CONCEPT

Library Cataloguing and Classification: RDA, MARC 21, Subject Headings and Dewey

19 – 23 April 2027
Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel



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Introduction:

Library cataloguing and classification decide whether a reader can find a book on the shelf or in the catalogue, yet many libraries carry inconsistent records, duplicate name forms, outdated subject terms and call numbers that scatter related titles. This Core Concept course trains technical services staff to describe resources with RDA, encode MARC 21 bibliographic and authority records, assign controlled subject headings and build Dewey and Library of Congress class numbers, including Arabic-script materials. Participants produce a Cataloguing and Classification Procedures Manual with a validated sample record set.

Course Objectives:

- Describe print, audiovisual and multi-part resources with RDA elements and relationships based on the IFLA Library Reference Model
- Encode and edit MARC 21 bibliographic records, including access points, publication statements and physical description fields
- Establish and maintain personal, corporate and title authority records so that every name appears in one consistent form
- Assign Library of Congress Subject Headings with subdivisions and build Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress class numbers and call numbers
- Apply cataloguing conventions for Arabic-script materials, including name order, romanisation choices and dual calendar dates
- Link cataloguing output to acquisitions, circulation, reference and library performance indicators in an integrated library system workflow

Target Audience:

- Staff responsible for original and copy cataloguing of books, serials and audiovisual items
- Staff responsible for assigning class numbers, subject terms and shelf locations
- Staff responsible for ordering, receiving and processing new library acquisitions
- Staff responsible for circulation desks, holdings maintenance and user registration
- Staff responsible for reference enquiries and catalogue search support in academic, school and corporate libraries

Course Outline:

Day 1: Library Technical Services and the Catalogue

- Library Operations Map: Acquisitions, Cataloguing, Processing, Circulation and Reference
- Catalogue Functions: Find, Identify, Select, Obtain and Explore
- From AACR2 to RDA: Why the Descriptive Standard Changed
- IFLA Library Reference Model Entities: Work, Expression, Manifestation and Item
- Catalogue Quality Audit: Sampling Records for Errors and Inconsistencies

Day 2: Descriptive Cataloguing with RDA and MARC 21 Encoding

- RDA Toolkit Navigation and Core Elements for a Manifestation
- Transcribing Title, Statement of Responsibility, Edition and Publication Data
- MARC 21 Bibliographic Record Structure: Leader, Control Fields and Variable Fields
- Encoding Fields 100, 245, 250 and 264 with Correct Indicators and Subfields
- Carrier, Content and Media Types for Print, Audiovisual and Multi-Part Items

Day 3: Subject Access, Authority Control and Classification

- MARC 21 Authority Format: Establishing Personal and Corporate Name Headings
- Library of Congress Subject Headings: Topical, Geographic and Form Subdivisions
- Dewey Decimal Classification Main Classes, Tables and Number Building with WebDewey
- Library of Congress Classification Schedules and Classification Web Lookups
- Call Number Construction and Shelf Order Rules for Mixed Collections

Day 4: Arabic Materials, Copy Cataloguing and Service Performance

- Arabic Personal Names: Kunya, Nasab and Nisba in Authority Records
- Romanisation Choices and Parallel Arabic-Script Fields in Bibliographic Records
- Hijri and Gregorian Publication Dates in Descriptive Records
- Copy Cataloguing: Evaluating and Upgrading Imported Records in the Integrated Library System
- Technical Services Indicators: Cataloguing Backlog, Turnaround Time and Circulation Use

Day 5: Cataloguing Lab and Procedures Manual

- Lab: Original Record Creation for a Case Monograph in Arabic and English
- Lab: Authority Record Clean-Up and Heading Merge Exercise
- Lab: Classifying a Mixed Shelf Sample from University, School and Corporate Collections
- Acquisitions-to-Shelf Workflow Mapping with Reference Desk Feedback Points
- Cataloguing and Classification Procedures Manual Drafting and Peer Review

Skills You Will Gain:

- RDA Descriptive Cataloguing
- MARC 21 Record Encoding
- Name Authority Control
- Subject Heading Assignment
- Dewey Number Building
- Library of Congress Classification
- Arabic Script Cataloguing
- Copy Cataloguing Evaluation

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a Cataloguing and Classification Procedures Manual and a validated sample record set for your own library
- Reduce duplicate headings and misfiled items that leave readers unable to find what the library already holds
- Speed up processing of new acquisitions by upgrading imported records rather than cataloguing every item from scratch
- Compare cataloguing practice with peers from university, research, school and corporate libraries

Conclusion:

A catalogue serves readers only when each record is described to a shared standard, names and subjects are controlled and class numbers bring related titles together on the shelf. The one week move from the library operations map and the reference model, through RDA description and MARC 21 encoding, to authority control, subject headings and Dewey and Library of Congress classification, then to Arabic materials, copy cataloguing and service indicators. The final day applies these methods in cataloguing labs and closes with a Cataloguing and Classification Procedures Manual.