Cataloging Staff Competency Levels

These levels are general recommendations and are open to interpretation based on local practices and staffing structures at individual libraries. They supplement and update the Illinois Statewide Cataloging Standards (http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/libraries/cataloging_standards.html) established by the Illinois State Library in 2004, and use the category terminology established there. The categories were developed to reflect likely divisions of responsibility across multiple cataloging staff; job titles are entirely local decisions and will vary widely. Education levels noted here are used as examples, not requirements, and will not be consistent across types and sizes of libraries. Training for each level should include context for how their tasks fit into the library and the importance of following consortium guidelines.

Barcoder

Most basic level. Not likely to have an LTA or other library degree; may have other library experience. Work is focused on data entry and involves matching items to existing bibliographic records. Should be able to identify basic fields in a bib record and identify issues.

Copy Cataloger

May have an LTA but likely not an MLS; likely has library experience. Work is focused on adapting pre-existing records, and involves matching items, making edits to existing bibliographic records, and could involve authority control. May work in a single format, and may assign Dewey and fiction call numbers. Should be able to identify fields in a bibliographic record and correct issues.

Original Cataloger

Likely has an MLS and should have library experience. Work involves matching items, making edits to bib records, authority control, classification, creating original bibliographic records, and may include supervisory responsibilities.

Competency	Barcoder	Copy Cataloger	Original Cataloger
Understands basic cataloging terminology	X	X	X
Knows where to look on the resource for cataloging information, i.e., the prescribed sources of information	X	X	X
Understands the basics of a MARC record	X	X	X
Understands the basics of RDA	X	X	X
Understands the definition and content of item and bibliographic records	X	X	X
Knows how to choose the correct bibliographic record that matches an item	X	X	X

Knows how to add an item and any necessary fields to item record (according to library or consortium guidelines); may include adding call numbers	X	X	X
Able to identify problems with the database or a record that should be reported to their supervisor	X	X	X
Has a basic understanding of RDA and descriptive cataloging		X	X
Has a basic understanding of MARC and how RDA principles translate into MARC		X	X
Has a basic understanding of OCLC or other source of bibliographic records in use locally, and how to identify records to be transferred into their local database.		X	X
Understands what changes their local system makes to the records		X	X
Has a basic understanding of the classification scheme in use locally		X	X
Has a basic understanding of how their system indexes and displays MARC fields		X	X
Able to identify problems that should be reported to OCLC or other record provider		X	X
Has a basic understanding of subject analysis using appropriate thesauri		X	X
Has a basic understanding of authority control and how authority records impact the local catalog		X	X
Understands how cataloging fits in to and supports library services in general		X	X
Able to collaborate and communicate effectively, with a public service orientation		X	X
Has a thorough understanding of RDA and descriptive cataloging			X
Has a thorough understanding of MARC and how RDA principles translate into MARC			X
Maintains a current understanding of working with various types of econtent records			X
Has a thorough understanding of OCLC or other source of bibliographic records in use locally, and how to create an original record in all formats			X
Has a thorough understanding of classification using appropriate schemes; i.e. Dewey Decimal Classification, Library of Congress Classification			X
Has a thorough understanding of how their system indexes and displays MARC fields			X

Knows how to report problems to OCLC or other record provider			X
Has a thorough understanding of subject analysis using LCSH and any other appropriate thesauri			X
Has a thorough understanding of authority records and authority control			X
Has a basic understanding of other metadata structures (such as Dublin Core, BIBFRAME)			X
Has a basic understanding of methods and approaches for metadata creation, editing, and analysis			X
Has a basic understanding of exposing catalog data to the web (e.g. linked data)			X
Understands the management of cataloging functions, and application of consortial guidelines across the library			X
Able to work with contract cataloging providers			X

Last Updated: 01/08/2020