



ANLTC Library Staff Survey

2004

Summary Report

Introduction

In 2004, ANLTC carried out a survey to gather data regarding library staff course attendance and to get their views about course relevancy and their reasons for non-attendance. The survey also asked respondents to suggest ideas for future courses and to consider other roles that ANLTC might adopt in the future.

1. Respondent Profile

Respondents included all member institutions of ANLTC, except for Queen's University and the University of Ulster. There was a total of 224 responses to the survey. The majority of respondents have attended an ANLTC course (71.8%). Overall the response rate was good, with a spread across all grades.

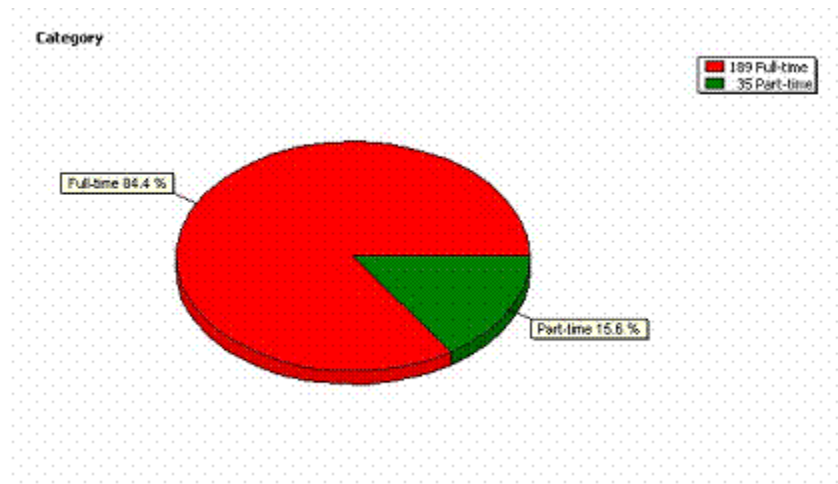
Grade	No.	% Total
Library Assistant	69	31
Senior Library Assistant	32	14
Assistant Librarian	86	38
Sub-Librarian	13	6

Deputy Librarian	4	2
University Librarian	4	2
Other	16	7
Total	224	100

There was also a good spread of returns across all ANLTC member institutions.

Institution	No.	% Total
DCU	12	5.4
DIT	9	4.0
NLI	10	4.5
NUIG	22	9.8
NUIM	21	9.4
RCSI	8	3.6
TCD	40	17.8
UCC	33	14.7
UCD	47	21.0
UL	22	9.8
Total	224	100

The majority of respondents are in full-time posts (84.4%). Of those in part-time posts, 56.4% are job sharers.



The profile reflects attendance at courses, where the majority of attendees are Assistant Librarians and Library Assistants.

Of particular interest is the fact that more than a quarter of those responding (28.2%) have never attended a course. Analysis of this particular group of 82 respondents reveals that 57% are Library Assistants and 71% work full-time.

A very high 89% felt that in general ANLTC courses are relevant to their work; however the most frequently cited reason for non-attendance at the individual courses of programme 2003 was lack of relevance. The table below demonstrates this clearly.

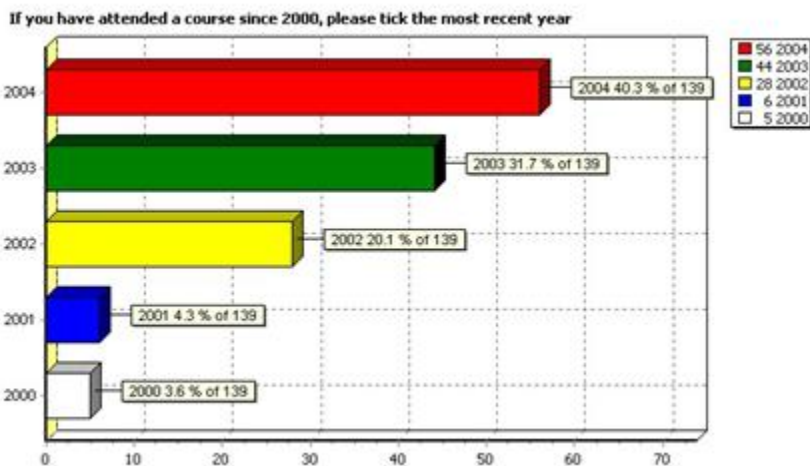
Programme 2003 - Reasons for non-attendance given by those who have never attended an ANLTC Course

Course/Event	Timing %	Location %	Relevance %	Cost %	No Advance Information Received %
Library Services to Non-traditional Users <i>(16 January, UU)</i>	12	16	36	6	30
Collection Management Strategies <i>(29 January, UCD)</i>	8.2	4.1	55.1	6.1	26.5

Searching the Web <i>(6 February, NUIG)</i>	16.3	10.2	32.7	6.1	34.7
Group Facilitation Skills <i>(28 February, NUIM)</i>	6.4	6.4	46.8	6.4	34
Supervisory Skills <i>(6 March, NLI)</i>	20.8	4.2	41.7	4.2	29.2
Marrying Effective Learning and Teaching with Online Technology <i>(4 April, DCU)</i>	20.8	4.2	41.7	4.2	29.2
Project Management <i>(8 April, NUIG)</i>	12.5	4.2	52.1	4.2	27.1
Disaster Planning <i>(11 June, UL)</i>	8.2	2	57.1	8.2	24.5
Visit to TCD Library <i>(9 September)</i>	21.7	0	30.4	6.5	41.3

2. Course Attendance Rates since 2000

Respondents were asked if they had attended a course since 2000 to indicate the most recent year of attendance.



40% of respondents attended a course as recently as 2004. Only 3.6% had not attended since 2000.

3. Awareness of ANLTC Courses

Respondents were asked how they heard about ANLTC courses. An overwhelming 76.3% said they heard about courses through their library training co-ordinator/ ANLTC committee member. Awareness was also raised through the website (18.3%).

4. ANLTC Web Site

The survey showed that over half of all respondents have accessed the ANLTC web site (53.1%). When asked to comment on the website, the majority of respondents found it to be clear, user friendly, well laid out and that it offered easily accessible and pertinent information regarding ANLTC events.

It was suggested that courses could be listed in chronological order. This suggestion may reflect that changes were made to the timetable last year and this may have created some confusion about the way events are posted.

While it was suggested that more detailed commentary on course content would on occasion be helpful, it is recognised that full programmes may not be available in January. How can we address this issue?

5. ANLTC 2003 Course Applications

There were nine ANLTC events offered in 2003, beginning on January 16th and ending the 9th of September. Respondents were asked to give a reason for not applying to the courses listed and to comment on what influenced their decision not to apply.

Programme 2003 - Reasons given for non-attendance (figures by percentage)

Course/Event	Timing	Location	Relevance	Cost	No Advance Information Received
Library Services to Non-traditional Users <i>(16 January, UU)</i>	15.8	15.8	49.2	3.8	15.3
Collection Management Strategies <i>(29 January, UCD)</i>	25	1.7	56.3	3.4	13.6
Searching the Web <i>(6 February, NUIG)</i>	22.5	16	40.2	3.6	17.8
Group Facilitation Skills <i>(28 February, NUIG)</i>	22.9	3.4	55.4	3.4	14.9
Supervisory Skills <i>(6 March, NLI)</i>	19	3.6	58.9	4.2	14.3
Marrying Effective Learning and Teaching with Online Technology <i>(4 April, DCU)</i>	28.5	1.7	51.7	1.7	16.3
Project Management <i>(8 April, NUIG)</i>	24.7	9	48.8	3.6	13.9
Disaster Planning <i>(11 June, UL)</i>	12.1	5.8	64.7	5.2	12.1
Visit to TCD Library <i>(9 September)</i>	40.6	2.5	34.4	3.8	18.8

The responses show that the main reason offered for not applying for a course or event was its lack of relevance to the respondent. Interestingly, cost was not identified as a significant factor.

Summary of comments on reasons for non-application

Respondents were also offered the opportunity to expand or comment on reasons for not applying to attend events on the 2003 programme. There were a total of 72 comments, which have been summarised as follows:

- Almost half or more did not feel that the particular course being offered was relevant to their needs or job roles. In some cases similar courses were being offered in-house and therefore were not considered relevant.
- Comments were also made about the timing of events. Staff shortages and events coinciding with busy term time activities were identified as application deterrents.
- Family obligations and factors associated with job sharing arrangements were cited several times as a contributory factor in not applying for events.
- In relation to the cost of events, comments were focussed around budget cuts, lack of funds and a freeze on training funding in certain institutions.
- It is clear that the reason for not applying varied depending on the individual in respect to type of work, home responsibilities, courses attended previously and college of employment. It was also pointed out that some institutions have quotas and that ANLTC also restrict course numbers due either to the training methodology or the subject matter.
- More innovation in course topics was suggested as a way to increase interest in events. Particular emphasis could be placed on the skills/competencies required to work in the changing library and information environment.

6. Overall Programme Relevance

Respondents to the survey were asked if they felt that in general ANLTC courses were relevant to their work.

A very high 90.4% felt that some of the courses were relevant, 73% felt all courses were relevant while 2.3% felt that none of the courses were relevant to their needs.

When asked to comment on the relevance of the programme a variety of responses were received.

- Some believed that course relevance depended on previous experience or library grade.
- Others responded that while particular courses might appear to be relevant, they are often targeted at a specific group or at those in management positions. "I always look at the intended audience" was one particular comment.
- It was pointed out that when determining relevance it would be useful if ANLTC could provide an indication of the course level, i.e. introductory, advanced etc.
- It was noted that not all courses could be relevant to work as a very broad spectrum of interests and subject areas needs to be covered to meet the requirements of all academic library staff. It was also commented that regardless of relevance all courses help to improve knowledge and understanding.

7. Suggestions for Future Courses

Respondents were asked what courses they would like ANLTC to offer in the future. The responses have been summarised below by category together with some examples of courses preferred:

Technologies and Electronic Resources (41)

e.g. Web technologies

Web design

Programming
Databases
Electronic publishing
Internet training

Management (18)

e.g. Management skills
Negotiation skills
Project management
Strategic planning
Staff motivation management

Customer Service (12)

e.g. How to handle difficult customers
Communication
Customer service
Services for non traditional users
Cultural diversity
Disability orientated courses

Personal Development (6)

e.g. Work/Life balance
Career planning
Stress management

Time Management

Specialist Skills (17)

- e.g. Cataloguing
- OCLC
- Classification
- Preservation
- Metadata standards

Courses for Library Assistants (12)

- e.g. Career development
- Information literacy
- Cataloguing
- New technologies

Training for Trainers (11)

- e.g. Promoting user education
- Teaching skills and methodologies
- Designing online quizzes and tutorials
- Presentation skills

There were also requests for more visits to other libraries and also for more repeats of some recently held courses such as web skills and cataloguing.

8. Possible Roles for ANLTC

The survey asked respondents what other roles ANLTC should have and the following is a summary of the suggestions proposed:

- Most commented that ANLTC should continue to encourage co-operation between libraries, share best practice and most importantly to continue to focus on and develop its training role.
- Other comments suggested that ANLTC might provide more networking opportunities through the organisation of more visits, updating activities and social events. The development of a chat room to provide a forum for liaison and information exchange was also proposed.
- There was a strong sense of satisfaction with the current role of ANLTC and it was felt that further diversification could “dilute” the core function of training.

9. Other Comments

The survey concluded with the option for respondents to make any other comments and 70 comments were submitted. Overall there appears to be a high level of satisfaction with the work that ANLTC is doing and with the courses it provides. It is felt that ANLTC provide an efficient, varied, valuable and up-to-date training service.

Some respondents would like to see more of the courses repeated to accommodate those who miss out on a place the first time round and the importance of courses as a way of meeting colleagues from other institutions was stressed.

Timing and location is clearly a key issue very important with lots of comments on travel issues and the fact that many courses are based in Dublin.

It was commented that ANLTC contributes to the upskilling of all library staff because staff in the profession design the courses. Prior to ANLTC there were very few courses for non-professional staff,

