

**To:** Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA  
**From:** Alan Danskin, British Library Representative  
**Subject:** Change to Definition of 9.16.1.1 Profession or Occupation

## Intention

The intention of this proposal is to broaden the definition of Profession or Occupation, with the objective of enabling more flexible use of the element to distinguish persons with the same or similar names.

## Discussion

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines occupation as: "

A particular action or course of action in which a person is engaged, esp. habitually; a particular job or profession; a particular pursuit or activity".

*Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines occupation as:

- a) "an activity in which one engages : a way of passing the time;
- b) the principal business of one's life: a craft, trade, profession or other means of earning a living."

In RDA, Profession or Occupation is currently defined as: "profession or occupation in which a person works or has worked (9.16.1.1). However, as the preceding definitions illustrate, the notion of "occupation" need not imply work (in the sense of paid employment), but can include voluntary and leisure activities.

Many terms used for occupations in RDA authority records in LC/NAF do not describe paid employment, but nonetheless describe activities in which the person has been *occupied*, and which may identify them or serve to disambiguate them from others of the same name. For example, a person may be best known as an "Angler", without this ever having been their paid employment.

Note also, that RDA already refers to persons "engaged in" (rather than "working in") a profession or occupation. See 19.1.6, "add a term indicating the class of persons engaged in the profession or occupation of the person"

This terminology is also used for Field of Activity of the Person (9.15): "a field of endeavour, area of expertise, etc., in which a person is engaged or was engaged". This proposal recommends use of consistent wording for the definition of "Profession or Occupation".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> JSC may wish to suggest to the FRBR Review Group that a similar change be made to FRAD 4.1

## Changes to RDA instructions:

1)

### **9.16.1.1 Scope**

Change from:

Profession or occupation is a profession or occupation in which a person works or has worked.

To:

Profession or occupation is a profession or occupation in which a person **is engaged or was engaged.**

2)

### **9.16.1.3 Recording Professions or Occupations**

Change from:

Record the profession or occupation in which the person works or has worked [...]

To:

Record the profession or occupation in which the person **is engaged or was engaged [...]**

3)

### **Glossary**

Change from:

Profession or Occupation      A profession or occupation in which a person works or has worked

To:

Profession or Occupation      A profession or occupation in which a person **is engaged or was engaged**

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### **9.16.1.1 Scope**

Profession or occupation is a profession or occupation in which a person is engaged or was engaged.

### **9.16.1.3 Recording Professions or Occupations**

Record the profession or occupation in which the person is engaged or was engaged [...]

## **Glossary**

Profession or Occupation      A profession or occupation in which a person is engaged or was engaged