The Changing Role of the Government Librarian

A move towards a personalised model of service provision, as proposed by the Department for Education and Skills Library

A study submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Librarianship

at

THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

by

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September 2005
Abstract

This research looks at the feasibility of implementing a personalised service model in a Government library setting. It focuses specifically on a proposal by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) library to implement a Business Librarian service. The Business Librarian service aims to expand the library’s existing enquiry service, by proactively tailoring and delivering a range of information resources and information consultancy services to specific project groups and teams. It intends to build closer ongoing relationship with others in the Department to track and support their information needs.

In terms of the existing research into personalised service provision, much has been written about the changing role of subject librarians in academic libraries, and the role of clinical librarians in the health sector. However, in the Government sector, much less has been published regarding the librarian’s changing role. This research aims to help re-dress this balance and answer the research questions proposed by the DfES library.

The research questions relate to the Business Librarian model. They look at service remit, marketing, resourcing and measuring the impact of the service. In order to do this a qualitative methodology, and an inductive and grounded theory approach have been used, in order to keep the results obtained grounded in practice. Interviews and questionnaires were conducted with potential users, to gain an idea of their expectations of the service. Interviews and questionnaires were also conducted with Government librarians to gain ideas of best practice from those that have implemented a similar model, and to gauge opinion on the proposed model.

The research concludes that the Business Librarian service is feasible in the context of the DfES library. There is demand for the service from potential DfES users, and the service reflects changes in the wider library sector, to provide tailored and value-added information. These changes have been brought about by advances in technology, which have not only
empowered the end-user, but have also increased information overload. A personalised service model can help to rectify this situation, reflecting changes in working practice, and helping to place the library back at the heart of information provision. In order to do this the DfES library needs to define the Business Librarian service clearly, take on a more proactive consultancy role and strategically market and measure its services, aligning itself with wider organisational strategies.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Sheila Corrall, for her support and encouragement throughout my dissertation. I would also like to thank all of the librarians at the Department for Education and Skills library, for their help and support, in particular Helen Challinor for proposing the original idea, and for her assistance throughout. In addition to this, I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by all of the Government librarians and DfES staff that have participated in the research. Lastly I would like to thank friends and family for their support during this time.
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1 Introduction

CILIP\textsuperscript{1} has recently published a report looking at the future of the library profession within healthcare, with implications for the wider profession. The report highlights the fact that the most successful professions constantly challenge their parameters and working environments (CILIP, 2004). The report highlights the need for the library profession as a whole to gain new “information territory” and act quickly to capitalise on the opportunities that this may bring. This is particularly pertinent at a time when there is increased pressure on library services to justify their existence, in light of changes in the nature of information provision and the empowerment of the end user.

Reflecting these changes, St Clair (2001), writing in the context of special libraries, says that the nature of information provision has shifted from “just in case” to just-in-time to “just-for-you. This illustrates that in a time when people feel overloaded with information, librarians are using their professional skills to provide timely, value added information, to satisfy the needs of their colleagues. In order to provide these services, the librarian not only has to be proactive, but also have a firm grasp of the business processes within the organisation (Wittwer, 2001)

In the Government library sector there is mounting pressure for librarians to demonstrate the value of their professional skills and services, and prove to senior managers that the information services they provide are a vital resource in improving organisational efficiency, not a luxury commodity (O’Conner, 2005). This pressure has intensified in light of the Gershon Review, looking at public sector efficiency, with the aim to cut civil service jobs and redirect resources to the front line (Bell, 2004). This pressure is causing some Government librarians to find new and innovative methods of service delivery, offering more personalised services, and working in a more strategic manner with colleagues, to better understand and meet their information needs.

\textsuperscript{1} Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
1.1 The Proposal from the Department for Education and Skills Library

In order to demonstrate value, and maximise the use of librarian’s professional skills, the DfES library plans to develop and implement a personalised model of service delivery. The basis for this proposal stems from a preliminary idea to create, what the DfES library plan to call a Business Librarian service. This service will run alongside the library’s enquiry service. Business Librarians will liaise closely with specific DfES teams and divisions; attending team away days and meetings, giving presentations. Librarians will take a highly proactive role in assessing information needs, building up close working relationships with others in the Department, monitoring and fulfilling their information needs. This research project looks at the most effective methods for implementing this new service.

1.2 Rationale for the Research

In terms of the existing research, much has been written about the changing role of subject librarians in academic libraries, with their expanding academic liaison and learning support role (Biddiscombe, 2002, Pinfield, 2001, Rodwell, 2001). The work that clinical librarians are doing as embedded librarians, supporting evidence-based practice has also been discussed in length (Beavan and McHugh, 2003, Florence et al, 2002). However, in the Government sector, much less has been published about the librarians changing role. Very little has been published with regard to personalised/tailored services that Government libraries are beginning to provide, or discussion about ideas of best practice in implementing these services. O’Connor (2005) says that civil servants find information invaluable, but they do not always find libraries invaluable. O’Connor says that civil servants need to see the value of the library service, but this must involve librarians playing a more proactive roles as members of the organisation.
From the brief introduction it can be seen that there is a need for all libraries, including Government libraries, to demonstrate how the information they provide adds value to their wider organisation. As can be seen from the literature review (chapter 3) little has been written in the context of Government libraries providing a personalised service model. The rationale for this research is therefore two-fold. Firstly, to fill a gap in the academic research and secondly, to provide practical research, in order to advise the DfES on the effective implementation of a personalised service model, with wider implications for all UK Government libraries.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

1.3.1 Aim
To explore the feasibility of the personalised model of service provision proposed by the DfES, investigating the issues arising, regarding its service remit and marketing, resourcing and measuring the service.

1.3.2 The Key Research Questions
Four key research questions have been proposed by DfES.

- **The Service Remit**: What services should the Business Librarian provide?
- **Marketing the Service**: How should the library market this new service to DfES staff?
- **Resourcing the Service**: How should the Business Librarian service be resourced?
- **Measuring the Service**: How can the value of the Business Librarian service be measured?

In order to answer these research questions a number of objectives have been set.
1.3.3 Objectives

i) Identify existing DfES ideas for the Business Librarian service, and identify initial ideas and constraints on the model.

ii) Explore how the role of the librarian has changed in other library sectors, including; academic, clinical and corporate sectors.

iii) Investigate Government librarian views on the Business Librarian service proposed by the DfES, and identify ideas of best practice, from those who have attempted to implement a similar model.

iv) Identify expectations of service that will be placed on the Business Librarian service by DfES staff.

v) Make recommendations to the DfES library on how best to develop and implement the role of the Business Librarian answering the research questions proposed.
1.4 The Structure of the Dissertation

1.4.1 Background Research (Objective 1)

The report first sets the context, looking at the existing DfES library service, to identify possible constraints and parameters on the Business Librarian model.

1.4.2 The Literature Review: The wider research environment (Objective 2)

A literature review has been conducted to identify how the librarian's role has changed in other library sectors, specifically in the academic, clinical and corporate sectors and in other Government libraries. It looks at theories and models of best practice that can be applied to the DfES library. The literature review also focuses on the professional skills and services needed to operate a personalised service model and how best to implement, resource, market, and measure the proposed personalised Business Librarian service. The literature review underpins the dissertation, informing the structure and content of the methodology, questionnaires, and interviews. The literature review has also informed the discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

1.4.3 Data Collection: Ideas of Best Practice from Government Librarians (Objective 3)

Initial research findings from the literature review, were extended to the Committee of Departmental Librarians (CDL), and other Government librarians, to gauge opinion on whether they would consider a move towards this type of personalised service model. Best practice and lessons learned from other Government librarians, who have attempted a similar task, have been identified.
1.4.4 Data Collection: User’s Expectations on the Service  
(Objective 4)

In extension to collecting Government librarian opinion, and to further 
determine service remit, DfES employees were surveyed and interviewed to 
identify the services that a Business Librarian should provide. The results of 
both elements of the data collection can be found in the Results and Findings 
chapter.

1.4.5 Research Outcomes (Objectives 1-5)

The information gathered through the course of the research has been 
synthesised in the discussion and conclusion, and recommendations have 
been made to the DfES on how best to implement the Business Librarian 
model, answering the research questions proposed. Future areas of 
research have also been identified.
2 Background Information

2.1 The DfES Library Service

The DfES library is based on two sites in London and Sheffield, employing 22 staff (20 are qualified librarians). The library provides a service to the 4319 people that work in the DfES, TTA and OFSTED, based at sites in London, Sheffield, Darlington and Runcorn. The library operates a staffed enquiry desk in both Sheffield and London from 9 am-5 pm Monday to Friday. It also has an Intranet website which includes; links to online journals and useful websites, general information about all library services, including its consultancy services\(^1\), current awareness service and information about library information skills training sessions.

2.1.1 The Business Librarian Service

The aim of the library enquiry service at present is to:

*provide a quality, customer focused enquiry service to meet the business and information needs of DfES, TTA and Ofsted*.

The Business Librarian service aims to expand on the existing enquiry service, by proactively tailoring and delivering a range of information resources and information consultancy services to specific projects groups and teams. For example a Business Librarian may provide tailored professional advice on information and knowledge management issues, website design, setting up communities of practice and offering information skills training sessions tailored to very specific user needs.

The Business Librarian service does not propose to offer any new services; it is just a means of repackaging and tailoring existing services to specific customer needs. It implies building closer ongoing relationship with others in the Department to track and support their information needs. All librarians will play a part in running the Business Librarian service, it is unclear as yet how a librarian will be selected, but one idea is that a librarian

\(^1\) This includes information and advice on copyright, metadata and intranet communities
will be nominated, or will put their name forward for a project. There are concerns that it would not be realistic for Business Librarians to operate like academic subject librarians, with people building up expertise in certain areas. This is due to the project-based nature of DfES working, and the flexible approach to gaining experience in many different areas that is favoured by the Library team.

Instead it is proposed that a Business Librarian, assigned to a project, will spend some time learning about the business needs of the team that they are supporting, in order to fulfil their information needs. It is proposed that an informal contract will be drawn up between the library and the team, at the start of the Business Librarian involvement, stating what is to be achieved over the duration of the project, with milestones and timescales for completion. At the end of the project the Business Librarian will go back and conduct a consultation review, to ensure that all work has been completed and the information need has been satisfied.

Currently the library carries out elements of the proposed Business Librarian service, as the library has been involved in working closely with teams in the past, for example with the Legal Advisors. The Business Librarian service aims to open this service up to more people, more systematically, by identifying where projects and teams may need assistance. It is anticipated that sources of Business Librarian work will come into the library via a number of channels. Through the identification of higher level enquires that come into the enquiry desk or that have been logged on the enquiry service database, repeat business and through targeting the service to specific teams.
2.2 DfES and Government Strategy

The DfES five-year strategy states that the Department should become more professional and expert, and exploit ICT to a greater extent becoming more strategic and less bureaucratic (DfES, 2005). Using librarians with professional and expert skills offers potential for the Department to get the best value from its information resources and help to exploit ICT more effectively. This can be done through consultation with Business Librarians. For example the service can potentially aid better website design, and encourage knowledge sharing and more efficient communication through the use of Communities to avoid duplication of work. The Business Librarian service will also enable the library to support the new strategic DfES in evidence-based policymaking.

The Business Librarian model also ties in with the recommendations made in the Gershon report, which looks to streamline the civil service, reduce bureaucracy and make better use of resources and create efficiency savings (Gershon, 2004). The Business Librarian service will make more proactive use of librarian’s professional skills, helping DfES staff to manage knowledge and become information literate so that can fully utilise all sources of knowledge and information available to them.

In a similar way the Business Librarian model will also support the Joined Up Government initiative, aiding the DfES to manage information and knowledge more effectively, and providing training in information literacy, to allow policy makers and researchers to conduct more systematic research, to take better account of all cross-cutting Government issues, again to improve evidence based policy making (Cabinet Office, 2000).
3 Literature Review

This chapter begins by reviewing the literature regarding the role of the subject librarian in the academic sector, and the sustainability of this role in the future. It looks at the debate surrounding the skills required to successfully carry out a subject librarian’s role. In particular how liaison, consultancy, communication and teaching skills have been given increased importance in the job selection process over recent years, above the need for detailed subject knowledge.

The literature review then moves on to look at the role of the clinical librarian in the health sector and the role they play in contributing towards evidence based practice, working closely with clinicians to fulfil this role. Their training needs and the role they play in providing information literacy training is also discussed. The role of the librarian in special libraries in the corporate and Government sector is also discussed, identifying an increasing need to provide customised value-added information, tailored to specific user needs.

From this initial review of the literature in these three library sectors, a number of key areas, where librarians are providing professional tailored advice, have been identified. Namely, the librarian’s increased role in information consultancy, knowledge management, information literacy training, and conducting reference interviews, all of which are changing the nature of the librarian’s role, taking the librarian into new information territory, and demanding that the librarian be in tune with the wider organisational environment. Finally, the literature is reviewed regarding the strategic planning, marketing and measuring of library services.
3.1 Academic Sector: the role of the subject librarian

3.1.1 The Role of the Subject Librarian

There is debate in the UK, Australia and USA regarding the role of the subject librarian\(^3\) and its continued viability in the future. Dickinson (1979) predicted the disappearance of subject librarians, due to the impossibility of a librarian’s knowledge covering large multidisciplinary collections (Rodwell, 2001). Heseltine also predicted the disappearance of the subject librarian in 1996, due to the convergence of learning support services in universities, which he said would negate the need for this specialist role (Martin, 1996). As yet, the large-scale disappearance of the subject librarian has yet to materialise in any of these three countries (Gaston, 2001). In the USA the number of subject librarians is growing, but in the UK their numbers are shrinking, with some universities cutting posts (Gaston, 2001). The most recent case being at Bangor University in Wales, where competition from other sources of information (namely the internet) and the perceived de-skilling of bibliographic searching by managers, has increased pressure on subject librarians to justify their existence, and has eventually led to a significant cut in posts (Curtis, 2005).

Others are far more optimistic about the future of subject librarians. In the UK, Pinfield (2001), Biddiscombe (2002) both say that subject librarians still have a significant role to play in universities, to help the library remain user-centred and to act as important interface between the user and the library. In fact Gaston (2001) says that it is the liaison role played by the subject librarian that has ensured their endurance over the years. Biddiscombe (2002) says that the role of the subject librarian will grow and expand, but that subject librarians must take advantage of new opportunities and technology and increase their liaison activity. In order to achieve this he points to more liaison work with academic departments, and subject librarians becoming less “library based”. Rodwell (2001) echoes this point saying that there is still a need for subject librarians to act as “infomediaires”,

\(^3\) Note that in USA Subject Librarians are more commonly known as Reference Librarians, but for the purposes of this report the term Subject Librarian will be used. Liaison Librarian is also an increasingly used term in the USA and UK as an alternative name for this role.
as although the end-user is now more empowered to conduct independent searching, they still rely on experts to conduct more complex searches, and to provide information skills training. Owusu-Ansah (2004) reiterates this saying that information overload means that librarian’s skills are highly valid, particularly in information skills training.

Frank et al 2001, writing from an American perspective, say that liaison programmes are too passive and do not go far enough. Instead they say that liaison programmes in the future should be more dynamic, with librarians becoming information consultants, providing a proactive value-added service. Frank et al (2001) say that this is particularly crucial now that many academics access the library from their desktops, and rarely visit the physical library, no longer seeing it as essential. In practice, McAbee and Graham (2005) have found that the majority of subject librarians in their USA survey spend more time providing reference services from a centralised reference desk, rather than operating as faulty liaisons. Frank et al (2001) say that to remain relevant in the future, subject librarians must move beyond traditional service models, and identify new areas of learning and growth, before other information providers take their place.

3.1.1.1 Skills Requirement

Rodwell (2001) says that Dickinson (1979) overemphasised the importance of subject knowledge, although Rodwell does not disregard it completely. Hay (1990) also disagrees with Dickinson’s views, saying that subject specialist knowledge is still highly valued in universities. Rodwell draws a distinction between subject expertise and subject knowledge. He says that it is fundamental that subject librarians have sound subject expertise, above a sound subject knowledge, which can become quickly outdated. Rodwell defines subject expertise as knowledge of the information resources and an understanding of the dynamics of the production and dissemination of information in a particular field, rather than detailed subject knowledge gained through formal education.
Biddiscombe (2002), Gaston, (2001), Hyams (2005) and Pinfield (2001), also all state that other skills are more important than subject knowledge. These four authors state that good communication and IT skills, and a flexible approach, are more important than subject knowledge. This enables librarians to build up strong relationships with academic departments, and adapt to new technology. Hyams (2005) goes even further saying that subject librarians, who are liaising with different schools and departments, need a huge knowledge of the operational and strategic activity occurring within them, which is a far cry from librarians with specialist knowledge cataloguing books.

In defence of subject knowledge, Rodwell (2001) says that a mixture of subject knowledge and subject expertise is required. The primary reason suggested for some subject knowledge is that there are some fields such as languages, where subject knowledge is obviously highly important, but Rodwell also states that another reason for subject knowledge is that academic staff often relate better to those who share their interests in a subject. Hyams (2005) does not completely disregard subject knowledge, saying that it is “highly appreciated”, but the ability to “communicate and enthuse” and be in tune with working culture is also of extreme importance.

American researchers Donham and Green (2004), Frank and Howell (2003) and Glynn and Wu (2003) all talk about subject librarians taking on a more advanced consultancy role. Donham and Green (2004) envisage subject librarians working in partnership with academics, in areas such information literacy teaching, rather than purely providing subject knowledge, acting as intermediaries between the resource and the faculty. Frank and Howell (2003) propose a continuum, with academic librarians moving from operating a passive liaison service towards more proactive and customised consultancy service model. They say that the move along this continuum is being driven by changes in information seeking behaviour, scholarly communication and information literacy training, which are providing librarians with a rationale to take on a consultancy role, and redefine the library service, before other information providers claim this territory.
Glynn and Wu’s study at Rutgers University Library shows liaison librarians working to develop highly effective formal and informal communication channels, adapting liaison relationships to suit individual information needs (Glynn and Wu, 2003).

In order to meet information needs, academic librarians have been increasingly involved with electronic information services, first as intermediaries, but increasingly as teachers, furthering their consultancy role (Martin, 1996). Court (2001) says that UK, subject librarians increasingly manage the environment in which learning takes place, meaning that librarians are becoming specialists who complement academics. Hyams (2005) says that subject librarians are increasingly using the hybrid skills of IT and teaching, to develop e-learning platforms on which to teach information literacy skills.

This move into consultancy is not without its problems as many new skills are required for the librarian to fulfil the role successfully. Peacock (2001), talking from an Australian perspective, says that many reference librarians enter the workforce unprepared for their teaching role. There is also concern that the emphasis on teaching and liaison will cause loss of subject knowledge and subject expertise and create undue stress for librarians trying to perform dual roles (Gaston, 2001). But Lipow (1992) says that it is vital for librarians to work closely with scholars, to assess their information needs and provide value added services (Frank and Howell, 2003). Pinfield (2001) echoes this, saying that resources must be found, as information skills teaching provides a real opportunity for subject librarians to raise the profile of the library in academic institutions.

3.1.2 Summary: Academic Sector

There is debate in the USA, UK and Australia over the future role of the subject librarian. Authors such as Dickinson and Heseltine have predicted its disappearance, due to changes in the nature of information provision. Others, such as Bidisscombe and Pinfield, see the subject librarian as having a significant role to play in the future connecting users to information.
Although there has been shrinkage in UK subject librarian posts, they still retain their importance, and in the USA reference librarians continue to thrive.

There is also debate regarding the skills required to perform the role of subject librarian. In recent years much of the literature has shifted away from the importance of subject knowledge in favour of new skills such as liaison, communication, teaching and consultancy. Rodwell in particular highlights a move from subject knowledge to subject expertise. This move into new roles is in putting increased pressure on subject librarians, in regard to maintaining traditional services, whilst expanding into new roles. Despite this fact many authors suggest that it is vital for subject librarians to expand into these new roles to maintain viability in the future.

3.2 Health Sector: the role of the clinical librarian

3.2.1 The Clinical Librarian: Evidence Based Health Care

Health information is a very political area in the UK; as a result health libraries have to keep reinventing themselves to keep up with future demands (Lord, 2005). Evidence based healthcare (EBH) is providing new roles for UK information professionals in healthcare (Beavan and McHugh, 2003). Librarians in this sector have moved towards conducting systematic reviews; locating evidence, filtering and appraising literature, adding value to information and furthering knowledge. They are also working to provide information at the point of care, such as partnerships between libraries and primary healthcare services (Wilson et al, 2004). To be successful in these new roles, and cross boundaries in the workplace, librarians must be fully aware of the benefits that their services can offer (Fourie, 2004).

Lamb (1971) was one of the first to discuss the role of the clinical librarian, who could provide physicians with specific information at the point of care (Sargeant and Harrison, 2004). It was not until the late 1990s that the role of the clinical librarian became familiar once again (Sargeant and...

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This was due to renewed emphasis on the use of evidence based practice in the NHS; the need for consideration of all high quality and up-to-date evidence when considering a course of medical treatment (Sargeant and Harrison, 2004). The role of the modern clinical librarian has sprung from this need, using specialist skills and knowledge, to synthesise complex information and re-package this information for clinicians (Harrison and Sargeant, 2004). The expert and specialist knowledge used by clinical librarians is gained through continual training whilst in post, rather than any specialist prior knowledge (Harrison and Sargeant, 2004).

The HEAG report highlights the need for librarians working in these new roles to have a good awareness of, and ability to sell, their unique skills, in order to gain acceptance from colleagues and clients (CILIP, 2004). They have to move towards collaborative working practices, and prove that they are in "real business" by being quick to adopt new technology and keep their skills constantly updated (CILIP, 2004). Palmer (2004) discusses the outcomes of the HEAG report, saying that changes in information provision in the healthcare sector reflect changes in the profession as a whole. Users now demand seamless access and self-service, with information customised to meet specific user needs and librarians providing outreach services, alongside traditional services. The HEAG research revealed that many librarians are ill prepared or reluctant to take on these new roles (Palmer, 2004). It calls for a new approach to professional development at CILIP, to try and counter this and ensure that librarians build on their skills continuously throughout their careers (Palmer, 2004).

### 3.2.2 Clinical Librarian: Training Needs

Some clinical library literature has looked at the training needs of the information professional in healthcare in clinical settings. Florance et al (2002) have discussed the training needs of information specialists, who will participate in practice settings, building up a specialist knowledge, what they term the "informationist", who works in a clinical team, bringing information...
skills, but has an in-depth understanding of the specialist area they are working in. Florance et al (2002) suggest that this preparation, as well as being learnt in post, could also be taught in post-graduate training programmes. Tennant et al (2001) have looked at the development of formal library liaison programmes in six Health Science Centre (HSC) colleges in USA. They found that having liaison librarians, who are subject specialists, helped partnerships to be formed between librarians and researchers. Tennant et al (2001) highlight that in order to gain and maintain subject specialist knowledge, liaisons should embark on continual professional development, including attending presentations and seminars and reviewing student dissertations.

3.2.3 Clinical Librarian: User Education and Information Literacy

In addition to their key role in EBH, health information professionals are working in a wide variety of fields providing information literacy training (Beavan and McHugh, 2003). The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is one such place that has embraced new technology and collaborative working practice to fulfil training needs (Cull, 2003). The RCN library works closely with the Life Long Learning team to maintain the Learning Zone website (Cull, 2003). Journals are available from the website, and there is a section with journals specifically tailored towards the training needs of nurses, who have to prove that they are keeping their skills up to date, to remain in practice. In order to create this tailored journals collection, librarians have used their collection development skills, usage surveys and extensive subject knowledge and experience (Cull, 2003). The Learning Zone website, also includes information literacy training online, through information literacy modules, again emphasising collaborative working between the Life Long Learning Team and the Library.

Palmer (2004) says that user education has grown in importance, and librarians need new skills to cope with this change. The report conducted by Harrison and Sargeant (2004) shows that 91% of clinical librarian posts in the UK surveyed offered user education sessions. Fricker (2004) also talks
about user education in NHS libraries, saying that at the Newham library there is an emphasis on providing user training, which often takes place on a one-to-one basis. Fricker (2004) says that one-to-one training is effective, but not time efficient. To combat this there is an emphasis on group training where possible. Fricker is not concerned about people’s seeming reliance on Google to find information. He says that people still turn to the library for more complex information needs, and he sees the role of the librarian in healthcare to fulfil these needs and provide training to enable users to be more self-sufficient.

3.2.4 Summary: Health Sector Libraries

The literature shows that UK information professionals in the health sector in the UK are claiming new territory, particularly in adding value to information through evidence based practice and information literacy training. Evidence based practice is based on the systematic review of research, which involves proactively filtering and appraising information. This information is then used by clinicians to consider all the evidence before deciding on a course of treatment.

Appropriate training for clinical librarians is also discussed extensively in the UK literature. It is felt that many clinical librarians are ill prepared for the specialist nature of the job. Knowledge is learnt whilst working in post, rather than through any prior knowledge of training gained during education. A number of authors (Palmer, 2004 and Florance et al, 2002) have called for a more comprehensive and structured professional development plan for clinical librarians, to help them keep their skills up-to-date.

3.3 Special Libraries in the Workplace

Wittwer (2001) says that special libraries need to enhance the business process, and become real partners with their customers and colleagues, watching developments within their parent organisation closely. To do this librarians need to keep up to date with new technology, self promote and add
proven value to information. They must also spend time building close relationships and collaboration partnerships with others in the organisation, to remain relevant to the organisation’s needs. Wittwer says that librarians must be aware that people no longer require intermediaries in the information gathering process. Instead librarians need to provide value added information, and consultancy skills, such as advice on knowledge management, web design and training on navigating digital resources.

St Clair (2001) continues this theme of adding value to information, saying that special librarians have moved towards providing tailored and customised information, providing just the right amount of timely information, with a certain level of analysis. Again St Clair agrees with Wittwer, that the role of the special librarian is no longer that of an intermediary between the user and information, instead it is about value-added, customised information. This view is echoed by Schamel (2002), who says that a librarians knowledge of the organisation, gives them the unique advantage of being able to offer “filtered”, “verified” and “summarised” information, delivered in a timely and cost-effective way to fulfil, and in many cases anticipate, user needs.

In addition to anticipating user needs, Brick (1999) has looked at the neglected subject of investigating non-library use in the workplace. Brick defined the non-user as someone who has information needs and has access to a workplace library (either physical or online) but does not use it. Importantly, accompanying the non-user is the infrequent, superficial and inefficient library user. Green (1994) says that lack of awareness and time to use library services can form a barrier against use (Brick, 1999). Brick’s study found that senior staff were the largest group of non-users, and lack of awareness of library resources and librarians professional skills was the main reason for non-library use. Brick found that in some cases lack of library promotion was to blame, but in others libraries had been highly active in promotion to no avail. This may be because people in the organisation are not information conscious, or that they prefer to use their own personal networks to find information (Brick, 1999). Brick says that libraries should be
much more proactive in identifying and targeting non-library users, making it an integral part of their marketing strategies.

### 3.3.1 Corporate Libraries

In the corporate library sector, Ryan (2005) and Konieczko (2003) look at how corporate information centres are finding new and innovative ways of being successful in increasingly harsh economic times, when there is constant need to justify their existence in measurable terms. Ryan says that the library must be proactive in suggesting resources to customers and take every opportunity to “walk the territory” and meet the users. Konieczko says that the key to the success of an information centre lies in anticipating organisational needs and direction before it occurs. Konieczko says that a library’s success depends on its staff understanding of the organisation’s business operations, and that librarians should immerse themselves in business planning processes outside of the library, to help develop tailored services to drive the organisations productivity.

Barreau, (2004) also talks about the challenges facing librarians, particularly in the corporate sector, where many library and information centres are closing. Barreau’s results show that increased visibility and collaboration in an organisation leads to greater accountability and stress for librarians, but benefits include a greater ability to define the role of the library and information professional within the organisation, and the ability to better meet the organisations information needs.

### 3.3.2 Government Libraries

A lot has been written regarding the changing role of librarians in the academic and clinical sectors. Much less has been written regarding UK Government librarians, and their changing role in providing personalised and tailored information services. A central theme identified from the Circle of State Librarians journal is that there is a need to move towards more intensive user training, boosting civil servants information literacy skills, so that they can conduct their own research efficiently (Cumming and
Cuthbertson, 2001, Cumming, 2004, Levay, 2003 and Miller, 2003). Miller (2003) says that Government librarians are information experts, not subject specialists. Instead, Miller says that Government librarians should be teaching colleagues to search for their own information, creating a more independent end-user and leading to a more efficient and effective organisation, and the creation of new knowledge.

Another theme that comes out of the literature is the librarian’s role in knowledge management across Government, providing advice to teams across the organisation, as well as being involved in organisation wide knowledge management strategy and implementation. Thornton and McCracken have written a number of articles concerning the Dstl Knowledge Agents, who are a team of information and subject experts, who provide an on-tap response to tackle Dstl colleagues information related needs (Thornton and McCracken, 2003). Knowledge Agents come from a variety of backgrounds, including information professionals, and they operate separately from the library and information service. They have a boundless service remit, from basic literature searches to complete support of the information needs on a major project. Timescales for work varies from immediate response, to much longer timescales. The Knowledge Agents are self-financing and offering a wide range of consultancy skills to support the business process, adding value to information and enabling knowledge sharing and creation (Thornton and McCracken, 2003).

At GCHQ8 the library is called the Knowledge Management Service. Librarians promote and enable knowledge sharing initiatives across the organisation; they harness corporate knowledge, using techniques such as knowledge harvesting, to add value to information (Pine-Coffin, 2005). Parry et al (2004) also describe their experiences of working on Home Office knowledge management initiative. All three authors have a background in librarianship, and say that librarians are well placed to work on knowledge and information sharing initiatives, because they have a background in

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sharing information effectively, and teaching others to handle information effectively.

GCHQ also provides an example of librarians providing a customised service to teams through the use of an out-beded service model. Librarians work away from the library for extended periods of time, building up a closer working relationship with their colleagues, to provide a service tailored to a teams needs, that tries to anticipate user needs and builds up a rapport with colleagues (Pine-Coffin, 2005). At GCHQ, librarians market their skills and search tools, they carry out appraisals to assess information needs, and network to raise their profile across GCHQ. Librarians have transferable skills, rather than specialist knowledge, and they rotate their jobs on a regular basis, so that all the librarians gain new skills (Pine-Coffin, 2005).

3.3.3 Summary: Special Libraries

In special libraries the emphasis in the literature is on adding value to the business process and improving efficiency. There is a need for increased partnership working with others in the organisation, and offering proactive consultancy services outside the confines of the library. In particular information literacy training and knowledge management are two of the main areas discussed where Government librarians can work outside the confines of the library, raising the profile of the library to provide a more proactive service. One of the major problems, highlighted in the literature, is low library usage due to a lack of awareness of the library service and librarians skills. It was suggested that this could be countered by more proactive and strategic library services, where librarians have a greater understanding of the business process, in order to better understand and anticipate user needs.
3.4 Professional Skills

A number of areas have been identified from the literature, where librarian’s professional skills are deemed important, if they are to move into new information territory and offer more personalised and customised services to customers.

3.4.1 Consultancy Skills

A survey sponsored by LexisNexis in 2003, showed that information professionals are increasingly being asked to work in consultancy roles, moving away from a purely information gathering role. This involves having understanding of the business in which they operate, to deliver the most relevant results and provide strategic value to business (Information World Review, 2003). Librarians are increasingly expected to take advantage of new technology and increase employee productivity through the use of information (Information World Review, 2003).

Vickers (1992) says that information consultants in the private sector need to have, not only library skills, but also computer and entrepreneurial skills (Frank et al 2001). They need to develop certain characteristics, such as the ability to be confident communicators, enthusiastic, and self-disciplined and have active listening and negotiation skills, and learn more from consultants in business and the private sector. Whitwell and Arganbright have established some key consultancy skills (Frank et al, 2001). These include; “under promising” and “over delivering” in order to establish achievable goals, communicating effectively throughout the course of the project and understanding the client base.

In academic institutions consultancy can enhance the image of the information professional in the faculty to one of “research partner”, “information provider “and “valuable resource” (Frank et al, 2001). This means that faculty are more likely to refer students to the library for assistance and guidance. Also this strong relationship means that information professionals are more likely to be invited to get involved in curriculum
development, and the faculty can learn more about the information resources available making the best use of the resources to hand (Frank et al 2001). Consulting also means that the library must undergo a cultural and philosophic change. Mentoring and training can help the consultant librarian to listen and anticipate client needs. Ultimately to truly succeed, the consultant must also bring analytical skills to the project to support the decision-making process (Frank et al, 2001).

3.4.2 Knowledge Management

One area where librarians are getting involved in consultancy is knowledge management, using their experience in managing both technical and human systems, to develop cultures and systems to aid knowledge sharing within organisations (Haines and Dunn, 2004, Lim and Klobas, 2000 and McKenzie, 2004). This is achieved by creating and managing systems (human and technological) in which tacit and explicit knowledge can be collected and organised, and can be combined with external information to create new knowledge (Al-Hawamdeh, 2003). Because there is now so much information available to people, the role of the information professional has shifted, towards helping people evaluate the information that they find, and share and create knowledge from information (Sinotte, 2004).

Successful knowledge management, by information professionals, requires a more proactive approach; adapting knowledge management strategies depending on organisational size and culture (Lim and Klobas, 2000). Davenport (1997) says that librarians have been overlooked in knowledge management in the past as they are seen as “passive repositories of knowledge” (Stoddart, 2001:27). Stoddart says that to achieve full involvement in the knowledge management process a change in perception of the librarian’s role is needed, which must involve a more proactive contribution from librarians within organisations.

Many librarians in the corporate sector are becoming increasingly visible and proactive, in implementing knowledge management strategies.
(Lim and Klobas, 2000). For example, at Linklaters and Alliance, the information and knowledge (Know-how) services have been integrated, so that staff with legal, information management and information technology skills can work together (Abell and Oxbow, 2001). St Clair (2002) says that special librarians have a critical role to play within organisations, combining information technology with knowledge sharing practice to create knowledge centric organisations. In the future St Clair (2002) suggests that information and knowledge professionals might hold the key to creating real time enterprises, knowledge centric organisations, where information is organised, and permeates the organisation, in such a way that it can react in real-time to changes in the wider business environment.

3.4.3 Information Literacy

SCONUL (2004) defines information literacy as encompassing user education, information skills training and key skills relating to the use and manipulation of information in the context of learning, teaching and research. Information literacy has been mainly discussed in the context of Higher Education (Johnson and Webber, 2004), but it is being increasingly discussed in the context of the workplace (Macoustra, 2004). Information literacy is essential to lifelong learning and knowledge management (Johnson and Webber, 2004 and Oman, 2001). Oman says that any organisation with a knowledge management program should have demonstrable links to information literacy training, which he describes as the “people component of knowledge management” (Oman, 2001:33). Oman says that information literacy should not be viewed in isolation; information professionals should tie information literacy training into internal employee development programmes. Macoustra (2004) writes from the neglected perspective of information literacy in the workplace. She finds that information literate staff have more effective research skills, and organisations that have introduced information literacy in conjunction with knowledge management strategies are more efficient and cost-effective as a result.
Within a university context, Johnson and Webber (2004) give examples from Strathclyde and Sheffield University on how information literacy accredited courses have helped create “reflective practitioners” across the university, who understand their information seeking behaviour, question information sources and understand that knowledge is not static. But the research concludes that as yet the LIS faculty are not taking the benefits of information literacy to the wider institution (Johnson and Webber, 2004). Smart (2005) has discussed ways of implementing an effective information literacy strategy, which is consistent across the organisation, drawing on experience from Plymouth University. Having a fully integrated and consistent information literacy programme can help to raise the profile of librarians and prove their worth on a much wider scale (Oman, 2001 and Smart, 2005).

3.4.4 Reference Interviews and Information Needs Assessment

Kelly (2001) says that the reference interview can determine specific customer needs. The reference interview can be used when setting up CAS alerts, or more generally, and can help to provide a more proactive enquiry service, helping the user get the most from resources. Kelly advocates the use of “floor walkers”, librarians who go out and train staff, and also help to raise the profile of the library.

On a larger more strategic scale, information needs assessments can be used to gain a more detailed picture of the information resources available, matched to user needs. Sykes (2001) says that information needs assessments may focus on different levels of the organisation, from team to organisational level, to determine exactly what type of information employees need to do their job. The information gained from the assessment should be core to the information centre’s strategic and operational plans, and should dictate buying decisions. If an information centre is proactive and progressive, Sykes says that it should meet with its users on a regular basis, to gain a better understanding of user needs, and periodically carry out an overall information needs assessment of the organisation as a whole.
Line (1969) defined an information need as the information needed by a person in their job to conduct research, that is recognised by the recipient (Nicholas, 1996). The information need arises when a gap in the information or knowledge is recognised. Nicholas also points out that many people have unexpressed or unknown information needs. This is where a reference interview at an individual level, or information needs assessment on a larger scale, conducted by a librarian, may help to recognise these unexpressed needs (Pantry and Griffiths, 1998).

3.4.5 Summary

Librarians are increasingly working in consultancy roles, which raise library profile and increase understanding of the wider organisation and its business processes. Working in consultancy roles has meant that librarians are having to develop and enhance entrepreneurial and communication skills to make the most of these new opportunities. Working closely with others outside the library in such a capacity, helps to raise library profile and showcase librarians professional skills.

The main areas in which librarians are offering a more proactive and tailored consultancy approach, is through knowledge management, information literacy training and by conducting reference interviews, and at a larger more strategic level, information needs assessments. All of these services involve a closer interaction with colleagues, a need to tailor services, be more proactive and raise the profile of the library service.

3.5 Planning, Marketing and Measuring Library Services

3.5.1 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning provides a process and a framework for developing library services, and a means of enabling a library to implement its missions, and objectives (Corrall, 2002). Strategic planning demonstrates to decision makers and stakeholders how library objectives fit in with those of the wider organisation, and how they are serving their customers and providing best value for money (Corrall, 2002). It is particularly important for libraries to plan strategically, as external decision makers often see libraries as an add-on
service, which is easily expendable. Asprey (2004) says that librarians may find it easier to engage senior managers in applying information best practice initiatives, such as information literacy and knowledge management, if the library can align itself with organisation wide strategic and operational plans. For the library to do this effectively, librarians have to engage with their colleagues across the organisation and gain a detailed understanding of the business imperatives (Asprey, 2001). In order to prove their worth, St Clair (2001) highlights that it is essential that librarians know the value of the information that they provide, and ensure that this information is reaching the right people at the right time. To do this (Schamel, 2002) says that libraries must market themselves effectively.

3.5.2 Marketing

Strategic Marketing Plans

Brewerton (2003) highlights that marketing library services is a key management activity, not an optional extra. The true essence of marketing is about predicting and satisfying customer needs profitably, rather than trying to sell the customer something that they do not need (Brewerton, 2003). But, what if the customer is not aware of the products and services available to them, which may satisfy their needs? Soules (2001) says that librarians perform such diverse role that it can often be difficult for people to know what a library does and its potential to fulfil information needs. Bell (2001) says that word-of-mouth marketing can be a powerful force; but this is only the case if potential customers have a good awareness of the library and the services that it offers. To counter this, Soules (2001) says that the marketing plans should be strategic in its nature, driving the entire library decision-making process, outlining the services the library provides, who the services can benefit and how these services and skills tie into higher strategic goals. Gronroos (1994) says that it is vital for customer focus to be completely embedded into the organisational strategy, not just an add-on or adjunct to the service. A strategic marketing plan can ensure that this is the case (Bell, 2001).

Relationship Marketing: A Paradigm Shift
Bell, Brewerton, Gronroos and Soules, all write from the relatively new perspective of relationship marketing theory. Gronroos says that relationship marketing can be broken down into two parts, attracting the customer and building a relationship with the customer, which involves developing a certain level of trust, built up over time. Strauss and Frost (2001) go even further, suggesting that customer relationship management provides mutual gain for all, because the service provider is more in tune with the customer’s information needs (Saez, 2002).

Before the concept of relationship marketing entered the literature, the marketing mix paradigm was the dominant marketing theory (Gronroos, 1994 and Singh, 2003). Based around the idea of acquiring customers and market segmentation, this theory is defined by the four Ps of marketing (product, price, place and promotion) (Gronroos, 1994). Singh (2003) says that the marketing mix theory is completely inappropriate for marketing library services, due to the complex nature of information provision, which requires the building of long-term mutual relationships and trust. Soules (2001), echoes this point, by saying that for libraries, the bottom-line is increased customer loyalty, building more meaningful relationships, increased customer numbers, and a way to prove that libraries add value. With increased competition from other information providers, and in an age where many library customers are remote users, librarians need to develop a loyal customer base, which will do some of the marketing for them and develop new relationships all the time (Soules, 2001). Ongoing and strategic marketing (including customer relationships and promotion, collaboration and proactive engagement) is crucial if libraries are to stay in touch with user needs and survive in the future (Bell, 2001).

Creating a Brand

Brewerton’s 2003 article emphasises the importance of libraries building a strong brand on which to promote their service. This includes the important task of giving a name to a service. Biddiscombe (2002) highlights nomenclature as an issue when defining the role of librarians involved in learning support. He says that there have been cases where the term
“librarian” has threatened job status. He recommends other terms, such as “learning development advisor” which describe the role much more precisely. At the Cornell College, USA, the term “consulting librarian” is used to describe this academic liaison role, emphasising partnership (Donham and Green, 2004). In the UK, Gaston (2001) says that more emphasis needs to be put on the “liaison” function, rather than the “subject” function of librarians working in this role. Ryan (2005) says that people in the corporate environment have certain negative preconceptions about the words “library” and “librarian”. This caused him to rename the service the “Business Information Centre”.

Shamel (2002), on the other hand, says that although libraries should build a strong brand, the name matters little, as long as the brand is consistent and marketed strategically. As part of this branding, Shamel (2002) and Brewerton (2003) both say that librarians should position themselves as the primary information provider in an organisation by building a strong brand, which will stick in people’s minds and accurately reflect the library and the services it provides. To do this Shamel highlights the importance of the coordinated strategic marketing of librarians as professionals. This, she says, can help to overcome some of the confusion and inaccurate stereotypes surrounding the profession.

3.6 Measuring Services

Marketing and measurement go hand in hand, “without objective, quantifiable data to guide it, true marketing is impossible” (Goldman, 1999, from Soules, 2001:345). Scherrer and Jacobson (2002) disagree, saying that qualitative measures are also needed to determine the success of a library service. Scherrer and Jacobson propose three new categories of service that must be measured, which are; consultation, outreach and web authoring. They say that new tools of measurement must be devised to accurately measure these new services. At present that say that many libraries are failing to qualitatively and quantitatively measure these services. Conversely some have said that quantifiable measures are needed to demonstrate the value of library services. Ryan (2005) says that time saved
is the only quantifiable measure in information provision. Ryan has devised a financial report to present to senior managers, which is based on valuing time saved using time tariffs. For example it was estimated that one person using a current awareness service saved 30 minutes per month. Ryan says that time saved is always an estimate, but is should be a defendable and believable estimate, enabling the information service to quantify value added to the organisation. Frank et al (2001) say that activates such as information consulting must also be strategic in approach, integrated into librarian’s day-to-day activities. They say that benchmarks of success should not be totally based on anecdotal evidence. All concerned should be made aware of the measures of success and this involves strategic planning and individual consultants need time and resources to fulfil their goals (Frank et al, 2001).

In order to track the progress of any strategic plan over time, and ensure that goals and objectives are being met, performance measurement needs to take place at all stages of strategic planning (Niven, 2003). The balanced scorecard framework developed by Kaplan and Norton has been revolutionary in the way that performance can be measured in all organisations, striving to give a “balanced” view of how an organisation is performing, using internal and external measures (Kaplan and Norton, 1996). Parker and Crawford (2001) also advocate the use of the balanced scorecard in special libraries. They say that it enables the library to measure many different aspects of the service, which can be used to translate the organisations mission and strategy into performance measures. This allows the library to demonstrate exactly how it has added value to the organisation. This said, as yet the balanced scorecard has not been widely discussed in a library context.

3.7 Summary: Planning Marketing and Measuring Library Services

Strategic planning is seen as necessary in much of the literature, enabling the library to prove its worth, also clarifying the information service to the organisation. Marketing plans should also be strategic in nature. They can help to clarify services to customers, outlining the services that the library
provides. This reflects a shift in thinking towards customer relationship marketing, building up long-term relationships with customers. There has also be discussion about the image of the librarian, in terms of building a strong brand on which to market the library service, and quash some of the preconceptions about librarians, to enable them to take a more proactive role within the organisation.

Measuring the library service is said to go hand in hand with marketing, to determine the success of the service. Some authors feel that quantifiable measures should always be defined, whereas Scherrer and Jacobson (2002) say that many of the new library services, such as consultancy cannot be quantified, and qualitative measures are needed. The balanced scorecard is widely seen as a means for library services to link strategic and marketing plans to measurable goals and outcomes. The balanced scorecard does not depend on a single measure, and so can give a more balanced picture of library performance across the board.

3.8 Conclusion

Across all three library sectors covered, much of the literature talks of the need for librarians to move into new roles, offering proactive value-added services, to raise awareness of the library within the parent organisation and to raise awareness of the library service and what it has to offer. There is also debate surrounding whether librarians need specialist subject knowledge, or whether it is more important for librarians to have detailed knowledge of information resources and the ability to synthesise and add value to the information they provide to customers. Much of the literature from all library sectors leans towards the importance of transferable skills and knowledge of information resources, rather than detailed subject knowledge.

The literature shows that librarians are increasingly offering information consultancy skills to their parent organisation. In all three library sectors, one of the main areas of consultancy was in knowledge management. Librarians are also working closely with others in the
organisation to offer information literacy training. Some authors have also written about the benefits of the reference interview and information needs assessments, to raise awareness of library services and help the library understand and meet people’s information needs.

In order to offer new services and become more proactive, the literature shows that strategic planning is essential, so that the library can align itself to the business needs of the organisation and target its resources efficiently and effectively. Strategic planning is also important in gaining acceptance from senior managers, demonstrating how the library service can benefit them directly. To be successful in implementing these new tailored services, the literature shows that libraries need a strategic marketing plan, which ties into the library and organisational strategic aims, with measurable outcomes. The balanced scorecard has been discussed in the wider literature as a means of aiding this process, but as yet it has not been widely discussed in a library context.
4 Methodology

This chapter discusses the primary research methods used in this dissertation. It discuses the qualitative methodology and inductive grounded theory approach used in this research. It looks at how the data was collected from a number of sources, using questionnaire and interview techniques. The data sources used were Government librarians and DfES employees. The limitations of the research are discussed, along with ethical procedures and the project management strategy undertaken. The chapter concludes by looking at some of the problems encountered during the research, such as short timescales and low response rates, and explains how these problems were overcome.

4.1 Research Methods

4.1.1 Qualitative Methodology

A qualitative methodology has been used to assess the intangible factors influencing the implementation of the Business Librarian model. A qualitative methodology was ideal for this study, which sought to collect detailed opinion and individual perceptions (Bell, 1992). Gorman and Clayton say, “[t]he ultimate goal of qualitative research is to understand those being studied from their perspective” (Gorman and Clayton, 1997: 23). In this case, the research provides a richer understanding of the views and ideas of best practice from Government librarians, in terms of providing a personalised service model, and a better understanding of DfES employee needs and expectations.

A qualitative methodology is also ideal for “real world” research due to its flexible nature (Robson, 2002). As well as being context sensitive, qualitative research is “exploratory”, “fluid” and “flexible”, which means that it is not possible to create a blueprint for the research at the beginning of the project, but research areas can be identified (Mason, 2002). In this case research questions were formulated at the outset through consultation with the DfES library, to ensure that all the necessary factors of investigation were
covered. These research questions were then put into workable objectives, and used to answer the research questions. The objectives were qualitative in nature, looking to seek opinion from a variety of sources. New sources of investigation were identified and expanded upon, and new questions and contacts were followed up, as the research progressed.

Qualitative research is ideal for small-scale in-depth projects, which focus on small geographical areas, or in this case a specific organisation (Robson, 2002). This approach allows in-depth insights through questionnaires and interviews. This is ideally suited to the complex environment that information providers now operate under, in order to run their services (Gorman and Clayton, 1997). It allows for the complexities of an organisation to be taken into consideration, by allowing the researcher to work directly with people to gain an awareness of subtleties and nuances that exist (Gorman and Clayton, 1997). The quantitative approach, on the other hand, is hypothesis based, using larger sample sizes to generate numerical information to identify patterns and events (Gorman and Clayton, 1997). It is unsuitable for this type of investigation, which looks at a smaller sample size in more depth. Quantitative research also relies on a much larger sample size for statistical tests to be valid.

Although this study is not suited to a quantitative approach, some quantitative data has been collected. Denscombe (2003) says that these two approaches, quantitative and qualitative, are not mutually exclusive, and can be combined to achieve balanced findings. In this case some quantitative data was collected to obtain hard figures that were used in conjunction with the qualitative results. Where possible, quantitative questions in questionnaires were expanded upon during the interview process. Combining qualitative and quantitative data ensures the validity of the results (Denscombe, 2003).
4.1.2 Grounded Theory and the Inductive Approach

In this research an inductive approach was used, as the study has been informed by the findings, rather than taking a deductive, hypothesis led approach (Patton, 1980). The research started with the problems (research questions) to be investigated, and allowed themes and patterns to emerge from the data as it was interpreted (Proctor, 2004). No prior assumptions were made. “Theories about what [was] happening in [the] program [were] grounded in the program experience” (Patton, 1980:41).

The grounded theory approach has meant that emerging theories are meaningful at a practical level to those working on the ground, rather than abstract theory (Denscombe, 2003). The theory used in this study is grounded in empirical research, and research has been conducted throughout the duration of study (Denscombe, 2003). Grounded theory and the inductive approach are entirely appropriate for a qualitative methodology, with only a small quantitative element, where an in-depth response is required from research participants (Robson, 2002).

The nature of grounded theory means that the researcher starts out with an open-mind and does not attempt to pigeonhole the individuals involved into pre-existing categories, but awareness of the wider influencing factors should be kept in mind (Denscombe, 2003). In this case, wider issues affecting the DfES and Government practice. Grounded theory is ideal when setting out to explore topics that have been ignored in the literature (Denscombe, 2002). It is therefore well suited to this research project.
4.2 Sampling

Purposive sampling has been used in this study, and is particularly suited to grounded theory, where the researcher does not seek a representative sample (Robson, 2002). Purposive sampling allows the researcher to focus on specific people and events that may be useful to the study (Denscombe, 2003). Individuals, teams and Government Departments were selected to take part based on prior knowledge of their potential contribution to the research. As the research progressed more people were identified to take part in questionnaires and interviews, based on their potential contribution to the research.

4.2.1 Sampling Government Librarian Response

In regard to the response from Government librarians, initially members of the Committee of Departmental Librarians (CDL) were contacted through the CDL mailing list, and asked to take part in a questionnaire. The CDL is made up of chief librarians from 24 UK Government Departments (Appendix 1). The questionnaire was aimed at all CDL librarians, irrespective of whether or not they operated a personalised service model. A small number of Government librarians (five in total) were selected to take part in an interview, based on their experience of running a personalised service, similar to the Business Librarian service proposed by DfES. This sample was later expanded to include other Government librarians (see the section on Response Rate for reasons).

4.2.2 Sampling DfES Employee Response

In terms of sampling for the DfES employee questionnaire, 45 people were selected by Helen Challinor, the DfES librarian. She identified teams and individuals that may be initially involved in the Business Librarian service, and existing users of the library service. Bell (2001) stresses that non-user habits are equally important and should be researched if the researcher is to find anything new. To achieve this, people were identified through contacts with the Learning Academy⁹, as a way of gaining the views

⁹ The DfES’s learning and training team
of some non-library users. People taking part in the questionnaire were invited to take part in an interview.

4.3 Methods of Investigation

4.3.1 Triangulation

Mason (2002) says that triangulation allows the researcher to study the research questions from different angles, giving more balanced findings. Triangulation tests different sources of information against each other (Robson, 2002). In this study, a mixture of investigative methods were used, to reinforce the findings and inform discussion. The literature review was used to inform the questionnaire and interview design and the discussion. The results of the questionnaires, informed the interview design. The information gathered from Government library sources, was combined with the DfES findings to inform the discussion. Also the questionnaires combined both a quantitative and qualitative element, to add depth to the findings. This meant that different perspectives were gained and comparisons and contrasts made to increase the validity of the findings (Yin, 2003).

4.3.2 Literature Review

Key texts were identified from an initial literature review, using Star\textsuperscript{10}, LISA\textsuperscript{11} and course reading lists. The literature review was then extended by following up sources in bibliographies and through further searching of LISA, the Internet and Star. The Internet was particularly useful for identifying key words. LISA was useful for ensuring that all key research was included in the research. The DfES also provided background information and suggested a number of references. One questionnaire respondent sent electronic copies of his own papers, which related to the research area.

\textsuperscript{10} The University of Sheffield’s library catalogue

\textsuperscript{11} Library and Information Science Abstracts
4.3.3 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used as a means of gathering a broad overview, from a larger number of people than could be obtained in interview alone.

Designing the Questions

The CDL questionnaire was simple in design, closely following the research questions and aiming to gain ideas of best practice from others in the field, and to identify reasons for and against implementing a personalised service model (Appendix 2). The DfES questionnaire was broken down into two sections, to gain opinion on the existing library service and then the proposed Business Librarian service. This added extra dimension to the research as a comparison could be made between use of the existing service, and how the Business Librarian service might be used.

Designing the Questionnaire Format

CDL and DfES questionnaires were both designed using a mixture of open and closed questions, to gain an in-depth mix of qualitative and quantitative responses. Line (1982) says that this is advisable, as closed questions are quicker and easier for respondents to answer, and it is wise to include some closed questions in order to gain some form of response. Where closed questions were asked, there was an option to expand on answers provided. Closed questions also add validity and clarity to open-ended questions.

For the DfES questionnaire some categorised questions were also included, to remind respondents of the types of services that the library has to offer. The danger of categorisation is that certain responses and categories will be overlooked when designing the questionnaire (Line, 1982). To overcome this, the questionnaire was rigorously piloted and there was an option for respondents to add additional comments.
Piloting the Questionnaires

The CDL questionnaires were piloted on two Government librarians at the Department for Work and Pensions, who are aware of the issues affecting Government libraries, but were not involved in the DfES’s Business Librarian proposal, so an objective view could be gained. The DfES questionnaire was piloted on five DfES librarians, to ensure that the categorized questions included all available services and options. The questionnaire was also piloted on two students, un-related to the DfES, to gain an objective view. The pilots tested the length of time taken to complete the questionnaire, and the clarity of the questions and instructions given, as recommended by Gorman and Clayton (1992).

Distributing the Questionnaires

All questionnaires were in electronic format, and people were contacted by email. The CDL email introduced the researcher and gave a short explanation of the proposed Business Librarian service (Appendix 3). The questionnaire included a short preface from the findings from the initial literature review on the changing role of the librarian to set the context of the investigation. The questionnaire was designed using the Forms function in Microsoft Word.

The DfES questionnaire was designed using an online survey package. This was due to recommendations by the DfES librarian, who has found this to be the most effective way of gaining a response from DfES employees in the past.
Response Rate

The response rate from the CDL questionnaires was low, only 4 out of 24 Chief Librarians responded. To increase the Government response, Departments were contacted individually and librarians were invited to take part in an interview. The benefits of this were two-fold. Firstly, the people contacted were involved in delivering library services at operational level, adding another dimension to the research, and interviews provided a much more detailed response. These combined methods meant that a response was gained from 10 of the 24 UK Government Departments.

The response rate from the DfES questionnaires was high, 27 of the 45 people surveyed responded. 11 of the 27 respondents also agreed to be interviewed, again a high response.

4.3.4 Interviews

The Interview Method

Interviews were used to develop a detailed contextual response. Mason (2002) says that interviews tend to involve the elaboration of points, rather than covering entirely new ground. The main advantage of an interview is its adaptability, allowing ideas and responses to be probed (Bell, 1992). In this research all interviews took place on a one-to-one basis to allow people to speak more freely and openly, and the ethics procedures were explained in detail prior to the interview.

Recording the Interviews

It was not possible to record the telephone interviews. Instead notes were made and typed up straight after the interview to maintain accuracy. Face-to-face interviews were recorded with the interviewee’s prior consent. Because only a small number of recorded face-to-face interviews were conducted it was felt that it was not worth transcribing them, again notes were made of the recordings.
The DfES Employee Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were carried out for some of the DfES employee interviews, dependant on time and location. In which case interviews took place in meeting rooms, away form the employee’s desk and other colleagues, with the aim to gain a more open and considered response. Face-to-face interviews were recorded with the interviewee’s prior consent.

Telephone interviews were pre-arranged and conducted for some DfES interviews, where location was a constraint. The advantage of this was that more interviews could be conducted, and more views could be gained to inform the research (Stone, 1984). Gorman and Clayton, (1997) say that the disadvantage of telephone interviews is that people are less likely to give sensitive information to someone they have not met. It was felt that for the purposes of this research, this problem could be limited by stressing the researchers impartiality, as an external researcher, and by implementing and emphasising the ethics procedures in place to maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, using a mixture of closed and open questions, to allow the interviewee to elaborate on the questions asked by the researcher, but also to gain some more structured feedback in important areas (Denscombe, 2003). An interview script was drawn up which began by running over the proposed Business Librarian service, giving two examples of how the service could be used (Appendix 4). The aim of this was to ensure that everyone interviewed had the same level of knowledge of the proposed Business Librarian service before the interview commenced. Interview questions were drawn up, but interviewees were also asked unscripted questions relating to their questionnaire responses.

The prepared interview questions looked to increase understanding of the interviewee’s information needs and the ways in which a Business Librarian service could be used. Preferred ways of receiving, communicating and sharing information were also discussed, as inspired by Bell (2001). It became clear from the questionnaire response that many people were...
uncertain about the services that library already provides. So with this in mind, another question was added to the interview, asking whether an informal information needs assessment would be beneficial, prior to using the Business Librarian service.

**The Government Librarian Interviews**

The Government librarian interviews used structured interview questions, identical to those in the CDL questionnaire (Appendix 5). The aim of these telephone interviews was to gain a more detailed response from people involved in implementing a similar service at operational level, as opposed to CDL questionnaire, which was aimed at Chief Librarians, operating at strategic level.

**4.4 Data Analysis**

A constant comparative method was used to analyse the qualitative data. Codes and categories were assigned to the data and constantly compared and adapted as new codes emerged (Denscombe, 2003). The use of this method helped to keep emerging theory grounded in practice. The aim of such analysis is to generate theory (in this case selective codes) that are central to the data (Robson, 2002). This theory is grounded in, and derived from the data collected. Tables, based on those illustrated in Robson (2002) and Gorman and Clayton (1997) were used to analyse the qualitative data.

In the case of this research, codes were assigned to the raw data (questionnaires and interview notes), to split the data into distinct parts, known as open coding (Robson, 2002). Connections and relationships were then identified, to interconnect the codes, known as axial coding (Appendix 6). Finally, selective coding took place, to identify the core categories, which give an overall picture of the research and the emergent theories and thinking, based on the data collected (Appendix 7).
The quantitative data, gained from closed questionnaire questions, was put into graphical format using Microsoft Excel. Due to the small sample size, all data is given in hard figures, rather than percentages, to aid clarity. Stephen and Hornby (1997) say that a sample size of 30 plus is required to carry out meaningful statistical analysis. The largest sample size was obtained from the DfES questionnaire, with 27 respondents, which was small enough for relationships in the data to be identified, without the use of statistical analysis.

4.5 Project Management and Research Timescale

A Gantt chart was constructed during the project-planning phase that included timescales and milestones (Appendix 8). This allowed the project to be managed more effectively, ensuring that data collection was started in good time. There were some problems encountered during the research that altered the schedule (see the Problems Encountered section).

4.6 Limitations

4.6.1 Generalisation

Generalisation is the “ability to draw defensible conclusions from the evidence one has obtained” (Gorman and Clayton, 1997:83). The qualitative approach and grounded theory used in this study are limited by the fact that the small-scale Government focus means that information gathered is not generalisable to the wider library environment. In this case purposive sampling was used so that specific factors could be focused on, therefore the sample is not a representative sample in statistical terms. This said, findings have been related to the wider literature to inform the discussion and increase validity. The findings of this study are context sensitive, and specific to the Government Departments, and even the specific teams and divisions involved. The main aim of this research is to provide context sensitive recommendations to the DfES library. The research may also reflect the work and thinking taking place in other UK Government libraries, and in some part enrich this thinking and practice.
4.6.2 Researcher Bias

Grounded theory assumes that the researcher has an open mind before the project commences, but this is subjective, and some researcher bias is inevitable (Denscombe, 2003). Triangulation can help to reduce bias (Gorman and Clayton, 1997). In this case data was collected using a number of methods from a number of different sources, to help eliminate bias and ensure validity of the findings. Bias may also slip in when the researcher is conducting research in an environment in which they are familiar (Gorman and Clayton, 1997). In this case, the researcher was already familiar with the DfES, having worked there in the past. (Gorman and Clayton, 1997) say that although some bias may occur in such a situation, the benefits of knowing the organisation outweigh the chance that closeness will hinder objectivity.

4.6.3 Limitations of the Interview Method

The interview is a highly subjective technique, which is always open to bias (Bell, 1992). Mason (2002) says that it is impossible to separate the interview from the social interaction, and the researcher should not try to do this, they should just be aware of these complexities. To limit bias, the interview script was as structured as possible, so that everyone interviewed, was given the same information at the start of the interview.

4.6.4 Limitations of the Questionnaire Method

A major limitation of the questionnaire method was that it was difficult to gather in-depth information, as there is only limited communication between the researcher and respondent, making subtle nuances are harder to detect. In this research, one of the major limitations of the CDL questionnaire was its design, using the Form function in Microsoft Word, which made it more time consuming for the respondent to fill in, than if it had been sent out as an online questionnaire (as was the case of the DfES questionnaire). This may have contributed to the low response rate. Later in the research, when the DfES questionnaire was designed, it received a much higher response rate. Non-responder bias is a factor that should also be
considered when discussing the limitations of questionnaires (Denscombe, 2003). There may have been other reasons why the CDL response was low, such as lack of knowledge of the subject area, technical problems with the questionnaire, lack of time etc.

4.6.5 Limitations of the Sample

The major limitation of the DfES employee sample was that the majority of people contacted to take part, and therefore the majority of respondents, were existing DfES library users. This made the results of the questionnaire slightly unbalanced, affecting the analysis and findings. Also all of the people who agreed to be interviewed were frequent library users. Non-user opinion was much more difficult to obtain, only 2 respondents were non-library users, and they declined to be interviewed. The combined CDL questionnaire and Government librarian interview sample was more representative, as responses were gained from 10 of the 24 Departments, from librarians at strategic and operational level.

4.7 Ethics

Ethical approval forms were completed, in accordance with Sheffield University guidelines during the planning stage of the research. People taking part in interviews and questionnaires were asked to read a participant information sheet and sign a consent form, in accordance with University guidelines. Respondents were made fully aware that their names would be made anonymous in the write up of the report. Ryan (2005) says that in his experience of working in an information service in the corporate sector, it is always better for an external person to conduct the research and surveys, stressing confidentiality, in order to get an honest response from service users.
4.8 Problems Encountered

One of the major problems encountered during the research, was the low response rate from the questionnaire sent out to Government librarians on the CDL mailing list. In hind-sight this low response may have been caused by the timing (during the holiday period) and the fact that the questionnaire was designed using the Form function in Microsoft Word, which meant that it was more time-consuming for respondents to complete and return. This is also emphasised by the fact that the DfES questionnaire was designed as an online survey, which made it easier to complete, and it achieved a much higher response rate. In retrospect all of the questionnaires should have been designed in online format.

To increase the response rate more Government librarians were contacted to take part in interview, than had been originally anticipated. This actually provided a much richer source of data than would have been gained through the questionnaire alone, but it meant that the research stage took longer than expected. Also many more people than anticipated agreed to take part in the DfES interviews. To get the research timescale back on track, the majority of interviews took place on the telephone, as this was less time consuming. In retrospect more time should have been allowed for the interview stage of the research.
4.9 Summary

- The research used an inductive grounded theory approach, meaning that it was informed by its findings, rather than being deductive and hypothesis led. It started with some broad research questions, and looked to answer these through empirical analysis. A quantitative methodology was used, with small elements of quantitative data collection. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. The findings were further enhanced by an extensive literature review. This triangulation between different sources of information helped to maintain the validity of the findings.

- The qualitative data was coded and analysed using the constant comparative method, suited to grounded theory, as the data used to derive the theory is grounded in the research environment. Quantitative data was compiled into graphs using Microsoft Excel, to aid the analysis.

- The methodology used is not without its limitations. The context specific nature of the primary research meant that the findings could not be generalised to the wider library environment. This said, some generalisation was made to the UK Government library sector. This was possible due to the comprehensive nature of the research, taking into account views from a wide range of Government Departments. Some broader generalisations were made, by linking the primary research to findings from the literature review.
5 Results and Analysis

This chapter presents the results and provides analysis of the primary data (quantitative and qualitative) collected in questionnaires and interviews. First it gives a quantitative analysis of the DfES questionnaires, analysing the closed response questions. It then moves on to give a combined qualitative analysis of the DfES questionnaires and interviews. Thirdly it provides quantitative analysis of the CDL questionnaire. Fourthly, it gives qualitative analysis of the CDL questionnaires and the Government librarian interviews.

5.1 Quantitative Analysis of DfES Questionnaires

5.1.1 Question 1: How often do you use the DfES library service?

![Bar chart showing frequency of DfES library service usage]

Fig. 1

Figure 1 shows that the highest frequency of respondents used the library once a month. 27 people in total responded to the DfES questionnaire. Eleven respondents used the library at least once a month or more. Only five respondents used the library once a week or more. Of the two “other” responses collected, the respondents said that their usage varied, depending on the type of project they were working on.
5.1.2 Question 2: How often do you use these library services?

Figure 2 illustrates that seven respondents borrowed a book every three months or more. Ten respondents used the current awareness service every three months or more. Seven respondents used journals (paper and online) at least once every three months or more. Four respondents used consultancy services once every three months or more. 10 respondents asked a general enquiry at the desk, every three months or more and five asked an in-depth enquiry over the same time period. The lowest response was for workshop attendance, where only two respondents attended library workshops more that once every six months and 11 attended workshops less than once every six months. From the more detailed breakdown (Appendix 9) it can be seen that no respondent attended a library workshop more than once a month.
5.1.3 Question 3: The Business Librarian Service: Rate these proposed services in terms of use to your team.

Fig. 3

Results in Figure 3, for the proposed Business Librarian service, show that 12 respondents said that they would find tailored training sessions in online journal searching very/fairly useful. 15 respondents said that they would find advanced Internet training very/fairly useful. In comparison, Figure 2 shows that, at the time of the study, only one person attended library workshops more than once every 3 months. This illustrates potential scope for workshops to be more effectively delivered using the tailored Business Librarian service. 13 respondents said that they would find it very/fairly useful for a librarian to attend a team-meeting or away-day to assess their information needs.
Figure 2 shows that 10 respondents said that they never use consultancy services. In Figure 3 the highest frequency of respondents said that they would find advice on web design, controlled vocabularies, metadata and communities either “very” or “fairly” useful. Again showing that there may be more scope for consultancy services to be delivered through the Business Librarian service.

5.1.4 Question 5: Would the Business Librarian Service be of use to your team?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 4

Figure 4 shows that the highest frequency of respondents (15), said that the proposed Business Librarian service would be of definite or possible use to their team. Seven respondents said that the Business Librarian service would not be of use to their team. Five gave no response, which may indicate that they are unsure of its use.

12 Advice on metadata, copyright, website design, communities and the Departmental controlled vocabulary
5.1.5 Question 6: Would an informal consultation contract help to define and tailor the Business Librarian Service to your needs?

Results for this question were split. Figure 5 shows the highest frequency, 11 respondents, said that a consultation contract (similar to a service level agreement) would not be useful to define and tailor the Business Librarian service to their needs. Ten respondents said that it would be of definite or possible.
5.2 Qualitative Analysis of DfES Questionnaires and Interviews

Using coding techniques, based on Robson (2002) and Gorman and Clayton (1997), the qualitative responses from the DfES questionnaires and interviews have been analysed, coded and grouped into three overarching themes (selective codes). These codes relate to the opinions and comments made by the respondents of DfES questionnaires and interviews (Appendix 6 and 7).

5.2.1 Professional Skills

Professional skills were identified as a recurring theme in questionnaires and interviews. Many respondents felt that a librarian could bring professional skills to the Business Librarian service, to aid DfES employees in their work. The main skills identified, were to provide information management advice, information literacy training and research assistance.

Information management advice

Information management advice reoccurred as an area identified by a number of respondents which should be incorporated into the Business Librarian service.

The first theme identified was that of website design. Four interview respondents said that a Business Librarian could use their professional information management skills to help with web design. Respondent 4 said:

“There are times when we would appreciate professional information management services, maybe at particular stages of website design or community set-up”

Three of these respondents required help to improve their website’s search facilities and a one respondent required advice on using metadata. All four respondents had not thought about asking the library for assistance in this matter. One respondent used an external agency for assistance with website
design and did not realise that the library offered such a service. All four were keen to gain advice on website design from a Business Librarian.

Three respondents commented on ways that the Business Librarian could provide advice on knowledge management. Respondent 5 commented on the role that a librarian could play in putting a system in place to aid the structure and organisation the team’s information. Similarly, respondent 6 said that help was required coping with high volumes of emails, touching upon the need for knowledge management advice. Respondent 4 said that they could use a Business Librarian one day a month to help improve and organise their intranet community.

**Information Literacy**

Information literacy training reoccurred as an area identified by respondents, which could be usefully incorporated into the Business Librarian service. Three questionnaire respondents talked about feelings of information overload.

Respondent 1 said:

“There is a need to make better use of all the sources of information, at present [the team] does not draw on all of them”

This theme of information literacy was also discussed at length during interview. Five respondents said that they would like to know how to keep up-to-date with key authors and journals and leading thinking in the field, and to learn how to search for information more efficiently. Respondent 3 said that he would like information literacy training. He said that people in the team have different levels of searching proficiency and it would be useful for new staff on his team to be shown the most important journals and sources of information to access. Respondent 11 said that she finds it difficult to judge quality and reliability of information. She would like to know the best websites to use, and better ways of searching for journal articles.
Research Assistance

Research assistance is another reoccurring theme identified from the interviews and questionnaires, where there is scope for Business Librarian involvement. Unlike information literacy, where a need has been recognised to train DfES library colleagues in effective information searching and retrieval, some respondents were keen for a Business Librarian to use their professional skills to actually carry out a certain level of research. Four interview respondents stated a need for research assistance, using a Business Librarian’s skills to scope the wider research environment.

Respondents 7 and 11 both said it would useful for a Business Librarian to scope the wider research environment. They said that this would greatly help to broaden their research. Respondent 7 said that the civil service can be accused of being “myopic” and that the Business Librarian service could help to change this, by working with researchers to widen their scope. In the past she did not think about turning to the library for help, because she didn’t know what they had to offer. In a similar vein, respondent 11 said that their team doesn’t gather as much information as they would like, and they find it difficult to keep up with current information from a broad range of sources, instead, they tend to look at research findings in isolation. She said that a Business Librarian could conduct “horizon scanning”, to help broaden their research and find the most current and relevant information.

Respondent 3 required assistance researching PQs\(^\text{13}\) and evidence-based policy development. These are all areas where the interviewee felt that a Business Librarian could provide the skills to find relevant information quickly. Respondents 5 said that research assistance with literature reviews would be beneficial. Often members of the team will conduct a literature review, which could have been done much more thoroughly and quickly by a librarian. The respondent said that this information is often required at the cutting edge policy level, so would have helped to raise the library’s profile.

\(^{13}\) Parliamentary Questions
5.2.2 Marketing

Means of marketing the service also came out in DfES questionnaires and interviews. The main themes that came out of the interviews and questionnaires were the target audience, defining the service, maintaining relevance to the Department, increasing awareness and raising library profile and encouraging cross-divisional working.

Target Audience

The target audience and the organisational level that the Business Librarian service should be pitched at, was discussed by a number of respondents. For example, one respondent said that the service should be pitched at the team or subject specialist level, whilst other talked of pitching it at the divisional or Directorate level (Appendix 10).

Respondent 7 said

“The Business Librarian would be of possible use but I don’t have a team, I am a personal performer, it may relate more to subject specialists than teams”

She said that the way the library markets the service that will determine its success. She suggested targeting specific project teams that are at the hub of project activity, which would also help to raise the profile of the Business Librarian service.

Respondent 11 said that the Business Librarian service may be better handled, and make more impact at the divisional level, moving beyond targeting individual teams, which are quite small. She suggested that the Business Librarian should try and get involved in divisional meetings and discussions.

Respondent 5 felt that the service might be better pitched at the Directorate level, having a number of librarians dedicated to each Directorate. He said that this has been done with other services in the
Department, and they have received high levels of praise. He said that Librarians should be involved in higher-level discussions, to help make cutting edge decisions. To do this, the interviewee said the librarian should make contacts, raise their profile and know the business. He said that there is potential in the Business Librarian service, but people in the Department need to know exactly how these services can help them with their day-to-day work, and the Business Librarian needs to know exactly what they require.

**Maintaining Relevance to the Department**

This was also an important point touched upon by respondent 10, who said that the Business Librarian service could help the library to better understand the needs of its users, saying that:

> “It might be used to ensure that appropriate texts and statistics are available for loan”

**Increasing Awareness and Raising Library Profile**

Raising the library’s profile by increasing awareness of the library and its services was also discussed by a number of respondents. Four respondents said that a Business Librarian service would increase rapport with DfES colleagues and had the potential to raise awareness of the library service in people’s minds.

Two respondents said that they would like a named contact in the library. Respondent 1 said that the Business Librarian service would give a point of contact and someone to build up a rapport with, to tell people what the library can and can’t do. At the moment the interviewee is reluctant to contact the library because she is unsure of the services the library provides and doesn’t want to burden them with something outside of their remit. She said that the Business Librarian service is comparable with other services in the division, where business contacts are used. Respondent 3 reiterated this, saying:

> “It would be very useful to have a named contact in the library, not to do every bit of research, but someone to turn to with more expertise to dig thing out quickly”.

65
He said that this would help the library feed more directly into the everyday life of the team. He says that:

“This is not a criticism of the library; it is just that it is not high up in people’s consciousness, even though the library always helps when they are approached and provides a good service.”

Respondent 3, 5 and 11 reiterated this feeling. Respondent 3 said that he often tracks down reports based on the experience and knowledge of colleagues in the Analytical Services division. It is quite hit a miss, and not systematic process. Respondent 11 said that she doesn’t use the library very often; this is not because librarians don’t help when approached, but because she forgets to use the service. She says that the Business Librarian service would help to increase awareness of the library. The interviewee says that user guides tailored to an individual team, with hints and tips, would be a good starting point. They may be able to use the Business Librarian for other projects and work in the future, once they get more of a feel for what a librarian can do.

**Defining the service**

The need for the library to clarify its services, and the role that the Business Librarian could play in this task was also discussed by a number of respondents. Six interview and questionnaire respondents expressed a certain level of confusion over the services that the library provides. This is highlighted by respondent 9, in the questionnaire, who said that she was interested in the Business Librarian service, but said:

“I don’t know what services you can provide that would be helpful to me”

Some respondents expressed confusion relating to service overlap between the Library and other services in the Department. Respondent 2 discussed her confusion due to some overlap of information supplied by the Learning Academy. She would like more clarification of the services the library has to offer. Respondent 9 also talked of her confusion over clarity of
service. In the past she has needed to track stories in the news and has been unsure whether this was the role of the Press Office or The Library.

**Cross-divisional Working**

A number of respondents mentioned cross-divisional working with others CSDD\(^{14}\) (the library’s directorate) to increase the libraries presence and profile, and avoid service overlap. Respondent 5 said in his division, account managers are brought in from other CSDD services, such as the Learning Academy and IT services, when new teams and projects are set up. He said that the library should also be involved at this stage; going into new teams to make an information needs assessment. He continued by saying that if CSDD is to revolutionise its services (downsize and streamline) it needs to work as a seamless unit, at the moment there is overlap. He said, from a library perspective, a Business Librarian could work to aid this, streamlining and raising awareness of the skills and services a librarian can offer. Once this has been achieved, he said the idea using other library services could flow out of this, once the librarian has got to know the business and individual’s needs and working practices.

Respondent 1, working in the Learning Academy, said that she would like more clarity as to who provides what information. Saying that at the moment there is overlap between the library and the Learning Academy, as to who supplies which services. She said that although they are working with the library to rectify the situation, a Business Librarian could liaise more closely, so that both sides can learn about each other’s policies and services and build a better picture of what each service has to offer, to reduce overlap.

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\(^{14}\) Corporate Services and Development Directorate
5.2.3 Logistics

Finally interview and questionnaire respondents discussed the logistics of delivering the Business Librarian service at ground level. In particular, opinion was gauged on the idea of service level agreements (SLAs), timescales, effective channels of communication and information needs assessments.

Service Level Agreements

Opinion of SLAs was gauged from questionnaire and interview respondents with mixed response. A number of questionnaire respondents had reservations about SLAs as a tool to help define and tailor the Business Librarian service to specific needs. Respondents said that SLAs tend to be restrictive and should not be necessary if a service is proactive. This said, a number of questionnaire respondents were in favour of SLAs, and saw them as a useful way to tailor the service.

This finding is also backed up by the quantitative questionnaire response (Fig 5), where the highest frequency of respondents (11 in total) said that an SLA would not help to define and tailor the Business Librarian service to their needs.

Timescales

Timescales for Business Librarian’s involvement in a project were discussed at interview. The response shows that timescales would be variable. Many people were keen for librarians to input into individual projects for short periods of time, but with the emphasis on building relationships and using the service perennially.

Three interviewees said that over a three-month project period, a Business Librarian would possibly be involved for one day, but spread out, in the form of phone calls, meetings and emails. Respondent 3 said that they did not see it as an “all the time service”, but said a named Business Librarian could be brought in at the project-planning phase, when the team
are thinking about the kind of information to be involved, and to find initial information. He said that this phase would be 2-3 weeks in duration at least, although it is hard to define, as it is often not a systematic process. Similarly, respondent 7 said that timescales were variable: a literature review might be quite a tight timescale, maybe five days, but it is very hard to gauge.

Two interview respondents said that timescales were often tight. Respondent 3 said that when working on PQ research, the timescale would be much shorter, maybe just a few hours. Respondent 9 said that timescales could be variable, but were often tight. She said that often if a Bill is going through, gathering information can be time-consuming and deadlines are tight.

Timing for involvement

Potential timings for Business Librarian involvement in a project were discussed at interview. The general consensus was that a Business Librarian could make the greatest impact if brought in at the initial project-planning phase. Respondent 7 made an important point, saying that the Business Librarian’s success is all about timing, catching people at the right stage on a project.

Five people interviewed said that the best time for a Business Librarian to get involved would be near the beginning of the project. Respondent 1 suggested that a Business Librarian should attend a meeting, once the initial project idea has been discussed, but before concrete ideas had been formed. Respondent 3 said that a Business Librarian could be brought in at project planning phase, when they are thinking about the kind of information to be involved. Respondent 5 said he would like a Business Librarian to get involved in a project at the initial project-planning phase, but then maybe to come in again later in the project.

Respondent 6, who was designing a website, said that the best time for a Business Librarian’s involvement would be after the foundations of the website had been laid, to get involved with streamlining, quality assurance.
Respondent 10 said that it depends on the project. When she worked with the library previously, to set up a community, the initial planning phase was the best time to get involved, as the information provided, directly shaped the community. In other projects she said this might be different; some foundations to the project might have to be laid down, before a librarian came in, to make most efficient use of their time.

**Channels of Communication**

Channels of communication were discussed at interview, to identify the most efficient and effective ways that a Business Librarian could communicate when working with DfES colleagues, and how they should market their services to potential users.

Meetings were one channel of communication identified by a number of respondents. Respondent 7 said that some project teams have kick-start meetings when a project starts up. She said that this might be a good way into a project for a Business Librarian. Respondent 11 said it would be best for a Business Librarian to invite teams to come along to a short meeting, where they can talk to a librarian about skills and services on offer.

Combined methods of communication, were the most popular choice for communication between a Business Librarian and a team. Respondent 1 said:

“*Emails are the best means of contact, but they can get lost. Communities are OK but they require a change in working practice. The best method may be personal contact, like a face-to-face discussion, that needs to be backed up by something in writing, so maybe attending a meeting, and then something in writing to say what has been agreed.*”

Respondents 4 and 7 reiterated this view, saying that an email would be the best means of communication, followed up with a “one to one chat”.

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Communities of practice were the least popular method of communication. Five interviewees either did not belong to a community, or felt that their community was under utilised, many stating that communities relied on a change in working practice within the Department, if they were to be used to their maximum potential. Respondent 3 said that his team do not use communities. Instead, he suggested that there could be one person on his team (a liaison) who is the named contact for the Business Librarian service. They could receive all the information from the Business Librarian and flag up any training needs with the librarian, championing the Business Librarian service within the team.

Respondent 8, who already receives a personalised library service, also stated that emails are a preferred means of receiving information. His team has a Community, but it is not fully embedded into working practice. He tends to use the community to post non-essential information and would use email to distribute essential information. In the respondent's opinion, meetings that the team has with the DfES library three times a year are one of the most effective channels of communication. They talk about issues and resource parameters, and find it a very effective way of discussing resource availability.

**Information Needs Assessment**

This question was added to the interview, when it became apparent from the questionnaire that many people were not fully aware of the services and professional skills that the library could offer. Opinion was gauged on the use of an information needs assessment as a precursor to using a Business Librarian service.

On the whole the idea of an information needs assessment received a positive response. Respondent 1 said that this would be a good starting point. Respondent 6 said that this would be useful as she is part of a new team, which could use this kind of assistance. Respondent 9 also said that this would be useful, as she has not had time to familiarise herself with the DfES library.
5.3 Quantitative Analysis of the Government Librarian Questionnaires

5.3.1 Question 1: Does Your Library Use a Personalised Service Model?

Six of the eleven Government libraries contacted either use a personalised service model, or have used one in the past. Five of the eleven libraries have never used a personalised service model (Fig 6).
5.3.2 Question 10: Would you consider implementing a personalised service model, similar to the one proposed by DfES?

![Question 10: Would Your Library Consider Implementing Such a Model in the Future?](image)

Fig 7
Librarians that do not use a personalised service model were asked if they would consider implementing a similar model in the future. Two librarians said yes, and one said no (Fig 7). Reasons for this are elaborated on in the qualitative analysis in the next section. Two librarians did not respond to this question.
5.4 Qualitative Analysis of the Government Librarian Questionnaires and Interviews.

Questionnaires from Librarians on the CDL mailing list and telephone interviews with Government librarians have been combined to give an analysis of the Government librarian’s opinion of using a personalised service model.

5.4.1 Response from Government Libraries that do not use a personalised service model.

5.4.1.1 Reasons against using a similar model
Libraries 7 and 8 said that the main reason for not using a similar model were lack of resources and having offices and staff dispersed over more than ten sites, making the service much harder to deliver and making potential users more difficult to identify.

5.4.1.2 Reasons for using a similar model in the future
Libraries 8 and 11 said that there were certain areas of the Department where a personalised service model could make much more of an impact than the traditional library service ever could, helping to build up a closer working relationship with colleagues in the Department.

5.4.2 Analysis of libraries that already use a personalised service model.

5.4.2.1 Service Remit
Librarians who already use a similar personalised service gave a mixed response. All four of these libraries have a varied and extensive personalised service remit, from database and thesaurus construction, to tailored workshops, current awareness, in-depth research and literature searches. Two of these four libraries cherry-picked and limited the service to certain teams/divisions. Library 4 in particular, supports a small number of contacts, with a focus on working in partnership with these contacts, rather than just carrying out ad hoc research requests. Library 4 provides research to support evidence-based practice. In both cases providing this service requires the librarians involved to build up an in-depth understanding of their colleagues business needs. The two libraries that have used a personalised
service in the past, both cherry picked and marketed to specific divisions, rather than opening up the service to the whole Department.

5.4.2.2 Marketing

Two of the libraries marketed their service using varied and extensive techniques. Libraries 1 and 3 both market their services through presentations and inductions. Library 1 gives presentations to business units and project managers, and publicises the personalised service through induction days and in-house publications. Library 1 also emails success stories to colleagues to promote the service. Both libraries also find that “word-of-mouth” is a significant means of creating more demand for the personalised service.

Four of the libraries deliberately under-market the service, to limit demand, and manage user expectations. Library 2 gains all of its business for its personalised service through cherry-picking potential users and repeat business, making a clear distinction between researchers and librarians. Library 4 markets its service through networking. Libraries 5 and 6, both of which have used a personalised service model in the past, deliberately cherry-picked and under-marketed to manage user demand and expectation.

5.4.2.3 Resourcing

Three of the libraries have placed some form of charging on their service. This has been done through project charges and occasional charges for team specific resources. Library 2 occasionally charges teams for the cost of employing casual staff to cover the work of the librarian whilst they are working on a special project. This is only done occasionally if other librarians in the team cannot absorb the work.

Two of the libraries prioritise and balance workloads, to ensure that staff are not overloaded, and to ensure that the personalised service can be run along side other commitments. Library 3 tries to do as much training as possible to ensure that colleagues can carry out research for themselves, to ease the workload. To balance workloads, managers in Library 4 consult
with librarians and identify peaks and troughs in workloads, before allocating work. Managers encourage open channels of communication, so that librarians can say if they feel overloaded with work. They have to create flexibility within the team and flexible workloads and encourage people to speak up early, before they become overloaded.

Three of the libraries that use this service model, have employed librarians solely dedicated to providing the personalised service. Conversely, three other libraries used all their librarians to run the service, making use of everyone's expertise. One library has created a structure whereby individual librarians build up expertise and contacts in specific subject/divisional areas. Libraries 2 and 4 both found that getting all staff involved was an excellent way of developing expertise, and preventing an “us and them” feeling where some staff feel deskilled.

5.4.2.4 Measuring the Service

Four of the libraries measured the impact and success of the personalised service through recording time spent on projects, the number of enquiries received, accolades and repeat use. Libraries 2 and 5 used feedback forms at the end of a project. Library 6 tried to find evidence of librarians making a valuable contribution to a project, influencing the outcome of that project. In the future, Library 2 said it is working on developing an enquiry database to record the outcome of all enquiries undertaken. Library 4 is considering using a balanced scorecard as a means of measurement in the future.

5.4.2.5 Gaining Acceptance from Potential Users

Four of the libraries had problems gaining acceptance from colleagues in the Department. Library 2, 4, 5 and 6 had problems gaining recognition of their skills and services. To overcome this problem, Library 2, asked the head of the division to sell the benefits of the service to teams. Library 4 worked to get more involved in the business planning process, to increase visibility and acceptance of what the library could do, amongst senior colleagues in the
Department. This also allowed the library to understand the Departments needs more fully.

5.4.2.6 Gaining Acceptance from Library Staff

In library 2 there were some initial concerns over increased workload, but once the service was up and running there was enough flexibility in the team to cover workloads. Library 5 had some problems, as only a few librarians were dedicated to running the personalised service, and other librarians, not involved in delivering the service, felt that they were being de-skilled.

5.4.2.7 Lessons Learned/Ideas of Best Practice

Libraries 2 and 4 said that librarians must have full involvement from the beginning of a project, interacting and communicating fully with teams. Library 2 said that everyone on the project (the team and the librarian) must be clear of timescales and objectives. This ensures that everyone is happy with the finished product and that customers are not expecting more than has been agreed. Library 4 built on this by saying that it is vital to make sure that the deliverables do not change over the course of the project. To do this the librarian should ensure that they liaise with the team frequently over the course of the project. The librarian should always try and get involved at the project planning stage, as the librarian is often able to shed new light on the project, and gain a better understanding of what is required.

Library 3 said that the most important lesson is to learn how to prioritise work quickly and effectively. Also have guidelines and processes in place, for when the librarian is away (guidebooks and fact sheets) to ensure continuity of service.

Libraries 5 and 6, which have both used a similar service in the past, said that they should have been less selective and marketed the service to more teams. Library 5 said that they should have first targeted some of their best library customers, who new more about the library service. Library 6 said that the main aim should be to educate potential users on what the
library can do for them. Library 9 said that it is most important to provide a service that is indispensable to colleagues and to be assertive in defending this service.

5.5 Summary of DfES Quantitative Analysis

- The highest frequency of respondents use the library service (physical or online) once a month (Fig 1).

- Current awareness services, journals, book lending and general enquiries are the most frequently used library services. Workshops were the least frequently used service (Fig 2).

- For the proposed Business Librarian service, information skills workshops, advice on website design and communities of practice, and having a librarian attend meetings to discuss information needs, were identified as being the most useful services to respondents (Fig 3).

- The highest frequency of respondents (15) said that the Business Librarian service would be of definite or possible use to them. Seven respondents said that they would not find the service useful, but did not give reasons (Fig 4).

- The highest frequency of respondents (11) said that were not in favour of using an SLA to define and tailor the Business Librarian service to their needs. This was a close result, as 10 respondents said that would find an SLA of use to define the service (Fig 5).
5.6 Summary of DfES Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative response from interviews and questionnaire was been broken down into three main themes: professional skills, marketing and logistics.

5.6.1 Professional Skills

Interview and questionnaire respondents discussed professional skills and services that they felt that library could provide through the Business Librarian service.

Firstly, information management emerged as a professional skill that Business Librarians should incorporate into their service. Assistance with website design and knowledge management were mentioned by a number of respondents.

Secondly, information literacy training reoccurred as an area where interview respondents highlighted the need for assistance. The need to keep up-to-date with key journals and current information in a more effective and efficient manner was mentioned by a number of respondents. The need to learn how to search for information more systematically, and from wider field was also discussed.

Thirdly, research assistance was cited as being a useful addition to the Business Librarian service. As oppose to providing information literacy training, some respondents said that they would like to receive research assistance, using a Business Librarian’s skills to scope the wider research environment. Assistance with research for PQs and evidence-based policymaking was mentioned specifically.

All of these professional services mentioned, suggest scope for Business Librarians to act more as consultant, getting to know working practices of teams, adding value to their work. This will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.
5.6.2 Marketing

Interview and questionnaire respondents discussed effective methods of marketing the Business Librarian service.

Firstly target audience was a theme identified. Respondents suggested varying organisational levels to target the service towards, from team, divisional and Directorate level, to specific project programmes and subject specialists. It was felt by a number of respondents that targeting the Business Librarian service in this way would help to raise the profile of the library across the Department.

Secondly, one respondent significantly mentioned that the Business Librarian service, as well as raising the library’s profile, would help the library to accurately reflect the needs of its users.

Thirdly, respondents felt that the Business Librarian service would help librarians to build closer links with colleagues across the Department and build a rapport with specific individuals and teams. It was felt that the Business Librarian service would help to raise the profile of the library and place it more prominently in people’s minds.

Fourthly, defining the library service was identified as an important task for Business Librarians to undertake, if the service is to be successful. To achieve this, it was felt that Business Librarians should work closely with others in the Department to proactively define its service, to ensure that it fulfils its potential. Information needs assessments were thought to aid this process.

Fifthly, cross-divisional working was identified as a tool to aid raising awareness and defining the library service. An issue, highlighted by a number of respondents, was service overlap, particularly with other services in CSDD. It was felt that Business Librarians could work closely with others
in CSDD, particularly the Learning Academy, to overcome this and to help the library define its service and raise its profile.

5.6.3 Logistics

Interview and questionnaire respondents discussed the logistics of delivering the Business Librarian service to library colleagues.

Firstly, SLAs were discussed, and received a fairly negative response, as backed up by the qualitative analysis. Some respondents felt that an SLA would create too much bureaucracy and create a restrictive service. Some positive comments were also made about SLAs. Namely some said that an SLA could help define the Business Librarian service and help the librarian tailor the service to user needs.

Secondly, timescales for Business Librarian involvement were discussed. Most respondents said that timescales would be variable and were difficult to define. The general consensus was that there was potential for a Business Librarian to be involved intermittently over the duration of a project, to provide advice and input. For other services, such as PQ research, the timescale may be much tighter, possibly a matter of hours.

Thirdly, the majority of respondents felt that a librarian would make most impact being involved from the start of a project, feeding into the initial project planning process.

Fourthly, effective and efficient channels of communication were discussed with interview respondents. A combined method of communication was the most often cited and preferred method of communication, usually a face-to-face discussion followed by emails. Meetings were also popular channels of communication. Communities were the least popular form of communication, with respondents either not belonging to a community, or rarely using their community to communicate with colleagues.
Fifthly, the idea of an information needs assessment received a positive response. The majority of respondents said that this would be a good starting point, to help people become familiar with the Business Librarian service, and how library services could be tailored to individual and team needs.

5.7 Summary of Qualitative and Quantitative Government Librarian Analysis

5.7.1 Summary of Qualitative Analysis

Six of the eleven libraries surveyed use, or have used, a personalised service model, similar to that proposed by DfES. Five libraries have not used a similar service (Fig 6). Of these five libraries, two said that they would consider using a similar model in the future and one said that they would not (Fig 7). In the qualitative analysis, reasons against using a similar service were a lack of resources (librarians) to run the service and geographical dispersion, making the service difficult to implement. Reasons for using the service were; a means of raising the library profile and awareness of the library, to reach more people that the traditional library service could on its own.

5.7.2 Summary Quantitative Analysis

5.7.2.1 Service Remit

This varied considerably, from database construction to running workshops and conducting in-depth research.

5.7.2.2 Marketing

Varied marketing strategies have been implemented, ranging from presentations to business units, to promotions in in-house publications and reliance on informal “word of mouth” marketing. Four of the six libraries said that they deliberately under-market their services to manage service delivery.
5.7.2.3 Resourcing

Three of the libraries charge colleagues in some shape or form, for some services. Two libraries carefully monitor and prioritise workloads to avoid library staff becoming overloaded with work. Three libraries have dedicated librarians to solely run the service, and three involve all of their staff in the service.

5.7.2.4 Measuring the Service

Varied techniques are employed to measure the success of personalised services. This varies from time spent on a project, number of enquiries generated, accolades, repeat use and feedback forms. In the future one library is looking at developing balanced scorecards and an enquiry database, as a means of measuring the service.

5.7.2.5 Gaining Acceptance from Potential Users

Four libraries had problems gaining acceptance from potential users, and gaining recognition of the skills and services that they could provide. To combat this one library involved itself in the business planning process, to increase visibility and acceptance amongst senior colleagues.

5.7.2.6 Gaining Acceptance from Library Staff

Two libraries said that some librarians expressed initial concern over managing workloads. Both of these libraries said that once the service was up and running these worries were quashed, as flexibility was maintained so that other librarians could absorb work, and workloads could be managed.

5.7.2.7 Lessons Learned/Ideas of Best Practice

These were numerous. Firstly, involvement from the start of a project was seen to be crucial, with the librarian clarifying objectives and timescales. Secondly, the need to prioritise and manage workloads effectively was vital. Thirdly, it was said that the librarians should not be too selective when marketing the service. Instead it was said that they should targeting the best
customers first to create an indispensable service, then open the service up to other potential users.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter gives the results and analysis of the primary quantitative and qualitative data collected. In the following discussion chapter, comparisons will be made between the qualitative and quantitative data collected. Government librarian and DfES data will be drawn together, with literature from the wider research environment, and more analysis and discussion will be given to the data in this wider context.
6 Discussion

This chapter discusses all of the research collected from the literature review and primary research, in order to answer the research questions proposed by the DfES, and fulfil the research objectives. Recommendations to the DfES library on how best to develop and implement the role of the “Business Librarian” will be made in the following chapter.

6.1 Is the personalised service model a feasible model for the DfES to use?

The aim of this research was to explore the feasibility of the personalised service model, proposed by the DfES. The wider research environment has been explored, including other library sectors and Government Departments, and opinion has been sought from potential users of the DfES Business Librarian service.

From the literature it can be seen that the role of the librarian is changing, due to changes in the nature of information provision and information seeking behaviour. There is a shifting trend towards providing personalised and tailored information in order to combat information overload. In the academic and health library sectors, subject and clinical librarians still play an important role in connecting specific user groups to information. Bidisscombe, (2002) and Pinfield (2001) both say that subject librarians still have a significant role to play in academic libraries. In the clinical sector, librarians supporting evidence-based practice, also have a vital role in adding value-to information through the systematic review process (Beavan and McHugh, 2003). In the corporate sector librarians are often taking on more of a consultancy and partnership role, using their professional information skills (Wittwer, 2001, St Clair, 2001).
In the Government library sector there is an increasing move towards providing services that are tailored to user needs. One of the main focuses in the Government library literature is the provision of information literacy training (Cumming and Cuthbertson, 2001, Levay, 2003 and Miller, 2003). There is also a focus on librarians providing their professional knowledge in information and knowledge sharing initiatives (Parry et al 2004, Pine-Coffin, 2005 and Thornton and McCracken, 2003).

Majority opinion from Government librarians that participated in this research shows that there is interest, and an increased move towards providing personalised services, tailored towards specific user needs. Librarians are playing an increased liaison and consultancy role, often providing their information skills expertise to specific projects, building up closer working relationships with colleagues in their Department. This is reflected in the fact that six of the eleven libraries surveyed already use a personalised service model, and two libraries that don’t use a similar model would consider using one in the future.

Although there was a positive response to the Business Librarian model by those that responded to the survey, it must also be noted that out of the possible 24 Government Departments targeted, only 11 librarians replied to the questionnaire, or took part in an interview. It is unclear, whether the other Departments provide a similar personalised service model. One respondent said that it was imperative that Government libraries move from offering a purely enquiry-desk based services if they are to fulfil the information needs of their Departments, and to ensure the libraries long-term survival.

Wider research also suggests that it is not only feasible for librarians to offer a more personalised service, but also essential if their professional skills are to gain wider recognition and to ensure their long-term survival (Ryan, 2005). In an age where librarians are in competition with many other information providers, and where the end-user is more empowered (but suffering from information overload) there is real scope for the librarian to add-value to, and manage information, and empower the end-user with
information literacy skills. But to do this the librarian needs to be more proactive, getting to know the complexities of people’s specific information needs, and also raising the status of the library and its professionals within the organisation.

This is verified by the DfES research findings, which show that the majority of respondents were keen to use the Business Librarian service, and were interested to know how the service could help them in their everyday work. At present the DfES library is used sporadically by the majority of those surveyed, it is not strongly embedded their consciousness as a primary information resource. Instead some respondents were reliant on networks of colleagues to obtain information, which they said sometimes limited the scope of their research. A feeling of information overload was also mentioned by a number of respondents.

The research conducted shows that although some of the existing DfES library services have low usage, the response to receiving these services through a more tailored Business Librarian service was very positive. In particular respondents were keen to received tailored information skills workshops, advice on web design and metadata. One area mentioned, where a librarian’s skills would be particularly useful, was in aiding evidence-based policy making, by providing information literacy and current awareness services to policy makers.

These results show that when used, the library service is highly valued by staff, but services need to be re-packaged and delivered in a different way, in order to increase their usage. At present there is a lack of awareness of the types of service the library has to offer and a lack of understanding of many of the specialist services. It would seem that many of these services, such as metadata advice and website design, would be best delivered though the Business Librarian model. This would mean that librarians could use their specialist knowledge, to recommend services to colleagues, which they may not have considered themselves. This highlights potential for
Business Librarian service to raise awareness of librarian’s skills at a team, divisional and Directorate level.

The Business Librarian service also fits in with wider DfES and Government thinking, to streamline the civil service and increase efficiency. The Business Librarian service will make more proactive use of librarian’s professional skills, helping DfES staff to manage knowledge and become fully information literate so that can fully utilise all sources of knowledge and information available to them.

The research shows that there is a need for the Business Librarian service. The discussion will now move on to look at service remit, marketing, resourcing and measuring the Business Librarian service.

6.2 Service Remit

6.2.1 Service Remit

The DfES library offers a wide-range of services from their intranet website and existing enquiry desk service. These include more traditional library services, current awareness services, information skills training and consultancy services, such as website design and advice on using metadata. These services will be re-packaged through the Business Librarian service, in order to tailor these services to individual needs. The research shows that the services provided by the DfES library closely reflect those offered by other Government libraries and other library sectors.

In repackaging its services other skills will need to be brought into play, to successfully implement the Business Librarian model. These will now be discussed in more detail.
6.2.2 Tensions in Service Remit

In delivering the Business Librarian service a number of contentious issues have been identified.

Using a Consultation Contract

The use of service level agreements (SLAs), to define the Business Librarian service, received a mixed response. Just over 50% of DfES respondent said that SLAs were too restrictive and time consuming, and one respondent said that he did not associate SLAs with proactively. This is in conflict with the Government librarian response, where a number of respondents said that it is essential to draw up a contract at the start of a project in order to clarify timescales, objectives and deliverables over the duration of the project.

Defining the Service

Konieczka (2003) says that special libraries that are moving towards becoming more proactive, should not try to be all things to all people. This can be achieved by having a well-defined library strategy and goals. In the case of the DfES they should consider whether the library has the resource for librarians to take part in basic research activity, as was suggested by a number of respondents. Conversely, should they take the route of one Government library, which draws a clear distinction between researchers and librarians? In The Circle of State Librarians journal, recent opinion would suggest that librarians should be involved in information literacy training, to make users, including researchers, more able and independent, rather than actually getting involved in any large-scale research themselves (Miller, 2003). There is a need to define the Business Librarian service, as many users are unsure of what it can offer them.
6.2.3 Tools to Overcome Tensions

Consultancy Skills

To resolve some of the tensions stated above it may be pertinent to look at the role that consultants play in the wider business environment. The key skills that consultants use may help librarians successfully embed the Business Librarian model. These skills may also help librarians to draw up contracts to define timescales and deliverables when working on a project. Frank et al (2001) says that consultants need to be confident and enthusiastic communicators, with active listening and negotiation skills. They need to be able to “under promise” and “over deliver” in order to establish achievable goals, communicating effectively throughout the course of the project and understanding the client base. These skills may help the librarian negotiate a form of contract on a case-by-case basis, which all users of the service are happy with.

Information Needs Assessment

One of the major problems encountered was the lack of awareness of the services that a Business Librarian could provide. This is reflected in a high non-response rate for a number of the qualitative questions, which may reflect a lack of understanding of the services offered (see Fig 2 and 3). In particular this applied to current awareness services, and information skills workshops. The suggestion of an information needs assessment was met with a positive response. In particular is was suggested that Business Librarians could attend team meetings and get to know the team’s needs, whilst at the same time explaining exactly what services the library has to offer.
6.3 Marketing the Service

6.3.1 Marketing to Define the Service

The true essence of marketing is about predicting and satisfying customer needs profitably, rather than trying to sell the customer something that they do not need (Brewerton, 2003). But, what if the customer is not aware of the products and services available to them, which may satisfy their needs? Soules (2001) says that librarians perform such a diverse role that it can often be difficult for people to know what a librarian does and their potential to fulfil information needs. Bell (2001) and a number of Government librarian respondents point out that word-of-mouth marketing can be a powerful force, this is only the case if potential customers have a good awareness of the potential of the library and the services that it offers.

This rings true when marketing a personalised service, as shown by the DfES and Government librarian interviews. For example, in the DfES library information skills workshops, current awareness services and consultancy services are not used to their maximum potential (Fig 2), despite the use of strong marketing drives. The primary research conducted, shows that there is potential demand for these services (Fig 3). This may mean that Business Librarian service is more effective at marketing and delivering these services, as they can be tailored to meet specific needs, rather than offering more generic services. This is particularly true of offering professional advice on very specialist services, such as using metadata, website design and information skills training. Many people interviewed, did not realise that the library offered these services, or did not understand how these services work, or the potential they hold to help them in their work. So it can be seen that a truly effective marketing strategy should also define the service. As Brick (1999) states, libraries should be aware of, and be in a position to market to, non-library users and those who may not be aware of the library or know what it has to offer.
6.3.2 A Strategic Marketing Plan

In the Government library sector a personalised model, such as the Business Librarian service, would seem to be taking library services in the right direction, as it offers the potential for librarians to better aligned to modern working practise and puts the library in a much stronger position to really add value, at a time when the need to demonstrate efficiency is key. Government librarians talked about making presentations to business units, this was often strategic in nature, targeting teams that are known to be working on particular projects.

This concurs with the research collected from DfES staff and other Government librarians, who feel that a more personalised service can help librarians maintain relevance to their Departments and increase rapport and build closer partnerships with others. The level at which to pitch the Business Librarian service, in order to build these relationships, was discussed extensively by Government librarians and DfES staff alike. In Government libraries, it was suggested that personalised services could be effectively pitched at project managers and business units. DfES respondents also suggested targeting specific project groups, rather than generic teams, who may work in a less cohesive way.

Two respondents also suggested that the Business Librarian service, should work more strategically with its larger division (CSDD), to help streamline the division and reduce service overlap (particularly with the Learning Academy). Two respondents envisaged the Business Librarian, operating as an account manger, is more inline with how the rest of CSDD operates, giving librarians more potential to contribute their specialist skills to the Department.
6.3.3 Marketing and Channels of Communication

Once the level to pitch the service at has been decided upon, it is also imperative to decide on the best channels of communication to market the service through and to have sustained communication over the duration of a project. The DfES library has suggested marketing the service through Communities on the intranet. This may be a good way of identifying project groups and groups of shared interest, but interviews with DfES staff show that they are not being used to their full potential, and are not fully embedded into working practices. One respondent said that their community is used infrequently and tends to be used to communicate information of very low priority. The consensus from DfES staff was that attending meetings would be a more effective way to market the Business Librarian service, and as a way into specific projects. Face-to-face communication and emails were seen as the most effective ways to communicate over the duration of a project.

6.3.4 Customer Relationship Marketing

The Business Librarian approach, of building up closer relationships with others in the organisation, and tailoring services to individual needs, links closely to customer relationship marketing. Gronroos (1994) and Bell (2001), both talk about customer relationship marketing, where by the importance of customer retention and customer satisfaction are recognised at the individual level, rather than in terms of market segmentation. None of the Government librarian interviewed use Customer Relationship Management software to manage or market their services.

6.3.5 Building a Brand

In addition to strategically aligned marketing plans and customer relationship marketing, libraries also need to build a strong brand for themselves, to raise awareness, and go a long way to gaining acceptance within the organisation (Brewerton, 2003). This includes the important task of giving a name to the service. In this case the name “Business Librarian” was only commented on once as being inappropriate. There is some debate in
the literature about naming library services. It has been suggested by these authors that “library” and “librarian” may conjure up negative images, and many have opted to use other words in their titles, such as “advisor”, “liaison”, “information”, “knowledge” and “business”, which they feel holds less negative connotations. Shamel (2002), on the other hand says that although libraries should build a strong brand, the name matters little, as long as the brand is consistent and marketed strategically. As part of this branding, Shamel (2002) and Brewerton (2003) both say that librarians should position themselves as the primary conduits of information in the organisation. Once a strong brand has been built, promotion techniques, such as promoting personalised services in in-house publications and emailing success stories and networking (as suggested by Government librarians interviewed) will be all the more effective.

6.4 Resourcing the Service

6.4.1 A Resource Intensive Service

One of the main reasons given by Government librarians against using a personalised service model is lack of staff resource. Providing personalised services may be resource intensive, it seems pertinent to discuss ways of overcoming resourcing issues, if personalised service models are to become more commonplace in Government libraries.

DfES opinion would suggest that there is demand for the Business Librarian service, if it is marketed successfully. Resourcing the service may be more problematic, in terms of having enough library staff to cover work on specialist projects, with little advanced warning, whilst maintaining the traditional library service. The DfES have already stated that they do not have the resource on operate like subject librarians in academic libraries, or to embed librarians into specific teams for extended periods of time.

6.4.2 Prioritisation and Flexibility

So, if the service is successful, it could mean increased workloads for staff. How should this be managed? Majority, opinion from other Government librarians would suggest that it is best to involve all librarians in the service, rather than having some librarians solely dedicated to the Business Librarian service. The benefits of this are two-fold, in that it means that expertise are being drawn from a larger skills base. Also in terms of staff morale, and gaining acceptance form staff, all librarians are given a chance to develop their skills.

The decision taken by the majority of Government librarian respondents not to divide into specific subject teams is also reflect by subject librarians in the academic sector. The literature shows a shift away from providing specialist subject knowledge, which can become quickly outdated, towards becoming experts in the information resources used in their specific subject areas (Rodwell, 2001).

In order to cope with the increased demands placed on Government librarians operating a personalised service model, one librarian said that the most important factor was to monitor workloads and ensure open channels of communication, so that librarians felt able to speak up early on in a project if they felt overloaded with work. A number of Government libraries said that it was imperative that staff were able to prioritise workloads effectively, to cope with increased workloads. Prioritisation is essential, as DfES respondents saw timescales for librarian involvement on a project to be variable, working to deadlines varying from 2-3 weeks to a matter of hours.

6.4.3 Charging

Charging for services was rare in the Government sector. One Government library employed casual staff to cover the work of the librarian, if on rare occasions the rest of the library team could not absorb their duties. They then charge this cost back to the team that the librarian was working with. Another Government information service, which operates as a separate entity from the library, but employs some librarians, relies on charges to
survive. These were exceptions; no other libraries were involved in charging, unless for specialist resources required by a team. A DfES respondent said that it was imperative that Business Librarians clarified any charges at the beginning or during the course of involvement. If Business Librarian services are to be provided free of charge, she said that this should be defined during the marketing of the service, or else some people may be put off from using the service.

6.4.4 Timing for Involvement

Finally, timing for involvement in projects was discussed with DfES staff. The majority said that it would be essential for a Business Librarian to be involved in the initial project-planning phase. This concurred with Government librarian opinion, where a number of librarians said that it was essential for librarians to be involved in the initial planning phase, and maintain constant communication throughout the duration of the project as deliverables may change. It is here that some lessons may also be learned from subject librarians, and their successes in effective liaison, involving themselves on committees to stay in tune with the faculty, its needs and most importantly, opportunities for the librarian to act as a consultant on projects (Donham and Green, 2004 and Glen and Wu, 2003).

Government libraries are beginning to follow suit and librarian’s skills are already being recognised. This is illustrated in the example given by library 4, where a librarian’s intervention in the early stages of a project actually changed the nature of the project from the outset, in terms of the projects scope. This illustrates the importance of networking and getting involved in projects at the critical planning phase. This may be one of the most proactive parts of the service, identifying potential contacts, but it may also be time consuming.
6.5 Measuring the Service

6.5.1 The Importance of Measurement

The importance of libraries adding proven value is a burning issue across all library sectors. In Government libraries it is a particularly pertinent issue in light of cuts in public spending and a focus on efficiency. Personalised services, may offer the opportunity for Government libraries to increase the efficiency of the organisation by using their professional skills, but it is imperative that this worth can be measured, in a way recognised by senior managers. Most are agreed on the importance of measurement, but few on the methods of measurement and more importantly on what should be measured. Goldman (1999) has talked of the inextricable link between marketing and measurement and the need for quantifiable data (Soules, 2001). Scherrer and Jacobson (2002) say that new categories of measurement are needed to measure qualitatively activities such as consultation and outreach work, now being undertaken by librarians.

6.5.2 Means of Measurement

The DfES plan to measure the Business Librarian service by recording business librarian activity in its customer enquires database. They also plan to collect feedback at the end of every Business Librarian project, by conducting a consultation review interview at the end of each project, recording a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, such as a rating scale and finding out if objectives were met and which parts of the consultation were most useful.

None of the Government libraries interviewed use strategic forms of measurement, linked to a balanced scorecard. One library proposed to use a balanced scorecard to measure all library services on the future. Four libraries measured their personalised services in terms of time spent on a project, number of enquires received and repeat use and accolades received. One library tried to find and record evidence of areas in which libraries had made a contribution, by influencing the outcome of projects. Ryan (2005) conducts one of the most comprehensive forms of measurement, in a
corporate information service, measuring time saved. He says that this can then be used to powerfully demonstrate how librarians add-value to the business process. As yet measurement of the new consultancy roles that librarians are undertaking is underdeveloped in practice settings.

6.6 Summary

Service Remit: All Government libraries offer a wide-ranging service remit. In the case of the DfES there are some tensions in the ways that the Business Librarian service should be delivered, in terms of using service level agreements and defining the service remit. Consultancy skills, used in other business environments have been identified as offering some of the skills to deal with these problems.

Marketing: All Government libraries operating a similar model took part in some form of marketing, and research shows that marketing is essential, in order to define the service to potential users. Strategic marketing plans can be used to decide the level at which to pitch the service and the areas and teams to target. Channels through which to market the service are also discussed, as are the merits of customer relationship marketing and building a strong Business Librarian brand.

Resourcing: Due to its personalised nature, some Government librarians see this new role as being resource intensive. In order to overcome this it was seen as important to involve all librarians in the service to draw from a wider skills base and prioritise workloads and maintain a flexible working environment. It was also seen as necessary to clarify any charging policy at the outset of a project. Timing for Business Librarian involvement was also discussed, and initial involvement was seen as essential.

Measuring: The importance of measurement is illustrated in the literature, but is under-developed in practice in all library sectors. This is especially true
of measuring consultancy and outreach services that many librarians are now involved in delivering. The balanced scorecard has been discussed as a tool for strategically aligning services and providing measurable outcomes, but as yet it is not commonly used in libraries.
7 Recommendations

7.1 Service Remit

- **Defining the Role.** There is a need to define the Business Librarian’s role to potential users. Research and opinion would suggest that librarians should not be involved in actual research, but in equipping people with the skills and resources necessary to conduct research.

- **Service Level Agreements:** Opinion from other Government librarians suggests that it is essential for librarians to define timescales and objectives before commencing a project. Conversely, SLAs were unpopular with many of the users interviewed. It may be necessary to use a different name, as a Service Level Agreement was though to be too formal and restrictive by users. Also, approaching users to conduct an information needs assessment may be a better fist step, before discussing the use of a contract. This is where consultancy skills come into play to listen to customers needs and negotiation timescales and agree aims and objectives.

- **Increase collaborative working.** Increased collaborative working, particularly with others in CSDD may help to raise the Business Librarian’s profile across the division and the Department. This may be a good first step for the service. There is a link to be made with the Learning Academy in terms of providing information literacy training. Research shows that to a certain extent, services such as this grow-up gradually through networking and informal channels of communication.

7.2 Marketing

- **Building a strong brand.** The name “Business Librarian” did not meet with adverse response. The name for the service would seem less important that building a strong Business Librarian brand, through networking and strategic marketing.
• **Channels of Communication.** Communities may provide a good lead into identifying potential teams who may benefit from the service. Communities are less well suited a communication tool, as they are not embedded into DfES working practice. Meetings were seen as a better means of communicating the Business Librarian service to potential user groups.

• **Get involved in kick-start meetings.** Networking to gain involvement in meetings and project groups has been identified as a key activity. This may be the most proactive part of the service. There is demand for the service, but people need to know exactly how the service can benefit them. This means that the library must also have a clear definition of its service remit.

• **Customer Relationship Management.** It is important to keep up-to-date with advances in CRM, as this may offer an excellent means of developing the Business Librarian service in the future, when the Department start to implement this software on a larger scale.

### 7.3 Resourcing

• **Prioritisation and Flexibility.** The service may mean that there is increased workload, but other Government libraries have found that maintaining open channels of communication and flexibility can help. In the long run it may mean that library services and librarian’s skills are used to their maximum potential. Also the aim should be to create independent end-users, who know how to use the library service and information resources to their maximum potential.

• **Clear Charging Policy.** If the library decides to charge for any aspect of the Business Librarian service, such as time, this should be made clear at the outset. In marketing the service it should also be made clear that the service is free of charge, as one respondent said that people might automatically assume that there will be a charge for using the service, which may deter potential users.
7.4 Measuring

- **Strategic Measurement.** This is one of the most underdeveloped aspects of many library services, but its importance should not be lost, as a means of demonstrating the value added by the Business librarian service. It may be pertinent to look at how other colleagues in CSDD measure the success of their services. There may be potential in using a balanced scorecard in the future.
8 Conclusion

The Business Librarian service is not only a feasible model, but also a necessary one, reflecting the changes taking place in information provision in the profession as a whole. There is demand for the service from potential DfES users, and the service reflects changes that are taking place in information provision on a wider scale. The development of a personalised service is also reflected across a number of other UK Government libraries.

This study used a qualitative methodology and an inductive grounded theory approach to explore DfES and Government opinion of the Business Librarian model. Research was also conducted into the changing nature of information provision in the wider library environment using an extensive literature review. Results from the primary research were analysed systematically using coding techniques. The major limitation of the methodology is the small sample size, which means that the primary data on its own cannot be generalised to the library profession as a whole, although comparisons with other library sectors have been made through the literature. Triangulation was used to inform thinking from a number of perspectives, adding to the validity of the findings. The methodology used has enabled the proposed research questions to be answered and has yielded some interesting results.

In terms of service remit, all Government libraries offer a wide-ranging service remit. In the case of the DfES there are some tensions in the ways that the Business Librarian service should be delivered, in terms of using service level agreements and defining the service remit. Consultancy skills, used in other business environments, have been identified as offering some of the skills to deal with these problems.

All Government libraries operating a similar model took part in some form of marketing and research shows that marketing is essential, in order to define the service to potential users. Strategic marketing plans can be used
to decide the level at which to pitch the service and the areas and teams to target. Channels through which to market the service are also discussed, as are the merits of customer relationship marketing and building a strong Business Librarian brand.

Due to its personalised nature, some Government librarians saw this new role as being resource intensive. In order to overcome this it was seen as important to involve all librarians in the service to draw from a wider skills base and prioritise workloads and maintain a flexible working environment. It was also seen as necessary to clarify any charging policy at the outset of a project. Timing for Business Librarian involvement was also discussed, and initial involvement was seen as essential.

The importance of measurement is illustrated in the literature, but is under-developed in practice in all library sectors. This is especially true of measuring consultancy and outreach services that many librarians are now involved in delivering. The balanced scorecard has been discussed as a tool for strategically aligning services and providing measurable outcomes, but as yet it is not commonly used in libraries.

In answering the research questions recommendations have been made to the DfES on how best to implement the Business Librarian model, based on the findings from all aspects of the data collection and research. Areas where further research is required have also been identified, namely in developing more strategic and systematic methods for measuring the service, in order to demonstrate the value that the service adds to the organisation and how it delivers on wider Government strategy.
9 Future Research

- There is scope for more research into the measurement of personalised library services, in term of the value they add to their organisation. At present in the Government library sector much of this measurement is informal and not suited to the new roles that librarians are fulfilling.

- There is also scope for more research into the role that consultants play in the wider business environment, in order to learn more about consultancy skills in general and how this can be transferred to a library setting.

- More research is needed into the training needs of librarians providing personalised services in all library sectors. This has been highlighted in the HEAG report (CILIP, 2004).

- Finally, there is also scope for research into ways in which a personalised service model can be implemented over a geographically dispersed area. Two Government librarians highlighted this as one of the main problems in implementing a personalised service, but little has been identified in the wider research.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Committee of Departmental Librarians Mailing List

Courts Service
Customs and Excise
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
Department of Constitutional Affairs
Department of Health
Department for Education and Skills
Department for International Development
Department for Rural Affairs
Department for Trade and Industry
Department for Transport
Department for Work and Pensions
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Government Communication Headquarters
Health and Safety Executive
HM Treasury and Cabinet Office
Home Office
Inland Revenue
Ministry of Defence
National Assembly for Wales
Northern Ireland
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Office for National Statistics
Office of the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman
Scottish Executive
Appendix 2 : CDL Questionnaire

Questionnaire:
Establishing a Personalised Service Model

The CILIP Healthcare Executive Advisory Group (HEAG) has recently published a report looking at the future of the library profession within healthcare, with implications for the wider profession\(^\text{16}\). The report highlights the fact that the most successful professions are ones that constantly challenge the parameters of their profession, and their working environments. The report highlights the need for the library profession to gain new “information territory” and act quickly to capitalise on the opportunities that this may bring.

This short preface illustrates the importance of expanding the role of the government librarian, and the services provided. The findings from this research project aim to act as a means of sharing and establishing best practice across government, in terms of providing a proactive and personalised service model.

CDL Questionnaire

Your Name:

Name of Government Department:

Your Current Job Title:

Section 1

1. Does your library service use a personalised service model, similar to that proposed by the DfES?
   Yes □
   No □ (Go to Section 2)

2. SERVICE REMIT: What services do these librarians provide?
   (For example, do they provide training, research, current awareness etc?)

3. MARKETING: How is this service marketed to potential users?

4. ROLE NAME: What is the name given to this type of role? (For example “Business Librarian” as proposed by DfES.

5. RESOURCING THE SERVICE: How do you resource your library in terms of staffing an enquiry desk and running this tailored library service?
6. MEASURING THE SERVICE: How do you measure the success of this service?

7. GAINING ACCEPTANCE: Were there problems in gaining acceptance from teams and divisions using this service?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If so how were these problems overcome?

8. Were their any problems gaining acceptance from library staff, in terms of expanding their role to cover this service?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If so how were these problems overcome?
9. LESSONS LEARNED: Were there any lessons learned, ideas of best practice, in terms of implementing this type of proactive and personalised service model?

Yes □

No □

If so what where they?

*Please go to section 3*

---

**Section 2**

10. Would you consider implementing a personalised service model, similar to the one proposed by DfES?

Yes □  (Go to question 11)

No □  (Go to question 12)

11. What would be the possible benefits of implementing such a model in your library?

12. What are the reasons against implementing a similar personalised model?

*Please go to section 3*
Section 3

13. I confirm that I have read and understood the attached information sheet and I understand that my participation in this questionnaire is voluntary.

☐

14. I understand that my responses will be anonymised, before analysis. I give permission for the researcher (Katherine Taylor) and the DfES library to have access to my responses.

☐

15. I agree to take part in the research project.

☐

16. I would like a copy of the completed report (after 1st September 2005).

The full report ☐

Summary of results ☐

Your participation in this research is greatly appreciated – thank you for completing this questionnaire

Please send your response to:
Katherine Taylor by Friday 24th June
Email: lip04ket@sheffield.ac.uk
Address: 50 Withens Avenue,
    Hillsborough,
    Sheffield
    S6 1WE
Appendix 3: CDL Email

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to invite you to contribute to a research project, which I am currently undertaking on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) library, to assess their plans to implement “business librarians” as a proactive and personalised service model.

We wish to gather opinion from other government departments regarding the DfES’s proposal. The preliminary plan is that “business librarians” will liaise closely with specific DfES teams and divisions; attending team away days, other specific meetings and giving presentations. They will take a proactive role in assessing information needs by conducting detailed reference interviews resulting in a consultation “contract” that sets out the aims and objectives of the role in a project format. This will result in closer working relationships with others in the Department, monitoring and fulfilling their information needs.

We hope that you will be willing to complete a short questionnaire, which should take 15 minutes to complete. I attach a copy of the questionnaire, and an information sheet, which elaborates on the purpose of the research. Individual responses and government departments will be kept anonymous. The findings from the report will be available from September 2005.

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire; your response is greatly appreciated.
Appendix 4: DfES Interview Script

Hello,
Thank you for agreeing to take part in this follow up interview. I appreciate you taking the time to talk to me.

Are you happy for the interview to be recorded?

I am going to ask you a number of questions. Some cover the same ground or repeat the questions that you were asked in the questionnaire, some are new questions and some relate specifically to your questionnaire response.

At this point can I just reiterate that your response will be made anonymous in the final copy of the report.

Before we begin, I will run over the proposed role of the Business Librarian once again to refresh your memory.

The Library is currently developing a new “business librarian” service, which will provide more tailored services to teams, to help meet their information needs. The preliminary plan is that “Business Librarians” will liaise closely with DfES teams and divisions. They will take a proactive role in assessing individual’s and team’s information needs by conducting interviews, attending team away days, other specific meetings and giving presentations to assess information needs and match their needs to library services on offer. If a piece of work is undertaken by a Business Librarian, the idea is that a service level agreement will be drawn up detailing the work to be undertaken, timescales, objectives etc.
I’d like to start by giving examples that illustrate the role of the Business Librarian that The Library is proposing.

The Library has been approached by teams who wanted to improve communication between their project team members by using a community. The Business Librarian:

- Advised community manager how to set up news, documents etc;
- Discussed their needs for external information and suggested sources;
- Put them in touch with com managers forum;
- Spent 15 hours over a period of 8 weeks and provided contact for future problems.

When a team was starting a project in a new area of work, the Business Librarian:

- Discussed information needs
- Helped team set up alerts across different databases
- Explained ILL services
- Advised on how to obtain books and journals direct
- Spent a short period of time with the new team, perhaps 6+ hours over a four-week period? E.g. initial meeting week 1, presentation week 2 or 3, feedback and follow up from queries + additional contacts given week 4 and provided contact for future problems.

1) So, thinking about the last time you were working on a project, what sort of information did you need to gather?

2) How did you share information on the project?

3) Follow that up with: How would you have liked a Business Librarian to help you with information gathering and dissemination?

4) How long was the whole project?
5) At what point in the project would you have liked the Business Librarian to get involved? E.g. during initial project planning and discussion phase.

6) How much time would you have liked the Business Librarian to have given to this project?

7) Moving away from projects is there any other area of your work, not covered in the questionnaire that a business librarian could help you with?

8) Depending on the answer to the question above – so, you think that generally the Business Librarian role is something that would/would not help you. [Ask as a closed question to get a figure for people interested/not interested].

9) What would be your preferred methods of receiving information and finding out what services are available through The Library. For example, e-mail or a more personal approach through Communities.

Thinking about the current services The Library provides.

10) If additional Library resources were available, what 3 things could The Library do, right now, that would help you in your work?

11) Would you find it useful for a Library colleague to come to talk to you (perhaps at a team meeting) and explain exactly what services are on offer and assess your information needs (without having to draw up a Service Level Agreement)?
Appendix 5: Government Librarian Interview Script

Interview Questions

Government librarians, with experience of providing a similar proactive and personalised service model, have been identified for interview. The intention is to gain ideas of best practice from librarians who have experience of implementing a similar service model as the Business Librarian model proposed by DfES.

1) What do you know about the DfES plans to implement Business Librarians?

Explain the Business Librarian plans.

Business librarians offer a proactive and personalised service. The preliminary plan is that “business librarians” will liaise closely with specific DfES teams and divisions; attending team away days, other specific meetings and giving presentations. They will take a proactive role in assessing information needs by conducting detailed reference interviews resulting in a consultation “contract” that sets out the aims and objectives of the role in a project format.

This will result in closer working relationships with others in the Department, monitoring and fulfilling their information needs.

2) How is this Business Librarian model similar to the work you have been involved in? (Either current or past work).

3) What was the service remit?

4) How did you market the service?
5) What was the name given to the role (e.g. Business Librarian).

6) How was the service resourced (e.g. in terms of running the service and manning the enquiry desk).

7) How was the service measured?

8) Were there any problems gaining acceptance from potential users?

9) Were there any problems gaining acceptance from library staff, to adopt this new role?

10) Were there any lessons learned or ideas of best practice that you are willing to share?
## Appendix 6: DfES and Government Axial Coding

### DfES Axial Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axial Code</th>
<th>Axial Code Definition</th>
<th>Relationship to Open Code Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Literacy</td>
<td>A potential need for a Business Librarian to provide information literacy training</td>
<td>2, 8, 18, 31, 35, 44, 52, 79, 83, 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Management Skills</td>
<td>A potential need for a business librarian to provide information management skills</td>
<td>2, 4, 12, 18, 23, 24, 38, 42, 56, 58, 74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Assistance</td>
<td>A potential need for a Business Librarian to provide research assistance</td>
<td>2, 3, 31, 48, 63, 72, 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience/Level,</td>
<td>The level that the service should be pitched at e.g. at individual, team, specialism, divisional, Directorate level</td>
<td>6, 46, 47, 50, 51, 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarify Services,</td>
<td>A need for library services to be clarified to colleagues</td>
<td>1, 8, 9, 10, 17, 30, 43, 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain relevance</td>
<td>The Bus. Lib service may help the library to maintain relevance to the needs of the department</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased Awareness</td>
<td>An increased rapport with DfES colleagues, with the potential to raise awareness of the library service in people’s minds.</td>
<td>20, 25, 32, 37, 54, 93</td>
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<td>Cross-divisional working</td>
<td>Cross-divisional working with other service providers, to increase libraries presence and profile and avoid service overlap.</td>
<td>9, 46, 47, 50, 51, 84, 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logistics</td>
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<td>SLAs,</td>
<td>Opinions on the idea to</td>
<td>11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 45, 57, 65, 68,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>use SLAs</td>
<td>71, 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timescales</td>
<td>Potential timescales for</td>
<td>22, 33, 41, 55, 60, 66, 75, 82</td>
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<td>project involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timing for</td>
<td>Potential timings for</td>
<td>21, 34, 40, 53, 59, 67, 80, 81, 92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involvement,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>beginning, middle end.</td>
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<td>Channels of</td>
<td>The most effective</td>
<td>19, 26, 29, 36, 39, 61, 70, 76, 85, 87,</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>between a Business</td>
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<td>Librarian and DfES</td>
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<td>colleagues.</td>
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<td>Information Needs</td>
<td>The use of an information</td>
<td>27, 62, 78, 86</td>
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<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>precursor to using a</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Axial Coding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Axial Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Remit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remit Varied and extensive,</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-depth enquires and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Library services,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherry-picked users</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing Varied and extensive,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low key/small scale/under marketed,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resourcing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Charging,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritisation,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated Librarians,</td>
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<td>All librarians involved</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Measuring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time, accolades and repeat use,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal Measurement,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Still in development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gaining Acceptance: Potential Users</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Raising Awareness/gaining acceptance,</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gaining Acceptance: Library Staff</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased workload</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal development,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>De-skilling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lessons Learned</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Involvement from the start,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritisation,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Clarification,</td>
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<tr>
<td>More marketing to Raise Awareness of the service from the start.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All staff involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be assertive.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Comments from Librarians that Do Not Use a Personalised Service Model**

| Reasons Against Implementing A Personalised Service Model |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of resources | Lack of resources to provide a full service | 45, 48 |
| Dangers of Outbedding | Library looses control | 51 |

| Reasons For Implementing A Personalised Service Model in the Future |
|---|---|---|
| Make more impact | Certain areas of the Department where a personalised service would make more of an impact than a traditional library model | 46 |
| More liaison with staff | There is a need for more liaison with colleagues, but difficult as would be staff intensive, spread over 46 offices. | 47 |
Appendix 7: DfES and Government Selective Coding

### DfES Selective Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selective Code (Higher Level Code)</th>
<th>Selective Code Definition</th>
<th>Relationship to Axial Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Professional Skills               | Pertains to the skills and services that a Business Librarian would be expected to provide, or could usefully provide to its DfES colleagues | • Information Management Advice,  
• Information Literacy,  
• Research Assistance |
| Marketing                         | Pertains to how the service could be marketed, the organisational level it should be pitched at, how it could be promoted. | • Target Audience,  
• Maintain Relevance to the Department,  
• Defining the Service,  
• Increased Awareness and Raising Profile  
• Cross-divisional Working, |
| Logistics                         | Pertains to the logistics of delivering the service at ground level. | • SLAs,  
• Timescales,  
• Timing for Involvement,  
• Channels of Communication,  
• Information Needs Assessment |

### Government Librarian Selective Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selective Code (Higher Level Code)</th>
<th>Selective Code Definition</th>
<th>Relationship to Axial Code</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Service Remit                     | The service remit of the personalised service model, in respondent Government Libraries | -Remit Varied and extensive  
-In-depth enquires and research  
-Standard Library services  
-Cherry-picked users |
| Marketing the Service             | How the service is marketed | -Marketing Varied and extensive  
-Low key/small scale/under marketed |
| Resourcing the Service            | How the service is resourced | -Service Charging  
-Prioritisation  
-Dedicated Librarians  
-All librarians involved  
-Lack of resources |
| Measuring the Service | How the service is measured | -Time, accolades and repeat use  
-Informal Measurement  
-Still in development |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Acceptance: Potential Users</td>
<td>Issues of gaining acceptance from potential users</td>
<td>-Raising Awareness/gaining acceptance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Gaining Acceptance: Library Staff | Issues of gaining acceptance from library staff | -Increased workload  
-Personal development  
-Library Development  
-De-skilling  
-Lack of skills |
| Lessons Learned | Lessons learned and ideas of best practice | -Involvement from the start  
-Prioritisation  
-Initial Clarification of Work,  
-More marketing to raise awareness of the service from the start  
-All staff involved  
-Be assertive |
## Appendix 8: Gantt Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>June</th>
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<td>9-20</td>
<td>21-31</td>
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<td>11-17</td>
<td>18-31</td>
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<td>15-21</td>
<td>22-31</td>
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<td>Literature Review</td>
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<td>Contact Potential Government Librarians for Interview</td>
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<td>Design and Pilot CDL Questionnaire</td>
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<td>Design and Pilot DfES Questionnaire</td>
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<td>Design All Interview Questions</td>
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<td>Arrange to Meet the Business Librarian Working Group,</td>
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<td>Attend Business Librarian Working Group Meetings</td>
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<td>Write Introduction</td>
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<td>Conduct Government Librarian Interviews</td>
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<td>Chase up non-respondants to questionnaires</td>
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<td>Contact Potential DfES Respondents for Interview</td>
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<td>Conduct DfES Interviews</td>
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<td>Collate Responses and Analyse Data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write Up Dissertation (Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusions)</td>
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Appendix 9: Detailed Graph

Question 2: How often do you use these library services?

Library Service
- Consultancy Services
- Current Awareness
- Workshops and Training Sessions
- Using Journals
- Book Lending
- Asking an In-depth Question
- Asking a General Question

No. Respondents
0 2 4 6 8 10 12

- No Response
- Never
- Less Than Once a Year
- Every 6-12 Months
- Every 4-6 Months
- Every 2-3 Months
- More Than Once a Month