

# isNTO

information services National Training Organisation

## Workforce Development Plan

December 2002

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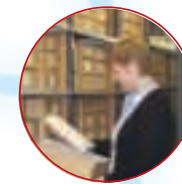
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**"Working Towards a  
Skilled and Learning  
Workforce"**

# Foreword by the Chair



I am very pleased to introduce our first Workforce Development Plan to you. This is a natural next step from the work we have been doing on Skills Foresight and Skills Benchmarking. The former studied our skills needs now and for the next seven years; the latter examined levels of performance and investment in skills development. Both of these reports present challenges to employers and other stakeholders across the world of information work. This plan repeats and extends these challenges, and points ways forward. If the challenges are to be met, we need the real commitment of employers and others to work with us towards this common, essential goal: a skilled and learning workforce.

**Martyn Wade**  
Chair  
*isNTO*

# Bibliography

The following are materials used in the production of this plan:

- Skills Foresight in the Information Services Sector: 2000-2007. isNTO, 2001
- Skills Foresight Toolkit. isNTO, 2001
- Skills Benchmarking in the Information Services Sector. isNTO, 2002
- In-House Skills Benchmarking Toolkit and Supporting Notes. isNTO, 2002
- Skills Foresight for ICT Skills in Scottish Public Libraries. isNTO, 2002
- A Planning Study for Implementing the People Skills Scoreboard in the Information Services Sector. isNTO, 2002
- Developing Skills for the Information Services Workforce in the Knowledge Economy. TFPL, 2001
- Functional and Occupational Maps for the Information Services Sector. Revised Edition. isNTO, 2002
- Labour Market and Skill Trends, 1998-99. DFEE, 1999

Details of all isNTO publications and activities can be found at: [www.isnto.org.uk](http://www.isnto.org.uk)

# Introduction by the Chief Executive

This is our first Workforce Development Plan (WDP) and reflects work done so far by isNTO: data collected and interpreted, impressions gained, opinions gathered. Because we are a young organisation and because of the constant dynamic of the world of information work, this Plan should be viewed as the first of a series: the first word, if you will, in a continuum of change and positive development where the "last" word will never be reached. Indeed, we already know that our next WDP will appear in the second quarter of 2003.

Because this is our first WDP it has been necessary within it to map out features of the information work environment which are the background and underpinning of skills provision and workforce development. This will not need repeating in future WDPs, except to acknowledge any significant infrastructural change. Within this descriptive tour of the information world's education and training you will find a number of declarations of intent from isNTO, and indications of relationships to be created or strengthened with other bodies.

You will find distributed through the text a number of personal statements from leading figures in particular parts of our sector, giving their views on the skills challenges facing their work.

We also map out our intentions and our aspirations in relation to project work. Some of these are related to National Occupational Standards and others concern qualifications – including the project to explore links and equivalences between all qualifications used in our Sector. Using data from our *Skills Foresight: 2000-2007* project, we list the prioritised Sector-wide training needs from that report. These training needs were identified and prioritised by senior figures from across the Sector, in consultation exercises. We also announce that a new Skills Foresight exercise has commenced and will report by 31 March 2003.

Finally, we list our priorities for action over the coming months, and show how we intend to pursue them. Within the Plan we also present a number of challenges to you, our employers and stakeholders.

I commend this Workforce Development Plan to you, for your attention and discussion.

**John M Pluse**  
Chief Executive



*Eccleshill District Library,  
Bradford, West Yorkshire.*

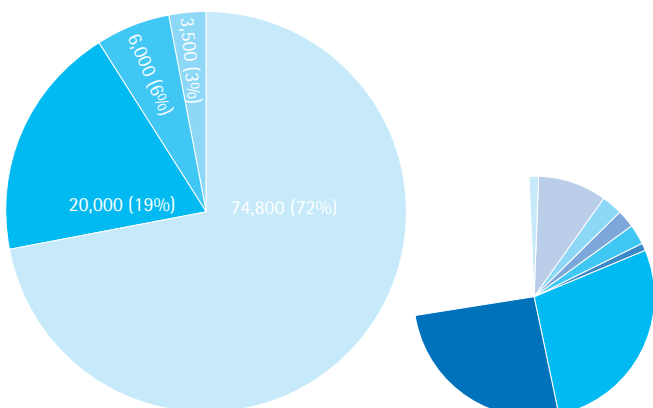
# Workforce Development Plan

## The Sector and its Workforce

### The National Training Organisation

The information services National Training Organisation (isNTO) was recognised by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment in January 2000 as the Government-recognised strategic authority on skills provision and development throughout the workforce in a Sector comprising library and information services of all kinds, archives and records management. Although all NTOs were de-recognised by Government from April 2002, isNTO continues to function in this role during the transitional period leading to an appropriate place in the emerging Sector Skills Council (SSC) network.

This is isNTO's first Workforce Development Plan (WDP) and it necessarily reflects the limited extent of the data so far collected on which a mature WDP must be based. This should therefore be regarded as the first stage of work in progress: it will grow and develop as more complete information is assembled.



Source: LISU 2001

#### Numbers Employed in the Sector

- Library and Information organisations
- Records management
- Archives
- Freelance

#### Breakdown of Employees in Library and Information Organisations

- NHS 1,300 (1.3%)
- FE Colleges 3,000 (2.8)
- National 2,850 (2.7%)
- Special Libraries 28,000 (26.8%)
- Universities and HE 9,600 (9.2%)
- Schools 2,250 (2.4%)
- NHS 1,300 (1.3%)
- Public Libraries 27,000 (25.8%)

### Scope and size of the Sector

The Information Services workforce is distributed in:

- Public library and information services
- Academic library and information services at all levels, including schools
- Library and information services in and around the NHS
- Library and information services of Government departments and quasi-Governmental organisations
- Library and information services in commercial and industrial organisations
- Library and information services in voluntary organisations
- The 3 National Libraries
- Publicly-funded archives services, including the National Archives services
- Privately-owned archives, including those of public companies
- Publicly-funded records services
- Privately-owned records services, including those of commercial and industrial organisations

The Information Services-related workforce in these organisations is some 110,000, of which about 73% are in library and information services, 21% in records and 6% in archives.

The data on which the workforce size and distribution is based is taken from the *Functional and Occupational Maps* for the Sector, revised in June 2002.

There are also estimated to be about 350,000 individuals throughout the UK workforce who utilise some of the skills and knowledge of information work, as part of broader roles. isNTO aspires to develop means of supporting these individuals and their employers, in relation to these specific skills.

# Stakeholders

## Economic and social importance

Information workers of all kinds have an importance to the social well-being and economic success of the UK which is difficult to over-estimate.

- Information workers are concerned with the form, content, arrangement, navigation and preservation of information, and with pro-actively making it accessible and attractive to actual and potential users
- They manage and support the information needs of the Knowledge Economy generally
- In particular, they contribute to the success of commercial and industrial enterprises, by providing timely and accurate information in general, and especially in support of research and development activity
- They are a significant contributor to the social inclusion policies of Government and other agencies
- They provide an essential support to individual lifelong learning, and to an informed and civilised society
- They are an indispensable support to learning, teaching and research in academic institutions of all kinds, from schools to universities
- They manage essential record keeping, from the legal records needed by commercial enterprises to the records of families and communities, balancing preservation with access.

## Roles within the workforce

In all three sub-Sectors there is a distinction between professional and other roles. There is a growing range of intermediate roles between the two, which can be characterised as sub-professional or technician posts. Senior managerial roles in all cases are in general occupied by professionally-qualified staff, but sub-professional and technician staff increasingly occupy junior and middle management roles. The recent revision of the Functional and Occupational Maps has shown significant changes to the job titles and roles in use in the Sector and reference should be made to them for more detail.

## Demographic trends and Occupational trends

These are covered in the revised Functional and Occupational Maps, mentioned above.

## Key Stakeholders

### Employers

Information Services Training Organisation Ltd, the legal entity behind isNTO, is an employer-led body owned by its subscribing members. It is governed by a Board of leading figures representative – occupationally and geographically – of the Sector. This close involvement of managing practitioners continues through the composition of the two Committees reporting to the Board – Lifelong Learning and Skills Development, and Standards and Qualifications; the three Panels – Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; and the emerging Panels in the English regions. We also involve practitioners with appropriate experience and specialist knowledge in our project work, often as members of Steering Groups.

In addition, many employing organisations in the Sector have become subscribing members of isNTO, although it has to be said that many more have not.

*In a climate of increased accountability and disclosure in both the public and private sectors, the profile of records management has perhaps never been higher. New legislation e.g. Freedom of Information, and regulation e.g. the FSA Regulations for the finance industry, require organisations to create functions and positions to meet new and often stringent obligations. After the Enron affair in 2001, many commercial organisations are considering fundamental changes to the way they document their activities and this is having considerable impact on records management activities and staff.*

*Organisations of all types are looking to strengthen their capabilities in this area through training and development of existing staff as well as through recruitment of qualified and experienced practitioners. Currently, training opportunities are limited to courses run largely in the south-east of England by a small number of commercial providers. Greater provision of basic training with an emphasis on the skills required for working in largely electronic environments is urgently needed. Similarly in recruitment, there is a severe shortage of newly qualified as well as experienced practitioners at all levels.*

*John D. Davies. Credit Suisse First Boston*

# Stakeholders

We believe that there is a moral duty upon all employers to support this NTO, which is working on behalf of them. Whether they are subscribing members or not, however, all employers in the Sector must be regarded as stakeholders in our mission.

We estimate that there are around 10,000 employing organisations in the core part of the Sector (ie: library and information services; archives; records). In many cases these are departments of a parent local authority or academic institution, a significant number are the information and/or records services of Government departments and agencies. Many of these employ substantial numbers of workers. A growing area is the information, knowledge management and records services of commercial and industrial enterprises, where the numbers employed on these functions tend to be smaller – although their importance to these enterprises is crucial.

## Professional Associations

There are three Professional Associations in our Sector:

- The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
- The Society of Archivists
- The Records Management Society of Great Britain

From its inception isNTO has had a Memorandum of Understanding with the Professional Associations collectively. Since all these bodies take a close and active interest in the personal development of their members, we regard it as important to involve them as stakeholders in our work.

## Other associations

There are a number of associations representative of particular specialist groups in the Sector. Prime examples are:

- The Society of Chief Librarians – representing heads of public library services
- The British Association for Information and Library Education and Research – representing higher education institutions offering courses in library and information studies
- The Society of College, National and University Libraries

## Skills provision and development for school librarians

*School librarians have an important role to play in developing students' information literacy skills. This means more than just learning how to find and use information in a superficial way; it involves questioning, critical thinking and problem solving in order to find meaning and to imbed learning. Institutions of further and higher education as well as employers are all aware of the lack of these skills in many young people, and the most logical place to support the development of information literacy is in schools.*

*However, in order for school librarians to maximise their role within this context, they need to understand pedagogical theory, be familiar with teaching and learning styles and strategies and lead the contextualisation of information literacy into all National Curriculum subjects and new educational initiatives. The skills required to accomplish this are many, but have their base in the educational agenda to which many school librarians are exposed only through on the job experience.*

*In addition, many school librarians lack the professional qualifications that would give them the inter-personal skills and academic background to access this new knowledge base easily. A training programme needs to be developed for both qualified and unqualified librarians that would lead to a specialist certificate in school librarianship and would cover the following priority areas:*

- Pedagogical theory
- Teaching and learning styles
- The National Curriculum
- New developments in ICT and their use in developing the skills of information literacy
- Reader development
- Adult training
- Management

*Lynn Barrett,  
Dixon's City Technology College, Bradford*

The latter is a party to the Memorandum of Understanding mentioned above. The other two, and numerous similar associations, are bodies with which we have not yet created a significant working relationship. These bodies are, however, to be regarded as important stakeholders in our work.

# Stakeholders

*The key trends in the academic sector are the continuing development of the hybrid library, combining paper-based and electronic media, and the related operational and organisational integration of library/information services with cognate activities and facilities. Growing dependence on project funding for service development provides opportunities for skills enhancement but brings challenges in personnel management.*

*The management of physical and virtual collections necessitates skills-related changes in cataloguing and indexing practices and the development of evaluative guides and navigational tools. Information resource procurement in the digital environment requires a greater understanding of scholarly communication, market forces and economic models, as well as abilities in financial planning and contract negotiation.*

*Information skills courses are becoming embedded in educational programmes and being extended to cover a wider range of research, study and transferable skills. Information professionals need a broader knowledge of academic and workplace activities as well as a deeper understanding of learning styles, teaching techniques and assessment methods.*

*Systems developments, such as the implementation of virtual/managed learning environments, web portals and open archives, are also promoting the integration of internally generated and externally published information and offering library staff new roles in online course design, digital rights management and electronic publishing. Structural changes, both physical and organisational, are requiring library and information professionals to oversee or manage a larger array of facilities (such as careers advice points, IT helpdesks, videoconferencing suites and Internet cafes) and to co-operate with or formally lead professional groups from different backgrounds.*

*Despite the technical demands of working in modern academic information services, research in the sector suggests that generic management skills and personal qualities are the most urgent areas for workforce development. Particular requirements include the capacity to form effective partnerships with academic and professional colleagues, within and beyond the institution; the ability to think, plan and act strategically, at service, institutional, regional and national levels; and – above all – the ability to lead, motivate and develop people in a volatile rapidly-changing environment, which in many services will require changes in management style and organisational culture.*

*Sheila Corral. Director of Academic Services  
University of Southampton*

## Trades Unions

There are a number of Trades Unions active in our Sector, and we have yet to develop a working relationship with them. Perhaps the most prominent is UNISON, the public service union.

As the collective voice of employees, Trades Unions are important stakeholders in our work.

## Education and Training providers

In addition to the members of BAILER, mentioned above, there are a number of higher education providers offering courses as a basis for one of the professional qualifications in the Sector. We would regard it as a healthy development if BAILER extended its remit to embrace all of these providers.

Each of the Professional Associations offers a range of short courses to support the continuous personal development of its members and other interested parties. There are also a number of commercial training providers active in the Sector. As we assemble and make sense of relevant data, isNTO will seek to influence this provision in line with the established needs of employing organisations.

We regard, and will treat, all of these providers as stakeholders in our mission.

## Funding bodies

To support its work, isNTO seeks funding from a wide range of bodies to supplement the very modest income from members' subscriptions. This funding is usually tied to specific projects and pieces of work. Funding bodies include:

- Government departments – notably DfES, the National Assembly for Wales, the Scottish Executive and DTI, although we would hope to add DCMS to this list in the near future
- Other national agencies – such as SSDA, QCA, SQA and the other Regulatory bodies; also, potentially, Re:source and the Professional Bodies
- Although we have not as yet tapped into European funding, we aspire to do so soon.

Our funders must be regarded as stakeholders, for so long as they fund parts of our work.

# Training Infrastructure

## The Current Training and Education Infrastructure of the Sector

### National Occupational Standards (NOS)

NOS are a collection of statements of occupational competence intended to cover the whole range of work carried out in the Sector. isNTO is responsible, as Standard Setting Body for this Sector, for maintenance, development and promotion of NOS.

There are separate NOS for Information and Library Services, Archives and Records. They are currently used only as the basis for National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications. It is one of our priorities to identify and promote wider uses for the NOS.

### National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (N/SVQs)

There has of late been something of a hiatus in relation to these qualifications. The Awarding Body for Information and Library Services NVQs pulled out as from 31 July 2001, and we have had considerable difficulty in securing a replacement. City and Guilds have agreed to offer this qualification at levels 2 and 3, and these are now available. We will continue in our quest for an Awarding Body for this qualification at level 4. This qualification, at levels 2, 3 and 4, remains available in Scotland, with SQA as the Awarding Body.

Although the revised version of the NOS for Archives and Records were approved by the Regulatory Bodies, the associated qualifications structure was not. The issue here is largely one of low take-up, and this presents significant difficulties. isNTO is currently seeking support from the Regulatory Bodies for a project to re-examine the structure of both the NOS and the vocational qualification, with a view to making the N/SVQ available again so soon as possible.

### Modern Apprenticeship Framework

isNTO has worked with the NTOs for Cultural Heritage (CHNTO) and Arts and Entertainment (METIER) on a DfES-funded Joint Modern Apprenticeship Framework project. The revised Framework, recently approved, has both generic and Sector-

specific sections. It is now available for use by employers. In addition to level 3 NVQs and Key Skills, there is a Technical Certificate for each Sector, in line with new Government requirements. For isNTO, this will be based on the City and Guilds Progression Award for Library and Information Assistants (7371) which has been mapped to the underpinning knowledge of ILS NVQ level 3.

### Professional Qualifications

There are a number of professional qualifications available relating to the various sub-Sectors of information work. The continuing relevance of these, and particularly the educational processes leading to them, needs regular objective re-appraisal. isNTO, working with employers and professional bodies, is best placed to carry out such objective review. The links and cross-over points between these and other qualifications in the Sector needs early examination, and isNTO's Unified Qualifications Structure Project, mentioned below, will address this need.



*University of Southampton Library.*

# Strategic Standards

## Pressing challenges for the public library sector

*Public Libraries have a higher national strategic importance than ever before – supporting e-government, raising standards of attainment, and acting as key players in the wider cultural strategy. But unless Councils get to grips with workforce planning we will not have the capacity to resource future developments in the way services are delivered.*

*Changes in local government and local governance mean we need “information workers plus.” We need able and enthusiastic staff who can respond to community planning, lead on creating local service partnerships, with the political awareness to position their services in delivering IEG, and the modernising agenda.*

*Eight Beacon library services model how libraries function as a community resource. This wider role depends on adding new skills – in partnership, negotiation, communication, understanding and using performance measurement, and leadership.*

*The implications of the People’s Network are more than improving staff IT skills. It means seizing the opportunities offered by bringing a different range of users into our buildings.*

*We need the skills to address declining patterns of use (marketing, creating awareness, listening to users) and to deliver our services within the context of consumer expectations carried across from the retail sector (ease of use, layout, presentation, customer responsiveness).*

*And all this without losing traditional users and traditional skills!*

*These are the needs – what is the challenge?*

*Our workforce, narrowly defined by age, gender, and social background, often does not reflect its community. We face difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff especially in specific skills areas.*

*We do not attract new graduates, as public libraries are unattractive in terms of image, pay and opportunity for career development.*

*We need a framework which allows us to attract good people, provide training and education routes to gain a wider range of professional competencies and support succession planning.*

*Within public libraries we must find ways of sharing our vision, creating opportunity within our structures and ‘growing our own stars’ through innovative development programmes.*

*Margaret Keeling.*

*Head of Library, Information, Heritage and Cultural Services,  
Essex County Council*

## Strategic Standards and Qualifications Plan

As the Standards Setting Body for the Sector isNTO is called upon to maintain a 3-year strategic plan in the area of Standards and Qualifications. This is submitted for approval to the Projects and Standards Advisory Group (PSAG), a standing joint committee representative of the Regulatory Bodies of each nation of the UK. These bodies have responsibility for occupational standards and for qualifications below higher education level. Our current Plan runs to March 2003 and includes:

### Review of Functional and Occupational Maps

The purpose of the Functional and Occupational Maps is to show the extent of the Sector, and who does what within it. This is obviously of crucial importance to the NTO as a basis for much of its work – in particular showing whether the National Occupational Standards for the Sector are appropriate in range and content. The Maps for this Sector were previously revised in 1997, and it is no surprise that a dynamic Sector such as this has changed significantly since that time. The Project to revise these Maps is now complete and the revised version has been sent to all subscribing members of isNTO. It is being posted on the isNTO website.

### Triennial Revision of the National Occupational Standards

The next revision of the NOS is due for completion around April 2003. It will obviously be informed by the Map revision, above, and we are now considering our strategy in relation to NOS revision. Whatever its scope, it is important that this revision succeeds in involving a wide range of employers and other stakeholders in the Sector. As well as up-dating the existing NOS, an aim will be to identify any additional areas which ought to have NOS.

### Occupational Standards for Microfilming and Digitisation for Preservation

We established the feasibility of NOS in this area, at the request of employers in the field. We are now negotiating the next stage with the PSAG.

# Strategic Standards

## Occupational Standards and Qualifications for Information/Knowledge Management

Information Management is the long-standing lifeblood of information workers. The concept of Knowledge Management is relatively new, and is a burgeoning area of work in this Sector. We intend to explore the feasibility of NOS for these areas, working with employers and other stakeholders. If this produces a positive outcome we will, as a second stage, draw up NOS and explore appropriate qualifications.

## Unified Qualifications Structure

The need for this stems principally from a situation in this Sector of unresolved tension between the range of professional qualifications and the newer range of N/SVOs. We see a need to establish and map equivalences and progression routes between these and all other qualifications in use in this Sector. The aim will be to have a single, unified career ladder, seeking parity of esteem and equality of access. This work will, inter alia, involve mapping NOS against a range of qualifications.



Wester Hailes Library, Edinburgh.

## "Working Towards a Skilled and Learning Workforce"

... is in fact the best basis for our Workforce Development Plan.

It requires a concerted effort on the part of isNTO, its members and all our stakeholders, identified above, not only to bring it about but also to create appropriately broad ownership of these efforts and the results.

We believe that isNTO – acting on behalf of all employers in the Sector – must be the focal point of this partnership for action. We will facilitate and drive this action by:

- Gathering, interpreting and publicising data on the ongoing state of the Sector in relation to education and development of the workforce
- Creating, and supporting the use of, tools to assist employers to assess their own organisations' real position
- Arguing for significantly increased investment in workforce development throughout the Sector
- Working with Government and other appropriate agencies to bring about such increased investment
- Seeking funding and support from Government, national, regional and local agencies to enable innovative approaches to workforce development.

It is important that isNTO – in consultation with stakeholders – identifies and resolves workforce development issues, including resource issues, and maps out skills needs from the present to a reasonable but manageable date in the future.

This must include qualification and experience frameworks, and monitoring the education and training structure – if necessary intervening in it.

Our Skills Foresight Project addressed the question of future skills needs, and the report *Skills Foresight: 2000–2007* lists these in the priority order indicated by wide consultation in the Sector. It should be stressed that this exercise highlights new skills emphases up to the chosen planning horizon, and does not mean that current basic training needs are suddenly obsolete: indeed the training needs listed in the Report (and referred to in more detail below) confirm a number of these current training priorities.

# Skills and learning

Individual employers should consider the Skills Foresight material (ie: the Report and the associated Toolkit) in the light of their own particular circumstances and environment. The documents can not be taken as a prescription for all organisations, but should be regarded as an overall framework which will facilitate and guide determination of specific local needs.

In this contextualisation process, employers should in particular consider their position in relation to the list of training needs in *Skills Foresight* (section 7.3) of which the top 20 are listed below in priority order. The figures on the right indicate the score derived from the frequency with which participants cited that item as a priority, giving a priority order to the list as a whole:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. basic ICT user (eg: ECDL)                      | 307 |
| 2. cultural/disability/special needs awareness    | 225 |
| 3. stress and time management                     | 223 |
| 4. supporting the learner/user                    | 222 |
| 5. customer care                                  | 221 |
| 6. assertiveness                                  | 218 |
| 7. performance management                         | 217 |
| 8. team building/team management                  | 217 |
| 9. motivation                                     | 214 |
| 10. staff appraisal                               | 213 |
| 11. managing change                               | 213 |
| 12. project management                            | 212 |
| 13. information retrieval (search and evaluation) | 209 |
| 14. use of software packages                      | 209 |
| 15. health and safety                             | 208 |
| 16. managing people/HR management                 | 208 |
| 17. counselling/coaching/mentoring/tutoring       | 206 |
| 18. recruitment practices                         | 205 |
| 19. strategic planning                            | 205 |
| 20. training others                               | 204 |

Employers will also need to consider – alongside this list – the top 20 future skills needs identified in the same report (section 7.1):

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. customer care                                 | 93 |
| 2. marketing and promotion                       | 92 |
| 3. information retrieval (search and evaluation) | 89 |
| 4. managing change                               | 89 |
| 5. enquiry techniques                            | 89 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 6. decision making                                | 88 |
| 7. supporting the learner/user                    | 87 |
| 8. managing people/HR management                  | 87 |
| 9. strategic planning                             | 87 |
| 10. working with others                           | 86 |
| 11. information/knowledge management              | 86 |
| 12. languages – Welsh, Scots Gaelic, Irish Gaelic | 85 |
| 13. motivation                                    | 84 |
| 14. interpersonal skills                          | 83 |
| 15. collection management                         | 83 |
| 16. performance management                        | 82 |
| 17. staff appraisal                               | 81 |
| 18. financial management                          | 81 |
| 19. assisting clients with ICT                    | 80 |
| 20. use of software packages                      | 80 |

The most urgent skills gaps identified in Skills Foresight were:

- marketing and promotion
- supporting the learner/user
- performance management



*N M Rothschild & Sons,  
Company Archive, London.*

# Priorities

## Priorities for Action

The present time, as isNTO negotiates its transition to an appropriate Sector Skills Council (SSC) is not the most obviously propitious moment to propose a skills development agenda for the future. Nevertheless, for the completeness of this Plan and – perhaps more importantly – to put down markers for whatever SSC this Sector goes into, here is a list of work to be done – some of it in progress.

### Workforce data

We need to broaden the data collected in a recently-completed *Planning Study for the People Skills Scoreboard* (jointly sponsored by DfES and DTI) into a full PSS exercise so soon as possible and preferably annually thereafter. This will give us a clearer picture of the Sector workforce in relation to size, age, qualification, investment in workforce development and other measures.

We need to promote and build upon the newly-completed Skills Benchmarking Report and to encourage use of the accompanying Toolkit by individual employers. This complements the PSS data, above, and begins to set some standards for the Sector. We will need to repeat and update this exercise regularly, every 2 to 3 years.

We are being funded by the new Sector Skills Development Agency to repeat the *Skills Foresight* exercise by March 2003 – and we aim to continue every alternate year thereafter. Again, we need to encourage use of the *Skills Foresight Toolkit* by individual employers, and we need to promote publication of the results of this local work to inform the national picture. We are grateful to the Scottish Library and Information Council for funding application of the *Toolkit* in a range of libraries. From this, a report will show ways of doing this and the staff time involved. This report will appear by February 2003.

### Leadership issues

We are re-launching the isNTO group which began to look at this topic, with a view to a major conference on issues and solutions in this area, during the first quarter of 2003. We also need to explore links and commonalities with other Sectors of the UK workforce on leadership.

*The Society of Archivists Regular Training Working Party produced a report, March 2002, that considered the regular training needs of archivists, records managers and archive conservators, post qualification. The full report can be viewed on the SoA website [www.archives.org.uk](http://www.archives.org.uk), under CPD. It identifies key subject areas and realised that they would need to be offered at different levels. For example, training in records management experience would need a different level to a records manager working solely in that area.*

*The suggested levels are: Policy (Why), Operational (How) and Implementation (Doing).*

*The key subjects identified are: IT/Information Skills; Professional Standards; Accountability; Legal Issues; Preservation Management; Management Skills.*

*The most pressing issues and challenges in terms of skills provision in archives and records management work are seen to be electronic records management (ERM) and the preservation of digital information. There is a need for training on how to turn theory into practice, especially in ERM. Subjects in this area should include advocating the need for ERM, gaining knowledge about technologies to be able to conduct informed discussions with IT experts, at least a basic grounding in associated legal issues, and guidance on how to identify requirements for ERM systems.*

*Another issue arising from this is a need to keep up to date with developments in ICT at one level and also acquire and maintain basic ICT skills at another.*

*The importance of training in non-archival skills was stressed in the report as essential - such as project management and financial management.*

*Susan Bradshaw. Society of Archivists*

# Priorities

*For library and health informatics staff the NHS offers challenging and exciting opportunities for personal and service development. The sector is complex and fast moving and the need to understand the changing environment is matched only by the challenge of meeting the needs of a wide range of users (clinicians, managers, researchers, students, patients, carers) who are located in a variety of distributed settings - or have no home library at all, and needing the skills and experience to understand and exploit a wide range of specialist databases and other sources.*

*Librarians in the NHS and the wide healthcare sector are required to demonstrate their professional competence against a background of evidence based medicine and the proliferation of information communication technologies. This offers the twin problem of providing information skills support to the 'new and nervous' and helping the enthusiast who searches the literature and is overwhelmed by their findings (the 'satisfied inept').*

*In addition to being expert searchers, teachers of information skills and 'learner supporters', library staff in the NHS and wider health care arena need to have at their finger tips all the business, people and managerial skills required to manage and develop services in a highly complex and resource aware community. Librarians must have the key professional skills. They will need to meet the challenges and opportunities that interest in developing 'Health Informatics' as a profession within the NHS offers, by demonstrating competency in IT systems and techniques. They must also be strategic managers, have people, financial and business skills, know how to market their services and maintain their environmental awareness.*

*Veronica Fraser. NHS Library Adviser*

## **Strategic Standards and Qualifications Plan**

We need to progress the work detailed under this heading, above, in an orderly but timely manner. It will be to the detriment of skills development in the Sector if the forthcoming transition to an SSC subjected this work to bureaucratic delay, and we are currently negotiating for smooth continuation of this work with the appropriate authorities.

## **Levels of investment in workforce development**

The data revealed during the People Skills Scoreboard and Skills Benchmarking work described above shows a worryingly low level of financial investment in people across this Sector. Pressure must be exerted – by continuation of this work, by exhortation and any other means available – to remedy this so soon as possible. The skills of this Sector are nationally-important and ever-changing, which points to such investment needing to be above rather than below national averages. A national and authoritative benchmark figure here is elusive, but employers in our Sector might begin by considering the figure of £600 per employee, per annum, given in *Labour Market and Skill Trends* (DfEE, 1998/99).

## **Quality of Education and Training in the Sector**

Quite apart from the financial issues above, the actual quality of education and training provision in this Sector, and its relevance to known employer needs, requires immediate examination. This is not to critically pre-judge the outcome, but rather to gather objective evidence to supplement that currently available, which is largely anecdotal. This will involve both mapping and quality audit.

## **Re-launch of NVOs in the Sector**

This is an urgent issue. The immediate need is to support City and Guilds with the re-launch of the Information and Library Services NVOs at Levels 2 and 3, now that the qualifications have been accredited. Beyond this, there is a requirement to seek re-launch of the vocational qualifications in archives and records, in whatever form comes out of the proposed review of existing NOS and qualification structures. The latent demand for these qualifications, arising from such developments as Freedom of Information legislation, is growing and we are at present totally unprepared to meet it.

# Priorities

## **Priorities for Action in Conjunction with Other Employers**

The advent and growth of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has the potential to distribute educational services and amenities to communicate in new ways. The rise of the Internet and broad bandwidth data-carrying streams has already had a major effect on the broader education and training providers, particularly in higher education and increasingly in further education.

This will spread to other parts of the education and training sector. In terms of isNTO employers, this will take place via the emerging (and increasing) numbers of links between employers in the community based and owned 'learning centres', workplace based provision and further and higher education providers.

The educational role of libraries is also increasingly interfacing with the community based and owned 'learning centres', and workplace based provision. This trend is likely to grow particularly with the roll out of the 'Peoples Network' (based around the library infrastructure), the UK Online network and the National Grid for Learning. The development of the 'digital curriculum' by the BBC and other broadcasters by 2004 should further stimulate demand. It should be noticed that ICT provides additionality to existing trends within education rather than the replacement or substitution of existing provisions. This trend means that linkages with 'informal' and workplace based learning provision will be vital for future success.

This is a taxing agenda for action and fulfilling its challenge will require continued – and broadened – support and involvement on the part of our employers.