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<b>United Kingdome</b>
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Two "schemes" are in force in UK for librarian and information professionals (generic term covering : librarian, information officer, information scientist, information professional, information manager, information specialist, records manager, knowledge manager, archivist, information strategist) :

- The Chartered professionals
- The National Vocational Qualifications (in Information and Library services)

## **1. The chartered professionals<sup>1</sup>**

CILIP is the Chartered Institute of Library and Information professionals, a new professional body formed following the unification in april 2002 of the Institut of Information Scientist (IIS) and the Library Association (LA).

### About Chartered Status

Academic qualifications provide evidence that people are aware of the core principles of information work and the various contexts in which they operate. But they don't necessarily guarantee aptitude for information work. To gain Chartered status and become a full Member of CILIP (MCLIP) shows that the professional has gained formal practice-based recognition of the skills in addition of academic qualification. After that, Fellowship (FCLIP) demonstrates that the professional has further advanced the professional skills to make an outstanding contribution to library and information professional practice.

Once Chartered, the professional should expect to keep his knowledge, skills and understanding up-to-date. CILIP can support a continuing professional development (CPD) through short courses, conferences and seminars, professional networking opportunities and by participation in the gobernance of the Chartered Institute.

### What is Chartered Membership

Chartered Membership is the first level of professional qualification awarded by the Chartered Institute. Most members gain Chartered Membership two or three years after graduating. It is open to any member who fulfils the requirements of the Bye-laws and complies with the regulations laid down by Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Source : [www.cilip.org.uk/qualifications/chartering](http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualifications/chartering)

The award of Chartered Membership is based on evidence of continuing professional development in practice, and on the ability to learn from expérience. Candidates are seeking to demonstrate how that knowledge has been applied and what has been learned as an outcome of that application.

### How to apply for Chartered Membership

Application for Chartered Membership is made through submission of a two-part application. The first part is a form on which candidates must provide information about the knowledge and skills they have developed since gaining their information studies qualification. The second part is a portfolio of evidence of continuing professional development.

There are two routes to Chartered Membership. One requires completion of a period of supervised training, the other a period of self-directed continuing professional development.

Route A : one year full-time equivalent work experience following a CILIP approved training & development programme supervised by a Chartered Member. Qualification required : CILIP accredited degree; candidates have to fill a registration of training form and a Training and Development Plan and, after the training period, supply a Certificate of completion of the professional training period (CPRA)

Route B : two year full-time equivalent work experience without direct supervision following a Personal Development Plan. Qualification required : CILIP accredited or other approved qualification. Candidates have to fill a Registration of Professional practice forme and a Personal Professional Development Plan and, after their qualifying period, supply a Certificate of Professional Training (CPRB)

At the end of both routes candidates must submit an application for election to the Register that is assessed by the Chartership Board.

The achievement of Chartered Membership carries with it the right to the postnominal letters MCLIP.

Five years after gaining admission to the Register as a Chartered Member, a Corporate Member may submit evidence of further professional development for the award of Fellowship (FCLIP)

## **2. The National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) <sup>2</sup>**

### **2.1 General presentation**

National Vocational Qualifications, introduced in the 1980s, are work-related and competence based qualifications, which represent national standards recognised by employers throughout the country. NVQs reinforce an individual's ability to competently undertake the work for which it has been awarded.

Every NVQ describes work functions, work tasks and standards of competence. This basic structure is called the Standards or National Standards and consists of :

- units (of competence)
- elements (of competence)
- performance criteria

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<sup>2</sup> Sources : several web sites

- range statements
- underspinning knowledge and understanding

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

The standards define the skills and knowledge required for a particular area of work.

The definition of competence provided by the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has four characteristics :

- task performance : the task specific or technical skills
- task management : the ability to plan and organise work activities
- contingency management : what to do when the unexpected happens
- team work : the ability to work with others.

The NVQ system has five "levels" of achievement, each representing an increasing range and complexity of tasks and greater responsibility within the working environment. Each level refers to a job role or range of role activities.

- Level 1 : Foundation skills in occupations : the most basic level ; the individuals demonstrates the ability to undertake a range of routine and predictable work activities.
- Level 2 : Operative and semi-skilled occupations : the individuals demonstrates the ability to undertake some complex non-routine activities and individual responsibility, to work alone and in collaboration with others.
- Level 3 : Technician, craft, skilled and supervisory occupations ; the individual demonstrates an ability to undertake a variety of complex and non-routine activities in differing situations, and offers a broad range of varied skilled activities, guidance and supervision of others. Associated with job titles such as supervisor, team leader, customer service manager and senior libraries assistant or manager.
- Level 4 : Technical and junior management occupations ; individuals need to undertake complex technical or professional work, responsibility for staff and resources, complex, technical specialised and professional activities, personal accountability; associated with job titles such as engineer, librarian or estate agent
- Level 5 : Chartered, professional and senior management occupations ; it broadly equates to post graduate competence for senior managers ; individuals have to undertake substantial personal accountability, autonomy, management of other managers, allocation of resources, analysis, diagnosis, planning and evaluation.

Each of five levels of attainment has eleven elements of competence. An element of competence is described as something that a person who works in a given occupation should be able to do.

Each NVQ is made up of a number of units, and each unit is a qualification in its own right. A unit represents an aspect of a job within an occupational area. Some units are mandatory and others are optional;

There are four basic sources of evidence :

- performance at work

- performance of specially set tasks
- questioning
- prior learning.

NVQs are available to anyone at any age or stage of their career.

A number of organisations are involved in the process of developing, delivering, awarding and preserving the quality of NVQs.

## **2.2 The NVQ in Information and Library Services (ILS)**

One Lead Body was set up for the information occupational sector. This sector was subdivided into the specialist areas of

- Information and Library Services (ILS),
- Archives,
- Records services and records management
- Tourist Information.

The first Standards were approved during 1995 for ILS. By December 1998, there were 165 assessment centres with the number of candidates at each site ranging from a minimum of one to a maximum of 26 (level 2), 29 (level 3) and 8 (level 4)

These NVQ's have been particularly helpful to paraprofessional or library technician staff to achieve recognition. They often have long periods of services with key skills, but have no formal qualifications.

Level 2 is currently the first Information and Library level used and is intended for library assistants. It covers processing materials, identifying and providing information and working with users.

Level 3 is intended for senior library assistants or information officers/executives and covers providing and organising information, solving problems for users and maintaining quality standards together with five optional units.

Level 4 is intended for library, customer services or information managers.

A level 5 qualification for senior manager was under discussion but appears to have been shelved.

At each level, NVQs are broken down into a series of units, which describe separate functions within an individual's job role. These are grouped into Core and Mandatory Units, and Optional Units. For example at level 2, the core and mandatory units are :

- process material for use
- Identify and provide information/material required by user
- Develop positive working relationship with customers
- Maintain arrangement of information material
- Secure information/material
- Contribute to the maintenance of a supportive environment for users
- Direct users

- Issue and recover loan material
- Maintain data in a computer system.

Each unit is a "mini qualification" and an individual can get the corresponding certificate.

There are no formal entry requirements but every applicants will be interviewed to establish which level is most appropriate. Candidates should either be working in a library or be prepared to undertake work experience

The programme is delivered in a flexible way with workshops, personal and group tutorials, classroom sessions. Written work produced from these sessions is assessed and oral assessment takes place in class ; workplace practice is assessed by observation. There are no exams. Successful completion is subject to final submission of a portfolio of evidence.

All candidates have to pay a registration fee to the awarding body (course fee : £ 310 for NVQ 2)