Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from The University of Sheffield

1	**Programme Title**	Librarianship Librarianship (PE)
2	**Programme Code**	INFT03 MA Librarianship (Full-Time) INFT13 MA Librarianship (Part-Time) INFT32 PG Dip Librarianship (Full-Time) INFT33 PG Dip Librarianship (Part-Time) INFT34 PG Cert Librarianship (Full-Time) INFT35 PG Cert Librarianship (Part-Time) INFT98 MA Librarianship (PE) (Full-Time) INFT99 MA Librarianship (PE) (Part-Time)
3	**JACS Code**	P120, P121
4	**Level of Study**	Postgraduate
5a	**Final Qualification**	Master of Arts (MA)
5b	**QAA FHEQ Level**	Masters
6	**Intermediate Qualification(s)**	Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip), Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)
7	**Teaching Institution** (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	**Faculty**	Social Sciences
9	**Department**	The Information School
10	**Other Department(s) involved in teaching the programme**	Not applicable
11	**Mode(s) of Attendance**	Full-time, Part-time
12	**Duration of the Programme**	1 year or 2 to 3 years
13	**Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body**	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)
14	**Date of production/revision**	March 2014, Revised April 2018

15. Background to the programme and subject area

Libraries and information services make a vital contribution to effective education, social and cultural services, as well as successful economic, business and commercial activities. The skills of librarians are essential to manage the repositories of both paper and electronic materials, and to identify, organise and make accessible the ever increasing amounts of information available in electronic, paper and multimedia formats. Technological advances mean that libraries and information services in both the public and private sectors are changing dramatically and library and information professionals need skills and experience in information handling, IT and management together with strong interpersonal skills.

The Information School was awarded an "excellent" score for teaching quality in 2001 by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Review and also has an international reputation for research, having been awarded the highest possible rating in all Research Assessment Exercises carried out by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (including the top 5* rating in 2001). Students will therefore be exposed to the latest concepts and ideas in the information professions. The composition of research and teaching in the Information School is highly multi-disciplinary, with staff backgrounds in Computer Science, Information Science, Information Systems, Knowledge Management, Librarianship and Business. Further information is available at the School website at: www.shef.ac.uk/is/

The MA in Librarianship Programme equips students with all the knowledge and skills needed to enter and develop professionally in this world of library and information work. There are two separate routes to gaining the MA in Librarianship: the *Professional Preparation* (PP) Route and the *Professional Enhancement* (PE) Route. Students following the PP Route generally have one year's relevant work experience prior to starting the degree programme and are aiming to start a career in the library and information professions on completion of the programme. Students following the PE Route generally have at least two year's relevant work experience prior to starting the degree programme and are aiming to gain knowledge and skills to enhance and develop their career in the library and information professions.

There are also Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma options within the programme. These serve two purposes. First, they provide exit options for those who are only able to complete 60 credits (PG Certificate) or 120 credits (PG Diploma) of the programme. Secondly, applicants who do not have a first degree but have other appropriate qualifications and experience may register for the Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma and progress to the MA programme, subject to the approval of the Examinations Board.

Within the Librarianship programme core competencies in IT, management and information handling are taught, together with a wide range of specialisms, allowing the student to study particular information sectors and types of information resource in depth. The School has an international reputation for research in library management and public policy, and has established the Centre for the Public Library and Information in Society. As a result teaching and learning on the programme is research-led and students can be sure that they will be exposed to the latest ideas and concepts in librarianship today.

There is a very strong record of graduate employment following successful completion of the MA in Librarianship programme. Students benefit from the international reputation of the School and the fact that the programme is fully accredited by the Chartered Institute for Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). Graduates from the MA in Librarianship go into a range of library and information related jobs in a variety of different employment sectors, including:

- *Education sector:* libraries and learning resource centres in universities, colleges, schools and research institutes.
- *Public sector:* public libraries within local authorities, prison and hospital libraries, government departments, National libraries, charitable and voluntary organizations.
- *Private sector:* law/solicitors' firms, banking/financial services organizations and communications/media companies.
- *Professional Organizations:* industrial and environmental professional bodies.

Some graduates take the opportunity to extend their study of librarianship to doctoral level within the Information School. Further information is available at the Departmental Web site at www.shef.ac.uk/is/careers

16. Programme aims

For all its programmes the School aims to:

1) deliver a curriculum for each degree programme that develops in students a broad understanding of the subject area together with a detailed and critical understanding of selected areas.

2) provide students with the knowledge and skills required to work as effective information professionals, managers of information or research workers in their chosen field.

3) enable those already working in the information field to update and expand their professional understanding and competencies.

4) prepare students for professional practice by providing programmes which meet the accreditation requirements of professional bodies and that meet the needs of employers.

5) deliver teaching informed and inspired by professional expertise and by the research and scholarship of staff.

6) encourage students to become informed citizens and to understand the place of information in society.

In addition the **MA Librarianship** aims to:

1) provide students with the knowledge and skills required to work as effective information professionals in library and information services in both the public and private sectors.

2) equip students with a broad understanding of the profession and allow them to develop a detailed and critical understanding of selected areas of their choice.

3) introduce students to the best current thought and practice in library and information work.

4) equip students with research skills relevant to the employment market.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding: Students completing the programme will:	
K1	have developed an understanding of the theory and practice of librarianship and information studies.
K2	be able to demonstrate an understanding of the nature of library and information resources and their uses, the interface between information and its users, and the technology and systems which produce, analyse and communicate information in libraries and information units.
K3	have acquired an up-to-date subject knowledge and understanding relevant to the employment market in library and information services.
K4	have acquired in depth subject knowledge in chosen specialisms.
K5	be able to apply theory and recognise best practice in the library/information workplace.
K6	be able to understand the application of research-based approaches to problem solving and decision making relevant to their professional experience and needs.
K7	be able to re-evaluate their professional practice in the context of current and emerging theory and research in library and information science (PE Route only).

Skills and other attributes: Students completing the programme will:	
S1	have developed a range of practical/professional skills relevant to the employment market in library and information services.
S2	have acquired practical/professional skills in chosen specialisms.
S3	have acquired research skills relevant to their chosen field of work.
S4	have acquired transferable skills of relevance to their studies and for lifelong learning.
S5	have developed communication and interpersonal skills to complement their subject knowledge.
S6	have acquired new skills and approaches relevant to their level and direction of professional development (PE Route only).

Students successfully completing the Postgraduate Diploma programme (PP and PE Routes) will be able to demonstrate K1-K5 and S1-S2, S4-S6 above, with the exception of research skills specifically associated with carrying out the Research Methods module and the research dissertation.

Students successfully completing the Postgraduate Certificate programme (PP and PE Routes) will be able to demonstrate a more limited range of learning outcomes from K1-K5, and S1, S4-S5, in accordance with their chosen modules, with the exception of research skills specifically associated with carrying out the Research Methods module and the research dissertation.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

Induction sessions and preparatory coursework during the first weeks of the programme are designed to introduce students to Departmental procedures and standards related to the writing and presentation of coursework, and to provide early formative feedback on performance. (S4, S5, S6 above).

Lectures establish the direction of studies and present information, ideas, case examples and critical analysis. Multimedia resources are used in lectures and student participation is encouraged. Students are provided with handouts of slide presentations and other lecture notes and materials. Visiting speakers are an important feature of the lecture programme on some modules. They are normally information management practitioners or researchers and provide real-life examples of information management practice and problems, and expose students to examples of good practice. (K1-K7 above).

Seminars, which may be staff-led or student-led, are designed to facilitate greater interactivity, allowing ideas to be discussed and challenged. Students are enabled to work through, analyse and respond to information and ideas imparted through lectures, for example through case study analysis. (K1-K7, S1, S2, S6 above).

Tutorials are small-group or one-to-one sessions with academic staff and are used on some modules to support group project-work or independent study. Research supervision also is provided through regular one-to-one tutorials throughout the dissertation research process for those registered on the MA in Librarianship Programme. The word tutorial is also used to describe meetings arranged between a tutor and an individual student in order to clarify a problem experienced by the student in the understanding of material or in the process of preparing assessed work.

Practical laboratory sessions are used on a variety of modules to provide students with hands-on experience of using ICT. (S1, S2, S6 above).

Collaborative group-work is an important feature of some modules. It is designed to enable students to work on complex, multi-faceted librarianship and management problems in a way that reflects professional practice and provides opportunities for students to develop professional and interpersonal skills. (S1, S2, S4 above).

Task-oriented projects, case studies: encourage students to contextualise theoretical and professional perspectives. (K4, S1, S2, S6 above).

Study visits and extensive contributions by practitioners expose students to examples of best practice. (K1-K6 above).

The Web provides 24/7 access to Departmental learning resources such as lecture slide presentations and handouts, and to administrative information relating to teaching. A Web-based 'virtual learning environment' is used on some modules to provide integrated access to both learning resources and computer-mediated communication facilities. (K1-K7above).

Individual and Group Presentations with feedback: help students to develop presentational skills. (S4, S5 above).

Independent learning is essential to successful completion of the programme and is expected for each module. Independent study is generally geared towards assimilation and further clarification of material encountered in lectures, preparation for seminars, tutorials and practical sessions, preparation for written assessments, and broader development of knowledge of the field of study. Independent study contributes to the development of all the programme's learning outcomes, and encourages *s*tudents to take responsibility for their own learning, to organise their time and develop effective learning skills. (S3-S4, S6 above).

Dissertation work under the supervision of academic staff allows students to develop and practice research skills. (K4, K6-K7, S3, S6 above).

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

Each taught module is assessed at the end of the semester in which it is taught. Assessment methods vary from module to module and are designed to measure attainment of intended learning outcomes to meet the aims and objectives of the module. All students experience a range of assessed individual and group assignments. There are no formal unseen examinations.

Knowledge and understanding are demonstrated through written assignments involving essays and reports. These require students to provide evidence of their ability to synthesise knowledge and learning, organise information and apply critical judgement to evidence. (K1-K7 above).

Professional/practical skills are demonstrated through case study analysis, creation of websites, and the completion of problem solving exercises. (S1, S2, S6 above).

Transferable skills (e.g. intellectual, technical and professional skills) are demonstrated through exercises including case study analysis, problem-solving, creation of Web sites and the research dissertation report (S1-S6 above).

Interpersonal skills are generally incorporated within modules and related to relevant assessments as appropriate. Examples include oral presentations, group exercises, student-led seminars, the use of research-based teaching materials and methods, and problem based case studies.

Research skills are assessed through the core module: Research Methods and Dissertation Preparation and the Dissertation itself.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

Internal

- Mission Statement of the University of Sheffield, as presented in its Corporate Plan.
- The Learning and Teaching Strategy 2011-16 of the University of Sheffield.
- The Faculty of Social Sciences Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013-16
- Sheffield graduate concept

- Current research and scholarship of School staff.
- Discussions with members of the Information School Advisory Panel (comprising senior members of the information professions) and formal/informal relationships with practitioners
- Regular analysis of the employment market through the Advisory Panel and investigation of job adverts in the professional press
- School annual student programme and module evaluations.

External

- The aims and objectives of the MSc programme are consonant with, and address a significant proportion of, the CILIP Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB), available from http://www.cilip.org.uk/jobs-careers/professional-knowledge-and-skills-base/pages/professional%20knowledge%20and%20skills%20base.aspx
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2008) http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx

20. Programme structure and regulations

The MA in Librarianship Programme offers two Routes: The **Professional Preparation** (PP) Route is for students entering as graduates with relevant work experience in a library or in a post in which a significant amount of work is related to information handling and use. Experience is normally expected to be equivalent to about one year in length although there is flexibility around this based on individual circumstances. The **Professional Enhancement** (PE) Route is for students entering as graduates and with experience of information work at a managerial or supervisory level (at least 2 years). There is a full-time and part-time option for both Routes. The full-time programme is offered over 12 months starting in late September each year, and finishing the following September. The part-time programme also starts in late September each year and normally takes two or three years to complete.

The programme is modular in nature, allowing students flexibility in the design of their degree.

Core modules are compulsory and ensure a coherent programme structure providing all students with the key concepts and essential tools they need to work as competent professionals in their chosen field.

Approved modules allow students to follow professional and personal interests in specialised areas in greater depth. In consultation with staff, students choose modules to design an academically coherent programme consistent with their own career aspirations and interests.

All core and approved modules are worth 15 credits (apart from one 30-credit module spread across both teaching semesters) and are designed on the basis of approximately 10 hours of work per credit (including contact hours, private study and assessment) in order to ensure an appropriate and uniform workload. The dissertation is worth 45 credits. Students aiming for a Masters degree must register for modules to the value of 180 credits.

A Practical Computing Module is also available in semester 1 to support students on the PP and PE Routes. This involves up to two hours of lectures/practical laboratory work per week and is not credit-rated. In consultation with the module co-ordinator, students may decide to attend all, some or no sessions on this module, depending on their prior technical skills and experience in relevant areas.

A year long, optional, non-credit bearing module on academic writing is available to all students. This supports students in developing the skills to write academic essays, reports and the dissertation.

Successful completion of the programme leads to the award of the Masters' degree, with either a 'pass', 'pass with merit' or 'pass with distinction' grade. On both PP and PE Routes, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma level awards are available after successful completion of taught modules to the value of 60 credits and 120 credits respectively (excluding the Research Methods and Dissertation Preparation module and the Dissertation module), for students who do not wish to progress further.

Please refer to the Programme Regulations, General University Regulations and the On-line Directory of Modules for detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules.

21. Student development over the course of study

Students who begin the programme will have had relevant experience in a library or information related environment. This is intended to provide a basic knowledge of professional issues and practice on which the MA in Librarianship Programme can build.

Core (compulsory) modules ensure that students take a coherent course, and introduce them to fundamental principles, key concepts and techniques. On the PE Route, core modules are reduced to a minimum and there is increased emphasis on work-related learning.

Approved (elective) modules enable students on both Routes to design a programme reflecting their developing interests and career aspirations in depth.

All students registered for the MA in Librarianship are required to complete a research-based dissertation of 10,000-15,000 words. This enables students to apply appropriate research techniques to a real-world related problem, for example a gap in knowledge, a disagreement between 'the experts', a hypothesis which has not been adequately tested, or a question which previous research has left unanswered. For full-time students the dissertation is carried out in the period from mid-June to September. For part-time students this is normally carried out during the period from mid-June to September in their second year or during their 3rd year on the programme. Students may develop their own dissertation topics, in consultation with staff, or select from a list of possible topics generated by academic staff and employers.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available at http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/is/pgt.

Applicants for the PP Route will normally be expected to have at least a second class honours degree (or its equivalent) in any subject discipline, and to have had practical experience in a library, information unit, or in an information-related role in another organization before joining the School.

Applicants for the PE Route will normally be expected to have, or expected to obtain before joining the programme, at least a second class honours degree (or its equivalent) in any subject discipline, and will be practicing library/ information professionals with at least two years relevant work experience prior to starting the programme. Applicants without first degrees will be considered for entry onto the PGDiploma and PGCertificate programmes in the first instance.

For both PP and PE Routes, additional requirements relating to English language proficiency may also be required.

23. Additional information

The Information School is housed in the modern purpose-built Regent Court and has its own dedicated computer facilities, laboratories and students social/study area. The School is ten minutes' walk from the city centre and is adjacent to the St. George's Library which contains the University's main collection of Librarianship, Information Science, Data Science, Computer Science and Management materials. The University's Information Commons, with its excellent resources for individual and group study, is within a few minutes' walk from the School.

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at www.shef.ac.uk/ssid.