Archive Service Accreditation Committee Annual Meeting 24 April 2024 Minutes

Attendees Geoff Pick (GP), Sarah Aitchison (SA), Charlotte Berry (ChB for point 1 only), Caroline Brown (CB), Teresa Doherty (TD), Mary Ellis (ME), Claire Harrington (CH), Jonathan Ladd (JL) (in place of Tina Morton) Gillian Mapstone (GM) (for NRS) Karen Sampson (KS), Catherine Taylor (CT), Joanna Terry (JT), Janice Tullock (JTu)

Apologies: Stephen Scarth, Tina Morton

Invited Observers and speakers: Isabel Wilson (IW) (Senior Manager, Museums (Development), Arts Council England)

Programme Team: Melinda Haunton (MH), Jane Shillaker (JS)

Minutes

1	**Welcome and apologies**
	It was noted that Charlotte Berry would be leaving NRS shortly and that Susan Corrigall would take up the post of Head of Records and Archives Engagement and as such would represent the NRS on the Accreditation Committee. The Committee formally noted the death of Jeanette Strickland, a serving member of the Accreditation Committee, and remembered the wealth of experience she brought to Accreditation.
2	**Review of Accreditation**
2.1	The Committee noted the report from the Review of Archive Service Accreditation and thanked The National Archives, The Welsh Government and the National Records of Scotland for the funding that had enabled this.
2.2	The Committee discussed the recommendations as noted in section 3 of the Executive Summary of the Review and refresh of the Archive Service Accreditation programme - phase 1 and agreed the following: 1. **Digital preservation**. The Committee agreed to separate out the risk management of analogue and digital collections in requirement 2.4.3. The Committee also agreed to include the DPC RAM in 2.4.3 as an alternative to NDSA levels of Digital Preservation for applicants to complete in this section.

There was some discussion around cyber security within Digital Preservation and how this should be addressed within the standard and with reference to scalability of the service.

2. **Environment and sustainability.** The Committee agreed to include an open question about the Environment and Sustainability that enabled applicants to demonstrate an awareness of these themes across the service and how the archive service was planning changes in this area. This would serve as a baseline for delivery. They asked for the inclusion of further guidance in the guidance document.

   The Committee recognised that this was an evolving area, currently in early stages of development and noted the need for best practice case studies as to what this means for an archive service and training for archive services to support this.

3. **Inclusion:** The Committee felt that it was important to strengthen EDI across the standard and that this should be scalable for different types of archive services. There was discussion around how this could best be implemented in Archive Service Accreditation with regard to the recommendations of the review. The Committee felt that it would be useful to develop a number of different draft proposals that strengthened EDI across the standard, the application form and guidance before formally agreeing any changes.

4. **Audiences:** The Committee felt more work needed to be done on this section based on the findings of the supporting reports.

5. **Programme Management**: The Committee noted that there were no serious issues raised around the programme and welcomed the positive feedback from those who had participated in the review,

2.3	**Next Steps:** **Digital Preservation:** Changes as agreed can be taken forward by TNA in liaison with DPC. **Environment and Sustainability:** Any changes should to be implemented at the highest level but this will need to be reviewed at a later date as guidance and good practice for different types of archive services emerge in this area.

	EDI: This area requires considerable work before any revisions to the Standard and its associated documentation can be published. It was agreed that a number of draft proposals would be developed before the annual Committee meeting next year. **Audiences:** This area needs further work to address the issues raised eg around language and repetition. It was noted that ARA was happy to work with partners in the development of training and guidance.
3	**Policy and precedent arising from 2023-24 Panels**
3.1	The Committee agreed that any service planning to close for over three months for positive development should notify the Archive Service Accreditation Committee of their intentions and submit a plan that outlined details for appropriate access to archive collections. Any such closure of an accredited archive service would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in terms of withdrawing accredited status. If an accredited archive service was closed for three or more years, then accreditation may be removed pending re-application. The Committee therefore agreed that the current wording on the removal/suspension of the award in the Withdrawal of Archive Service Accreditation document should be amended. The Committee agreed that the submission of inaccurate information as part of an application for accreditation, whether inadvertent or deliberate, can materially affect the award of Accreditation and a re-application for accredited status may be required. The Committee noted: - The first award to a digital-only service was made at the panel meeting on 8 Nov 2023. - There was some concern expressed by Panels that a number of applicant services had no pest monitoring in place - The impact of long-term decisions to store the majority of collections offsite on an archive service.
3.2	The Committee noted the case of an accredited archive service that had potentially become ineligible due to changes at the service.
3.3	The list of precedents was agreed by the Committee.

3.4	It was agreed that the Committee does not accept lobbying of individual committee members and that any matters regarding Archive Service Accreditation should be communicated to accreditation@nationalarchives.gov.uk for a Committee response.
4	**Minutes and matters arising**
4.1	The minutes of meeting May 2023 were agreed. MH confirmed she had contacted ARA's Cyber Security Group.
5	**Annual assessor meeting feedback**
5.1	The Committee noted the minutes from the Assessors' meeting, including their feedback on the review and their concern around ongoing issues regarding conservation expertise and practice in applicant services.
6	**Update from Museum Accreditation**
6.1	IW provided an update on Museums' Accreditation. The importance of maintaining close links between the two schemes was noted.
7	**Recruitment of new Committee members**
7.1	The Committee would review the procedure for recruiting new Committee members before the next external recruitment round for recruited members.
8	**Statistical return and reflection on 2023-24**
8.1	The Committee noted the annual statistical return and that applications had now returned to pre-pandemic levels.
8.2	SCA/NRS provided the following update: • The Accreditation review had noted limited capacity for assessment in Scotland. This situation has now been resolved with the onboarding of new assessors. • The review will be an opportunity to generate renewed interest in Archive Service Accreditation across archive services in Scotland and SCA and NRS will be looking at ways of doing this, including a survey to try to identify perceived obstacies • Once the Standard is updated SCA/NRS will be looking at training requirements eg in the areas of EDI, environmental sustainability, DPC RAM and would also welcome discussion about UK wide support in these areas.
8.3	The Committee thanked all peer reviewers who had participated in the assessment rounds 2023-24 as follows:

	Chris Ash, Helen Bartlett, Sue Breakell, Fiona Bourne, Claire Collins, Victoria Cranna, Mark Dorrington, Morag Fyfe, Vicky Holmes, Kate Jarman, Jemma Lee, Richard Lewis, Ruth MacLeod, Richard Meunier, Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan, Louise Ray, Catherine Ross, Katharine Short, Mari Takayanagi, Tamara Thornhill, Caroline Walter, Matti Watton, Cathy Williams, Richard Wragg
9	**Routine updates to programme documentation: to approve**
	The Committee approved the updates to the Programme's main guidance documents, including the updates that incorporated the Archives West Midlands Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging self-assessment toolkit.
10	**AOB**
	GP thanked all those who had attended the 10 year Celebratory Events for Archive Service Accreditation.
11	**Dates for next meetings of the Accreditation Panels are:** • 3 July 2024 • 7 November 2024