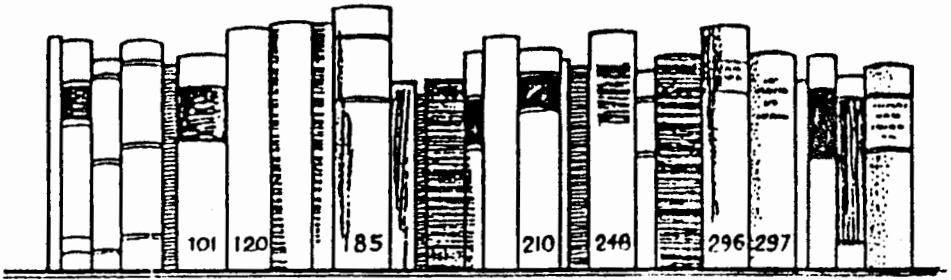


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The *Bulletin* is published by the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries as a forum for professional exchange and development in the fields of theological and philosophical librarianship. ABTAPL was founded in 1956 to bring together librarians working with or interested in theological and philosophical literature in Great Britain. Twenty four issues of the *Bulletin* were issued between 1956 and 1966. After a period of abeyance, the *Bulletin* was revived in a New Series [Volume 1] by John Howard in 1974. It has been published in its present form, three times a year (March, June and November), since that time. Numbers 1-40 of the New Series (to November 1987) have been construed as Volume 1 of the New Series; Volume 2 began with March 1988. The *Bulletin* now has a circulation of about 300 copies, with about a third of that number going to libraries in Europe, North America, Japan and the Commonwealth.

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Notice to Members

ABTAPL keeps records of its members on computer files. Primarily these are names and addresses used for despatching the *Bulletin*. From time to time the address list may be made available to relevant publishers. If any member would prefer not to have their name included in such a mailing would they please let the Honorary Secretary know.

Editorial

In Barchester Towers, Archdeacon Grantly describes the power of the editorials in the *Jupiter* newspaper as being like that of the Czar in Russia, or the mob in America. I suspect that this editorial will tread a more modest course! I must admit, having agreed to write this my next question was, 'Well, what does one actually say in an editorial?' It seems to have something to do with commenting on current developments and taking an overview of events - but now I sound like Sir Humphrey Appleby!

As many of you know, my summer has been dominated by the fact of redundancy and finding another job. Having mercifully emerged at the other end of this trying process, - living in a new town, with a new job - it seems appropriate to reflect on this experience in a general sort of way. I suppose the most obvious theme which emerges from the last two *Bulletins* and from my own experience is a sense of uncertainty; a sense that however solid and permanent something seems, whether it be a collection, a job, a profession, a College or whatever, it can in fact disappear almost overnight. Coupled with this unease is the realisation of one's apparent helplessness in the face of change. However good one's qualifications, however long one has worked for an organisation, however dedicated one has been, we are all liable to be summoned to the manager's office and told that our services are no longer required.

Perhaps Librarians suffer from this process more than other professionals in that Librarians seem to specialise in dedication coupled with helplessness. We are often highly motivated, hard working, well qualified and intelligent; providing services and carrying responsibilities which are rarely acknowledged in pay or status. And yet, we often feel helpless because we are marginal to the organisations we work for. In an academic environment we are not academics, in the public sector we give services and skills to people, rather than taking from them - and that makes us marginal in today's world. This means that we are rarely in the driving seat when major decisions about money or job security are being made. For all our dedication and qualifications, we can only stand by and watch whilst decisions we may consider short sighted and self defeating are made which we are powerless to stop.

Chuang Tzu, a Taoist sage wrote,

*Great truths do not interest the multitudes,
and now the world is in such confusion,
even though I know the path, how can I guide?
I know I cannot succeed, and that trying to force results
I shall merely add to the confusion.
Isn't it better to give up and stop striving?
But then, if I do not strive, who will?*

It sounds very modern, the sense that things are falling about, that the good is being mortgaged to the expedient, the future being sold to pay for the

present; together with a profound unease and a sense of helplessness. Yet Chuang Tzu wrote these words 2300 years ago in Chou dynasty China, in a society which apparently seems so very different from ours. I find it comforting to reflect on these words, not to confirm and justify a self-pitying sense of helplessness, but because they remind me that despite all appearances to the contrary, nothing really changes. Or more accurately, that things change constantly yet somehow, intriguingly, they always stay the same.

Perhaps the experience of redundancy has taught me to see something of the changeless beneath the changing; to see what is of permanent value in myself and in my skills and experience which go on into new situations. This perspective does not insulate one from the pain of change, yet it restrains one from being so caught up in the endlessly shifting, disillusioned present that one forgets the future, forgets the things that go on, that have a permanent value and which in the end ensure that there is a future. Perhaps as an Association we need to recover something of that perspective.

Andrew Lacey

**NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NVQs): AN INTRODUCTION FOR
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION WORKERS**
by Bronwen Jones

What are NVQs? Are they different from other qualifications in the UK? Will they affect library and information work? This article provides a basic introduction to NVQs. It also looks at current developments in NVQs relevant to people working in libraries and information services. Whilst some potential benefits are highlighted, this is not a critical evaluation of NVQs. A list of references and contacts at the end of this article will give more in-depth coverage than attempted here.

What is an NVQ?

NVQ stands for National Vocational Qualification (in Scotland it is known as an SVQ) - it will be the most prominent form of certification outside school in the 1990s. NVQs are job-based qualifications for all industries. They are skills-based rather than academic. A person gaining an NVQ has demonstrated that he or she has the range of skills and knowledge to carry out a particular job - to nationally agreed standards.

Why do we need NVQs?

There is currently a confusing array of vocational qualifications. For some occupations there are no qualifications at all, or they are only available to people able to attend college or university. It has also been recognised that British companies are unable to compete effectively due (in part) to poor on-the-job training.

NVQs are designed to give people improved access to opportunities offered by training and qualifications. Better trained, more fulfilled staff are likely to be more productive and to offer a higher quality of service.

"NVQs can be a passport to a better job and a better Britain. Everyone has something to contribute and qualifications are the recognition that people at work deserve for their skills."

(Norman Willis, Secretary General, TUC)

It is significant that NVQs are supported by all major political parties, the CBI and trades unions.

National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ)

Set up by the UK government in 1986, the NCVQ was asked to replace the existing system of vocational qualifications. This is being achieved by the development and implementation of NVQs. The NCVQ acts as a quality assurance body similar to the British Standards Institute - it does not directly develop and accredit the new qualifications. Rather, it co-ordinates and approves the work of 'Lead Bodies' and 'Awarding Bodies' (see below), ensuring that qualifications are broadly comparable across different occupational areas.

Lead Bodies

These are organisations which represent the various industrial or occupational sectors. There are around 170 Lead Bodies, whose members come from employer groups, trades unions and professional organisations. They have the task of defining standards for NVQs. The Information and Library Services Lead Body (ILS-LB) has been developing occupational standards for its sector since 1991, although the NVQ is not yet available. The Library Association has been contracted by the Employment Department to manage the project for ILS-LB.

Awarding Bodies

Standards developed by Lead Bodies are packaged into qualifications by Awarding Bodies, such as City & Guilds, RSA and BTEC. ILS-LB has decided to appoint RSA (Royal Society of Arts) and SCOTVEC (Scottish Vocational Education Council) as its Awarding Bodies for the development of qualifications at levels 1 to 4 (see below). They will prepare suitable forms of assessment to establish that candidates can meet the NVQ standards. Each Awarding Body can provide a list of centres approved to offer its NVQ (addresses of Awarding Bodies can be found in the NVQ Monitors - see references).

The NVQ Framework

All NVQs slot into the NVQ framework according to their occupational area and level.

The framework is essentially a classification scheme covering 11 major occupational areas and 5 levels of qualification. Provisionally, Information

and Library Services has been placed in the Communication section. More details about the framework can be accessed via the National Database (see references) or NVQ Monitors.

The NVQ Levels

There are 5 levels of qualification available, ranging from level 1 (basic work activities) to level 5 (professional/management). As a rough guide (since NVQs do not measure the same things as GCSEs or A levels) an NVQ 2 equates to 4 GCSEs and an NVQ3 equates to 2 A levels. Candidates do not have to work from level 1 upwards, they can start at a level appropriate to their existing skills and experience.

What jobs do NVQs cover?

NVQs already cover about 80% of all jobs, including child care, accounting, retailing, engineering, etc. New areas are under development, such as library and information services, languages, prison service and so on (current details are in NVQ Monitors). The NCVQ has to work towards the 'National Education and Training Targets' which include: "By 2000, 50% of the work-force to be qualified to at least NVQ3 (or equivalent)."

Information and Library Services - progress

NVQs are currently being developed at levels 2, 3 and 4. Pilot studies were due to begin in Autumn 1994, with work on level 5 commencing as funding allows. The draft qualifications should be submitted to NCVQ and SCOTVEC in Spring 1995 (levels 2, 3, 4), with level 5 being introduced in 1996. This means that NVQs will soon be available to the library 'paraprofessional' - for whom qualifications in this sector are incomplete at the moment. Career development will be possible, unrestricted by academic criteria or other barriers likely to prevent equality of opportunity.

Management NVQ

It is difficult to explain NVQs without the jargon (and acronyms!) that goes with them. This illustration of one NVQ (potentially relevant to many librarians with management responsibilities) is intended to clarify the structure and processes of an NVQ. It also introduces, and hopefully explains, some of the terminology associated with these qualifications.

The Management NVQ (level 4) is based on the MCI (Management Charter Initiative) standards. It is aimed at first line managers. Candidates are normally assessed in the workplace, although it is possible to gain an NVQ at a college/training centre, or by open learning. Each MCI candidate must be registered at a centre approved by BTEC - this may be a college or industrial/commercial organisation.

There are 9 'units of competence' in the Management NVQ. One of these units is:

"Contribute to the implementation of change in services, products and systems."

Within this unit, there are 2 'elements'. One of these elements is:

"Contribute to the evaluation of proposed changes to services, products and systems."

Within this element, there are 3 'performance criteria'. One example is:

"Feedback from subordinates, customers and users is assessed and passed on together with a reasoned evaluation to the appropriate people."

A trained assessor will measure candidates against the performance criteria. This may involve observing an individual performing tasks in the workplace. Depending on the NVQ, there may also be projects, assignments or written tests. Through these various means, a candidate gathers 'evidence' to demonstrate that he or she can do a particular job. If the person meets all the performance criteria for all the elements in one unit, a 'Certificate of Unit Credit' can be awarded. Once all the units are achieved, a full NVQ is awarded.

Advantages of NVQs

- * Units can be gained gradually (no set timescales)
- * Individuals may be assessed for existing skills (APL - accreditation of prior learning)
- * No entry requirements
- * Flexible learning approach
- * Suited to individual's needs (time and place)
- * Accessibility

(A note on costs: these will vary according to the NVQ undertaken. However, because NVQs are often assessed in the workplace, and are directly relevant to the employer's needs, costs will frequently be met by the employer. Unemployed adults can also gain NVQs 'free' through the national 'Training for Work' programme.)

NVQs abroad

Each European Union member state has its own system of qualifications, and this has not changed with the introduction of the single market. However, NVQs are gaining increased recognition in other member states through various joint projects, such as the 'Euro Qualifications Programme'. The aim is to achieve greater mobility of the workforce by, for example, training programme exchanges and mutual recognition of qualifications. Further details can be found in 'The NVQ Monitor', Winter 1993/94 (see references).

Summary

NVQs will soon become a national currency in the UK employment market. Individuals can now have existing skills recognised and rewarded, and have access to career opportunities not previously available. Employers

should benefit from more targeted training leading to better motivated staff and higher productivity/quality services. The economy will have an increasingly skilled workforce, resulting in the ability of companies to compete more effectively in an international market. There are criticisms and concerns about NVQs which may need to be addressed. However, the Information and Library Services Lead Body sees its involvement in NVQs as essential - not only for the survival of people working in their sector, but also in the interest of those for whom they provide services - the customers.

References

1 DAKERS, Hazel. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs): the impact they are likely to make on library and information departments. (rev. Jan. 1994 - available from the Library Association)

Originally published in: FOREMAN, Lewis (ed) *Developing professionals in information work: personal and organisational growth in libraries*. London: HMSO, 1992. ISBN 0-11-887539-6

2 ILS Newsletter (Volume 1, September 1994)
Information and Library Services Lead Body
The Library Association, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE
Tel: 071-255 2271 Fax: 071-637 0126

3 The NVQ Monitor (Winter 1993/4, Spring/Summer 1994)
National Council for Vocational Qualifications, 222 Euston Road, London NW1 2BZ
Tel: 071-387 9898 Fax: 071-387 0978

4 (Free) Leaflets on NVQs from NCVQ (address above)
Brief Guides:

NVQs and work
NVQs and colleges
NVQs and employers
NVQs and careers guidance

NVQ Notes:
European Developments and NVQs
Assessing competence in unpaid work
Access and equal opportunities

NVQ System: *The National Database*

5 NVQs and GNVQs - your questions answered (date unknown)
(Free) Leaflet from: City & Guilds of London Institute, 76 Portland Place, London WIN 4AA

6 The New Qualifications Framework (1994)

General National Vocational Qualifications (1993)

(Free) Leaflets from: Department for Education, Publications Centre, Westex Ltd., PO Box 2193, London E15 2EU

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THE PROMISE OF FOLLETT by Maurice Line

Joint Funding Councils' Libraries Review Group (Follett Committee) Report. Bristol: HEFCE, December 1993.

This is the first major review of academic libraries since the University Grants Commission Committee on Libraries (Parry Committee) reported in 1967. Over the intervening 26 years, but particularly in the last five, higher education has been transformed. There are many more universities, a number of other institutions of higher education are able to award degrees, and the oversight and funding of higher education are unified under the four funding councils (one for each part of the UK). Above all, the number of students has enormously increased.

While all this has been going on, the output of books and journals has continued to grow, and their prices have gone up more quickly than the RPI - and the percentage spent by institutions (which are themselves pressed for money) on their libraries has shrunk. The only thing that has kept pace with student numbers in the past five years is the number of loans; everything else in libraries - volumes acquired, staff numbers, reader seats, interlibrary loans and so on - has fallen well behind.

Parent institutions have been issuing strategic plans, quality of teaching is being assessed, and institutional performance indicators are being produced; but in none of these developments has much attention been paid to libraries. Their central importance is almost universally recognised in principle, but practice tells a very different story. It would not have been altogether surprising if academic librarians had succumbed to mass paranoia.

Another major development underlies much of the report. Spectacular advances in information technology have helped libraries not only to continue

to operate but actually to improve some services, but they have also involved extra expenditure. Largely as a result of IT, the concept of the library is changing. As the report says, "the emphasis will shift away from the library as a place . . . and towards the information to which it can provide access".

A Major Event

So this report is a major event. The Libraries Review Group (hereinafter referred to as "Follett", after its chairman, Sir Brian Follett, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Warwick) has done a thorough and impressive job in a commendably short time. Librarians were well represented on the main group and the three sub-groups. Having firmly stated the principle that every institution must determine how it spends its money, the report puts its message over with considerable force.

It is aimed at the funding councils and individual institutions. If institutions are to have decent library facilities, they must, Follett says, provide the resources for them out of their block grants, aided by some substantial short-term injections of money from the funding councils in certain areas: more space (£50m, in addition to £140m provided by institutions), local co-operation (£500,000), and IT (£15m for various projects), most of these sums over three years. In addition, up to £10m should be allocated to support for humanities collections.

Acute Problem of Space

Follett's initial concern was primarily with library provision for taught students. The problem of space, for readers rather than stock, is especially acute. It may be alleviated by increased opening hours and by conversion of book to reading space by use of high density storage, but this will not be enough. The extra money recommended would be for "projects to build, remodel or adapt space".

Much better co-operation is needed between lecturers and libraries in ensuring that recommended reading is available. This is an old problem. The "single database of reading list material for each course" proposed, which would "benefit teachers, students, librarians, publishers and booksellers", has perhaps a better chance of working than the customary complaints and entreaties of librarians directed at lecturers.

I would have liked more to be made of the problems faced by students other than lack of reading space. Little is made of the huge shift in expenditure from monographs to journals, which must have penalised students; it is also irrational, because journal articles are far easier to get quickly from elsewhere than are books.

Collaboration between libraries in support of teaching, which Follett commends, is already being tried in several cities; the report talks of successful arrangements, but the benefits in terms of shared access to reading space or stock, even when libraries are very close together, can hardly be more than marginal, and they can be outweighed by the cost and effort involved. Failure surveys in several universities have shown that students are not getting much

more than 60% of what they need for their work, and recommendations that libraries should co-operate and that each institution should review whether it is spending enough on short loan collections seem a seriously inadequate response.

Uneven Research Provision

Follett devotes a roughly equal part of the report to research provision, recognising that it overlaps substantially with student provision. Research provision is much more uneven than student provision, for historical and other reasons. Selective research funding has exacerbated the problems.

The remedies proposed by Follett include encouraging the development of networks of research libraries at national or regional level, drawing on the strengths of particular libraries or groups of libraries. Since this cannot be forced on any institution, numerous bodies such as the British Academy, the British Library and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) will have to discuss how it is to be achieved.

In addition, the funding councils should invite bids from institutions for special funding to support specialised collections which are widely used by other humanities researchers; and the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge should continue to receive their special grants of £1.1m a year each to help with the cataloguing, storage and access costs resulting from legal deposit, on condition that they are accessible to researchers from elsewhere in the UK. Whether they should continue to benefit - if that is the word for such a huge and costly burden - from legal deposit is an issue that is, probably wisely, not confronted.

Dubious Benefits of Integration

I am unhappy with the main proposal, which "would include integrated acquisitions and disposals policies". Such planned schemes have been proposed, and tried, many times before, and most of them have either failed or yielded nothing of additional value. Some concentration of specialised resources occurs anyway, and the extra benefits of planning remain to be proved.

Unless total resources are enlarged, the only benefits would be for users visiting the collections for consultation; for remote document access planning is unnecessary, since the catalogues of the collections are becoming accessible electronically; and there is little point in the enlargement of resources for its own sake, since demand for the additional matter acquired will (to judge from the evidence) be little used, and the collections of major US and western European libraries are becoming as accessible as our own.

There are several recommendations concerning the management of libraries which address the frequent exclusion of libraries from institutional plans. Libraries should be viewed in the context of an integrated information strategy, which should consider what form of collaboration is best between the library and computing and audio-visual services. Although each institution should decide what it spends on the library, a "coherent and generic set of

performance indicators" should be developed, to enable them to assess its attainment of objectives in comparison with other libraries.

The cost of journals appears in more than one part of the report. Here Follett is optimistic, or perhaps the group thought that something must be tried; the CVCP should seek "co-operation with the Association of American Universities and other appropriate US bodies to find practical and effective ways of influencing the periodicals market in a manner which both provides value for money for periodical purchasers and a fair return for publishers". Good luck to them!

Of particular interest is the chapter on IT; no fewer than 18 of the 46 recommendations relate to IT. If all were accepted, these would greatly enhance the ability of academic libraries to exploit the enormous possibilities of IT. Copyright is recognised as an area of conflicting interests, but "publishers should be prepared to be receptive to the requirements and interests of higher education if the latter can offer effective policing of licensing agreements and co-operation in work on technical monitoring controls". A pilot initiative is recommended.

Document Delivery Consortia

One recommendation is for funding for electronic document delivery consortia, subject-based, metropolitan and regional. While there may be some point in subject-based consortia, it is hard to see any at all in metropolitan or regional, since distance is irrelevant with electronic systems; and anyway it is important to use the national document supply services of the British Library to the full if they are to be maintained.

Surprisingly no mention is made in the report of income generation, perhaps deliberately, for there is an underlying assumption that nearly all access to all libraries should be free to all UK staff and students. Nor is anything said about such trends as "out-sourcing" library operations and limited term contracts.

Very little happened as a result of Parry; librarians kept quoting the (qualified) recommendation of 6% of institutional expenditure on the library for years but, as noted earlier, the percentage has actually declined. The Follett report ought to result in at least more serious attention being given to libraries, followed by some positive action.

Major reports are not always very good ones. This is. The membership (including several vice-chancellors) of the Follett group, the report's solid arguments, and the soundness of its recommendations make it unlikely to be ignored.

Maurice Line was formerly director-general, Science, Technology and Industry, at the British Library. This article is an edited version of one which appeared in The Bookseller, 20th May 1994 and appears here with the kind permission of the author.

Note:

One of the schemes developed as a result of the findings of Follett is Bookflow.

This aims to provide "a new and simple means of enabling the movement of various classes of document between libraries, and from publishers to the book trade and thence on to libraries, in a rather faster, more secure and more cost-effective manner than has been possible to date." The basic service is computer-supported and uses an overnight parcels carrier service. Clients are provided with boxes to carry material within the system; these are sealed, collected at lunchtime and replaced with a box holding material destined for that client from elsewhere within the system. Use of sealed boxes reduces the amount of packaging and labelling, therefore saving time and money at each destination. Cost of the service is based on a fixed price (volume independent), with charges set with quarterly advance notice. The scheme is due to start full operation in January 1995 and a number of demonstrations and discussion sessions are planned to be held in various locations before Christmas 1994. Further details can be obtained from the

Bookflow Project Development Office,
35 Church Street,
Newent,
Gloucestershire
GL18 1AA,

Tel. 0531-822600, fax 0531-822800)

Maurice B. Line
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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: AN UPDATE by Gwen Palmer

By any standard, 1993/4 has been a remarkable year for Religious Education!

The remit to the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA)

In August 1993 Sir Ron Dearing, then Chairman designate of SCAA, was required by the Secretary of State to take up work initiated by the National Curriculum Council and to produce model syllabuses for RE for the guidance of local Agreed Syllabus Conferences. Six working groups (Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh) were asked by SCAA to continue their work on statements of what each group believed to be the essentials of their faith, and about which pupils in state schools might learn. SCAA took over the operation in October 1993, set up other working groups (including groups of

teachers, to consider the practical use of the faith materials), and a monitoring group (from across the spectrum of religions, many also with professional experience in education). The monitoring group's task was to make recommendations to SCAA within the DFE remit on the form and content of the Authority's guidelines on RE. All this activity got well under way during Autumn 1993.

RE and the Department for Education (DFE)

Meanwhile, at the DFE, a Circular on Religious Education and Collective Worship was being devised with the stated intention to take up, develop, and ultimately replace guidance on both areas which had been given piecemeal following changes in the law from 1988 onwards.

A draft Circular was sent out for consultation during the Autumn term. Its contents and format drew a great deal of response and comment, much of which was by no means favourable. Phrases such as 'predominantly Christian' were used of RE in the draft, putting, many respondents argued, a much stronger emphasis on Christianity than the legislation allowed and than had hitherto been advised by the Department. This interpretation, it was said, would appear to relegate other principal religions and their adherents to second-class status not only in RE but, by implication, in society. Some critics of the draft also argued that their suspicions of its partisan nature were further confirmed by the rejection of any place in RE for ethical philosophies such as Humanism. Suspicions were also fuelled by what seemed to be a lack of attention to any educational basis for the interpretations now being attached to the law, and by the voices of a small but vociferous minority who continue to argue that the law was intended to protect 'the country's Christian heritage' and to require 'predominantly Christian Religious Education' (and 'predominantly Christian worship') in state schools.

At the end of January 1994 the DFE Circular (1/94) was published in its final form, following what had been a long drawn out consultative process. Despite considerable - and helpful - restructuring within the Circular, the major sources of complaint identified in many responses remain virtually unchanged. For example, the Department's interpretation of the law as requiring of RE that, 'As a whole and at each key stage, the relative content devoted to Christianity should predominate' (para 35), and that Collective worship 'must contain some elements....which accord a special status of Jesus Christ' (para 63), are both retained. On the other hand, the revised layout now serves to demonstrate that which the law actually requires, and by implication, that which is comment and/or interpretation. The Circular also affirms beyond doubt its own status: 'This guidance does not constitute an authoritative legal interpretation of the provisions of the Education Acts or other enactments and regulations; that is exclusively a matter for the courts' (page 1). Despite remaining criticisms, Circular 1/94 is worthy of careful scrutiny, not least because of its comprehensive nature but also because there is much in it which can be set in the balance against the less helpful passages.

The Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted)

At the turn of the year, Ofsted produced a Report on *Religious Education and Collective Worship* in schools which it had inspected during 1992/3. The fact of its publication was in itself a great leap forward. (Over many years, attempts of HMI to publish papers giving an overview of RE have been doomed to failure.) The 1994 Report highlights the fact that despite a number of good RE lessons seen, many primary and secondary schools were not meeting legislative requirements for the provision of RE.

Interestingly, in the light of the past year's debate, the Report identifies a 'widespread misconception....that current RE teaching has abandoned Christianity....The evidence of inspection is that this is untrue'. Ofsted asserts that it is other major world faiths which had a limited or confusing coverage. The Report also lists a number of areas which Ofsted believes to be crucial to the improvement of RE. These include: clear aims; improved documentation (e.g. Agreed Syllabuses, detailed schemes of work in schools); appointment of specialists; INSET (in-service training) for non-specialists; time, accommodation, and resources; and for schools to 'consider RE a priority and recognise the extent of their need for help' (para 83).

SCAA's Model Syllabuses for RE

In January 1994 SCAA's draft Model Syllabuses were sent out for consultation - in the form of one Introductory booklet, two Models, one compendium of reports from six faith working groups, a glossary of terms relating to the religions, and a document on attainment targets in RE. The consultative process drew great many responses - and led to important changes in the final documentation.

The contents of the draft Introductory booklet were cut back substantially and are no longer within a separate booklet. There is now a basic but vital introduction to each of the Model Syllabuses, showing how the material can be drawn upon should local Agreed Syllabus Conferences choose so to do. There is no longer any diagrammatic representation of balance between religions (such as the bar-chart which many read as specifying percentages of time for particular religions). However, Sir Ron Dearing's recommendation that RE should take a minimum percentage of 5% of curriculum time is also advocated here, and is said to be the basis on which the Models were finally revised. The Key Stages* in both Models include proposals for a minimum and in some cases a maximum number of religions to be studied in addition to Christianity at each stage.

* Age equivalents for Key Stages are;

KS1 = 6 - 7 years old

KS2 = 8 - 11 years old

KS3 = 12 - 14 years old

KS4 = 15 - 16 years old

Model One is structured on the basis of knowledge and understanding of what it means to belong to a faith community, and is entitled, 'Living Faiths Today'. 'Questions and Teachings', Model Two, indicates the links between shared human experience and the teachings of six major faiths. No additional syllabus based on a thematic approach was devised by SCAA, partly because of the given timescale. However, SCAA acknowledges 'that the two Models....do not represent the only way of structuring an agreed syllabus' and emphasises also that the Models 'are not intended as schemes of work for schools'.

There is as yet no guidance on RE for 16-19 years old pupils or resolution of the RE/RS problems in Key Stage 4. The importance of looking at an issue from the point of view of more than one tradition is stressed. Throughout, there is emphasis upon the contribution RE can make to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people. Advice is given to local Agreed Syllabus Conferences that schools should be given as much flexibility as is compatible with the law and with planned continuity and progression to choose both what they should teach and how they might teach it.

The final documentation from SCAA (four booklets in all) was launched on 5 July 1994 at what must have been a unique gathering: it included a range of faith community leaders and representatives, the Secretary of State and other politicians, people from a variety of educational contexts, the media, and teachers and pupils from schools (ready, willing and able to show and to talk about their work in RE).

The future of Religious Education

Every local Standing Advisory Council for RE (SACRE) has received by now a copy of the SCAA 'package' for each of its members. Each SACRE is legally obliged to review its present Syllabus within a given timescale. The choice of whether or not to follow (in whole or in part) the SCAA guidance will rest with each local Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), convened to draw up an Agreed Syllabus for RE which conforms to current legislation. Many have already started work, others are nearing completion. Both SACREs and ASCs have to have a teachers' group/committee within their required membership. In future, every local Agreed Syllabus has to be reviewed on a five-yearly basis.

What has become more clear over the past year is that the legislation referring to RE is capable of being interpreted in a range of ways and that no one interpretation has emerged as being definitive. Some may welcome the flexibility that this seems to imply, but of course it does not follow that a legal decision may not emerge from the courts in the future. The Local Agreed Syllabus Conferences have the responsibility of creating the local Agreed Syllabus, which is itself the statutory instrument on which schools must base their RE. Learned Counsel's opinion soon after the promulgation of the 1988 legislation was that the legality or otherwise of any local Syllabus may be judged against its interpretation in practice in local schools!

Even given the achievements of the past year there remain a number of major issues which are likely to continue to be the subject of controversy, both nationally and locally. These include:

- * The educational basis for RE in schools. Can it be clearly differentiated from the nurture of faith within families and and / or faith community? How should schools take account of the faith which some pupils and teachers carry with them?
- * Given the present legislation, should the balance between Christianity and the other major faiths be expressed in terms of time or secured by parity of esteem? If the latter, how can this be guaranteed?
- * Should pupils learn about religions systematically or thematically, or by a mixture of both approaches? Are there conflicts of educational philosophy as well as of practice which need to be addressed?
- * Are children at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 capable of learning about more than one religion without becoming confused? Is there research evidence to support practice?
- * Can RE in schools contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development? If so, how?

It is almost inevitable that the status of RE will be more generally recognised as a result of recent and ongoing activity (including inspections and publicity). However, for the provision and quality of RE to be enhanced, it is as well to note that further needs will have to be met. Even the DFE is beginning to recognise, following the Ofsted and RE Council Reports (see below), that there are insufficient teachers appropriately qualified and experienced to teach the subject. A major in-service initiative, together with targeted recruitment to initial teacher training is essential to make up the present shortfall. It would be a great pity if the efforts which have been expended on RE were to come to nothing for lack of staffing. Many teachers have argued that attention must also be paid to the accreditation of RE at Key Stage 4 and to provision at 16-19 if pupils and parents are to be convinced of the educational value of RE. These are urgent requirements. Will they be addressed?

What is quite clear, is that Religious Education is now very much part of the educational agenda and is likely to remain so for some time to come. It is also clear that a great debt of gratitude is owed not only to those at national level (including the faith communities, politicians, and the leaders and professional officers of NCC, SCAA, and Ofsted) who have listened and then

have acted, but also to members of local SACREs and ASCs, and most of all to those teachers who have continued against the odds and often with minimal time, support and resources, to make RE worthwhile, interesting, and above all a stimulating and thought-provoking educational experience for the children and young people of tomorrow's world.

Gwen Palmer
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Religious Education and Collective Worship 1992-1993: A Report from the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, Ofsted, HMSO (1994) ISBN 0-11-350041-6

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Living Faiths Today, Model 1, SCAA Ref. RE/94/062, ISBN1-85838-038-3
Questions and Teachings, Model 2, SCAA Ref. RE/94/063, ISBN 1-85838-039-1
Faith Communities' Working Group Reports, SCAA Ref. RE/94/064, ISBN 1-85838-040-5

Glossary of Terms: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, SCAA Ref. RE/94/065, ISBN 1-85838-041-3

Time for Religious Education and Teachers to Match: a Digest of Under-provision, A Report by Dr Brian Gates for the RE Council of England and Wales (1993), ISBN 0-905437100

This article first appeared under the title Religious Education: Over to You! in REsource Vol 17, No 1, Autumn 1994, and we are grateful for permission to reprint it here. Resource is published by the Professional Council for Religious Education which has also produced a very useful booklet covering legislation on religious education and collective worship to 30 March, 1994. Their address is:

Professional Council for Religious Education
Royal Buildings
Victoria Street
DERBY
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NOTES AND NEWS

Public Library Review Draft Report

ASLIB has issued the above draft report on the review whose terms of reference require the team to "assess the scope and value of public library services currently provided by local authorities in England and Wales. . . to draw up guidelines and a framework for local choice for what should constitute a 'comprehensive and efficient service' . . . to consider the desirability of any changes in requirements of the Public Libraries and Museums Act, and to identify key developments requiring national attention." The report describes the scope of the review, methods of research and gives a list of draft recommendations. The recommendations are:

Retain and enhance the network of local libraries

- longer opening hours (questions of staffing and funding are addressed in the report) - to include Sunday opening
- capitalising on public libraries' resources
- mini- and micro-libraries; Public library branches and "micro-branches" in new forms at new locations. Links to employment exchanges and training schemes should be developed to help the unemployed.
- greater diversity in services to meet the needs of individuals who have physical or learning difficulties
- community services and 'civic networking'

Infrastructure investments to link central and branch libraries to the new information superhighways

- via broadband telecommunications links
 - five or six regional hyperlibraries to be created, which incorporate decentralised collections in specialised subject areas from the British Library, with expertise to support them.
- These would receive funding from diverse sources, with control shared between funders and a representative body of users.

Their role would be:

- to act as centres for regional co-operation
- to be responsible for collections in selected subject fields
- to develop corporate agreements with partners in other fields in shared enterprises
- to promote investment, sponsorship and donations
- to develop joint marketing and promotional initiatives
- to co-ordinate management development and training
- to provide reference and loan services. They would charge for loans as per the British Library

Local democratic control; diversifying funding

- charging: no charges for core services (lending of books, access to libraries and local information holdings, etc.) and reference services
- when there is access to on-line information, it should be free when it is to a network source which is available at no more than the cost of local telephone calls, within the units of duration laid down by the library authority. Where substantial costs arise there should be the option of an economic fee
- suggestions for ways to change the emphasis of funding, methods of making of payments and deployment of additional personnel: alternative funding sources could be found by:
 - changing copyright law on "intellectual property", so that owners of such rights could protect them by making a payment for deposit of such property with the British Library;
 - making interlibrary transactions and co-operation cheaper by the introduction of a coupon and credit card system;
 - the introduction of a national system for recovering unreturned materials and unpaid fines
 - the use of voluntary agencies to provide the staffing for longer opening hours.
- diversifying sources of funding in partnerships with other agencies and organisations, European partnerships and National Lottery funds and other charities.

Department of National Heritage Study: Contracting-Out in Public Libraries

The draft report has been issued. One of the pilot projects involved the contracting out of two branch libraries by the London Borough of Brent. The in-house bid won and is committed to the following:

- * 15% increase in opening hours
- * video and word processors for hire
- * CD club
- * homework club
- * toys
- * improved targets for issues, visitors and membership
- * 6% saving on costs over a contract period of 5 years

Ecumenical News International is an ecumenical news service which was launched on 1st September 1994, superseding Ecumenical Press Service. ENI will provide a "journalistically credible" global, ecumenical news service, including religious perspectives on world-wide news developments.

Supported by World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the Conference of European Churches, ENI is distinct from them. It will provide a daily news service, by fax and electronic mail, and a printed bulletin every two weeks.

Appeal for information

I am studying a phenomenon which is known to have been very common in the nineteenth century: the printing of sermons in imitation of manuscript, either by the use of a special type face resembling handwriting, or by the lithographic reproduction of a hand-written sermon. Surviving examples are very rare. However, many may survive unrecognised, particularly in theological libraries, because of the difficulty of identifying and cataloguing them. If anyone knows of any examples, or has any information on their distribution and use, I would be very grateful if they would get in touch with me.

Arnold Hunt
Trinity College
Cambridge

Changes of address

Sheffield Academic Press/SUBIS has moved to Mansion House, 19 Kingfield Road, Sheffield S11 9AS Tel: 014-255 4433

National Christian Education Council and IBRA have moved to 1020 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LB

FOOTNOTE

We must extend childrens' experience. An Advisory Teacher for RE went into an all white school in a rural area. In the entrance hall was a wonderful display of work on Ancient Egypt. In the course of conversation the Head commented "We don't go along with all your 'multi-faith' ideas here - we have no Jews, Muslims or Hindus in this area". "Oh, then may I meet your Ancient Egyptians?" replied the Advisory Teacher.

RE Today, Autumn, 1994

The security we have as Christians working in a Christian foundation enables us to acknowledge other faiths openly and freely

Diocese of London: Guidelines