

Qualification of Library Assistant

Library assistants

- Library assistants help librarians, and library technicians organize library resources and make them available to users.
- At the circulation desk, library assistants lend and collect books, periodicals, videotapes, and other materials.
- Training requirements for library assistants are generally minimal. Most libraries prefer to hire workers with a high school diploma or GED, although libraries also hire high school students for these positions.
- Library assistants receive most of their training on the job. Generally, no formal postsecondary training is expected. Some employers hire individuals with experience in other clerical jobs; others train inexperienced workers on the job. Familiarity with computers is helpful.

Education

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- Most libraries prefer to hire library technicians who have a postsecondary certificate. Certificate programs in library technology include coursework in acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, reference, and automated library systems. The [American Library Association](#) has a list of certificate programs available by state.
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- Most library assistants typically need a high school diploma or equivalent.

Important Qualities

Communication skills. Library technicians and assistants need to listen to and understand patrons' needs, answer questions clearly, and teach patrons how to use library resources.

Detail oriented. Library technicians and assistants must pay close attention to ensure that library materials and information are organized correctly and according to the library's organizational system. Cataloging and processing library materials also requires attention to detail.

Interpersonal skills. Library technicians and assistants provide customer service to library patrons and work with [librarians](#), teachers, or researchers.

Technology skills. Library technicians and assistants use computers to help patrons research topics. They also use technology to maintain the library's database of collections.

A library assistant performs clerical duties in a library. As a paraprofessional, he or she helps patrons select materials but refers requests for more in-depth research to librarians. Library assistants check in and out material at the circulation desk, receive payments for fines, shelve books when patrons return them and help process new material. They are also called library clerks, library technical assistants and library circulation assistants.

Duties:

Assisting library users to locate books, information and resources.

Enforcing policies regarding noise, eating and drinking etc.

Answering enquiries using IT based research tools and the internet.

Engaging with library users face to face and over the telephone.

Involved in delivering children's activities like reading stories etc.

Undertaking clerical and office tasks like filing, photocopying etc.

Referring complex enquiries to other staff as appropriate.

Maintaining stocks of stationery, supplies and help-sheets etc.

Preparing stock for the shelves, shelving and shelf tidying, and repairing books.

Checking areas of the library to ensure that information on display is up to date.

Handling payments, including cash, in relation to fines and/or services.

Registering new users, checking their ID, then Issuing cards, updating systems, and explaining what facilities and services users are entitled to.

KEY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Experienced in working in a customer service environment.

Able to cover as relief for the absence and annual leave of other library staff.

Good level of IT literacy.

Ability to exhibit tact & diplomacy when dealing with upset or aggressive people.

Ability to work under pressure on a busy frontline service.

A positive attitude towards training and personal development.

Willing to work late nights and weekends.

A pleasant manner when dealing with customers and colleagues.