



Education and Training Section

Report on quality assurance models in LIS programs

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Executive Summary

IFLA ET Section has been studying the issue of equivalence and reciprocal recognition of academic qualifications in LIS since 1977 and its current activities still include the problems of international reciprocity/equivalency of qualifications and Library and Information Science (LIS) School guidelines. The goals of these efforts are to facilitate the mobility of students and to increase employability. The need to reinforce the comparability of Higher Education internationally through quality assurance systems is now becoming more pressing for IFLA due to the WTO GATS agreement on commoditization of education. The internationalisation of higher education systems could give the opportunity for improving the skills of individual students and to increase the quality of the national LIS higher education systems.

At the Berlin Conference in 2003, the IFLA Education and Training Section approved a survey on quality assurance models in LIS programs, aimed at achieving greater transparency of professional qualifications and increasing international cooperation of LIS schools for quality assurance and accreditation. Two overarching priorities guided the survey:

- To explore the issue of quality as currently measured in worldwide LIS schools;
- To provide support for promoting quality in LIS education and training.

The primary purpose of this survey was to gather data from a sufficient number of LIS schools from each region of the world about current quality assurance processes, priorities and concerns. The study required an investigation of quality assurance models worldwide, collecting data about current quality measurement, quality assurance systems, LIS guidelines and standards. The methodology has been based on a literary and documentary review and on a questionnaire which has been sent to a selection of LIS Schools. The total of replies received were 31%.

Quality assurance has been considered a strategic importance for LIS schools in at least two approaches: 1) the professional association accreditation of the program, 2) the government agency accreditation of the program. There is a third quality assurance model, based on educational standards, less used in LIS schools (only 10%), focused on the educational process. The survey has shown that there is often (58%) the same quality assessment procedure, in four steps: 1) external evaluation always begins with self-evaluation, 2) site visit (evaluation by impartial experts, usually from the field of study concerned) using LIS or general guidelines, 3) public reports (of which only 41% are publicly available) are then done, 4) follow up. Regarding what quality assurance covers, it can be said that quality assurance in LIS is more focused on resources and curriculum design (76% and 64%) than on outcomes (52%) and student evaluation (58%).

The main finding of the survey has been a quality model, which is based on a taxonomy(ies) covering quality criteria/processes/definitions to describe, specify, and understand critical properties, characteristics, and metrics of quality in LIS. Three models of quality assurance have emerged from various LIS guidelines and standards: 1) program orientation, 2) educational process orientation, 3) learning outcomes orientation.

Further studies are needed for developing an international policy approach to quality assurance and accreditation.

Recommendations are given for stimulating sharing data and experiences between LIS Schools and creating link between quality assurance and recognition collaborating inside IFLA Sections.

1. Background

The World Trade Organisation General Agreement on Trade in Services (WTO-GATS) has approved a multilateral framework that sets out rules for the conduct of international trade in services, including education services. The GATS includes both general rules—for example, those related to the transparency of trade-related regulations—and a framework for specific commitments under which countries choose whether, and under what conditions, to allow access to their markets for foreign suppliers. In terms of the context of the WTO-GATS, Library and Information Science (LIS) is increasingly recognized as part of the knowledge sector. The provisions in the GATS related to trade regulations and ways countries choose to allow access to their markets are relevant to recognition of international standards or qualifications for professionals. International standards are encouraged, although they are not mandatory, both for the quality assurance of the LIS schools offerings and for recognition in countries outside the home country of the LIS school. Additionally, in the context of an increasingly internationalised job market, employers need reliable information on how to evaluate specific higher education degrees and in terms of the degrees recognized and granted in their domestic market..

The IFLA Education and Training Section has been studying the issue of equivalence and reciprocal recognition of academic qualifications in LIS since 1977 (Fang, and Nauta, 1987; Dalton and Levinson, 2000; Daniel, Lazinger, and Harbo, 2000). The Education and Training Section is still working on the challenges of international reciprocity/equivalency of LIS qualifications and is exploring the need for revision of the international guidelines for LIS education. The goal of these efforts is to facilitate the mobility of students across national borders and to increase their employability globally. International guidelines establishing standards for assessing the quality of LIS higher education programs would also provide opportunities for improving the skills of individual students and to increase the quality of the national LIS Schools.

At the Berlin Conference in 2003, the IFLA Education and Training Section approved a survey of quality assurance models in LIS programs, aimed at achieving greater transferability of professional qualifications and increasing international cooperation among LIS schools in establishing and maintaining quality assurance standards. As graduates of educational programs become more mobile in the global society, the need to establish the comparability of Higher Education degrees internationally through quality assurance systems becomes more pressing.

2. Goals and objectives

Two overarching priorities guide the survey:

- To explore how quality is currently measured in LIS schools worldwide;
- To provide recommendations for promoting quality in LIS education and training.

The primary purpose of this survey was to gather data from a sufficient number of LIS schools from each region of the world on current quality assurance processes and to access the perceptions of priorities and concerns relating to quality assurance in LIS education.

The research questions were:

- How to improve the quality assurance process in LIS schools at national and international level?
- How to preserve diversity within an international framework of quality assurance?

The objectives were:

- To record specifics on existing quality assurance systems in LIS schools worldwide;
- To identify the different stakeholders' roles in quality assurance;
- To consider the quality assurance standards, guidelines and quality indicators followed by LIS schools.

3. Methodology

The survey collected data on current methods of measuring quality, identified formal quality assurance systems, and examined existing guidelines and standards used to assess the quality of LIS educational programs. The methodology has included:

- A review of the relevant literature;
- An analysis of existing quality guidelines and standards;
- A survey of LIS schools.

The analysis of data has been done with a view to developing a typology of approaches and understanding the different rationales for assessing quality. In addition, the perceived advantages and disadvantages as well as the costs and benefits of the various approaches were examined.

3.1 Activities done

1. Based on the literature review of current practice in LIS, a taxonomy of quality assurance techniques has been developed (Table 1) (February-August 2004);
2. A questionnaire was designed and tested by the Education and Training Section of IFLA at the Buenos Aires IFLA Conference. IFLA ETS Section participants contributed to the improvement of the questionnaire, and feedback was collected through October, 2004.
3. A first report was presented during the Education and Training IFLA Section Standing Committee on 21st August 2004 at Buenos Aires.
4. A bibliographic database was developed, containing the results of the literature review.
5. The selection of LIS schools to be surveyed was determined by the following method:
 - First, members of the IFLA ET section acting as regional and local area guides. Terry Weech did the work for US; Elsa Barber for Latin America.
 - Then, using the following LIS school directories, LIS schools' web sites and email addresses were identified in as many countries in the world as possible. Only LIS schools with available websites were selected for the survey. The sources used included:
 - the list of UNESCO Libraries Portal;
 - the Tom Wilson "World list of Departments and Schools of Information Studies, Information Management, Information Systems."
 - Finally, the LIS schools listservs: Bailey, JESSE and LISNET-ECSA were used to send a general message to the subscribers asking them to provide answers to the survey questions.
6. A questionnaire on current practice on quality assurance was sent by e-mail to 160 LIS schools worldwide with a December 2004 deadline. A reminder letter was sent in January 2005 to those who did not respond. A simplified version of the questionnaire was prepared in December 2004 for US and Canadian LIS schools, asking them if there were other accreditation systems other than the American Library Association.

Survey objectives[Survey questions
Existence of a quality assurance system Who is accrediting	1) Is the LIS program evaluated by a body outside the School?
Ways to review performance	2) How often does a formal evaluation of the LIS program take place? 4) Is a self-evaluation report delivered to the evaluating body? 5) Do site visits take place? 6) What standards and guidelines are used for the LIS program evaluation? 7) Is a follow up evaluation report made publicly available, not limited to School/University?
Ways to look at performance indicators Ways to look at outcomes	8) What aspects of the LIS program are evaluated?

7. The analysis of data was done with a view to developing a typology of approaches to assessing quality and to understanding the different rationales used. (February-June 2005).
8. A database containing the questionnaire results and the quality indicators in LIS was built. This will be available online for research and will be updated continuously (From July 2005 onward).

4. Findings

4.1 Literature and documentary review findings

The literature search was necessarily selective; the aim was to identify a sufficient range of references to provide a large scale ‘map’ of the literature based on the identification of three overlapping and interconnected topics: 1) quality assurance; 2) internationalisation and quality assurance; 3) quality guidelines and standards used in LIS schools.

For each topic, the review below provides a summary of two to three references which were found to be representative. Further references are mentioned where appropriate.

4.1.1 Topic: Quality assurance

Definitions

One of the major problems plaguing the field of assessing quality is the inconsistent use of the term. Quality in LIS is a value judgement, differently interpreted by various stakeholders, such as governments, employers, students, administrators and LIS teachers. Because quality is a very subjective concept, it is very important to identify the *accrediting body* in order to understand the procedures and purposes of the evaluation as well as to establish the authority and validity of the evaluation.. Harvey and Green (1993) have identified the following five concepts of quality discernible in higher education:

Quality Definition	
Exceptionality	Focus on excellence.
Perfection	Focus on consistency.
Fitness for purposes	As determined by the stakeholders, who have an interest.
Value for money	Focus on accountability in terms of the efficiency and productivity of the evaluation process.
Transformative	Focus on empowerment of students and/or the development of new knowledge.

Quality assurance is defined as a planned and systematic review process of an institution or program to determine that acceptable standards of education, scholarship, and infrastructure are being maintained and enhanced (CHEA 2003). Usually quality assurance includes expectations that mechanisms of quality control are in place and effective. In some contexts, such as the U.K., quality control is in the form of standards set by the institution or other bodies that oversee the awarding of degrees. It is important to distinguish between quality assurance, accreditation, validation, quality audit, and subject benchmark statements.

Accreditation is the formal or official external recognition of a (validated) programme. This may be for funding purposes or it may be the registration of the programme as a provider of professional education (which thereby signifies that graduates have attained a level of minimum professional competence). If quality is a very subjective concept, it can be said that it is very important to define the *accreditor* to know procedures and purposes of evaluation. Accreditation is a common form of assessment of quality in the U.S. and Canada.

Validation refers to the internal procedures of the institutions which ensure that a programme has fulfilled internal institutional criteria. This process is often an internal process within permitted parameters and, usually, conforming to explicit guidelines. In some countries the validation for new programs is not only internal to the institutions but require an external approval (Government,

Professional Associations, others). Most institutions have processes for periodic review of existing programmes of study and of their constituent modules; some others have a validation process only at the start of a new course.

Quality Audit: A test of an institution's quality assurance and control system through a self-evaluation and external review of its programs, staff, and infrastructure. Designed to provide an assessment of an institution's system of accountability, internal review mechanisms, and effectiveness with an external body confirming that the institution's quality assurance process complies with accepted standards.

Subject Benchmark: Provides a reference point against which outcomes can be measured. Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of programs in a specific subject. They also represent general expectations about the standards for the award of qualifications at a given level and articulate the attributes and capabilities that those possessing such qualifications should be able to demonstrate. Subject benchmark statements are often used in the U.K.

4.1.2 Topic: Internationalisation and quality assurance

Relevant issues and a proposed framework for monitoring quality in relation to internationalisation are provided by: Knight (Knight 2003; Knight and De Wit 1999). Further reading in this area from range of international perspectives can be found in: OECD (OECD 2003) (1999); UNESCO (UNESCO and CERI 2004), International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). Van Damme (Van Damme 2001, 2002) and Westerheijden (Westerheijden 2001) provide background from the European perspective. ENQA (ENQA 2002) presents information on benchmarking in European universities.

Quality assurance of internationalisation

Knight provides a detailed framework for reviewing the quality assurance of internationalisation strategies in higher education institutions, where 'internationalisation' is understood as a "process" of integration. Quality assurance of international programs has been accomplished using the Internationalisation Quality Review Process (IQRP) (IQRP 1999) developed by the Institutional Management of Higher Education (IMHE) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in consultation with the Academic Co-operation Association (ACA) in Brussels. The pilot project in which the IQRP was developed formed the basis of an influential collection of studies (OECD 1999), edited by Knight and de Wit. The purpose of the IQRP, is to evaluate and improve the quality of internationalisation in three areas: the "achievement" of stated institutional goals relating to internationalisation; the "integration of the international dimension into the primary functions and priorities of the institution"; and the "inclusion of internationalisation" within the institution's "quality assurance system". This process involves an "analysis", rather than "description", of internationalisation strategies referenced to a wide range of criteria under eight headings.

Internationalisation of quality assurance

This trend is very important for LIS Schools, as some of them has been involved in international panels of external assessors for joint venture in quality assurance (Virkus 2003). UNESCO and the Council of Europe have developed a Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education. Launched in October 2002, the UNESCO Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (UNESCO 2002, 2004) brought together different stakeholders in higher education from Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean and used the mechanisms linked to the UNESCO regional conventions on the recognition of qualifications. Recognising that the existing international frameworks need to be reinforced, it has been

recommended in its Action Plan that the Regional Conventions on the Recognition of Qualifications respond to the challenges of quality assurance cross-border higher education provision, including consumer protection.

In Europe, Campbell and van der Wende (Campbell and Van der Wende 2000) explain how higher education is changing due to the Bologna process focus on quality assurance. Other factors impacting higher education include free trade zones, new educational providers and the development of distance education. Internationally available information on education, and the increased mobility of students and degree holders have resulted in the need for international recognition of qualifications. OECD (OECD 2003) provides a summary of the progress on OECD/CERI work on mapping trends in international quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications. In particular, the OECD forum on trade in educational services describes the work on developing guidelines on consumer protection in cross-border higher education.

Harvey reported that a significant number of authors called for a uniformity of content and quality measures when establishing international quality assurance. (Harvey 2003). The presumption is that uniformity is important and desirable and thus that all courses should 'cover' the same content. IFLA ET Section has published the *Guidelines for equivalence and reciprocity of professional qualifications* (Fang and Nauta 1987) which is an attempt to reconcile some of the issues related to uniformity. A lack of a common definition of quality, of purposes and of processes seems to make a collaboration on a single accreditation system difficult, and perhaps not desirable. However, common trends must not be overlooked (Kajberg 2003). The question remains, whether in the demand for uniformity it is the professional association which has the role of safeguarding the professionals, or some other agency.

4.1.3 Topic: Quality guidelines and standards used in LIS Schools

It is important to declare that, in the strictest sense, standards can only come from accredited standard establishing bodies, such as the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and the International Standards Organization (ISO). Many of the so-called "standards", mainly specified by LIS professional associations, are actually guidelines, principles or statements of good practice rather than true standards.

All the LIS guidelines are fairly open and flexible enough to offer space for different approaches (Khoo, Majid, and Sattar Chaudry 2003). LIS guidelines cover areas as:

- The context of the programme, the institutional support, the relationship with the parent institutions;
- Mission, goals and objectives;
- Curriculum;
- Faculty and staff;
- Students and policy and procedures;
- Administration and financial support;
- Instructional resources and facilities;
- Regular review of the programme;
- Employment and labour market.

IFLA ET Section has produced the *Guidelines for professional LIS programs* which define accreditation requisites (IFLA. Section Education and Training 2000). IFLA guidelines specify theory and practice and suggest having practicum, internship and fieldwork for students. The content of a core curriculum is also indicated, together with transferable skills, such as communication skills, time management skills, analytical and problem solving skills. Other LIS

guidelines add more disciplines or additional skills to the core. The criteria mostly commonly used in LIS Guidelines assume that learning takes place if institutions provide certain inputs or resources (e.g., curriculum content, limited class size, full-time faculty, student workload, documented policies, equipped classrooms and libraries).

Quality assurance organizations, such as NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) and ACPA (American College Personnel Association), or in Europe the Bologna Process (Adam 2004) are now placing a growing emphasis on learning outcomes, giving institutions greater flexibility over how they achieve the outcomes. Emphasis on learning outcomes leads to the need to consider the relationship of quality assurance to the recognition of qualifications (Tammaro 2005).

CILIP (CILIP 1992) and Australian Libraries Information Association (ALIA)(ALIA 2003; Ramsden and Martin 1995), combine an accreditation and a certification program. For the certification procedure, there is the need to provide evidence of an individual's fitness for professional practice. This evidence consists of a professional development report, a portfolio and an interview with the person to be certified. It should be said that if the entire process of certification has to have compliance with guidelines, it becomes too cumbersome or costly, and it will be bypassed. Continuing Library Education Network Exchange (CLENE) tried to implement a learner recognition and provider approval system tied to quality guidelines. Because the system seemed complicated and involved fees, it was abandoned and eventually transformed in ALA guidelines (Varlejs 2003).

Another approach to quality assurance in LIS is the application of industrial standards such as ISO 9000, and management systems such as TQM (Total Quality Management) and EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management 1992). The ISO 9000 series intends to stimulate trade by providing assurance of an organisation's ability to meet specifications and perform the negotiated standards. The focus is on basic process control of products and services. The standards are not intended to certify quality of a product or service or whether one is better than another, but the standards relate to an organisation's quality system (Lampercht 1992). Most managers of educational institutions recognize that quality must focus on linkages among functions across entire organisations: this is the principle of Total Quality Management (Seymour 1991). TQM combines quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement and goes beyond traditional customer satisfaction by addressing the needs of internal customers (as students, parents, employers), suppliers and other stakeholders.

In trying to use industrial standards in education, it becomes inevitable that education is treated as if it were a manufacturing process and students are viewed as products or consumers. Modelling students as customers has the advantage of emphasizing that to achieve quality one has to listen to students and be sure they are satisfied. Quality assurance models based on TQM stress self-evaluation and institutional enhancement. Freed et.al. (Freed, Klugman, and Fife 1997) discusses the implementation of an adaptation of total quality management to higher education. Quality management systems (Herget 2003) offer for LIS University Departments the possibility to achieve and monitor excellence, by looking at financial aspects, internal processes, efforts for change and innovation, impact of communication, and alumni surveys. EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) is an excellence model (Konrad 1997), trying to facilitate the achievement of the best results by the institutions. Based on above discussions, (Harvey 1995) hypothesizes that the effort to implement quality management models as practised in industry across all operations of a university is flawed. An educational enterprise has to take a more holistic approach, not limiting by the processes, product or service approaches of the industrial model.

4.2 Taxonomy of LIS guidelines and standards

Three models of quality assurance have emerged from various LIS guidelines and standards (Knox 2001). The three models correspond to different phases of the educational cycle. They are: 1) program orientation, 2) educational process orientation and 3) learning outcomes orientation. The three models are presented in Tab. 1 Taxonomy of LIS Quality Assurance Models:

Program orientation: attention is given to functions such as needs analysis, goal setting, curriculum design, staffing, resource acquisition and allocation. Most accreditation quality assurance models are based on programme orientation. Quality indicators balance participants and employers needs and aspirations, LIS schools purposes and resources, and societal trends. But program orientation stresses accountability. Staffing quality indicators include attention to the use of effective procedures in teacher selection criteria. (Medical Library Association 1992) (Music Library Association 2002) (Society of American Archivists 2002)

Educational process orientation: these quality indicators include the major decision areas for higher education institutions who plan and conduct education programs and university quality audits which focus on quality control. Educational needs assessment, program improvement and program justification procedures include multiple sources of evaluation. Most of the guidelines used by LIS Schools are based on industrial standards such as ISO 9000, TQM and EQM. In all these standards, the focus is on improving quality in education from an industry perspective, it means reducing variance around set standards of the educational process. The assumption is that, if the process is well done, the success of the education is assured. An other criteria is based on the assumption that when specifying quality standards, one is defining *minimum* requirements to identify *excellence*. Industrial standards usually stress world-class benchmarks and excellence. Benchmarking not only defines what should be done, but also indicates how well it should be done.

Learning outcomes orientation: Learning outcomes focus attention on explicit and detailed statements of what students learn: the skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities which LIS Schools seek to develop and then test. Student centered learning is the new approach in higher education institutions and Pors (Pors 2001) has measured students' performance and perceptions as elements of quality assurance. This approach has been represented as a paradigm shift from traditional ways of measuring learning, characterised as input approaches (emphasizing teaching hours expressed in ECTS and counting resources) to output focused methodologies using learning outcomes and competencies.

The emphasis on outcomes moves the criteria for quality from the input (what staff teach) to the outcome (what students will be able to do). The adoption of a learning outcomes approach focuses on the learner and not on the teacher. It promotes the idea of the teacher as facilitator or manager of the learning process and recognises that much learning takes place outside the classroom, without a teacher present (Adam 2004). In the Dutch Higher Education system the focus is currently on developing a competence-oriented curriculum also for information studies (Roggema-van Heusden 2004). Many countries have national systems of qualifications which are comprehensive, including all levels of education and training. A number of English-speaking countries have formally developed and published national frameworks of qualifications. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), introduced in the UK in 1980, are work related and represent a national standards recognised by employers through the country and used as reference criteria for qualifications¹. The

¹ One Lead Body of NVQ was set up for the information occupational sector, subdivided into the areas of: Information and Library Services, Archives, Records management, Tourist information. NVQ describes work functions, work tasks and standards of competence, in five levels of achievements, each representing an increasing range and complexity of tasks and greater responsibility within the working environment. Each level refers to a job role or a range of role

outcomes assessment process is not only important for quality assurance: it also enables the lifelong learner, from students to full professional status, to trace their progress through the identification and recognition of knowledge and skills acquisition and further training needs (Brine, Feather 2003). Some indicators relate to professionalism by identifying competencies and knowledge mastery, and critical skills such as problem solving and the ability to apply practical knowledge. (Special Libraries Association 2004; Association of College and Research Libraries 1992) The quality assurance model in this case is based on individual certification and stresses the transformative concept of quality assessment and proscribes ways to measure it.

These three approaches correspond to the different phases of the educational cycle. Most LIS schools use a combination of the three approaches. The three approaches are listed in *Table 1 Taxonomy of LIS quality assurance models*, indicating the quality evaluation elements of: accreditors, purposes of evaluation and related indicators, time frame, typical output of the evaluation process and definition of the quality underlined concept.

(i) Tab. 1 Taxonomy of LIS Quality Assurance Models			
Quality Assurance Models	Programme orientation	Educational Process orientation	Learning outcomes orientation
Assessor or accreditor	Government Agency, Professional Association External review committee University Audit	Internal assessment, University Audit	Professional Association Educational assessors Participation of students
Purpose of assessment	Accountability Customer protection	Improvement of the learning experience	Improvements in the quality of the student achievements, competences or employability
Indicators	Organisational structure Resources in terms of funding, staff numbers and IT/Library facilities Number of students, drop - out rates, recruitment Course content and design Staff	Validation and approval frameworks Level and standards Support for learning Responsiveness to learner backgrounds and preferences, pedagogy	Assessment of student learning outcomes through exams and/or employee evaluations Placement in employment Student evaluation of the learning experience Complaints and appeals
Time frame	Periodic	Continuous	Programme lifecycle
Typical output	Accreditation of the programme	Self improvement report	Certification of student/learner achievements
Information sharing	Publication of results	Internal report	Individual Certification, Publication of results
Quality Concept	Fitness for purposes, Value for money	Exceptional, Perfection	Transformative

activities. Individuals complete a set of tasks which are assessed against criterion-referenced national standards and, if deemed to be satisfactory, a national recognised qualification is awarded.

4.3 Survey Findings

Two levels of analysis has been done for the majority of questions. The data are first presented in aggregated form, including respondents from all countries. Secondly the respondents have been sorted into the five regional areas used by IFLA. This approach was taken because it is important to see similarities and differences at the regional level. It is recognized that there are differences in level of development and the importance of issues among subregional units, but this level of analysis is not addressed here.

The total replies to the questionnaire received between August, 2004 and March 2005 were 50 or a 31% response rate. Thirty-three questionnaires were immediately returned for not having valid addresses. One questionnaire was returned without having been completed. The 31% response rate is low. Some of the reasons for this could be: the choice to use email with the questionnaire as attachment: a significant percent (21%) of the email addresses were not valid; some (0,6%) respondents were not able to return the questionnaire filled; the choice of using only English in the survey; the survey was sent to LIS School faculty and many considered quality assurance as an administrative task: some respondents transmitted the questionnaire for reply to the Administration; some reluctance to reply about quality, especially in cases when there was no quality assurance in existence in the LIS School.

Tab. 2 Questionnaire statistics

LIS Schools selected for the survey	160*
Total number of questionnaires (Appendix 1) sent out	160
Number of questionnaires having invalid email address	33
Number of questionnaires returned by final deadline	40
Number returned in response to reminder letter	10
Total number of useable responses received	50
Response rate (as percentage of selected LIS Schools)	31%

*Note: The sample size reflects the number of LIS Schools selected for participation in this survey.

The replies have been aggregated for the five regional areas and, inside them, for countries. Forty-five countries are represented. The United States was considered as a single country, being regulated by the same quality assurance system. US and Canada received a simplified version of the questionnaire, asking them if they add an accreditation system other than ALA. The replies received from regional areas are spread as following:

Tab. 3 Questionnaires returned by Area

Regional Area	Questionnaires sent	Questionnaires returned	% Respondents	Questionnaires returned from countries in area	% Countries in area
Africa	15	2	4	2	5
Asia	21	7	14	6	13
Europe	33	27	54	27	60
Latin America	33	9	18	7	15
North America	58	5*	10	3	7
Total	160	50	100	45	100

*A simplified version of the questionnaire was sent to US and Canadian LIS schools, asking them if there were other accreditation systems other than the American Library Association.

The replies were analysed in the context of the research questions and objectives of the survey. The analysis considered:

- the assessor or accreditor of the program,
- the focus of quality assurance,
- the ways to measure performance,

- the performance indicators and the outcomes.

4.3.1 Is the LIS program evaluated by a body outside the School?

Most of the countries have a national and university quality assurance system, only 10% have no evaluation or accreditation of quality. The quality assurance process is at present driven by government or government founded agencies (64%) of the time and are combined in 36% of countries with internal quality audits. The other model present in Library Schools sees professional associations as leading the quality assurance process (14%).

Some of the LIS Schools have also external assessors (20%), such as employers representatives, of international panel, and former students. Particularly relevant is the Subject Review Audit done in the UK for benchmarking. EFQM is used by LIS Schools in Netherlands at institutional level; TQM is used by LIS Schools in Switzerland.

Tab. 4 Accreditors	Replies	%
No accreditors	5	10
Government or a body funded by the government	32	64
University Quality Audit	18	36
Professional association	7	14
Other stakeholders (like external assessors, employers, alumni, etc.)	10	20

In tab 4 Accreditors: the results reflect only the seven respondents to the questionnaire they had accreditation by a Professional Association. In the U.S. and Canada, schools were not asked to return the questionnaire if their QA was based only on accreditation by a Professional Association; and so the percentage of Professional Associations as accreditor is low. But it should be considered that all LIS schools in the U.S. and Canada are accredited by a Professional Association and so the 14% is not corresponding to reality.

The differences by regional area are relevant. Africa is the area where quality assurance seems less prevalent with 50% of respondents with a quality assurance system. But it should be added that only two countries have replied to the survey from Africa, so a general conclusion cannot be drawn. North America (100%) and Europe (88,9%) show a generally applied internal and external quality assurance systems, composed of a multiple stakeholders approach. In North America and Canada the Professional Association model is leading, while in Europe the Government Agency model prevails. Asia, 100% of respondents indicated that they were organized for quality assurance, with most indicating government agencies as the most common method and an internal Quality Audit as the second most common. Asian Professional Associations are just beginning to enter the arena of evaluation of LIS schools. Latin America Library schools (85,7%) have a quality assurance system, with government agencies leading the evaluation (55,5%), while professional association are less involved with oversight for only 20% of the quality assurance systems.

Tab. 5 Accreditors by Area					
Area	No Accreditors	Government Agency	University Quality Audit	Professional Association	Other stakeholders
Africa	1	1	1		
Asia and Oceania	0	6	3	2	1
Europe	3	20	10	2	6
Latin America and Caribbean	1	5	2	1	1
North America			2	2	2

4.3.2 Ways to review performance

The quality assurance procedure usually has four steps:

- periodical evaluation process;
- self-assessment;
- site visit;
- follow up report.

The quality assurance process most frequently (66% of the respondents) takes place every two to five years, with self-assessment and site visits combined represent 58% of those who replied. Few programs produced a follow up report and there was not much evidence of providing publicity about the reports. Only 38% indicated that they produced publicity about the results of the evaluation process.

Most of the respondents said that guidelines are followed. Typically the guidelines are part of an accreditation handbook or policy manual that contains a description of the accrediting process, the eligibility requirements, relevant policies that institutions must address in the self study reports and other documentation developed to assist institutions that are preparing a self study and conducting evaluation and assessment exercises. The policy generally elucidate standards and relate to their application.

Tab. 6 Quality assurance procedure		
Frequency	Replies	%
- annually	5	10
- two to five years	33	66
- over five years	1	2
- other	4	8
Self assessment	30	60
Site visit	29	58
Follow up report		
- publicly available	19	38
- not publicly available	6	12

The quality assurance process in four steps is used, with little differences, in all the regional areas and seems to be recognised as the best practice to be followed.

Differences remain for the follow up of the quality assurance evaluation, as the report is not always produced and if it is, is not often distributed to public.

Tab. 7 Quality assurance procedure by Area

Area	Periodicity				Self-assessment	Site visit	Follow up report	
	One	Two to five	Over five	Other			Public	Not Public
Africa		1			1	1		
Asia and Oceania	1	5	1		6	6	3	1
Europe	4	19		4	16	15	12	2
Latin America and Caribbean		6			5	5	2	2
North America		2			2	2	2	1

4.3.3 Performance indicators

Quality assessment criteria and indicators could act as a catalyst to promote ongoing dialogue about quality. This section on Performance Indicators groups and lists in descending order the indicators of quality assurance as listed by the respondents. The resources and content design indicators are ranked higher (respectively by 76% and 64% of the respondents) which is consistent with the fact that input measures are more widely used than other measures.

Quantitative and demographical data on students are also considered quality indicators by 52% of countries.

Other indicators refer to staff quality (e.g. professional experience, academic background, contribution to professional development), research productivity, value based education, organisation of cultural meetings etc., international activities, teaching materials, and support and service staff.

Tab. 8 Performance indicators	Replies	%
The design and content of the program	38	76
Resources in terms of funding, staff numbers and IT/Library facilities	32	64
Number of students, drop - out rates, recruitment	26	52
Other	12	24

A regional area review of the importance attached to these indicators show some differences. For instance, curriculum design and content is considered the most important indicator by 100% of all countries respondents; only Europe and Latin America rank resources indicator at about 80%.

Tab. 9 Performance indicators by Area

Area	Resources in terms of funding, staff numbers and IT/Library facilities	Number of students, drop - out rates, recruitment	The design and content of the program	Other
Africa	1	1	1	
Asia and Oceania	6	6	6	2
Europe	19	14	24	6
Latin America and Caribbean	4	3	5	2
North America	2	2	2	2

4.3. 4 Ways to look at outcomes

An outcomes focus is less prevalent than the use of input measures. Students are involved in quality assurance in only 58% of countries. Learning outcomes are used by only 52% of countries, at different educational levels.

Tab. 10 Outcomes	Replies	%
Student evaluation of the learning experience	29	58
Assessment of student learning outcomes through exams and/or employers evaluations	26	52
Other	9	18

A regional review of the importance attached to these factors show more similarities than differences. For instance learning outcomes approach is diffused in Asia, Africa and North America (100%), while student evaluation is less used. In Europe and Latin America student evaluation is preferred, while learning outcomes assessment is less used. It should be noted that the Bologna process is aiming to focus on this latter approach and in the future the situation can change. In Latin America, outcomes based approach is about 40%, looking both at learning outcomes and students satisfaction. In North America the outcomes based approach is very popular and widely used..

Other indicators are related to: staff teaching evaluation for promotion, the percentage of students working after graduation, relevance to the labour market, and research done by students.

Tab. 11 Outcomes by Area

	Assessment of student learning outcomes	Student evaluation of the learning experience	Other
Africa	1	1	
Asia and Oceania	6	4	2
Europe	15	20	4
Latin America and Caribbean	2	2	1
North America	2	2	2

* It should be noted that only recently the ALA Committee on Accreditation added learning outcomes to indicators. They were not on the 1992 version of the standard.

5. Conclusions

Relating to the survey objectives, the findings have demonstrated that:

..To record specifics on existing quality assurance systems in LIS schools worldwide

Most of the LIS Schools have quality assurance system, but 11% of respondents have no evaluation or accreditation of quality.

...To consider the different stakeholders role in quality assurance

Quality assurance has been considered a strategic importance for LIS schools in at least two contexts: 1) the professional association accreditation of the program, 2) the government agency accreditation of the program. There is a third quality assurance approach, guided by university and quality audit and with a focus on educational standards, but less used in LIS schools (only 10%).

...To look at quality assurance models and procedures

The survey has shown that 65% of the time, the following four steps are followed in as part of the procedures for quality assessment: 1) external evaluation always begins with self-evaluation, 2) site visit (evaluation by impartial experts, usually from the field of study concerned) using LIS or general guidelines, 3) public reports (of which only 41% publicly available) are then done, 4) follow up reports after the initial assessment..

....To consider the quality assurance standards, guidelines and quality indicators

Regarding what quality assurance covers, it can be said that quality assurance in LIS is more focused on resources and curriculum design (73% and 86%) than on outcomes (59%) and student evaluation (66%).

The main result of the survey has been the development of a quality model, which is based on a taxonomy covering quality criteria/processes/definitions to describe, specify, and understand critical properties, characteristics, and metrics of quality in LIS education. Three models of quality assurance have emerged from various LIS guidelines and standards: 1) program orientation, 2) educational process orientation, 3) learning outcomes orientation.

Responding to the research questions, we can say:

....How to improve the quality assurance process in LIS schools at national and international level?

The learning outcomes orientation could be helpful for improving quality in LIS Schools. Graduate outcomes are a critical indicator of how effectively universities are defining and instilling the skills and attributes expected of their graduates, with success in the labour market being the most obvious indicator of good outcomes. Given, however, that research training and more broadly, the provision of lifelong learning opportunities and skills upgrading are a significant aspect of the role played by the higher education sector in meeting the knowledge society's economic, social and cultural needs, another key indicator is the active participation of graduates in the quality assurance process. The difficulty has been to determine if there is an impact on the quality of student learning.

...How to preserve diversity within an international framework of quality assurance?

Further study of IFLA Education and Training Section should try to reply to the questions.

It is hoped that the results of this survey will be useful to the LIS schools and other stakeholders at national level, because the institutional perspectives and experiences should be factored into the current discussion and debates about the international dimension of higher education. Given the

importance and changing nature of quality assurance of higher education in a period of continuous change, it will be important to conduct the survey on regular basis in order to systematically monitor the developments and to assure that IFLA could continue to assist its members with this fundamental aspect of higher education of professionals. Knowing what other are doing and learning from other experiences has tremendous potential

As part of the survey methodology, a number of guidelines and quality policy documents have been collected that could be made available for sharing with others. They are available for consultation in the IFLA survey on QA website (provisional URL: turing.ittig.cnr.it/ifla/index.html). Two phases of disseminations of the results of this study are planned. The first phase of dissemination will be the Section Newsletter (*The SET Bulletin*). The second phase will be publications in LIS journals and presentations at LIS conferences.

6. Recommendations

1. Benchmarking

Internationalisation pushes for common mutual trust zones in LIS schools. The fact that these zones of mutual trust in many cases lack the stability provided by strong institutional and legal frameworks makes them vulnerable and point to the need for IFLA Education and Training Section support. There is the need for stimulating collaboration and sharing of best experiences from the bottom level of LIS schools creating a peer review networking team for benchmarking.

2. Quality assurance and recognition

A second approach considered by the research team for establishing criteria by which worldwide comparisons of LIS qualifications can be made, was to link quality assurance of LIS education and recognition of professionals having successfully completed the courses that each LIS schools provides. There is a synergy between recognition for professional purposes and recognition for academic purposes in the work done by Library associations and IFLA:

- The development of high quality information sources to improve knowledge of the different educational systems within the LIS sector;
- The establishment of academic and professional networks inside IFLA as a mechanism for the exchange of information between academics and professionals, in order to obtain a more thorough knowledge of the issues surrounding the various forms of recognition;
- The comparison of course quality assessment systems, current or future, into contact with each other and involving members of the professional and business world.

IFLA Education and Training Section should seek, via these paths, to strengthen the initiatives it has already undertaken in this area and to establish new ones coming under its competence.

Contacts have been already established with the Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Section for collaborating on the development of IFLA quality guidelines and recognition of qualifications.

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Annex 1

**Quality assurance models
in LIS programs**

A survey

Conducted by



**International Federation of Library Associations
and Institutions**

Education and Training Section

October 2004

4.

4. Dear Colleague,

In today's global arena, Library and Information Science (LIS) is increasingly becoming a global knowledge sector. Whether an opportunity or a challenge, internationalisation cannot fail to be central to IFLA for the development of library and information professionals. The real pressure is coming from the greater opportunities for global mobility of employment, to which the Quality Assurance (QA) and Accreditation agencies are being compelled to respond on an international basis. The need to reinforce the comparability of Higher Education internationally through quality assurance systems is now becoming more pressing for learner protection, greater transparency of qualifications and increasing international cooperation of national quality assurance and accreditation agencies.

The survey intends to contribute to the current debate by investigating existing models, procedures, methods and institutions responsible for QA. We are specifically interested in how the quality of your LIS program is evaluated.

The questionnaire is primarily aimed at members of *SET*, the Section Education and Training of the IFLA. However, we would appreciate if you send us names and addresses of other stakeholders which are knowledgeable and competent in the field.

The data gathered will be kept and processed strictly confidential and anonymously throughout the entire survey and analysis task.

The questionnaire is composed of these elements:

- Definition of key terms;
- Details on respondent;
- Questionnaire about existing QA systems in your country;
- Documentation.

The completion of the questionnaire will require about **15 minutes** of your time.

Thank you for your support in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Anna Maria Tammaro

<p>Deadline: 15 December 2004</p>

**Please return the questionnaire
by email to annamaria.tammaro@unipr.it.**

**or send by mail to:
Anna Maria Tammaro
Via Montebeni 9
50014 Fiesole (Firenze)
Italy**

1. Definitions of key terms²

Accreditation: Accreditation is a process of external quality review used in higher education to scrutinise colleges, universities and higher education programs for quality assurance and quality improvement.

Criteria: Standards for accreditation or certification of an institution or program. These involve expectations about quality, effectiveness, financial viability, compliance with national (U.S.: state and federal) rules and regulations, outcomes, and sustainability.

Peer Review: External review and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of an institution's academic programs, staffing, and structure, carried out by a team of external evaluators who are specialists in the fields reviewed and knowledgeable about higher education in general. Reviews may be based on standards set by the accrediting organizations or on quality standards set more broadly.

Quality assurance: Planned and systematic review process of an institution or program to determine that acceptable standards of education, scholarship, and infrastructure are being maintained and enhanced. Usually includes expectations that mechanisms of quality control are in place and effective. Also (U.K.), the means through which an institution confirms that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by the institution or other awarding body.

Quality Audit: A test of an institution's quality assurance and control system through a self-evaluation and external review of its programs, staff, and infrastructure. Designed to provide an assessment of an institution's system of accountability, internal review mechanisms, and effectiveness with an external body confirming that the institution's quality assurance process complies with accepted standards.

Quality Standards: The level of requirements and conditions that must be met by institutions or programs to be accredited or certified by a quality assurance or accrediting agency. These conditions involve expectations about quality, attainment, effectiveness, financial viability, outcomes, and sustainability.

Self-study: The review and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of an institution's own academic programs, staffing, and structure, based on standards set by an outside quality assurance body, carried out by the institution itself. Self-studies usually are undertaken in preparation for a quality assurance site visit by an outside team of specialists. Results in a self-study report.

Subject Benchmark: (U.K.) Provides a reference point against which outcomes can be measured. Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of programs in a specific subject. They also represent general expectations about the standards for the award of qualifications at a given level and articulate the attributes and capabilities that those possessing such qualifications should be able to demonstrate.

² Mainly based on Glossary of key terms of the Council For Higher Education Accreditation: http://www.chea.org/international/inter_glossary01.html#qa.

2. Details on Respondent and Organisation

The information given on this page will be kept strictly confidential and is processed anonymously throughout the survey and analysis task. We kindly ask you to provide us with the required information in the table below. Feel free to ask further clarification and more information to the address below. The fields indicated by a (*) are obligatory fields for the statistical analysis.

Respondent

(*) Position within organisation	
Email ³	

Details of your organisation

(*)Name of Organisation	
(*) What is your place of residence?	
<input type="checkbox"/> North America	<input type="checkbox"/> Europe <input type="checkbox"/> Latin America and Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> Africa	<input type="checkbox"/> Asia and Oceania

³ If you wish to receive information about the results of the survey and the project in the near future.

3. Questionnaire about existing quality assurance models

1) Is the LIS program evaluated by a body outside the School?

Yes No

If **no**, please do not proceed further and return the survey to the address below.

If **yes**, please tick as many as apply of the following:

- Government or a body funded by the government
- University
- Professional association

.....
(please specify name of association)

- Other stakeholders (like external assessors, employers, alumni, etc.)

.....
(please specify)

- Other:

.....
(please specify)

2) How often does a formal evaluation of the LIS program take place?

Annually Once every two to five years Over five years between evaluations

Are there occasions when evaluations take place at more frequent or less frequent intervals? If so, please explain why:

.....
3) What aspects of the LIS program are evaluated (Tick as many as apply)?

- Resources in terms of funding, staff numbers and IT/Library facilities
- Number of students, drop - out rates, recruitment
- The design and content of the program
- Assessment of student learning outcomes through exams and/or employers evaluations
- Student evaluation of the learning experience
- Other:

.....
(please specify)

4) Is a self-evaluation report delivered to the evaluating body?

Yes No

5) Do site visits take place?

Yes No

4. Documentation

1) What standards and guidelines are used for the LIS program evaluation?

.....

.....

(please specify)

2) Is a follow up evaluation report made publicly available, not limited to School/University?

Yes No

Please, fill the questionnaire adding any documentation useful for better understanding of your responses.

Please give, if convenient, feedback and your opinion concerning this questionnaire:

[your comments]

If you are interested, we will send you (by request) the results of our survey via email. In this case please indicate your email-address in the corresponding field on page 4.

Thank you for your patience and for answering our questionnaire!

**Please return the questionnaire
by email to annamaria.tammaro@unipr.it**

**or send by mail to:
Anna Maria Tammaro
Via Montebeni 9
50014 Fiesole (Firenze)
Italy**

**New Deadline:
15 December 2004**

Annex 2 LIS Quality Guidelines

LIS Guidelines	Unit of analysis	Ways of looking at performance	Ways of looking at outcomes	Ways to review performance
ALISE	Program	Faculty Students Curriculum Revenues and expenditures Continuing education		Annual statistical report
ALA-APA certifications	Certification Program	Needs assessment Curriculum design and delivery Assessment exam and planned evidence of results Target audience Eligibility requirements	Analysis of results from individual certification programs, Survey and analysis of the perceptions of those with the certification that it: Aided their career advancement Increased their ability to be effective in their library position Ability of the certification program to sustain itself financially, Assessment of the credibility and influence of the certification program throughout ALA and in the library field.	The competencies and requirements for professional practice (e.g., the body of knowledge, required experience, mandated skills) in a specialty will be established by the appropriate ALA division
ALA-COA (Accredited by CHEA and member of ASPA)	Program	Mission, goals, objectives; Curriculum content; Faculty or faculty recruitment plans; Students recruitment, pre-requisite; Physical resources and facilities; Administration and financial support; Evaluation plan.	Desired learning outcomes assessment* Way of accommodate various learning styles; Way of encouraging students to practice and apply their learning * The phrase "outcomes assessment" does not appear in the 1992 Standards.	Measures of aims and objectives achievement; Resources effectively used; Departmental and program evaluation; Students achievements: basic skills, thinking and practice in the discipline, preparations for lifelong learning. Examinations Performances Student work Alumni survey Employer feedback

LIS Guidelines	Unit of analysis	Ways of looking at performance	Ways of looking at outcomes	Ways to review performance
ALCTS Educational Policy Statement	Program			The standards are advisory only.
Australian Library and Information Association ALIA	Program			ALIA course recognition is for a maximum of seven years. However, it also requires an annual course return which is scrutinised and if unsatisfactory may result in queries and recommendations that aspects of the program be addressed. Education Policy statements and the statement 'Library and information sector: core knowledge, skills and attributes' at http://www.alia.org.au/policies/
American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)	Outcomes	The document is divided into two sections: general competencies and subject competencies.	Areas of general competency include: 1) Reference and Research Services; 2) Library Management; 3) Collection Management; 4) Organization and Classification. Graduate library education for law librarianship must, at a minimum, provide basic competencies in: 1) the Legal System; 2) the Legal Profession and Its Terminology; 3) Literature of the Law; 4) Law and Ethics	The standards are advisory only.
American Association of School Librarians (AASL)	Outcomes		Position Statement on preparation of School Library Media Specialists	The standards are advisory only.
American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIST)	Outcomes		Include six general areas Foundations of Information Information Use and Users Methods of Inquiry Information Processing Information Technology Information Service Provision and Management	The standards are advisory only.

LIS Guidelines	Unit of analysis	Ways of looking at performance	Ways of looking at outcomes	Ways to review performance
CERTIdoc	Outcomes	Competences Diploma (Level 1: in Higher Education; other Levels: secondary studies) or	Self-assessment	Assessment of items in the dossier; Interview; Decision of the Certification Committee Renewal

		professional Diploma or a course of 200 hours Professional experience (Level 1: 5 years; other: 3 years) Plan for CPD		
CILIP	Program	Purposes Resources	Employment Further education Career mobility Income	Efficiency Productivity Effectiveness
IFLA	Program	Mission, Goals and Objective Curriculum Core elements Continuing education Faculty and staff Students Admission requirements Completion requirements Administration and financial support Instructional resources and facilities	Regular review of the curriculum, informed by input from employers, practitioners and professional associations, as well as students and faculty Evaluation of student achievement, provided in consistent and equitable basis Student and alumni evaluation on a regular basis	The standards are advisory only.
Medical Library Association (MLA)	Outcomes	Medical Library Association. Platform for Change: The Educational Policy Statement		The standards are advisory only.

LIS Guidelines	Unit of analysis	Ways of looking at performance	Ways of looking at outcomes	Ways to review performance
Music Library Association	Outcomes		Core Competencies of Music Librarians Professional Ethos Training and Education Reference and Research Collection Development Collection Organization Library Management Information and Audio Technology and Systems Teaching	The standards are advisory only.
Special Libraries Association (SLA)	Outcomes		Core Competencies Information professionals contribute to the knowledge base of the profession by sharing best practices and experiences, and continue to learn about information products, services, and management practices throughout the life of his/her career. Information professionals commit to professional excellence and ethics, and to the values and principles of the profession. Professional Competencies Managing information organisation Managing information resources Managing information services Applying information tools and technology	The standards are advisory only.