



## Current Drivers of Continuing Professional Development

Numerous professional associations and special interest groups in the library sector have produced formal statements of the knowledge, skills and understanding that practitioners are expected to display in their work, which typically also highlight the responsibility of individuals to maintain and develop their competencies, illustrated here by the preamble to the Medical Library Association's (2007, p. 4) policy statement:

MLA believes that lifelong learning must be a cornerstone of every individual's professional development plan to achieve success in the health sciences environment and that individuals must assume greater personal responsibility for defining their ongoing learning goals, increasing their competencies, and improving their professional performance.

Many professional bodies in different fields now also require their members to provide formal evidence of their CPD to retain their qualifications. Within the library sector, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) currently offers a voluntary Revalidation Scheme enabling members to demonstrate their commitment to CPD formally on a three-year cycle, by submitting a portfolio of evidence including a CV, a CPD log and a personal statement providing a critical evaluation and reflection of the learning outcomes from training and development since their previous submission (CILIP 2004). CILIP's recent commitment to replacing revalidation with the phased introduction of a mandatory CPD scheme provides further evidence of the necessity for library and information professionals constantly to refresh their knowledge and skills in a volatile digital world (Broady-Preston 2009).

Specialisation is another significant driver of CPD. New professionals often work in roles requiring broadly-based expertise at the start of their careers and then need or want to specialise in a particular field as they identify job opportunities and/or recognise personal interests that they are keen to pursue. In addition, there has been a general trend for professional work to become more specialised, driven on the one hand by the growing complexity of the operational environment and on the other hand by non-specialists undertaking tasks previously seen as the work of professionally-qualified practitioners (Cheetham and Chivers 2005; Corral and Cox 2008; Watkins et al. 1992). In university libraries, this is exemplified both in the shift towards online searching by end-users and in the redistribution of responsibilities between professional, paraprofessional and other library staff, which in turn has drawn attention to the training and professional development needs of library assistants (Corral 2004; Webb 2004).

Traditional work boundaries have become blurred not only within professions, but also between professions and other specialist groups, giving rise to labels such as 'hybrid' and 'blended' librarian (as noted in chapter 4), with the result that new specialties have emerged requiring practitioners to develop skills, knowledge and

understanding drawn from more than one domain in a trend that has become more common in the digital world. Examples in university libraries include growth of new specialties in the area of library technologies and information systems, such as digital library specialists and institutional repository managers, who need to combine library/information and information technology/media expertise; academic liaison librarians and information literacy educators are a more extreme case of hybrid or blended professionals, requiring information-related, subject-based, pedagogical and technological know-how to fulfil their roles effectively in subject-specific digital learning environments (Bell and Shank, 2007; Corral and Cox 2008).

Professional organisations have recognised this need for greater breadth and depth in their formal definitions of the competencies that librarians are expected to possess and enhance throughout their careers. The American Library Association's Core Competences of Librarianship includes a whole section devoted to 'technological knowledge and skills' and the following points related to pedagogical understanding (ALA 2009, p. 4):

- The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.
- Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.
- The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.

The ALA (2009) statement is intended only to provide 'a general foundation' for professional practice and the ALA website<sup>1</sup> refers practitioners to other more specialised knowledge and competencies statements developed by relevant professional organisations. A notable example here is the Medical Library Association's (2007) competencies statement, which again specifies competence in both information technology/systems and curricular design/instruction, in addition to information resources and services, scientific research methods, managerial areas and the specific subject context for health information work. Another highly-specialised example is the ALA Association of College and Research Libraries Standards for Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians and Coordinators, which defines 41 core proficiencies in 12 categories for instruction librarians and an additional 28 proficiencies for coordinators, illustrating the level of expertise now reckoned as 'needed to be excellent teachers' (ACRL 2008, p. 2).

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1 <http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompspecial/knowledgecompetencies.cfm>.

## **Multiple Routes to Continuing Professional Development**

CPD can be experienced in many different ways, both on the job and away from the workplace. The term Continuing Professional Education (CPE) or 'professional continuing education' is also used, notably in the US, for both formal award-bearing programmes and short courses (Lynn et al. 2010). There are overlaps between initial and continuing professional education programmes: some academic programmes are intended as 'professional preparation' programmes for new entrants to the profession, while others are designed specifically as professional development or enhancement for experienced practitioners wanting to upgrade their qualifications and/or develop their expertise in new specialisms (e.g. the part-time distance learning MSc in Health Informatics at Sheffield), but many programmes can be used for either purpose; for example, the MSc in Electronic and Digital Library Management at Sheffield attracts both recent graduates seeking careers in a dynamic specialist field and experienced professionals wanting a deeper understanding of the digital environments that characterise the contemporary library landscape.

In addition, schools and departments of information and library studies often promote individual modules or clusters of modules from their standard education programmes as standalone or packaged offerings, either on a traditional model of weekly sessions or as intensive blocks of teaching and learning over one or more days, enabling practitioners to take modules on topics not covered in their previous education or subjects that have changed significantly or emerged in the interim. Some information schools also offer short courses on more advanced or specialised topics related to their research interests as open programmes or bespoke provision tailored to the needs of particular institutions or professional communities; for example, the Centre for Information Literacy Research at Sheffield has provided workshops on information literacy strategy development for university and college libraries as part of our ongoing work on the application of strategy tools to information literacy activities (Corrall 2008; Corrall and Sen 2010).

The importance of work-based or workplace learning for staff development is evidenced by the formation in 2003 of a new section of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) specifically to focus on Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning (CPDWL). LIS schools are experiencing growing demand for part-time professional education from people who want to combine learning with a full-time job and can see the benefits of being able to relate theory to practice in a more direct way than can be done when studying full-time away from the workplace. Traditional weekly day-release attendance and distance education via e-learning are both popular modes. Educational institutions are also experimenting with different, often innovative, models; for example, a new two-year part-time Foundation Degree in Library and Information Practice is being delivered in four one-week residential sessions per year, with the rest of the programme being taught online through blogs, interactive learning and social networking. The course has been deliberately designed as 'work-based and

**Table 15.1** Continuing professional development activities

External activities	Internal activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committees and meetings</li> <li>• Multi-institutional/cross-sectoral projects</li> <li>• Establishing new formal partnerships</li> <li>• Professional networks/special interest groups (in-person and virtual)</li> <li>• Formal education programmes (including online learning)</li> <li>• Summer schools/immersion programmes</li> <li>• Training courses</li> <li>• Conferences and seminars</li> <li>• Benchmarking clubs</li> <li>• Study visits</li> <li>• Job exchange</li> <li>• Preparing and presenting talks for professional meetings</li> <li>• Preparing and teaching courses for library professionals</li> <li>• Peer support groups</li> <li>• Writing for publication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task forces and working groups</li> <li>• Cross-departmental/multi-professional projects</li> <li>• Negotiating new internal collaborations</li> <li>• Knowledge exchange with colleagues (e.g. events, best practice websites)</li> <li>• Mentoring schemes and coaching programmes</li> <li>• Action learning/learning by doing</li> <li>• Training hours and in-house courses</li> <li>• Trial and error, problem-solving</li> <li>• Testing new products and services</li> <li>• Work shadowing</li> <li>• Job rotation</li> <li>• Preparing and delivering training for library staff</li> <li>• Conducting service evaluations and in-house research projects</li> <li>• Reading professional literature</li> <li>• Learning logs and reflective journals</li> </ul>

grounded in practice, with the firm belief that you learn better by doing' (Glyndwr University 2009). Practitioners at all levels from library assistants to senior managers are increasingly recognising the value of work-related learning that takes place on or around the job, from both economic and educational viewpoints.

Larsen (2006) provides a list of different methods of CPD, which she splits into external and internal activities. Table 15.1 adapts and expands her examples to show the variety of options and how CPD can be incorporated in the operational tasks of university libraries without necessarily requiring substantial funding, although several of the external activities listed may incur significant costs. Some of the examples (e.g. mentoring programmes and training courses) can be undertaken as either internal or external activities, but are listed only once to avoid duplication.

### Technological Impacts on Work and Learning

The impact of the digital environment on CPD activities can be seen here in some of the methods included, such as online/e-learning, professional networking experienced through virtual environments and websites for knowledge exchange. Technology-related developments have also set the agenda for CPD through their

impact on all areas of university library practice, notably in relation to collection development and information resource management, information literacy education and liaison activities, where the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by library staff have expanded significantly. The technology-related skillset not only extends across an expanded range of library-specific and other related systems (e.g. electronic resource management systems, repository software and virtual learning environments), but arguably must also include familiarity with the discipline-specific and generic tools used by researchers, teachers and students. Social media competencies have emerged as a hot topic in this context (as noted in Chapter 2). Murphy and Moulaison (2009, p. 328) explain the multi-faceted skillset needed:

Librarians need a new branch of skill sets specific to utilizing and leveraging social networking sites to provide quality services and maintain their role as information experts in a Web 2.0 world ... These include skills for interacting with patrons within the sites, understanding and articulating the nature of social networking sites and their potential roles related to library services, creating presences and content, evaluating and applying information, and having the ability to assist patrons with gaining and applying these skills.

Many academic librarians have adopted a learning-by-doing method to learn about Web 2.0/Library 2.0 technologies, thus applying the classic action learning philosophy to a digital learning environment. Gross and Leslie (2008) provide a good example of learning-by-doing in their account of implementing and evaluating a successful Learning 2.0 '23 things' programme in an Australian academic library; Appleton (2009) describes a large-scale implementation of Learning 2.0 in the UK, which involved 140 learning and information services staff working in groups via a virtual learning environment (Blackboard); and Wilson (2008) describes how academic librarians can incorporate the use of Web 2.0 tools, such as podcasts, RSS and Twitter, into their daily routines to keep up with technology developments. Academic librarians are also using Web 2.0 tools for CPD related to other areas of practice, engaging virtually in external activities without incurring the costs of travel: for example, by attending talks on professional interests and communicating with people already practising in the area through Second Life, which can be more engaging than simply reading an article, while also stimulating participants to explore topics further through reading (Jennings 2009). Similarly, they have used virtual learning environments to deliver training on topics not directly related to technology: Forrest (2007) describes the delivery of a self-paced five-part module to raise awareness of disability issues among university library staff, which demonstrated increased understanding and attracted favourable comment.

However, conventional methods of CPD are still popular, as shown by the extensive programmes of short courses offered by CILIP and other professional organisations. A recent US survey of practitioner opinions of different modes of CPD revealed face-to-face instruction as the most preferred (and frequently



experienced) option, with blended learning ranked second (but least frequently experienced), followed by asynchronous and synchronous web-based learning and finally webcasts. Many respondents commented positively on web-based synchronous instruction, citing access to instructors and interactions with other learners as benefits. They also liked the idea of webcasts and asynchronous instruction, but reported that the former often failed to engage their interest and the latter tended to be pushed aside by daily work. Cost was stated as the key factor influencing their CPD choices, followed by immediate access to instructors (Lynn et al. 2010). Libraries can reduce cost by combining external and internal education activities, for example Beaubien et al. (2009) describe how a university library educated liaison librarians in scholarly communication by sending a small group to a regional institute prior to organising a series of discussion sessions within the institution.

Summer schools and other intensive courses are now well established in the sector and continue to attract applicants: for example, the International Summer School run by Tilburg University since 1996, which has a digital library focus and attracted more than 1,000 individuals over a ten-year period, some of whom have attended more than once (Prinsen 2007) and the Immersion Program offered annually by the Association of College and Research Libraries since 1999, which now offers four different one-week tracks intended to give teaching librarians 'the intellectual tools and practical techniques to help your institution build or enhance its instruction program' (ACRL 2010a). The expansion of this programme shows how teaching ability is no longer regarded as an add-on for subject/liaison librarians, but recognised as a core competence, as information literacy efforts have gained momentum. A UK survey of subject librarians found the majority had attended short courses on teaching, almost one third had taken an extended programme and nearly a fifth had gained a formal qualification in teaching (Bewick and Corral 2010). Whatley (2009, p. 30–31) confirms the need for continual updating of pedagogical abilities to perform effectively in digital learning environments, as she outlines how technology has affected her role as a liaison librarian and her professional development needs:

I now need robust continuing education to enhance the effectiveness of my teaching and expose me to smart instructional design techniques. I need to hone my skills in developing achievable learning outcomes and in assessing those outcomes, and I need to understand what I can accomplish using online tutorials, podcasts, and research guides and what I cannot.

Summer schools have had a crucial role in relation to special collections, which are attracting renewed interest and usage as a result of digital library developments and have been identified by trend watchers as a likely future focus for the profession (Jefcoate 2007; ACRL 2010b). Lynch (2009, p. 4) argues that:

special collections are a nexus where technology and content are meeting to advance scholarship in extraordinary new ways ... Information technology is reshaping both stewardship and use of these collections.

Schreyer (2004) reports that few US schools offer comprehensive coverage in their programmes – although archives education is better – but many practitioners participate in the range of one-week introductory and advanced courses provided by the Rare Book School at Charlottesville<sup>2</sup>, hosted by the University of Virginia. The London Rare Books School<sup>3</sup> is the UK version of the Charlottesville programme, offered similarly as a series of one-week courses in the summer by the University of London as UK educational provision is similarly limited, though national initiatives in archives and developments in digital libraries are influencing curriculum developments; for example, Sheffield now offers electives on Archives and Records Management and on Digital Multimedia Libraries as part of the MA Librarianship.

### **Mentoring and Reflection as Professional Meta-competencies**

A significant trend over the last ten years is the growing recognition within the library profession of the benefits of mentoring relationships, the importance of critical reflection and the value of reflective writing to professional development. In the UK, mentoring and reflective practice have both been actively promoted by CILIP through their incorporation as essential features of its framework of qualifications. Candidates for all qualifications – from Certification for paraprofessionals, through Chartership for new professionals to Revalidation and Fellowship for experienced practitioners – must submit a personal reflective statement as a required element in the portfolio of evidence that forms the basis for the award. The CILIP guide to *Building Your Portfolio* (Watson 2008) includes practical guidance on reflective writing and sample extracts from personal statements of successful candidates. CILIP also provides supporting courses on portfolio building through its Career Development Group. Mentoring is a compulsory requirement for all Chartership candidates, strongly advised for Certification candidates and also available to applicants for Revalidation and Fellowship (CILIP 2006).

Professional organisations in other countries have also recognised the role of mentoring and reflection in professional development by featuring these practices in their competency statements (Abels et al. 2003; ACRL 2008; ALIA 2005; MLA 2007). In addition, mentoring relationships and reflective journals are common features of the library leadership institutes that have become a global phenomenon over the past 20 years (Mason and Wetherbee 2004). Mentoring and reflection can

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2 <http://www.rarebookschool.org/>.

3 <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/cmeps/events/courses/LRBS/index.htm>.



both be classed as ‘meta-competencies’. Cheetham and Chivers (2005, p. 109) define a meta-competency as ‘a competency that is beyond other competencies, and which enables an individual to monitor and/or develop other competencies’ and actually give reflection the status of a ‘super-meta-competency’, because of its potential to help people step beyond their other competencies and then analyse, modify and develop them. Many commentators have observed wider benefits from reflection beyond the personal and professional development of the individual as it can also lead to improvements in work practices and service delivery and thus contribute to quality enhancement and organisation development (Forrest 2008; Sen 2010).

Forrest (2008) describes the different purposes and types of reflection that are relevant to practitioners who need to evaluate their own personal performance and the overall service performance of their library (for example, to build a portfolio for a professional qualification or more immediately to improve the quality of a teaching session). She provides several models and examples as guidance, noting that people often find reflection hard, but that the process (and specifically the physical act) of writing can help people to progress their thinking, deepen their understanding and eventually improve their practice. Reflection can also often form an integral part of other staff and educational development initiatives, such as peer observation of teaching, as shown by Brewerton’s (2004, p. 36) informative account of the triad process used at Oxford Brookes University Library; one of the specific objectives of the scheme was ‘to encourage all Subject Librarians/ Assistant Subject Librarians to reflect on the effectiveness of their own teaching sessions and identify their developmental needs’. Cipkin and Stacey’s (2009, p. 31) comparative analysis of the skills, development and evaluation needs of liaison librarians operating at entry level and middle management also confirms the value of reflective practice at different career stages:

Although we operate at different levels within the organisation, we conclude that success depends, in large part, on reflective practice and recognition that subject liaison skills also interface with a host of other generic skills, including managerial and technological abilities.

Recognition of the central role of reflection in professional practice has led to its formal introduction into higher education, notably for students on vocational courses to prepare them for reflective practice in the workplace. Sen (2010) describes how students on the MA Librarianship programme at Sheffield are helped to develop skills in reflective writing through lectures, readings, workshops and an assessed task that involves an online journal where they reflect on their own development as a manager throughout a two-semester module on Management for Library and Information Services. Students have found this assignment particularly valuable in preparing them for the demands of the CILIP Chartership process. Library and information educators have also introduced mentoring into their practice in collaboration with practitioners. Hallam and

Newton-Smith (2006) describe two examples of 'transitional mentoring' initiated with the Australian Library and Information Association to ease the transition from professional education to the workplace: an individual mentoring scheme that begins during the final semester of the education programme and a group scheme to support students in their first year of employment. Other contemporary examples of library mentoring include programmes designed to support diversity within the profession and in-house leadership development initiatives (Moore et al. 2008; Murray 2007).

Power (2006) offers additional insights into the theory and reality of reflective workplace learning in an academic library, concluding with practical advice on the use of tools such as learning logs, learning plans, learning lines and portfolios to organise and record learning. Joint's (2003) discussion of writing for publication explains in practical terms how the process of reflecting and writing can be taken to a next stage of publishing in a professional or academic journal, offering the potential to enhance practice at a deeper and broader level by sharing personal or institutional insights and contributing to the professional knowledge base. In this context, the development of new open-access peer-reviewed journals, such as the US-based *Communications in Information Literacy* and UK-based *Journal of Information Literacy*, which have practitioners involved as editors or members of editorial boards, demonstrates the present high level of engagement of information literacy practitioners in CPD.

### **Leadership Institutes and Organisational Development Programmes**

Leadership development has been flagged as a priority for the library profession since the 1980s. Within the UK, it featured prominently in the Fielden report on human resource management in academic libraries, whose recommendations argued that

programmes on leadership and associated issues are required for those middle or senior managers in LIS who have major staff management responsibilities, and aspire to head of service positions (John Fielden Consultancy 1993, s. 4.41).

Ten years later, when converged library and computing services had become common in the UK, the HIMSS report similarly identified leadership among the key skills gaps and unmet development needs for aspiring service heads (Abbott 2003). The same concerns have been reported in other countries, notably Canada, where the '8 Rs report' identified leadership potential as the most important and most elusive competency for academic libraries recruiting professional staff and also argued that 'Leadership ... is a competency that should be held by staff throughout the organization' (8 Rs Research Team 2005, p. 19). Leadership in the present environment is even more challenging with the need to operate and influence across traditional boundaries as library and information organisations

continue to expand and collaborate with an array of diverse partners, including academic writing centres, careers services, educational development teams, multimedia production units, study skills tutors and university presses.

A common response to the perceived leadership problem is the 'leadership institute', a particular form of development programme that generally combines an intensive, multi-day residential element with a challenging practical assignment, diagnostic and reflective exercises, peer networking and coaching or mentoring. Mason and Wetherbee (2004) identify more than 30 programmes of this type launched over the last 20 years, mainly in the mid to late 1990s and predominantly in North America. Continuing demand is indicated by Arnold et al.'s (2008) survey of 230 participants in leadership institutes, which lists websites for 30 examples across the globe. Such institutes can be cross-sectoral or sector-specific, with several well-known examples in the academic library field, notably the ACRL/Harvard Leadership Institute (ALHI) and the Frye Leadership Institute, which is aimed at both library and IT professionals (Gjelten and Fishel 2006). UK initiatives in this area also date back to the 1990s, when the former British Library Research and Development Department sponsored an experimental cross-sectoral strategic management development programme that eventually led to a programme for the higher education sector managed by the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) with other partners (Noon 1997).

The latest example in the UK is the Future Leaders programme for academic information services, run by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, with support from SCONUL and the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA), which is 'based on the assumption that excellent leadership cannot be taught but can be learned' (Stevenson 2006, p. 19). Cox et al. (2006) identify other distinctive characteristics of the Future Leaders programme, for example:

- year-long format, including two residential modules and three meetings of learning sets, culminating with a capstone day to share and review achievements and learning;
- emphasis on self-awareness and ongoing reflection, including a regular supply of stimulating readings and strong encouragement to maintain a reflective journal;
- pre-course interaction at an individual level with facilitators, including interview, analysis of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator data and presentation of 360-degree feedback report;
- execution of a self-selected project, aligned with institutional priorities, regularly reported and supported at learning sets during the year;
- availability of ongoing supports, including VLE forum and resources list, teleconferences and access to programme facilitators and participants.
- highly supportive network of contacts with similar aspirations and challenges, cemented by sharing of experiences and the atmosphere of openness, honesty and trust.

Key features of contemporary library leadership programmes thus include the use of technology-supported learning to supplement face-to-face interactions. As an alternative to externally-provided programmes, some academic libraries have opted to develop and implement their own in-house leadership development programmes, a notable example being the University of Saskatchewan Library in Canada. Williamson's (2009) case study describes how her programme was deliberately not designed as an intensive immersion programme, but instead structured into six shorter (two-day) off-site modules, each covering a particular theme: leadership and relationship building; team building; leading change; performance planning and accountability; leadership and organisational culture; and personal mastery and organisational effectiveness. Williamson (2009, p. 623–4) explains that this less intensive model:

is intended to help reduce the resource impacts on the participants, provide time in between modules to reflect upon, practise and implement what has been learned and to provide time to complete reading or practical leadership assignments.

Murray (2007) also recognises the need for individual libraries to take responsibility for leadership development, specifically in relation to succession planning. Advocating a strategy of 'grow your own', she suggests various tactics (including leadership institutes and project-based assignments), but places particular emphasis on internal systems and processes to support development, describing the use of formal mentoring and personal development plans at the University of Cambridge.

Although leadership institutes are evidently well established and well liked within the sector, such programmes have been criticised for their short-term nature and failure to cover in sufficient breadth and depth the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to lead change in complex digital environments. Hernon and Schwartz (2006) argue for a more cohesive and comprehensive approach, represented by the new PhD in Managerial Leadership for the Information Professions initiated by Simmons College in Boston<sup>4</sup>. Developed with a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under its 2005 Librarians for the 21st Century programme, the Simmons PhD combines doctoral-level study with leadership development in a distinctive and novel way. It differs from leadership institutes in its strong research focus, much longer duration (enabling fuller exploration of leadership theories and their application) and the recognised academic qualification awarded on completion. It also differs from a standard PhD in library and information science in its concentration on managerial leadership, emphasis on contribution to the theory of organisational behaviour and management and the involvement of leaders in the profession as 'professors of practice' working alongside Simmons faculty members.

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4 <http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/academics/programs/phd-mlip.php>.

## Practitioner Doctorates for Advanced Professional Development

Doctoral degrees have not traditionally been a popular CPD strategy for practising librarians. Powell et al.'s (2002) survey of ALA, ASIST, MLA and SLA membership involvement in research found only 21 of their 615 respondents had a doctorate in library and information science. However, Johnson (2009) argues that more LIS Masters graduates will wish to progress to the next rung on the qualification ladder as the status of both Bachelors and Masters degrees declines following the massive global expansion of higher education. Anecdotal evidence supports this claim, particularly in relation to academic librarians, with a trend towards research-based career development already evident among practitioners in North America, where deans of university libraries often prefer candidates for senior positions to have a doctorate or be willing to obtain one. Academic status is an acknowledged issue for academic librarians that affects their credibility with the academic staff that they aspire to partner in the teaching and learning process. Growth in postgraduate research student intakes, particularly from overseas, has resulted in many subject/liaison librarians spending more time supporting research students and led some to conclude that they would be better equipped for this role if they had personal experience of research at a higher level than the typical Masters dissertation project.

The trend of LIS practitioners studying for higher degrees reflects a more general trend among professional disciplines as practitioners in all domains are faced with continually expanding knowledge bases and the need for enhanced skills in data handling and analysis to support evidence-based practice in the workplace. There is a widespread view that traditional PhD programmes do not adequately prepare people for senior positions in the professions, hence the need for new forms of degree programmes that combine doctoral-level research with practice-based learning (Wormell 2004). New models of research degree have emerged to meet the needs of practitioners seeking advanced professional development, the most significant being the 'professional doctorate' (also known as a 'practitioner' or 'practice-based' doctorate), which is typically a highly-structured subject-specific degree of shorter duration than the traditional PhD with the name of the profession in the title, for example Doctor of Education (EdD) or Doctor of Business Administration (DBA). The first EdD was awarded at Harvard University in 1921, but professional doctorates did not appear in Australia and the UK until the 1990s; Bourner et al. (2001) record the University of Bristol's EdD as the first British example in 1992, but report rapid growth thereafter, with 109 programmes identified at 38 institutions by 1998.

Specialist doctoral degrees have now been introduced in many subjects. A notable example is the structured, part-time Doctoral Programme in E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning at Lancaster University<sup>5</sup> introduced in 2008, which combines two four-day residentials with online learning and normally takes

5 [http://csalt.lancs.ac.uk/csalt/tel\\_docprog.htm](http://csalt.lancs.ac.uk/csalt/tel_docprog.htm).

four years to complete, involving six taught modules and a thesis of around 50,000 words. Within LIS, Wormell (2004, p. 117) outlines plans for a professional doctorate at the Swedish School of Library and Information Science, arguing that the new degree will:

fit the needs of libraries, business and industry for research oriented, but broadly educated senior managers and technologists, who – with a doctoral training – can perform more effectively in their working environment.

The model includes half-day workshops on Saturdays, combining taught elements and reflective sessions run as action learning sets, supplemented by a virtual research community. The thesis here consists of a portfolio (c.50,000 words) with a prescribed structure based on three studies of issues within the candidate's organisation (written as journal articles and refereed externally), supported by a context-setting introduction, a literature review, a concluding chapter and appendices including a reflective report (5,000 words) and three case studies (2,000 words each).

In the US, in addition to the Simmons College initiative, Syracuse University<sup>6</sup> has established a Doctorate of Professional Studies in Information Management, described as 'a part-time executive degree program for working professionals' and as 'a scientist-practitioner degree, focused on training future leaders in applied areas of the information professions'. This is a three-year programme aiming to prepare practitioners with at least five years experience for 'senior leadership jobs in business, government, libraries, and elsewhere'. Highlighted features include the flexible online, hybrid, limited-residency format; the applied focus, with customisable areas of study; and a strong peer support network. The thesis project again is on a smaller scale than the standard doctoral project: it is expected to be completed in a single year and to have the format, tone and style of a publishable trade book. In the UK, Robert Gordon University<sup>7</sup> introduced a Professional Doctorate in Information Science (DInfSc) in 2010 as a practice-based alternative to the traditional PhD for practitioners with a minimum of three years managerial experience in information or knowledge management, which can be taken part-time or full-time, on campus or online, but requires a thesis closer to the standard PhD length (c.80,000 words). In addition, the Information School at Sheffield<sup>8</sup> will shortly offer a four-year taught doctorate similar to the Lancaster model and the successful EdD offered by the School of Education at Sheffield.

Professional doctorates conform to the same academic standards as a traditional PhD, but have additional features likely to appeal to university librarians, namely:

6 <http://ischool.syr.edu/academics/doctoralprograms/DPS>.

7 <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/information-communication-and-media/study-options/postgraduate-research/professional-doctorate-in-information-science>.

8 [http://www.shef.ac.uk/is/research/phd\\_mphil/index.html](http://www.shef.ac.uk/is/research/phd_mphil/index.html).



- a focus on work-related issues, working on real problems/projects
- rapid application of learning and research within the workplace
- generation of publishable work as part of the submitted thesis (e.g. journal articles)
- participation in action learning sets and support from a peer network/online community.

In addition, as a form of in-service (rather than pre-service) professional development, they differ from the traditional doctorate in the period typically set for completion, which is shorter than the pro rata six years usually suggested for a part-time PhD, reflecting the experiential learning already gained by specialist practitioners and managers. The modular structure with its larger taught element and division of submitted work into smaller publishable outputs make this an attractive and manageable option for busy professionals who are committed to evidence-based practice and keen to raise their game academically. There are similarities with leadership programmes, but the practitioner doctorate offers a more sustained period of reflective personal development.

## Conclusion

CPD is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a professional practitioner, which is particularly important in the context of continuing rapid technology-driven change in university libraries. Staff development is a shared responsibility of individuals and employers that is being pursued through numerous diverse routes, from conventional external courses and summer schools on special interests to managed learning in the workplace using virtual environments and innovative work-based education programmes. Reflection and mentoring are more widely practised as a result of their incorporation in professional qualification schemes and leadership programmes. The preparation of future leaders remains a global concern for the profession that is being addressed by university libraries collectively and individually with in-house initiatives being introduced alongside established leadership institutes. Practice-based taught doctoral degrees are emerging as a promising new method of advanced professional development, illustrating the growing professional recognition of the need to see education, research and development as a continuum informing, enhancing and advancing university library practice.

## References

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