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Information and documentation — Quality assessment for national libraries

Information et documentation — Evaluation de qualité pour les bibliothèques nationales

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso .org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation,* Subcommittee SC 8, *Quality — Statistics and performance evaluation.*

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document is concerned with the evaluation of national libraries.

It provides guidance on the use of performance indicators regarding the quality of services in national libraries and on methods for assessing the impact and value of national libraries.

Clause 5 resumes the work done in ISO/TR 28118:2009 where, for the first time, a specific evaluation method was described for national libraries. This document establishes a set of performance indicators that are adapted to the mission and functions of national libraries. Annex A specifies how the indicators are intended to be calculated and used.

In Clause 6, this document describes methods for identifying and proving the impact of national libraries on individuals, institutions and on society. The methods described in Clause 6 do not reflect all possible methods or evaluation techniques, but are those seen to be most effective for assessing impact of national libraries. Annex B gives examples of impact surveys, considering different user groups of national libraries.

The texts in this document are partly based on ISO 11620 and ISO 16439.

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Information and documentation — Quality assessment for national libraries

1   Scope

This document defines terms for the quality assessment of national libraries and specifies the following methods for the assessment:

— performance measurement, and

— impact assessment.

The results of both methods are of special interest for comparison over time within the same library. Comparisons between libraries are possible if differences in the mandate, tasks and constituencies of the libraries are taken into account.

Not all methods described in this document apply to all national libraries. Limitations of the applicability of individual methods are specified in the descriptions.

This document is not intended to exclude the use of performance indicators or of methods for impact assessment not specified in it.

This document does not cover web archiving, but refers to ISO/TR 14873 for statistics and quality issues for this new task of national libraries.

2   Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3   Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
access
successful request of a library-provided online service

Note 1 to entry: An access is one cycle of user activities that typically starts when a user connects to a library-provided online service and ends by a terminating activity that is either explicit (by leaving the database through log-out or exit) or implicit (timeout due to user inactivity).

Note 2 to entry: Accesses to the *library website* (3.46) are counted as *virtual visits* (3.97).

Note 3 to entry: Requests of a general entrance or gateway page should be excluded.

Note 4 to entry: If possible, requests by search engines should be excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.1]

3.2
accessibility
ease of reaching and using a service or facility

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.2]

3.3
anecdotal evidence
evidence based on anecdotes or stories, obtained informally from personal observations and experiences, not collected systematically nor empirically tested

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.5]

3.4
availability
degree to which content, documents, facilities or services are actually provided by the library at the time required by users

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.6]

3.5
benefit
helpful or good effect, or something intended to help

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.7]

3.6
book
non-serial printed document in codex form

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.4]

3.7
capital expenditure
expenditure which results in the acquisition of, or addition to, fixed assets

Note 1 to entry: This includes expenditure on building sites, new buildings and extensions, furnishings and equipment for new and expanded buildings, computer systems (hardware and software), etc. When applicable, local and national sales/purchase taxes [e.g. value added tax (VAT)] are included.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.6.1]

3.8
closed stacks
stacks that are not accessible to users

Note 1 to entry: Antonym: *open stacks* (3.63).

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 11219:2012, 2.19]

3.9
commercial publication
document in print or electronic format that is generally produced, distributed and sold for the purpose of profit

Note 1 to entry: Excludes publications by non-profit organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.7, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.10
conservation
preservation measures and actions applied to prevent, arrest or delay deterioration of a document or other material object

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.12.1.01]

3.11
content unit
computer-processed uniquely identifiable textual or audio-visual piece of published work that may be original or a digest of other published work

Note 1 to entry: This includes documents or parts of documents (e.g. articles, abstracts, content tables, images) and descriptive records.

Note 2 to entry: Adapted from COUNTER code of practice, Release 3:2008.

Note 3 to entry: PDF, Postscript, HTML and other formats of the same content unit will be counted as separate items.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.9]

3.12
contingent valuation
method for assessing the economic value of non-profit institutions and projects of public utility depending on potential users' responses to survey questions such as what they are willing to pay for a *benefit* ([3.5](#)) or feature (willingness-to-pay), or what they would accept as financial compensation if a certain benefit or feature was missing (willingness-to-accept)

Note 1 to entry: The method is used in environmental protection and health care, for example.

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.9]

3.13
cultural economics
branch of economics that studies the relation of culture to economic outcomes and explores cultural phenomena as economic factors

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.12]

3.14
data mining
computational process that identifies patterns by analysing *quantitative data* ([3.73](#)) from different perspectives and dimensions, categorizing it, and summarizing potential relationships and impacts

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.13]

3.15
digital document
information unit with a defined content, born digital or digitized, that has been created or digitized by the library or acquired in digital form as part of the *library collection* ([3.43](#))

Note 1 to entry: This includes eBooks, electronic patents, networked audio-visual documents and other digital documents, e.g. reports, cartographic and music documents, preprints, etc. Databases and electronic serials are excluded.

Note 2 to entry: A digital document can be structured into one or more files.

Note 3 to entry: A digital document consists of one or more *content units* ([3.11](#)). Before *digitization* ([3.16](#)), the library must decide which content units should be searchable afterwards, e.g. articles in serials, or songs on records.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.13]

3.16
digitization
process of converting analogue materials into digital form

Note 1 to entry: Digitization for document supply from the *library collection* (3.43) to a user or institution is excluded.

Note 2 to entry: Digitization for preservation purposes is included.

Note 3 to entry: Mass digitization is included.

Note 4 to entry: Purchase of electronic copies for replacing print copies is excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.15]

3.17
document
recorded information or material object which can be treated as a unit in a documentation process

Note 1 to entry: Documents can differ in form and characteristics.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.1.1.38, modified — Note 1 to entry of ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.17 has been included.]

3.18
document processing
everything done to a document after it is acquired by a library, before it is placed on the shelves, including acquisition, descriptive cataloguing, subject indexing, if applicable binding, physical processing, and shelving

Note 1 to entry: For electronic documents, the end of processing will either coincide with cataloguing when the URL for a document on an external server has been added, or with the installation of the document on the library's server and the URL being added in the catalogue.

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 28118:2009, 2.13, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.19
document retrieval
process of recovering specific documents from a *storage* (3.87) place

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.10.1.03, modified — The term "placement" has been excluded in the definition.]

3.20
economic impact
effect of a policy, decision, institution, or event on the economy of a given area

Note 1 to entry: Economic impact is usually measured in terms of changes in economic growth (output or value added) and associated changes in jobs (employment) and income (wages).

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.16, modified — The term "decision" has been added while "programme" has been excluded in the definition.]

3.21
economic impact of libraries
positive influence of libraries on the local, regional or national economic life

3.22
educational services
learning sessions and learning materials and programmes in all formats for children and adults for the purpose of enhancing skills in library and information use

Note 1 to entry: This includes the provision of services for schools and the cooperation with other libraries in preparing and offering educational services.

Note 2 to entry: Education of librarians is excluded.

3.23
effectiveness
measure of the degree to which given objectives are achieved

Note 1 to entry: An activity is effective if it maximizes the results it was established to produce.

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.15]

3.24
efficiency
measure of the utilisation of resources to realize a given objective

Note 1 to entry: An activity is efficient if it minimizes the use of resources, or produces better performance with the same resources.

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.16]

3.25
electronic collection
digital collection
all resources in electronic form in the *library collection* (3.43), whether born digital or digitized

Note 1 to entry: The electronic collection includes databases, electronic serials, and *digital documents* (3.15). *Free Internet resources* (3.31) which have been catalogued by the library in its *online catalogue* (3.61) or a database are excluded.

Note 2 to entry: The resources can be networked, installed on stand-alone workstations or stored on physical carriers.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.21, modified — The term "digital collection" has been added as an accepted term.]

3.26
electronic document delivery
<mediated>electronic transmission of a document or part of a document from the *library collection* (3.43) to a user, mediated by library staff not necessarily via another library

Note 1 to entry: Electronic transmission of documents to members of the *population to be served* (3.67) is included. Fax transmission is excluded.

Note 2 to entry: May be split up as to transmission with or without charge to the user.

Note 3 to entry: Unmediated downloading by users from the *electronic collection* (3.25) of the library is excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.7]

3.27
electronic service
library service delivered via electronic means whether from local servers or provided via networks

Note 1 to entry: Electronic library services include the *online catalogue* (3.61), the *library website* (3.46), the *electronic collection* (3.25), electronic lending, electronic document delivery (mediated), electronic *reference service* (3.77), *user training* (3.94) by electronic means, services for mobile *devices* (3.51), services for interactive use (including services on social networks), and Internet access offered via the library.

Note 2 to entry: This does not include booking physical services (e.g. rooms or library tours) by electronic means.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.8]

3.28
evaluation
process of estimating the effectiveness, efficiency, utility and relevance of a service or facility

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 3.19]

3.29
event
pre-arranged activity with cultural, educational, social, political, scholarly, or other intent

EXAMPLE   Exhibitions, author visits, literary discussions, workshops, etc.

Note 1 to entry: Only events arranged by the library on its own or in partnership with other institutions are included, whether inside or outside the library premises. Events inside the library premises organized by institutions outside the library without the library's cooperation are excluded.

Note 2 to entry: *User training* (3.94) lessons and library tours are excluded.

Note 3 to entry: Ongoing programmes are included. Each session of a programme is counted as one event.

Note 4 to entry: Virtual events are included.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.9]

3.30
focus group interview
focus group discussion
group interview in the form of a moderated discussion among a small number of selected individuals on topics introduced by the moderator

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.23]

3.31
free Internet resource
Internet resource with unrestricted (open) access for which no payment is required

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.23]

3.32
full-time equivalent
FTE
measurement equal to one staff person working a full-time work schedule for one year

Note 1 to entry: For example, if out of three persons employed as librarians, one works quarter-time, one works half-time, and one works full-time, then the FTE of these three persons would be 0,25 + 0,5 + 1,0 = 1,75 librarians (FTE).

Note 2 to entry: Not all libraries may use the same number of hours per year to determine an FTE. Thus, any comparative measures between libraries may need to consider any differences in hours.

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.23]

3.33
goal
desired state of affairs to be achieved by the implementation of agreed policies

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.24]

3.34
homepage
main or opening screen of a website to which all other pages for users are linked

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.3.3.26]

3.35
impact
difference or change in an individual or group resulting from the contact with library services

Note 1 to entry: The change can be tangible or intangible.

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.25]

3.36
income generated
income generated by library operations and from fees, charges, subscriptions and donations that is available to the library for expenditure

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 28118:2009, 2.24]

3.37
indicator
expression (which may be numeric, symbolic or verbal) used to characterize activities (events, objects, persons) both in quantitative and qualitative terms in order to assess the value of the activities characterized, and the associated method

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.25]

3.38
information literacy
ability to recognize a need for information, to identify, retrieve, evaluate, and use information effectively and to use information in an effective and responsible way

Note 1 to entry: Literacy in the sense of being able to read and write with a minimal level of proficiency is fundamental for information literacy.

Note 2 to entry: This includes the skills for using information technology to access and retrieve information.

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.26, modified — The phrase "and to use information in an effective and responsible way" has been added in the definition.]

3.39
informational question
directional and/or administrative inquiry delivered to library staff

Note 1 to entry: This includes questions for locating staff or facilities, questions regarding opening times and registering procedures and questions about handling equipment such as printers or computer terminals.

Note 2 to entry: The question can be delivered personally or by means of telephone, regular mail, fax or electronic media (via email, the *library website* (3.46) or other networked communication mechanisms).

Note 3 to entry: For reference questions, see 3.76.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.13]

3.40
input
contribution of resources in support of a libraryEXAMPLE   Examples of resources are funding, staff, collections, space, equipment.

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.28, modified — Examples in the definition has been formatted separately for clarity.]

3.41
interlibrary loan
loan of a document in its physical form or delivery of a document, or part of it, in copied form, from one library to another which is not under the same administration

Note 1 to entry: Mediated transmission of electronic documents is counted as *electronic document delivery* (3.26).

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.16, modified — Note 2 to entry has been omitted.]

3.42
interview
oral questioning technique which results in a transfer of information from the interviewee to an interviewer or researcher

Note 1 to entry: This technique obtains direct reactions to questions, in contrast to written questionnaires or *self-assessment* (3.80) [*self-recording* (3.81)].

Note 2 to entry: Interviews can be subdivided according to the number of interviewees into one-to-one interviews and group interviews.

Note 3 to entry: Interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured.

Note 4 to entry: Where semi-structured or unstructured interviews are used with a group of respondents, these are usually described as focus groups or group discussions.

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.30]

3.43
library collection
documents provided by a library for its users

Note 1 to entry: Comprises information resources held locally and remote resources for which access rights have been acquired.

Note 2 to entry: Access rights can be acquired by the library itself, by a consortium and/or through external funding.

Note 3 to entry: Acquisition is to be understood as deliberately selecting a document, securing access rights and including it in the *online catalogue* (3.61) or other databases of the library. Interlibrary lending and document delivery are excluded.

Note 4 to entry: Does not include links to Internet resources for which the library has not secured access rights by legal agreements (e.g. legal deposit right), license or other contractual and/or cooperative agreement. *Free Internet resources* (3.31) which have been catalogued by the library in its online catalogue or a database should be counted separately.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.28]

3.44
library employee
person who works for a library in return for payment

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.7.1]

3.45
library staff research publication
research publication by library staff in professional and academic subjects

Note 1 to entry: Includes publications in all formats, and presentations at conferences.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.5.4]

3.46
library website
unique domain on the Internet consisting of a collection of web pages that is published by a library to provide access to the library's services and resources

Note 1 to entry: The pages of a website are usually interconnected by the use of hypertext links.

Note 2 to entry: Excludes documents that fit the definitions of *electronic collection* (3.25) and *free Internet resources* (3.31) that may be linked from the library website.

Note 3 to entry: Excludes web services in the library's domain that are operated on behalf of other organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.18]

3.47
loan
direct lending or delivery transaction of a returnable item in non-electronic form (e.g. book), of an electronic document on a physical carrier (e.g. CD-ROM) or other device (e.g. eBook reader), or transmission of an electronic document to one user for a limited time period (e.g. eBook)

Note 1 to entry: Renewals are excluded but could be counted separately.

Note 2 to entry: Loans include registered loans within the library (on-site loans).

Note 3 to entry: Loans include copied documents supplied in place of original documents (including fax) and printouts of electronic documents made by library staff for the user.

Note 4 to entry: Loans of documents in physical form to distance users are included.

Note 5 to entry: Mediated electronic transmission of documents is counted as *electronic document delivery* (3.26) if their use is permitted for unlimited time. This includes transmissions to members of the *population to be served* (3.67).

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.19, modified — Note 6 to entry has been omitted.]

3.48
longitudinal study
two or more *surveys* (3.88) in which the same or a similar survey instrument is administered more than once to the same population, after a suitable time period has elapsed, to measure changes in patterns of usage, perceptions, attitudes, etc.

[SOURCE: ISO 16439:2014, 3.35]

3.49
mass conservation
conservation (3.10) measure of simultaneous treatment of a large number of documents by automated conservation techniques

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.12.6.35]

3.50
mission
statement approved by the authorities formulating the organization's *goals* (3.33) and its choices in services and products development

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 3.33]

3.51
mobile device
portable computing device, designed to be held and used in the hands, typically having a display screen with touch, pen and/or keyboard input and Internet connection

EXAMPLE   Mobile phone, eBook reader, tablet.