Chapter 25
Internationalization of LIS (Library and Information Science) Education:
The Bologna Process Approach

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with internationalisation of LIS education and its practical implementation. The author and the initiator of the 'Bologna Process' here explains the process herself. While an initial trend of the internationalisation of the Bologna Process is towards the harmonisation of the LIS curricula and the transparency of the minimum requisites, or what is called the core programme, an apparently opposing trend is towards the stimulation of excellence and innovation in the LIS curricula in Europe. The necessary "mutual trust" between Library Schools in Europe can stem from quality assurance systems, which are appropriately compatible and credible, and involves: conceptual definition of LIS: getting the concept of LIS related to quality is to be agreed correctly, including the core and innovation in curriculum, learning and teaching: using the best educational practices for facilitating learning, learning outcomes: ensuring that the student has a role in quality assurance.

1. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION

Internationalization in Library and Information Science (LIS) education is rapidly becoming a key issue and represents one of the most comprehensive strategies for the development of LIS higher education in Europe (Tammaro, 2001; Kajberg, 2002; Vodosek, 2002; Kajberg, 2003b; Abdullahi & Kajberg, 2004; Virkus, 2004; Tammaro, 2005; Virkus & Tammaro, 2005; Virkus, 2007). Alongside the growing importance of internationalization, the concept itself has acquired a vast number of interpretations. In the literature, internationalization of LIS education is understood in the following ways:

1.1 International Dimension

This is based on the assumption that internationalization must be considered essential to the mission of higher education institutions. The focus is primarily on foreign language training and gaining intercultural experiences (Abdullahi, Kajberg & Virkus, 2007). In addition, it is assumed that by enhancing the international and intercultural dimension of teaching, research and higher education institutions themselves, the quality level of higher education systems is boosted (Boaz, 1986). More recently, some cooperative agreements concerning the LIS sector have experimented with accreditation systems, dictated by the need to assess and ensure the quality of the international dimension of teaching (Vodosek, 2002; Virkus, 2003).

1.2 International Curriculum

Curricular internationalization has the aim of adding an international element to the content and delivery of programmes. This category covers a wide variety of cases.

The first efforts in LIS involved the international harmonization of LIS curricular. In a context of rapid evolution of the information professions, UNESCO was the first to seriously consider the education of information professionals, the result being the emergence of the basic idea of harmonization, i.e. the design of a harmonized programme (UNESCO, 1984).

The most prominent form of curricular internationalization is the delivery of a programme in a language different from that of the country in which the programme is offered, such as English language taught courses. Together with English taught programmes, various forms of country comparative and international studies also fall into the category of curricular internationalization. Experts classify this type of offering as "internationalization at home or IaH" (Abdullahi & Kajberg, 2004).

A further group of international curricular is those jointly delivered by two or more higher education institutions in at least two countries (Tammaro & Dixon, 2003). They are joint or double degree, with a common curriculum and recognized period of study abroad.

1.3 Trans-National Courses

Today the market orientation in LIS education prevails (Kajberg, 2002). Enrolment of international students is the specific aim of some LIS schools (Abdullahi, Kajberg & Virkus, 2007), compensating for budget shortcuts and loss of national students. Collaborative or cross border provision entails delivery of programmes with the help of a licensed foreign tertiary institution and various forms of distance (usually online) education methods. The common feature of all these trans-national courses is a particular form of mobility (OECD, 2004):

- **People mobility:** A person goes abroad for educational purposes,
- **Program mobility:** It is not the student but the educational offering which crosses the border.

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