

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative
Subject: Post-nominal letters as Other Designation (Additional examples for RDA 9.6.1.9 and 9.19.1.7, and addition to Appendix E)

ALA thanks the BL for this proposal on the syntax for post-nominal letters associated with personal names. We are not convinced that the question of punctuation needs to be addressed by revising the instructions, rather than agreeing on an application decision. In addition, several commenters questioned the BL assertion that enclosing post-nominal letters in parentheses was “not appropriate”. However, if the JSC wishes to revise the instructions to accomplish this, we suggest a different approach.

ALA’s revision addresses several concerns:

1. *Not introducing the term “post-nominal” in Appendix E.*

ALA believes that the definition of “post-nominal letters” is broader than what is intended by this proposal. According to Wikipedia,

“Post-nominal letters, also called post-nominal initials, post-nominal titles, or designatory letters, are letters placed after the name of a person to indicate that the individual holds a position, educational degree, accreditation, office, military decoration, or honour, or is a member of a religious institute.”

The ALA revision suggests using the more specific terms from AACR2, “initials of an academic degree, initials denoting membership in an organization” in the revised instructions instead.

2. *Placement of new instructions for these types of letters.*

ALA sees a greater parallel between post-nominal letters for degrees and memberships with *Title of the Person* (RDA 9.4) than with *Other Designation Associated with the Person* (RDA 9.6). Our revision introduces expanded wording to the existing instruction in 9.4.1.9, *Other Term of Rank, Honour, or Office*.

In addition, ALA is reluctant to use different punctuation conventions for the same element based on what was recorded. Appendix E does not currently provide a divergent practice for a single element.

3. *No need to update Appendix E.*

If a new instruction for post-nominal letters is added to 9.4, no changes would be needed in Appendix E, which already prescribes the use of a comma.

Proposed revision – marked up copy

9.4 Title of the Person

CORE ELEMENT

Title of the person is a core element when it is a word or phrase indicative of royalty, nobility, or ecclesiastical rank or office, or a term of address for a person of religious vocation. Any other term indicative of rank, honour, or office is a core element when needed to distinguish a person from another person with the same name.

9.4.1 Basic Instructions on Recording Titles of Persons

9.4.1.1 Scope

Title of the person is a word or phrase indicative of royalty, nobility, or ecclesiastical rank or office, or a term of address for a person of religious vocation, ~~or another term indicative of rank, honour, or office.~~

Title of the person includes other terms indicative of rank, honour, or office, including initials representing an academic degree, or membership in an organization.

Title of the person excludes terms of address that simply indicate gender or marital status (e.g., Mr., Mrs.).

...

9.4.1.9 Other Term of Rank, Honour, or Office

~~Record other titles of the person indicative of rank, honour, or office if the terms appear with the name.~~ Record a term indicative of rank, honour or office, including initials representing an academic degree, or membership in an organization, if the terms appear with the name.

Record the term in the language in which it was conferred or in the language used in the country in which the person resides.

EXAMPLE

Captain

Reverend

Sir

Ph.D.

F.I.P.S

...

9.19 Constructing Access Points to Represent Persons

...

9.19.1.6 Other Term of Rank, Honour, or Office¹

Add a term indicative of rank, honour, or office, including initials representing an academic degree, or membership in an organization, if the term appears with the name (see **9.4.1.9**)

¹ Note that changes to 9.19.1.6 are also addressed in 6JSC/BL/20 that would affect everything after the 1st sentence.

if it is needed to distinguish one access point from another. Make this addition when the following elements are not available:

date of birth and/or death (see 9.19.1.3)

fuller form of name (see 9.19.1.4)

or

period of activity of the person and/or profession or occupation (see 9.19.1.5).

EXAMPLE

Wood, John, Captain

"Captain," a term indicative of rank, added to distinguish the authorized access point from another

Optional Addition

Add a term indicative of rank, honour, or office even if there is no need to distinguish between access points.

EXAMPLE

Appleby, Robert, Sir

"Sir," a term of honour for a knight, added to help identify the person

Murphy, Kevin (Kevin Joseph), Ph.D.

Proposed revision – clean copy

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Future considerations

ALA agrees with BL that the JSC should consider changing the classification of “Saint” from *Other Designation Associated with the Person* to *Title of the Person*.