Finding out about libraries, archives and information services

The libraries, archives and information services industry is part of the lifelong learning sector, represented by Lifelong Learning UK Sector Skills Council, which also includes: community learning and development; further education; higher education; and work-based learning. The sector as a whole currently employs over 1.2 million people in a range of educational institutions, as well as public and private sector organisations.

The libraries, archivists and information service (LAIS) industry involves those undertaking these activities in institutions whose primary purpose is lifelong learning. This includes public libraries and archives, higher education and further education libraries and archives, and national libraries and archives.

Key facts:
- In the industry there are:
  - 48,982 staff in England
  - 1,055 staff in Northern Ireland
  - 5,388 in Scotland
  - 3,112 in Wales
- 37% of the female workforce is at the most senior levels.
- Women represent over 50% of those employed as information officers.
- Up to 60% of archivists are women and they are well represented at senior level.

Jobs in the industry include: chief archivist, chief information officer, chief librarian, archivist, librarian, information officer, assistant archivist, library assistant/information assistant

Entry and progression
Entry requirements and progression in the industry are varied. The most common route into the profession is to take a degree in Librarianship and Information Management accredited by Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). To become a qualified Archivist, applicants need to gain a postgraduate qualification in archive studies, or archives and record management, recognised by the Society of Archivists. Work experience is essential for those wishing to enrol on postgraduate courses.

To become an archivist, applicants need a degree, followed by a post-graduate qualification recognised by the Society of Archivists. The following degree subjects can be useful: History; Information science; Library studies; and Modern or ancient languages. Work experience, gained through volunteering, is essential to gain entry onto a postgraduate
Archivist programme. Competition for places on postgraduate Archivist programmes is high.

To become an information assistant, applicants are required to have an NVQ Level 2 (or equivalent) or 4 GCSEs (grades A-C, including English and Maths or the equivalent), two years relevant experience and an appropriate IT qualification.

There are several routes to becoming a librarian: studying for a university qualification before starting work; or by finding a job as a library assistant and qualify by gaining experience and work-based training combined with some study.

For library assistant roles, applicants will need at least five GCSEs.

There are a range of industry endorsed courses (at foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate), apprenticeships, training schemes and vocational qualifications.

For job specific entry requirements, job profiles should be consulted.

**Workforce statistics**
Number of UK employees: 58,537
Gender: 41% male, 59% female

[N.B. There are no further data on workforce characteristics.]

**Employment trends and future prospects**
It is estimated that the size of the lifelong learning workforce as a whole will increase from 2008 to 2015, so significant recruitment will be required during this period. It is likely that the library, archives and information services industry will increase in a similar manner.

As the lifelong learning sector relies on voluntary workers and a high proportion of publicly funded positions, the recession is unlikely to impact the estimated demand for the workforce as severely as the private sector. However, it is expected that there will be an overall decrease in available funding, which will affect employment figures.

**Skill requirements and shortages**
The main skills shortages in the industry are:

- Information and communication technology (ICT) skills: digitisation; metadata management; database building; basic and advanced ICT user skills; web management and web content development
- Specific technical skills: cataloguing; indexing; stock selection; conservation; preservation; information retrieval and management; knowledge management; CMS
• Customer engagement: interpersonal and communication skills; language skills (Welsh language in Wales); skills to support adults with needs in terms of Skills for Life (and its equivalents); community engagement skills, partnership working skills
• Management and leadership

**Occupational trends**
The Society of Archivists is actively trying to encourage religious and ethnic diversity in its recruitment.

**National and regional data**

**East Midlands** – There are an estimated 2,729 people in the workforce in the region.
**East of England** – There are an estimated 4,412 people in the workforce in the region.
**London** – There are an estimated 8,569 people in the workforce in the region.
**North East** – There are an estimated 4,293 people in the workforce in the region.
**North West** – There are an estimated 6,326 people in the workforce in the region.
**South East** – There are an estimated 7,468 people in the workforce in the region.
**South West** – There are an estimated 4,381 people in the workforce in the region.
**West Midlands** – There are an estimated 5,430 people in the workforce in the region.
**Yorkshire and the Humber** – There are an estimated 5,373 people in the workforce in the region.
**Northern Ireland** – There are an estimated 1,055 people in the workforce in the region.
**Scotland** – There are an estimated 5,388 people in the workforce in the region.
**Wales** – There are an estimated 3,122 people in the workforce in the region.

**Salary levels**
Pay scales in this industry are variable, so the following only provides an indication of the average annual salary levels:

• Chief archivist £35,000
• Chief information officer £50,000
• Chief librarian/Head of service can earn from £40,000 - £50,000
• Archivist £17,897 - £28,134
• Information officer starting salary can be £17,000 - £27,000, rising to £28,000 - £44,000 for senior level positions
• Assistant information officer £10,000 - £13,000
• Chartered librarian in a public library £23,473 - £29,714
• Assistant librarian £10,000 - £13,000, rising to £16,278 – £18,270 for senior library assistants positions
• Chartered librarian in a Further Education College £24,045 - £27,503
• Assistant librarian in a Further Education College £16,502 - £18,690
Further information on the librarian salaries can be found on the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals website.

**Career paths**
Job profiles from Next Step and case studies from LUK UK

**Further sources**
Lifelong Learning UK
Society of Archivists
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
National Archives
Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)
Association for Information Management (ASLIB)

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