

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Examiners has the impression that members have been pleased rather than otherwise to be informed of the Board's deliberations by the circulation of a news sheet once or twice a year, with some relation to the regular meetings of the Board.

For this reason, as the newly elected Chairman of the Board, I have taken the responsibility of issuing the present release. I am sure that members will realise that there is difficulty in communicating in this somewhat "popular" form discussion which, in your interests, must be discursive, and decisions which, for the same reason, must be carefully framed. Moreover, there are areas of the Board's operations which are subject to the approval of Council and of which, therefore, it would be improper to reveal the details prior to this approval.

Accordingly, I would like to repeat that this release is no more than an attempt to inform members, in general terms, of the activities of the Board.

CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP

A new Board of Examiners, the first to be constituted under the Charter, came into office on 1st May. It has not yet held a full business meeting, so that this report refers to the last meeting of the previous Board held on 17th April. There was present by invitation at that meeting, however, the only member of the new Board who was not also a member of the old. Opportunity was also taken accordingly to have a short preliminary meeting of the new Board for the purpose of electing a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman.

The new Board is as follows:

Chairman: H. Bryan (4)

Deputy Chairman: Miss M. Ramsay (2)

Members: J. Balnaves (4)

Miss J. Hagger (2)

R. C. Sharman (3)

F. A. Sharr (2)

Miss J. P. Whyte (3)

Note: Members retire in rotation and the number shown against each name refers to the years of each member's possible term. These periods of office were determined by lot after the election of the Board.

The incoming Board has registered its appreciation of the contribution made both to the Board and to the Association by the retiring Chairman, Miss Whyte, and the Deputy Chairman, Mr. Sharr, during their term of office.

DRAFT EXAMINATION PAPERS

The main business of the Board was the first scrutiny of draft examination papers for November. In accordance with its established practice the Board assigned specific responsibility to its several members to consider;

- (a) whether each question was clear and unambiguous;
- (b) whether each question was within the syllabus;
- (c) whether each paper covered the syllabus fairly and was of the required standard.

These details are mentioned only to reassure members, if such reassurance is necessary, that the examinations, which are, of course, a prime responsibility of the Board, are handled with very considerable scrupulousness and care. As one who has had something to do with examinations, both at secondary and tertiary levels, it is my opinion that the Board's practice on these matters sets a very high standard indeed.

MATTERS RESOLVED BY THE BOARD

Holding over of fees due to clashes with University examinations

Fees paid in 1963 by candidates who did not sit for Association examinations due to clashes with University examinations will be held over. This will not be the practice in future, however, and members should note very carefully the wording of Regulation A21. This regulation clearly states that only illness which prevented a candidate from sitting will entitle him to have fees held over. A claim for this must be supported by a medical certificate.

Candidates to be informed of marks

This practice will be followed again in the case of the 1964 examinations. The Board has the impression that members favour knowing actual marks.

Dates for the 1964 examinations

These are recorded in the *Australian Library Journal*. As in 1963, an attempt has been made to avoid requiring candidates to sit for two papers on the same day, but there are limits to what can be achieved without unduly extending the examination period.

MATTERS DISCUSSED BY THE BOARD

Under this heading are simply noted some matters which the Board has under consideration and which have either been referred to Council with a definite recommendation or are still subject to further investigation and report.

The Board has considered suggested amendments to the *list of reference books* quoted in the syllabus for paper 3, and a revised list is being prepared. The Board is grateful to the seven Branches, Groups and other bodies who responded to its call for information and opinion on this matter.

The Special Libraries Section has been asked for its advice about possible *amplification of the syllabus for Paper 5(c)*, bearing in mind the general intention of the group of papers to which this paper belongs.

The Board also considered the relevance of *experience gained in attendance at part-time training courses in librarianship* to the service requirement for the issue of the Association's certificates. It was decided that such attendance could not be counted towards the service requirement. Of course, if a candidate attends these training classes during working hours while employed in librarianship, he does not have to deduct this time!

With regard to applications for *exemption from papers of the Registration Examination* on the basis of other qualifications, the Board resolved that all except the most straightforward cases be dealt with at the formal meetings of the Board and not settled by correspondence. This may mean delay in finalising some applications but will ensure the fullest possible consideration of all.

MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL

The Board discussed and has referred to Council its recommendations on a number of matters of which only the most general indication can be given here.

These included various aspects of the *matriculation pre-requisite* for the Association's examinations, in the question of *accreditation of schools of librarianship*, the matter of preparation of *text books for the Registration Examination*, *proposed amendments to the syllabus for papers 14-16*, and *possible time limits for the submission of Diploma theses*.

There were other matters discussed on which either the Board has reached no finality of recommendation or of which mention at this stage might only be misleading to members.

GENERAL

The Board of Examiners is really no more than a committee of our Association, but because of its composition and its responsibilities it occupies a somewhat unique position.

It has delegated to it the day to day direction of an extensive system of examination, the details of which are approved by the Association itself. Under the Charter it has specific responsibilities also relating to the conferring of Associateships and Fellowships. As a result, it is frequently called upon to advise the Association on matters relating to professional education and training.

The Board's powers, however, are carefully spelled out in the Charter and it can exercise no influence other than through the advice it can tender to Council in the light of its own experience.

Members of the Board realise the responsibilities attendant upon their election. They are certain that they cannot discharge these responsibilities unless they are kept informed of members' feelings about and opinions on the particular matters within their sphere of reference.

I am sure my colleagues would join me in adjuring you to speak up on these matters if you have something to say.

Harrison Bryan, Chairman.