



Statistics and Outcomes: Report on UK Applications and Awards for Archive Service Accreditation (June 2022-May 2023)

This report offers an overview of how Archive Service Accreditation is progressing across the UK since its launch in June 2013, with a particular focus on the period June 2022 to May 2023. It also outlines how applicant archive services have achieved against the standard both at module and at requirement level within the assessment framework.

The report provides the following information:

- 1) Applications for Archive Service Accreditation
 - Total number of applications
 - Number of 1st applications from non-accredited services
 - Number of 2nd applications from non-accredited services
- 2) Applications for the Review Stage of Archive Service Accreditation
- 3) Applications by type of archive service
- 4) Validation visits undertaken by assessing bodies
- 5) Archive services awarded Archive Service Accreditation
- 6) Removal of Archive Service Accreditation
- 7) Achievement at module level
- 8) Achievement at requirement level
- 9) Review Stage: Changes to overall assessments, modules and requirements
- 10) Review Stage: New Required and Improvement Actions
- 11) Provisional Status Review

The report is based on the total number of applications reviewed for Archive Service Accreditation by an Archive Service Accreditation Panel. Any applications whose review was deferred by a Panel, are included in Sections 1-3 of the report only (Applications for Archive Service Accreditation and type of applicant archive services), as these applications do not have a confirmed outcome or assessment.

1) Number of applications for Archive Service Accreditation reviewed by Archive Service Accreditation Panels (seven years)

Total number of applications

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total							
England	24	52	30	15	11	17	20
Northern Ireland	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
Wales	4	4	0	0	0	3	5
Total	29	58	31	17	11	21	29

First time applications from non-accredited archive services

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total 1st applications							
England	24	52	30	12	5	6	4
Northern Ireland	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	0	0	1	2	0	1	0
Wales	4	4	0	0	0	0	2
Total	29	58	31	14	5	7	6

Second time applications from accredited archive services

Total 2nd applications				2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
England	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	6	11	16
Northern Ireland	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0
Scotland	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	4
Wales	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	3	3
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	6	14	23

Since the launch of Archive Service Accreditation in June 2013, 244 archive services have completed an application for Archive Service Accreditation across the UK. This figure includes archive services who may have made a first unsuccessful application but who were subsequently accredited. Of the 244 applicants, 198 were making an application for an initial award and 46 were accredited archive services making a second application to retain accredited status after the initial six-year award.

The number of new applications has continued to drop since the peak of the initial rollout in 2017/2018 as those archive services identified as priority applicant groups in England and Wales (Places of Deposit) have largely applied for accreditation. It is also worth noting that 2019/2020 also saw the first cohort of accredited archive services make their second application for Archive Service Accreditation according to an agreed application schedule. The number of archive services making their second application 2022/2023 has again increased and this reflects the initial rollout of the programme as it gathered pace.

During 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 the programme was impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic and associated national restrictions. Following a decision by the Archive Service Accreditation Committee in May 2020, new applications were suspended. In November 2020 the Accreditation Committee agreed that individual home nation assessor bodies should address any new applications, or assess any suspended applications, according to their resources and any of the restrictions

in place. Since then, there has been a gradual resumption of pre-pandemic operations for both applicant services and assessor bodies.

Provision was agreed by the Archive Service Accreditation Committee, for those accredited archive services who were due to submit the review stage application or make their second application for accreditation to allow up to a year's extension to their existing award and again this is reflected in the application statistics.

2) Applications for the Review Stage of Archive Service Accreditation

The Review Stage is a 'check in' for archive services three years after the initial award of accreditation. Archive services report to their home nation assessor bodies on any changes since the award of Accreditation, for example changes in resourcing, structure, premises or new or revised policies and plans surrounding collections and access. Review Stage applications are made within an agreed timescale with the assessor body.

Review Stage applications							
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
England	7	9	11	19	22	28	26
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	0	2	3	0	1	0	2
Wales	0	4	1	4	1	2	0
Total	7	15	15	23	24	30	28

As noted above there has been some delay in Review Stage applications due to the COVID 19 pandemic and associated pressure on archive services and home nation assessor bodies but despite this the number and pattern of Review Stage applications continue to reflect the trend of initial rollout of the programme.

3) Applications by type of archive service

Archive Service Accreditation uses [scalability](#) to identify the types of archive service applying for accreditation and to outline the expectations for different types and sizes of archive service. We share the breakdown of types of archive services according to that scalability here. These include first time applications and second time applications from accredited archive services

Application by type of archive service

	Total	2013-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
England										
Local Authority Type 1	6	0	0	1	3	0	2	0	1	1
Local Authority Type 2	87	11	9	13	21	23	5	5	8	7
Other Public Sector Type 1	5	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0
Other Public Sector Type 2	45	4	2	7	20	2	6	4	5	7
Private and third sector Type 1	4	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 2	7	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	3
Private and third sector Type 3	18	3	1	1	6	3	2	2	0	1
National		1							1	0

	Total	2013-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Northern Ireland										
Local Authority Type 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Authority Type 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Public Sector Type 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Public Sector Type 2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

Scotland	Total	2013-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Local Authority Type 1	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Local Authority Type 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Other Public Sector Type 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Public Sector Type 2	5	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
Private and third sector Type 1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

Wales	Total	2013-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Local Authority Type 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Authority Type 2	9	2	2	2	3	0	0	0	1	2
Other Public Sector Type 1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Other Public Sector Type 2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Private and third sector Type 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Private and third sector Type 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	4

In 2022/2023 applications were dominated by accredited archive services making their second application for accreditation in comparison to those making an initial application – twenty-three out of twenty-nine archive services. Almost all these services belonged to the group *Local Authority Type 2 and Public Sector Type 2* and reflects the initial rollout of accreditation where application cohorts were dominated by *Local Authority Type 2* (which applies to the majority of Places of Deposit).

In terms of new or first-time applications for accreditation, during 2022/2023 applications were received from local authority services, private and third sector and other public sector archives.

4) **Number of validation visits undertaken by home nation assessor bodies**

When assessing an application for Archive Service Accreditation, assessor bodies can also make a visit to the applicant archive service. This is an opportunity for the assessor to validate elements of the application, review any documentation not suitable to be submitted as part of the application, and also to view the site.

The home nation assessor bodies are:

- The National Archives (TNA) for England
- Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) for Northern Ireland
- National Records of Scotland (NRS) and Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) for Scotland
- The Welsh Government (WG) Culture & Sport division, for Wales

Onsite Validation visits for applications for Archive Service Accreditation from non- accredited archive services.

Validation visits	2013-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
England (TNA)	93%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	1	19 %	100%
Northern Ireland (PRONI)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	n/a	n/a	N/A
Scotland (NRS/SCA)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	N/A
Wales (Welsh Government)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	100%

Validation visits for second time accreditations 2022/2023

Validation visits	2022-2023
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England (TNA)	100%
Northern Ireland (PRONI)	N/A
Scotland (NRS/SCA)	75 %
Wales (Welsh Government)	66 %

These figures include both onsite and virtual validation visits (team meetings) although in reality virtual visits only took place in a small number of cases, for example where national restrictions still prevented on site visits or where the assessor had a good understanding of the onsite premises already.

In England, where the policy is to visit a minimum of 25% of applicant archive services at each round, The National Archives achieved 100 % visits by the assessment team to new applicant services. Similarly in Wales, the Welsh Government achieved 100% visits by the assessment team to new applicant services.

Validation visits for Review Stage applications for Archive Service Accreditation

Review Stage Validation visits	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023 Onsite visit	2022-2023 Virtual visit
England	25%	n/a	n/a	23 %	23 %
Northern Ireland	n/a	n/a	n/a	N/A	N/A
Scotland	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	50%
Wales	0%	n/a	n/a	N/A	N/A

Validation visits are most often made at Review Stage in cases where not all sites of an archive service were visited during the initial assessment for the award or where there has been significant change to premises. Here we see the increasing use of the virtual visit by assessor bodies at the Review Stage.

5) Number of archive services awarded accredited status

The Archive Service Accreditation Panel approves the award of Archive Service Accreditation. There are three potential outcomes:

- Accredited: The archive service has demonstrated that it meets the standard
- Provisionally Accredited: The archive service is close to meeting the requirements of the standard. Provisional Accreditation is awarded for up to two years so one or two significant areas of development can be addressed.
- Not Accredited: The archive service requires development in significant areas to meet the standard.

The Panel can advise deferment of an application if the archive service is undergoing a period of significant change, for example change in governance or change in service offer.

One application from an English archive service was deferred by the Panel during 2022/2023.

2022-2023	Full Accreditation	Provisional Accreditation	Not accredited
England	17	2	0
Northern Ireland	0	0	0
Scotland	4	0	0
Wales	4	0	1
Total	25	2	1

Total 1st accredited archive services	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
England	12	8	14	23	46	24	12	0	4	3
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

Scotland	1	2	2	1	2	0	2	0	1	0
Wales	1	2	3	3	4	0	0	0	0	1
Total	14	12	19	27	52	25	14	5	5	4

Total 2nd accredited archive services	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
England	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	6	11	16
Northern Ireland	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0
Scotland	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	4
Wales	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	3	3
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	6	14	23

During 2022/2023, twenty-five archive services were awarded full accreditation by the Archive Service Accreditation Panel and two archive services were awarded provisional accreditation. Of those services awarded full accreditation four were initial awards.

6) Removal of Archive Service Accreditation

The award of Archive Service Accreditation can be withdrawn from an accredited archive services under exception circumstances. These include:

- Where an archive service no longer meets the eligibility criteria
- Where the archive service no longer meets the standard
- Non-participation in routine reporting for Archive Service Accreditation
- Extraordinary removal of Archive Service Accreditation in by the Committee

Removal of accreditation	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
England	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Wales	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

7) Achievement at module level of Archive Service Accreditation

Each application receives an overall assessment for each of the three modules within the Accreditation standard, in addition to a detailed assessment against each requirement or sub-requirement. A 'Not Met' in any module makes Accreditation impossible to award.

June 2022 to May 2023	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Organisational Health	27	0	1
Collections	22	6	0
Stakeholders and their Experiences	27	1	0

Twenty-seven of the applicant archive services met the standard overall for Organisational Health and one applicant failed to meet this module overall.

Twenty-two of applicant archive services met the Collections module overall while six archive services were assessed as partially meeting this module. This is the module where applicant archive services performed least well this year.

Applicant archive services performed most strongly in the module Stakeholders and their Experiences. Twenty-seven of the applicant services met the overall standard here with one service assessed as partially meeting the standard here.

The table below illustrates those areas where applicant archive service performed strongly and less strongly against the standard since the launch of Archive Service Accreditation in 2013.

2013 to May 2023	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Organisational Health	210	21	1
Collections	181	27	8
Stakeholders and their Experiences	230	10	1

8) Achievement at requirement level of Archive Service Accreditation

Each application also receives a specific assessment against each requirement or sub-requirement of the standard. This allows a more in-depth analysis of how an archive service performs against each element of the standard.

a) Requirements for Module: Organisational Health

Organisational Health assesses those areas that underpin the long-term acquisition, preservation and accessibility of archive collections.

	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
1.1 Mission Statement	24	4	0
1.2 Governance	26	1	1
1.3 Forward Planning	27	0	0
1.4 Resources: Premises	19	9	0
1.5 Resources: Finance	27	1	0
1.6 Resources: Workforce	24	0	1

In this module 1.4 Premises continues to be the weakest area. Where archive services did not satisfy this requirement fully this was due to a lack of sufficient, secured space for storing collections, either analogue or digital, and in some cases a lack of appropriate staff or public space as well.

b) Requirements for Module: Collections

The Collections module examines an archive service's capability to develop, maintain information about and care for its collections.

	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
2.1 Collections Management	26	2	0
2.2.1 Collections Development Policy	25	2	0
2.2.2 Collections Development Plan	24	4	0
2.3.1 Collections Information Policy	23	5	0
2.3.2 Collections Information Plan	14	14	0
2.3.3 Collections Information Procedures	26	2	0
2.4.1 Collections Care Policy	21	7	0
2.4.2 Collections Care Plan	19	9	0
2.4.3 Collections Care Procedures	11	17	0
2.4.4 Disaster Recovery Plan and Procedures	23	5	0

In this module applicants performed most strongly in those requirements concerning policy, whilst performing least well overall against Collections Care Procedures (2.4.3). Here 61% of applicant services were assessed a partially meeting this requirement. This particularly highlights those cases where there are poor storage conditions but where archive services are successfully managing risk (2.4.3) and also those cases where there was a need to improve risk management around digital preservation but storage for analogue collections was well managed.

50% of applicant archive service were assessed as partially meeting requirement 2.3.2 Collections Information Planning reflecting large cataloguing backlogs and 61% of applicant archive services were also assessed as partially meeting the requirements for 2.4.3.

c) Requirements for Module: Stakeholders and their Experiences

This module checks an archive service's ability to provide and develop access to its collections, in response to its community's needs.

	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
3.1 Access Policy	26	2	0
3.2.1 Understanding and Analysing Audiences	25	3	0
3.2.2 Planning for Access	24	4	0
3.3.1 Information on Access	25	3	0
3.3.2 Procedures for user access	26	2	0
3.3.3 A variety of means of access	27	1	0

Archive services continue to perform most strongly in this module overall and in particular against requirements 3.1 Access Policy and 3.3.3 A variety of means of access is available. Applicant archive services tended to perform slightly less well against requirement 3.3.2 Planning for access and engagement.

9) Review Stage

As part of the Review Stage application, accredited archive services report any changes to their archive services, for example in resourcing, restructuring, forward planning, and any revised policies. This means the original assessment against each requirement can potentially change.

The tables below show where changes were made to the original assessment at the Review Stage.

Changes to overall assessment

2022 to 2023

Met to provisional	Provisional to met	Provisional to not met	Met to not met
0	1	0	0

Twenty-eight archive services submitted a Review stage application satisfactorily and all of these archive services retained their accredited status, including four archive services who continued with provisional status. The number of archive services that have come through the three-year review stage with provisional status has increased partly due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the associated restrictions which impacted adversely on the archive service's capacity to deliver the necessary improvements to enable a move to full accreditation.

However, one archive service successfully moved from provisional status to full accreditation at the Review Stage assessment during 2022 to 2023.

Module level

2022-2023

	Organisational Health	Collections	Stakeholder and their Experiences
Met to partially met	3	2	0
Partially met to met	0	4	0
Partially met to not met	0	0	0

There were eight changes of assessment at module level across Organisational Health and Collections and Stakeholders and their Experiences. Here four archive services moved from partially to fully meeting the Collections Module overall, whereas two services moved from fully meeting to partially meeting the same module. Three archive services moved from fully meeting to partially meeting the Stakeholders and their Experiences module overall.

Requirement level

2022-2023

Requirement	Met to partially met	Partially met to met
1.1	0	0
1.2	0	0
1.3	1	4
1.4	3	4
1.5	1	0
1.6	1	1

2.2.2	1	4
2.3.1	1	1
2.3.2	2	4
2.3.3	1	0
2.4.1	2	2
2.4.2	0	6
2.4.3	0	7
2.4.4	1	6
3.2.1	0	0
3.2.2	0	3
3.3.1	2	0
3.3.2	0	4
3.3.3	1	0

Changes in assessment from partially met to met were spread across requirements for all three modules with most changes noted for requirements 2.4.2, 2.4.3 and reflect progress in theses respective areas since the initial award of accreditation.

Changes in assessment from met to partially met were likewise spread across requirements for all three modules with most changes noted for requirement 1.4.

10) New Improvement and Required Actions at Review Stage 2021 to 2022

In some cases, accredited archive services are given additional improvement and required actions at Review Stage by the assessor. These tend to be much fewer than at the full application stage.

Requirement	Improvement Action	Required Action
1.1	0	0
1.2	0	0
1.3	1	2
1.4	3	1
1.5	1	0
1.6	0	1
2	0	0
2.1	0	1
2.2	0	1
2.2.1	0	0
2.2.2	0	0
2.3	0	0
2.3.1	1	0
2.3.2	0	0
2.3.3	0	0
2.4	0	1
2.4.1	0	0
2.4.2	0	1
2.4.3	1	1
2.4.4	1	2
3.1	0	1
3.2	0	0
3.2.1	0	0

3.2.2	1	0
3.3.1	0	0
3.3.2	0	0
3.3.3	0	0

New required and improvement actions are distributed across the whole standard for the year 2022/2023.

11) Provisional Status Reviews

Archive services may be awarded provisional accreditation for up to two years either following an assessment for a full application for accreditation or at review stage if it is felt that there is a particular area for improvement before full accreditation. Archive services are asked to report against particular actions as part of the review of their provisional status. The outcome may be a move to full accreditation, retain provisional status until review stage or removal of accreditation.

2022 to 2023

	Total	Provisional to Full	Provisional Retained	Accreditation removed
England	1	1	0	0
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
Scotland	0	0	0	0
Wales	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	0	0

During 2022/2023 one archive service that was initially awarded provisional status successfully moved to full accreditation