

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

BOARD OF EXAMINATION,

CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION OF LIBRARIANS

NEWS RELEASE

In view of the favourable reception of the first News Release in May 1962 the Board has decided to issue a release after each of its meetings.

It will be sent to all Branches and Sections: they in turn are invited to republish it in their own news sheets.

The Board of Examination met in Sydney on Monday and Tuesday 20 and 21 August, 1962. Just prior to the meeting, the election by the General Council of members for the new Board had taken place - by postal ballot for the first time - and the new members were invited to attend the last meeting of the old Board as observers.

The new Board

Of the retiring Board, the Chairman, Miss Wilma Radford, Miss Betty Doubleday and Mr K.A. Lodewycks did not stand for re-election. Fourteen nominations were received for the seven vacancies and the following were elected to take office on 28th August:

Miss J. Whyte	Mr H. Bryan
Mr F.A. Sharr	Mr D.H. Borchardt
Miss M. Ramsay	Miss J. Hagger
Mr R.C. Sharman	

The new Board comprises two members from each of Queensland and Tasmania, and one each from New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. Four members come from university libraries, two from State and public libraries and one is an archivist.

Examination papers

The whole of the first day was spent in a thorough scrutiny of the draft examination papers for this year's Registration Examination. Every paper was examined from three points of view:-

- a) is every question clear and unambiguous?
- b) is every question within the syllabus?
- c) does the paper as a whole cover the syllabus fairly and is it of the required standard?

Most of the compulsory papers had already been examined at the April meeting, so that this was a second appraisal. Never before has so much time been devoted to this vital task; in future it is hoped to do it

even more thoroughly by each member of the Board concentrating on one particular aspect, e.g. clarity of wording, etc.

Syllabus

Proposals for alteration of the syllabus were received from the Queensland Branch (revision of the list of reference books for paper 3) and from a group of tutors in Victoria (to regulate the order in which papers may be taken).

The Board decided to make no change in the syllabus at present. It thinks that frequent minor changes are unsettling to all concerned and that, in any case, to make changes before the syllabus has been tested in practice would be premature. After this year's examinations the Board will certainly review any lessons to be learnt from them.

Setting and marking of examination papers

The introduction of the new syllabus has brought to a head a need which has been growing for some time for more constructive guidance to examiners. Detailed discussion of this is not of general interest, but members may like to have an outline of what goes on behind the scenes to ensure as far as possible that results are fair and consistent.

In each paper there are normally two examiners, and there may, if the number of candidates is large be additional "markers". The two examiners draft the paper and submit it to the Board. The Board scrutinizes it, as described above, and if more than verbal clarification is required refers the paper back to the examiners for modification or amendment. The amended version is then again scrutinized by the Board.

After the examination has been held, candidates answers are despatched to examiners. They are then expected to read a sample batch of answers in order to assess the general standard. After doing so they meet, if possible, to decide how each question is to be marked to compare their trial marks on the sample batches, and to resolve any problems which have become apparent. This ensures as far as possible consistency between the various examiners.

They then go ahead with marking the answers on the basis that they have agreed to.

When all answers have been marked, borderline passes or failures must be reviewed by a second examiner before the pass or failure is confirmed.

The examiners then forward the answers, a statistical return and a report to the Board. On arrival all the marks are rechecked arithmetically by the office staff.

Before the results are announced the Board satisfies itself that it approves the standards of marking adopted by the examiners and that the results are consistent.

In a country the size of Australia these repeated checks and counter checks inevitably take some time, since they must be done by volunteers in their own time. The Board would like to see an earlier announcement of the results and will continue to seek ways to speed up the process despite the growth in the number of candidates. But it will not agree to any suggestions for greater speed which might result in unfairness to candidates by less careful marking or checking of results.

Type size in examination papers

It was decided that in 1963 papers should be printed in 10pt type instead of 8pt, as an aid to candidates.

Late applications for examination

The Board recommended to Council that from next year there should be a period of a month's grace after the closing date for the Registration Examination, during which late applications will be accepted on payment of a supplementary fee of £5.5.0.

Retirement of Miss Radford

At the conclusion of the meeting the following resolution was passed:-
"That the Board express and record its appreciation of the outstanding leadership contributed to the Board by the Chairman, Miss Wilma Radford, which has materially assisted the successful introduction of the new syllabus, and has therefore made a significant contribution to the development of libraries and librarianship in Australia."

New Chairman and Deputy Chairman

A brief meeting of the new Board was held to elect officers. As a result the following were elected:-

Chairman	Miss Jean Whyte
Deputy Chairman	Mr F.A. Sharr