

SERIALS IN INFORMATION AND LIBRARY MANAGEMENT COURSES AT LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

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Looks at the role of serials in Information and Library Management courses at Liverpool John Moores University. Demonstrates how serials run through the award programmes in a structured way. Details the focus on serials in Resource Management and Collection Management modules, including the Serials Roadshow. Outlines the coverage of serials in other modules.

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Serials as part of Information and Library Management programmes

It is sometimes mistakenly thought that Information and Library Management programmes neglect serials as an area of study. This is probably because when scanning course documentation, serials does not appear as a module in its own right. However, at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) different aspects of serials run through programmes in a structured way.

Serials in modular programmes at LJMU

LJMU offers both BA (Hons) and BSc (Hons) in Information and Library Management (ILM). This is a modular course in which students take core modules and choose from option modules according to their own particular interests and skills. Students can choose the BA or the BSc route but, regardless of which route students take, they all take a core module at second level called *Resource Management*. This focuses on collection management, including the importance of the effective management of serials within a collection. Second level is regarded as appropriate for this module - after they have undertaken introductory/basic aspects of the subject at level 1 and before they proceed to more specialised aspects at level 3.

The Postgraduate Diploma in Information and Library Management is also now a modular course. Students take a set of core modules in the first semester, and in the second semester take further core modules and choose from option modules, reflecting areas in which they wish to specialise, having identified interests in the first semester. *Collection Management* is one of the option modules in the second semester, and has been heavily subscribed.

Resource management and collection management modules at LJMU

Collection management focuses on how to acquire, manage and develop collections of various media in different types of library and information services. In the lecture programme attention is paid to serials and their importance in collections. Information firstly focuses on the importance of serials in various collections, the importance of serials in providing up-to-date information, the

range of formats, and how serials can form the major part of some collections. The next stage is the acquisition of serials, including methods of acquisition, where these methods are most appropriate, and their advantages and disadvantages. The role of the serials agent is discussed in detail - how they operate, why they are needed and what they do. Information in the form of promotional material is obtained from a serials agent, and a pack is given to each student. Other aspects of serials are discussed - how to select, the long term implications of serials holdings, the question of binding, choices in methods of arrangement, and so forth. The automation of serials is another topic and comparisons are made between automated and manual systems. Lectures include examples of aspects of serials management in specific libraries. Serials are featured in ways other than lectures in the modules. Students visit an information and library service to look at collection management and development generally. This visit is usually made to Liverpool Institute of Higher Education, which comprises more than one site but is not too large for the overall collection management to be appreciated. Here students are interested to see the important role that serials play in the collection. They also visit LJMU service to see how serials are managed throughout the university sites. Guest speakers have also been invited to demonstrate automated serials systems.

The Serials Roadshow

Obviously we are delighted to take advantage of *The Serials Roadshow* and, because they are so accommodating, we can locate their annual visit at an appropriate time in the modules. We have the format involving the four core speakers - the serials publisher, the serials agent, the librarian and the binder. We follow the pattern of listening to the four core speakers followed by a panel discussion, in which the students have the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers - an opportunity of which they take advantage! All students receive a pack of information about *The Serials Roadshow*. This contains handouts relating to talks by the core speakers, brief biographical notes on the speakers and details of the UKSG. The *Roadshow* is a successful event in itself, but is

even better received when arranged at an appropriate time in a programme of study.

The role of serials in other ILM modules at LJMU

The *Collection Management* and *Resources Management* modules include information on serials management, but serials are covered in other ways in other modules, and so form pervasive subject matter throughout the degree and postgraduate programmes.

In other modules, such as *Research Methodology* and *Information Sources*, students are instructed in the use of abstracts and indexes (hard copy, CD-ROM and online), and know from their own research and experience about the need to obtain information from serials other than those held by their own learning resource centre. They are aware, and reminded, of the need to obtain serials information via Inter Library Loans. For this reason a visit to LJMU's Inter Library Loan Department is incorporated into the programmes.

In *Information Sources* the history, types and forms, significance and use, and bibliographic control of serials is covered. Attention is paid to directories and union lists. Abstracts and indexes are also covered, both in the context as serials publications and also for access to the contents of journals. In *Information Materials* serials are covered in the context of bibliographic description and rules. The financial aspects of serials are covered in *Financial Management*, and in *Managing Library Systems* the aspect of serials housekeeping in library housekeeping systems is being introduced. *The Electronic Library* (level 1) provides an introduction to the electronic journal and networks, which is followed up at level 2 (and at postgraduate level) more specifically and in more detail via the Internet in *Access to Databases*.

Conclusion

Therefore, we take serials very seriously in our Information and Library Management award programmes at LJMU. The modular structures have been carefully and logically constructed, so that the contents of modules are linked and developed. We feel that it is more meaningful for serials to be included in different modules, rather than treat serials as an isolated topic.