities in much the same way as one of our accrediting teams from the COA would do. While the visit usually only takes a day, the CNA A Secretary for Library Education (who had five other fields in the humanities to cover as well as library science) defended this short period of time on the grounds that only one program was being examined, and the size of the team enabled them to do more than a COA team which usually only numbers four people.

The University Grants Commission is another body which exercises some outside scrutiny of academic programs. This body makes visits to the universities which receive government grants and apparently performs in somewhat the same way as the CNA A visiting teams which visit the schools at the polytechnics.

One other very interesting feature of evaluation of programs in British library schools, at least those at the polytechnics, is the use of external examiners. These examiners are paid an honorarium and expenses for coming in and reading the examinations of students in a particular program in a school, and criticizing both the examinations and the results. This is insisted upon by the CNA A as a means of ensuring the quality of programs. The CNA A attempts to avoid, in these assignments, any sort of conflict of interest. Most external examiners are library educators but apparently some few may be qualified practitioners.

One cannot close the discussion of scrutiny of programs

without some note of the Library Association in this area. First of all, the Library Association has maintained a body called the Board of Assessors, apparently dominated by practitioners, which is charged with the task of approving programs set up by the universities and polytechnics. Its role is apparently pro forma. The battle for control of education for librarianship has been won by the schools. However, a consideration of this victory is that they maintain contact with the field as represented by the Library Association, and pay some deference to the views of practitioners, which obviously is in the best interests of the schools anyway.

The Library Association is seeking to develop a formal procedure of ongoing evaluation of library and information science programs which will include site visits by practitioners and other educators. Actually, this mechanism has been planned and will take effect in the fall of 1982. For the polytechnics at least, this practice will to some extent duplicate the work of the Council for National Academic Awards visiting teams, except that the CNAA strongly emphasizes scrutiny of the academic programs of the school and their comparability to university standards, while the Library Association teams will look at whether or not the school is paying enough attention to up-to-date practice in the field. Subjective opinion obtained from some faculty seemed to be that the Library Association as represented in its practitioner element, tended to look askance at the schools' tendency to drift off into theoretical considerations, and perhaps also their undue emphasis on information science. This, however, is a subjective view and the interest of the Association in developing a system of scrutiny that will more adequately reflect the views of interested practitioners would seem to be an eminently healthy development. The Association is now in the process of developing a group of "scrutineers" who will serve on these teams.

Role of the Library Association

Mention of the role of the Library Association in evaluation

of library education leads naturally to a consideration of the role of the organization in general. The Association is, at present, much like our own American Library Association in that it provides an umbrella organization for librarians from different types of libraries, and contains several divisions, both relating to subject or type of work, and geography. The Association has over the past three decades retreated from its almost complete control of library education through its examination system which governed admission to the prestigious list of chartered Librarians, which designated those librarians who were Associates and deemed professional. While it still maintains this prestigious list, it has "devolved" to the schools the examining function, the last "external examinations" being given by the Association this past year. This means that successful completion of an approved course by a student carries with it exemption from the Association exams (now no longer given anyway), but also, with varying lengths of experience, recognition as a Licentiate of the Association and with further experience, the Associateship and listing on the Register of Chartered Librarians.

An interesting and logical career ladder, with credentials for varying levels of accomplishment has been carefully hammered out over the past few years and is now in place. It contains recognition for support staff personnel providing for their education and certification. While this level of recognition is not yet in place, the Association is working with the Business Education Council (BEC) to plan a three-tiered level of education and certification for these people.

At the professional level, the LA, after prolonged study and negotiation, has introduced a credential called the Licentiate which may be achieved through one year of junior professional work under a supervising librarian after the attainment of the first educational qualification, which would be a Bachelor's Degree or the Diploma. Following achievement of this level, the librarian then enters upon a further period of experience extending for three years. At the conclusion of this time, the librarian may

apply for Associate status, and listing as a Chartered Librarian. He or she must submit a report to the LA not exceeding 4000 words describing the experience attained during these years. Practitioners chosen on a regional basis will serve as "scrutineers" of these essays. If the experience (and the report that describes it) is deemed satisfactory, the librarian achieves full professional status.

A number of currents may be seen in the development of these two levels of the career ladder. First, there is the obvious desire to elevate the status of the profession by requiring a period of "internship" before achieving fullfledged professional recognition. Achievement of Associateship of Chartered status will now come at approximately age twenty-six whereas under the "old" system, one could reach this professional level as early as twenty-one or twenty-two. Comparisons with other professions have been made, and the argument is advanced that awarding the highest general professional credential only after greater experience would be helpful in salary negotiations.

Secondly, there is the British emphasis on practical experience as being vitally important to professional status. The practitioners obviously are not satisfied with the library schools' endeavors to build work experience into their program and wish to ensure a substantial background experience for a librarian before granting him or her full-fledged recognition as a professional. They recognize that one does not, certainly, become a knowledgeable, expert professional librarian, or information professional merely through achieving a degree and through a year's experience. More is needed, they feel, to assure the public of professional competence.

Third, there is the desire of the Association, representing the practitioners, to continue to exercise a strong voice in the preparation of professionals and not to allow the schools to go off on their more theoretical and academic emphases. This represents in my view a healthy tension between the field and academe, a communication that could well be emulated on this side of the

Atlantic. While the schools must, and should, maintain their academic standards and faculty must keep up with their colleagues in other departments, the practitioners have every right to seek to have this activity directed toward the needs of the profession, and the strengthening of information science.

A word should be said concerning the Fellowship of the Library Association, which is still the top credential in librarianship in the United Kingdom. Under the new "career ladder", two new avenues have been opened whereby librarians may obtain this qualification. Whereas in the past, Associates could become FLA's only through the writing of a dissertation plus the achievement of several years of responsible experience, they can now submit a lengthy written statement detailing their contribution to the profession. This contribution must be substantial and not just filling a position for five years. A third alternative is that they may submit published work representing a contribution to the profession. This publication, or publications, must be of a quality equal to that of a thesis. This broadening of the routes to the Fellowship represents a recognition of the fact that many distinguished librarians do not have the time to compose a substantial thesis (the equivalent of a doctoral thesis) and also the fact that a substantial publishing record may equate to a thesis both in terms of scholarship and contribution to the profession. The British emphasis on librarianship as a practical profession is again apparent.

Mention has been made earlier of the role of the Board of Assessors of the Library Association in approving courses of instruction in the schools, both initially and now through quinquennial visits. In addition, the Association has set up a committee called the Standing Committee on Professional Education, the acronym for which is SCOPE. Its function seems to be very similar to that of SCOLE in The American Library Association, in that it is supposed to be a bridge between practitioners and educators and also to advise the Association on formal courses and continuing education opportunities for librarians.

The Association has also continued to offer an opportunity for what are designated "mature" people to obtain chartered librarian status. While the Association has now given up its external examinations (that is, external to the schools) it will evaluate in some way the background and experience of librarians who do not have a formal educational credential. The profession just will not accept, at present, the notion that all chartered librarians must be graduates.

In summarizing, one is impressed with the many similarities to North American library education. There is the clash between the practical orientation of the profession, and the more theoretical approach of the schools.

There is the problem, present for both students and faculty, of contracting opportunities. And, there is also the problem of continuing assessment and evaluation of programs and practice, and communication between the field and academe. Because of the many similarities, we have a great deal to learn from each other.