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Professionals

Career training gets new seal of approval

FOR MANY YEARS, CILIP and its predecessor bodies have been accrediting university library and information courses, so that new entrants to the profession can be sure that their academic studies will equip them for library and information work and for professional qualification.

Now CILIP is turning its attention to continuing professional development (CPD), and is poised to offer a Seal of Recognition to CPD providers who can show that their courses and training activities address one or more areas of CILIP's Body of Professional Knowledge.

'I have had some very positive experiences of continuing professional development in the commercial and legal fields, both of schemes linked to professional associations and those created in house,' says David Byrne, Head of Information at BT Group Legal and a member of CILIP's Accreditation Board, which will oversee the new Seal of Recognition.

'It seemed a logical next step to extend CILIP's reach in the field of training to provide recognition for the various courses, training events and learning activity in the information sector that are not included among the courses currently accredited by CILIP.'

Fellow board member Gwenda Sippings agrees. 'At my first accreditation visit to a university in 1999, I was impressed by the importance given to meeting the criteria and gaining CILIP's authoritative approval of the course content,' she says. 'This scheme builds on that quest for quality.'

CPD providers who have taken part in the pilots for the scheme are equally enthusiastic. 'SoR will make it easier for us to market training beyond London (where we are already known) and may mean we can grow our training programme,' said Mike Clarke, Director of the London Libraries Development Agency. 'Being part of a "family" of formally recognised LIS training providers can only help us and the sector.'

LLDA offered its Building for Excellence customer care training package for the seal. Initially developed in Redbridge Libraries as in-house training, the agency wanted to offer it more widely and looked to CILIP for ways of benchmarking it. 'Building for Excellence is a project of which we in Redbridge are very proud,' adds Carol Boswarthack, who led on the

CILIP is launching a quality mark for benchmarking short training courses. **Tim Buckley Owen** takes a look at how it will work.



Gazette fact file

Get the Seal

An application pack for CILIP's Seal of Recognition is now available, and training providers are invited to contact the Qualifications & Professional Development Department for further information.
seal@cilip.org.uk
www.cilip.org.uk/seal



package's development. 'We are thrilled it has been among the first to gain this new form of recognition.'

Jim Tinneny of the University of Ulster faced a similar challenge when asked to devise a 12-week module on school library science for a group of lecturers from Sri Lanka. 'From this I began working on the School of Education at the university to get them to set up something similar for our school librarians,' he explains. 'Once word got around interested parties, it became clear that CILIP's approval would be a must in order to attract participants.'

His initiative paid off. 'The fact that the course was over-subscribed in the first year was clearly down to the knowledge that CILIP was involved,' he says. The award of the SoR has formalised CILIP's approval,

he continues. 'This is especially important to school librarians, who have until recently felt they were the poor relations among librarians. My impression is that because of CILIP's recognition of this course the students now feel that they are really part of the wider library community.'

CILIP is of course a training provider in its own right. But the LLDA's Mike Clarke has no problem with CILIP being both an accreditor and a provider as long as there is transparency. 'We are a small sector - there isn't a sufficiently mature market in training provision, so as long as CILIP does not act in an anti-competitive way, the more the merrier.'

CILIP's Head of Training & Development Penny Simmonds is clear that her programme will be assessed no differently from those of all other training providers. 'CILIP Training will need to seek approval for SoR in the same way as any other training provider,' confirms David Byrne. 'CILIP is concerned with the standard of every provider.' Now the scheme is up and running (with a formal launch at Online Information 2006 at the end of November), the Accreditation Board is in no doubt that training providers will line up to apply for recognition.

'CILIP has a gold-plated brand that has value far beyond its current membership,' adds David Byrne. 'A commercial course recognised by a trusted professional body is a powerful combination. Any training provider serious about working with information professionals will need the Seal of Recognition.'

NEWS BRIEFS

Conference heads for sell-out

CILIP's second RFID in Libraries conference has nearly sold out for the second year running. More than 170 attendees have already registered, and just a few places remain for the UK library community's premier RFID event, which will be held in London on 15 November.



The conference theme is 'Identifying and Exploiting the Full Potential of RFID'. One programme highlight is the presentation of results of exclusive research into RFID implementation in the UK. This was specially commissioned for the conference and has generated an excellent response.

A few places left

Overall conference sponsor is 3M Library Systems, and other sponsors include Intrepid Security Solutions, Intellident, D-Tech Direct, Talis, 2CQR, Telepen, DS, and Emerald. Delegates will be able to see the latest RFID technology and discuss their requirements with industry experts. Last year 90 per cent of delegates rated the conference 'Good to Excellent'. It is supported by the MLA and the DTI as well as the BIC/CILIP RFID in Libraries Group. Media sponsors are *Gazette* magazine and GovernmentForum 365.com

■ Don't miss *Gazette's* special feature on RFID in the UK on pages 4-7, which provides a pre-conference briefing. Book one of the few remaining places at RFID in Libraries at www.cilip.org.uk/rfid2006 or email conferences@cilip.org.uk

PEOPLE

New President named for CILIP

Bruce Madge, Sub-Librarian, the British Medical Association, has been elected unopposed as CILIP President Elect for 2007-08. Bruce has many years of experience in the health information sector, including Head of Healthcare Information at the British Library. He will serve as CILIP President 2008-09.

