

Glossary of Terms

Retrospective Conversion (ReCON)

25 key terms, for screen display and quick revision

ALA Glossary of Library & Information Science

Authoritative reference of the American Library Association; source of a standard exam definition of ReCON

Audit (data audit)

Systematic examination of source data before migration to identify quality issues

Automation (library automation)

Use of computer systems to perform library operations such as cataloguing, circulation, and searching

Backlog

Accumulated old records awaiting processing or conversion (e.g., card entries not yet digitized)

Bibliographic record

A structured description of a library item: author, title, edition, publisher, subject, etc.

Card catalogue

Traditional manual catalogue consisting of index cards; the “non-machine-readable” source for ReCON

Cataloguer

Library professional who creates and maintains catalogue records

Crosswalk

A mapping that converts records from one metadata format to another (e.g., MARC ↔ XML)

Current cataloguing

Day-to-day creation of machine-readable records for newly arriving materials (contrast: ReCON)

Data clean-up

Resolving errors and inconsistencies in source data identified during the audit

Data degradation

Natural decline in data quality and reliability over time, making it unreliable

Data governance

Policies and processes for tracking and reporting data quality, ensuring integrity

Data integrity

Accuracy, consistency, and trustworthiness of data throughout its life cycle

Data migration

Moving data from one system to another, involving a change in storage, database, or application

Harrod's Librarian's Glossary

Standard reference work; source of the second exam definition of ReCON

ILMS (Integrated Library Management System)

Software that manages all core library operations: catalogue, circulation, acquisitions, serials

MARC (MAchine-Readable Cataloguing)

The standard format for encoding bibliographic data so computers can store, process, and search it

MarcEdit

Free, widely used software tool for data migration and ReCON; performs batch editing, format transformation, record merging, and validation

Machine-readable form

Any format a computer can read, search, and process (e.g., MARC records, database entries)

Metadata

“Data about data”; structured information that describes resources

Parallel systems

Running old and new systems simultaneously (e.g., card catalogue + computer); ReCON eliminates the cost of this duplication

Patron

A library user

UBC (Universal Bibliographic Control)

International principle that every item be catalogued once, to standard, so records can be shared worldwide

Union list / union catalogue

A combined listing of the holdings of multiple libraries, showing which library holds which item

Validation (record validation)

Checking records for errors and compliance with cataloguing standards

HOW TO USE THIS GLOSSARY

Self-Quiz Before the Exam

1. Cover the definition column with your hand or a sheet of paper.
2. Read the term, and say the definition aloud in one sentence.
3. Any term you cannot explain in one sentence is a revision priority.
4. Repeat for all 25 terms, then re-test only the flagged ones.