# Archive Service Accreditation

# Guidance for developing and completing an application

May 2025

# ARCHIVE SERVICE ACCREDITATION GUIDANCE

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**Introduction to this guidance**

Each requirement in the Archive Service Accreditation standard is accompanied by guidance, designed to help applicants to:
- Understand the significance of the requirement and the desired outcomes that come from its achievement
- Understand the expectations of the assessment process for that particular requirement, with some guidance on how to relate it to their particular archive type and scale
- Identify possible supporting evidence
- Find tools and resources that might assist with meeting the requirement

This guidance is organised into:
- General guidance for the requirement as a whole
- Guidance for specific questions (indicated by their 'Q' number) where suitable
- Scaled guidance relevant to specific archive types and scales – where this scaled guidance is relevant to a specific question it is attached to the question. Otherwise it follows the specific question guidance.
- Information and supporting documentation needed
- Where evidence may be found
- Questions to consider when formulating responses
- Tools and resources

## A. INTRODUCTION TO YOUR ARCHIVE SERVICE

This section of your application outlines your archive service to the Archive Service Accreditation assessors and the Panel, which will consider your application. Archive services are many different sizes and shapes and this section gathers information that will describe your service fully. The team may not know or visit your service and therefore it is important to provide this information as comprehensively as possible.

### A.1 Applicant details

### *Q1.  Identification - ARCHON Code*
This can be found on The National Archives website at
http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/find-an-archive.  Each archive service listed has the ARCHON code provided in its details. If your service does not have an ARCHON number please request one through the Discovery site at
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/discovery-help/find-an-archive/.

### *Q2.  Scalability*
The requirements for Archive Service Accreditation are adjusted according to the scale and mission of the service. You should examine the scalability table for the scheme to assess which of the 7 types of service your service best fits. The types are as follows:
- Local Authority Archive Service Type 1
- Local Authority Archive Service Type 2
- Other Public Sector Archive Service Type 1
- Other Public Sector Archive Service Type 2
- Private and Third Sector Archive Service Type 1
- Private and Third Sector Archive Service Type 2
- Private and Third Sector Archive Service Type 3

If you are unsure which scalability applies to your service please contact the assessing organisation in your home country.  The assignment of 'type' on this scalability table helps the assessment process as an indicator of the level at which your service should be operating; the expectations of different types of service will vary. Scaled guidance is provided here to aid you in determining what might be expected of your service.  It should be viewed as helping to inform your application and is just one factor that the assessor will take into consideration as part of the context within which your service operates.

### A.2 Service and Collection details

### *Q7. Advice from assessing body regarding size of collections not meeting eligibility criterion*

Please only provide the name of the assessing body you consulted and this will be crosschecked during Accreditation. Do not include any details of the advice.

### *Q8. Description of formats*

Archive Service Accreditation requires that you have the spaces, policies and procedures necessary to care for the collections that you hold. In order to assess this, the application requires that you provide details of the size and media types covered. In particular you are asked to provide a brief description of the formats, which could include:

- Size, such as number of items or collections
- The range, and possibly predominating types within that format e.g. all glass plate negatives for photographs
- Proportion of total collections that is comprised of that format.
- A very broad indication of date range

The table might look something like this:

| Format | Description (100 words each) |
|---|---|
| **Paper** | Most common format for our holdings (90%) – mostly 20$^{th}$ century. |
| **Parchment** | We hold a very small number of parchment documents which date from the 12$^{th}$ to 15$^{th}$ centuries. |
| **Photographs** | Photographs are held within collections or in the local studies collection, which date from the late C19th century to the current day. We do not have special photographic storage. |
| **Audio visual** | The Regional Film Archive holds film. |
| **Electronic media** | We hold 450GB on a secure server, representing 3 large collection and multiple small accessions. This includes both born-digital and digitised objects. There are a variety of digital object types including still images (JPEGS and TIFFS), moving image, Microsoft Office formats, plus less commonly used formats and unidentified formats. |
| **Maps** | We hold 340 rolled maps and have 10 plan chests mostly nineteenth century |

This need not be detailed but should provide an overview of the holdings so that the assessor and Panel can understand the general profile of the media within your collections.

### Q9. How services are provided

To aid assessment, the application asks that you indicate how certain services are provided. It asks that you indicate the delivery method of the service choosing from:

- Provided by archive service
- Provided elsewhere in the governing body
- Provided by outside organisation/partnership
- Not provided
- Planned within 5 years

Your table might look something like this:

| Service | Delivery Method | Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Archive services** | Provided by archive service | |
| **Records Management** | Provided elsewhere in the governing body | Provided by the records management department, which is part of the corporate governance division. |
| **Corporate lead on Freedom of Information** | Not provided | Not applicable |
| **Corporate lead on Data Protection** | Provided elsewhere in the governing body | Provided by the corporate governance division |
| **Electronic Records Management** | Planned within 5 years | A system has been procured and is in implementation. Please see our plan, reference 2. |

This question aims to build an overview of the services provided and is not necessarily comprehensive. Please add any services you provide which are not listed.

### Q10. Details of Public Usage

The application also requires details of access to and use of your collections. Archive service statistics and financial information should be provided for the same year throughout and this should be the last full financial year. Section 1 asks about the basis of your financial year.

The information required matches the requirements of CIPFA for local authority archive services but is also vital information for any service assessing its own usage.

If possible you should provide figures just for the use of the archive service and indicate this in the table.  However, if this is not possible (e.g. the archive figures are

subsumed within those of a library, museum or heritage attraction) please provide those figures and indicate in the Table that the figures are not just for the archive service.

### Q11.Access and engagement usage not covered by public usage

Other use is defined as use for and with anyone not included in the public use listed above. If you are unable to split out 'other 'usage from 'public' usage, please include all usage in Q10 and leave this table blank where relevant. Archive service statistics and financial information should be provided for the same year throughout and this should be the last full financial year. Section 1 asks about the basis of your financial year.

The following is guidance for each of the figures required:

|   | Use of resources | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Total number of visitors of all kinds to site in the last year | |
| 2 | Of visitors included above, how many were using the archival resources for their own study? | Count readers only once a day; exclude visiting groups, guided tours which belong in question 5 |
| 3 | Number of items produced in the last year | Calculate according to the method usually employed by the service (unit of production whatever size); include only archival documents. Please indicate the method of calculation used. |
| 4 | Number of appearances in exhibitions in the last year | Include all sizes of displays/exhibition and all appearances new or repeat |
| 5 | Number of learning events held in-house in the last year | Include all events held on own premises and branch offices, including visiting groups and guided tours |
| 6 | Number of learning events held outside in the last year | Include events held at libraries, town centres, museums, fairs etc. |
| 7 | Total attendance at learning events in the last year | Total attendance at events noted under 5&6 |
| 8 | Enquiries received by post, email and telephone in the last year | On or related to documentary holdings, requiring an answer and originating outside the archive service's parent body. |
| 9 | Estimated number of visits to the network resources (website) in the last year | A visit is defined as a session of activity/series of one or more page impressions, served to one user, to |

| | | the archive website. A unique visitor is determined by the IP address or cookie. The session is deemed to end when there is a lengthy gap of usage between successive page impressions for that user. An example of a lengthy gap would be a gap of at least 30 minutes. Count one visit per visitor session. Visits to 'data aggregators' such as Discovery/Archives Hub should be excluded. |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | Estimated number of page impressions and user visits to office's online research resources hosted by commercial providers in the last year | This question will not apply to internal figures |
| 11 | Estimated number of page impressions and user visits to the archive service's online catalogues in the last year | |
| 12 | Number of times moving image material contributed to screenings | Includes broadcast and screening events |

### *A.3 Funding of the archive service*

*Q12. Indication of the total headline annual budget*
*Please use the figures for the last full financial year. If your service's budget is part of a larger budget and cannot be easily separated, please supply a separate note that lays out the indicative costs and income of the archive service.*

*Q13. Unusual closure or new service in the last complete financial year*
*This provides an opportunity to explain any significant factor that has affected the provision of services both to public and non-public users.*

**Existing award holders only**
This section closes with a table for use only by archive services which currently hold an award. All Accredited Archive Services are set a number of required and improvement actions to guide the service's future development. These are reported at interim review stage and may be completed at that point. Where actions are not already formally recognised as completed, progress should be reported. If circumstances have changed and the action is no longer relevant, please explain here.

**SECTION 1 Organisational Health**

This section looks at the strategic and operational context within which the collections are managed and made accessible. It aims to understand the structure and purpose of the parent body and the relationship of the archive service to these. It also examines whether there are sufficient resources and planning to support an effective archive service both currently and, in the years, to come.

Organisational health looks at:

- Mission and values – the strategic purpose and culture of the organisation and the archive service
- Governance and management structures – the legal basis of the organisation and the archive service, and how the latter is managed
- Forward planning – having a structured, informed and purposeful strategy for operations and development in forthcoming years
- Resources: spaces – having suitable, dedicated locations for managing and accessing collections of all types
- Resources: finance – having sufficient funds to operate the archive service
- Resources: workforce – having access to sufficient skills, knowledge and operational capacity

**1.1 Mission and Values**

**Significance**

A mission statement is important because it explicitly defines the rationale and intent of the service. It is the starting point for managing and developing the service as well as being the overall measure against which the activity of the service is gauged. Organisational values are important in understanding the approach and behaviours that are expected in delivering the service. In particular, this requirement considers how an organisation approaches issues of equality, diversity and inclusion in delivering its archive service.

This requirement is based on the following definitions:

Mission: The words 'purpose', 'vision' and 'mission' are applied variously and often interchangeably within strategic planning vocabulary. Collectively, these terms should describe, in the broadest expression, **why** a service or body exists and **what/where** it aspires to long term. Archive Service Accreditation has chosen to use the word 'mission' to encapsulate these terms (Museum Accreditation uses the term 'Statement of Purpose' to describe the same thing). For the objectives of Archive Service Accreditation, a 'mission statement' is defined as: '**A strategic statement (or series of connected statements) which defines the purpose and direction of the archive service, in relation to the governing body it services.**

**Values:** these may be articulated within that mission statement or separately and are defined as '**Principles or core beliefs that guide the actions of the archives service, in relation to the governing body it serves'**.

**Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)**: refers to addressing the impacts of inequality and exclusion which may come from discrimination around the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 also gives the duty to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and to foster good relations between them. Exclusion may also arise through factors such as socio-economic background, educational background, lack of digital access and geographic isolation. While some factors are consistent across the population, others are differently distributed across the UK, its regions, nations and communities. Individual archive services serve communities which have a different balance of these challenges, and approaches will take account of communities' needs and expectations.

You may also increasingly see the terms 'equity' and 'belonging' used in the context of EDI. PAS 1948:2023 explains the relationship between all these terms as follows:

| 1 | **Equality** | Principle | Equality of opportunity for all |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | **Equity** | Practice | Access of opportunity for all |

| 3 | **Diversity** | Fact | Seeing each other's differences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | **Inclusion** | Act | Accepting each other's differences |
| 5 | **Belonging** | Integrate | Feeling wanted and valued |

**Inclusive practice** encompasses the legal requirements around equality, and the recognition that a diversity of experiences, voices and understandings strengthens any organisation. *But it also goes further*, to remove barriers and actively to seek engagement with communities and views which have not previously been included. **For archive services**, this specifically comprises considering what is collected or not collected, and how it is described, as well as the people involved with the collections, whether as workforce or as audiences.

**What assessment is looking for**
A mission statement is not just a phrase. It should be a realistic and forward-looking definition of the service's purpose and aspirations. The assessment process will look at how the archive service works toward fulfilling both its mission and values and how the mission statement and any related statement of values explicitly and implicitly informs key policies and planning. Assessment will also look at how the mission and values are communicated to all stakeholders.

Archive Service Accreditation recognises that, in most cases, the archive service is some way removed from the main business of the organisation it serves. In these cases, the mission statement may be defined at different levels in the organisation and in more than one type of document (e.g. an overarching mission statement for the parent body and then a specific mission statement for the archive service). Archive Service Accreditation requires the connection of the archive service mission to the wider organisation and its documentation to be described clearly.

The approach of the archive service is likely to be informed by values articulated at an organisation-wide level, though these may additionally incorporate professional ethics and values at a service level. Archive Service Accreditation requires the connection of the archive service values to the wider organisation and its documentation to be described clearly.

**Q14-15 Mission Statement**

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local authority archive services:*
An archive service's mission may be expressed within different levels of documentation and at different points in an organisation e.g.:
- A statement drawn from the Council's cultural/information strategy (or equivalent) guiding the joint/managing archive service planning document e.g. in county-wide archive strategy

- A statement for the individual archive service supporting the joint/managing archive statement e.g. in local record office strategy
- Within the strategic objectives of a corporate business case
- As the public task statement of an archive or heritage service

*University archive services*
The mission statement will typically be located within the relevant committee terms of reference or perhaps in the terms of an endowment or bequest. Where the archive sits within a university library, it may be within the library's public task statement.

*Joint Services*
Again, there may be several layers of mission statement, at different levels and all these should be stated.

*Charities*
These are guided by a statement of purpose, which may or may not have been rewritten into a mission statement for use in planning documents.

*Companies*
Again, it is expected that there will be several layers of mission statement at different levels.

*Private and third sector archive services Type 1*
This may consist of a short statement with a brief description of the collection, the interest of the creators and of potential researchers. It may form part of a wider document, such as a single overarching archives policy.

### Q16 Statement of Values
If this is incorporated into the Mission Statement, then refer back to Q14. If the values of the archive service form part of parent organisation values, please explain here.

### Q17 Using the EDIB Self-Assessment Model
This question asks you to undertake a self-assessment using Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool which is accessible at https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/about-us/projects/the-equality-diversity-inclusion-and-belonging-self-assessment-tool-the-edib-sat. This tool is a rapid assessment maturity model allowing for scoring of actions against 5 levels (0-4) ranging from no or low awareness through to optimised activity across a range of areas that are covered within the three modules of Archive Service Accreditation. The answer may cross-reference other responses, for example Q28 Forward Plan, in demonstrating which areas of improvement are prioritised.

If your archive service has already undergone a structured self-assessment of your work in this area, you are welcome to upload alternative documentation and comment on this process instead. If you are not able to complete the self-assessment model, please comment.

Services will not be assessed on the level they achieve, but rather on demonstrating they undertook this exercise, have considered the findings, and identified improvement areas. It is likely that Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archive services will have undertaken some action as a minimum at organisational level to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. The parent bodies of archives services within the third sector and business are also likely to have addressed issues covered by the tool. It is recognised that there may be differences between the actual and potential levels achieved by small independent services compared to small archive services operating within larger institutions.

EDI touches on all three sections of the Accreditation standard and services will be expected to revisit this response and demonstrate their commitment to improvement in subsequent questions and supporting documents.

You may wish to upload a completed version of the EDIB SAT worksheet with your application. This is available online with the toolkit at https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/about-us/projects/the-equality-diversity-inclusion-and-belonging-self-assessment-tool-the-edib-sat.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Mission statement
Statement of values

**Where evidence may be found**
Cultural strategy
Public task statement
Business case or Forward plan
Articles of Association
Organisational Website
Inclusion Policy or equivalent (this might be variously referred titled using some or all of the terms inclusion, equality, equity, diversity and belonging).
Organisational documentation to meet public sector equality duty (PSED) regulations
Evidence of externally validated organisational development accreditation/awards – available on request where applicable

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Where and how in the organisation's strategic statements of purpose is the archive service's mission statement articulated?

- Does the archive service mission statement clearly link to the governing body's mission?
- Is the mission statement clear, realistic and appropriate to the archive service's size and purpose?
- Are any of our results in the EDIB SAT surprising?
- How does our activity demonstrate the archive service's commitment to delivering the organisational values set out in Q18?
- What areas/actions do we, as an archive service, have autonomy over to improve our scores, and which require wider organisational support?
- What areas are we prioritising for improvement and is this evidenced in our forward planning documentation?
- How does the EDIB tool fit with other EDI benchmarking that might be happening across our organisation?

**Tools and resources**

The National Archives:  *Raising the Profile of your Archive Service* - provides advice on why effective communications is important, understanding your audience and developing an appropriate message, how to communicate that message and evaluating the impact of the communications
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/effective-communications.pdf

Rebuilding Heritage, *What's the Point of You? Clarifying Your Vision and Mission* – a short useful introduction to how to create a useful and meaningful mission and vision. A linked case study supports this.
https://rebuildingheritage.org.uk/resource/whats-the-point-of-you-clarifying-mission/

ILFA *Mission Statements of Government Libraries worldwide* – brief advice on writing mission statements plus numerous examples for national libraries which whilst for major institutions do give ideas around developing statements
https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/government-libraries/publications/MissionStatementsAugust2011-2.doc

Archives & Records Association Code of Ethics https://www.archives.org.uk/ara-code-of-ethics

International Council on Archives Code of Ethics https://www.ica.org/resource/ica-code-of-ethics/

NCVO guidance https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/strategy-and-impact/strategy-and-business-planning/setting-the-direction-of-your-organisation/#values-how-you-will-work

The National Archives statement of values
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/jobs/vision-and-values/

UK Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy illustrates how EDI is presented within the context of wider organisational values
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2022-to-2025/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2022-to-2025-html#a-civil-service-that-values-and-invests-in-its-people

Archives West Midlands, *Equality, Diversity and Belonging Self-Assessment Toolkit* enables a quick appraisal of an organisation's current position with regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging across archive service functions. Elements of the SAT engage with many parts  of Archive Service Accreditation, and can support active planning  https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EDIB-SAT-Beta-version.pdf

*PAS 1948 - Diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace – Code of practice* This open access standard offers a more generic workplace assessment and toolkits within the appendices.  https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/insights-and-media/insights/brochures/pas-1948-diversity-equality-and-inclusion-in-the-workplace/

*Equality and Human Rights Commission Codes of Practice*
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/codes-practice

*The Public Sector Equality Duty guidance* (2011)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-for-public-authorities/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-for-public-authorities and House of Commons Library Briefing on *The Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Impact Assessments* https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06591/

Archives and Records Association *Embedding Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusive Practice in UK Archive Sector*. A series of seven online presentations and associated training resources introducing concepts and practical steps for services. https://www.archives.org.uk/embedding-eedi

The National Archives, Inclusion Hub https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/inclusion/ a range of resources and case studies to support inclusive practice across archives. It also provides links to relevant information on the Equality Act 2010 https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/inclusion/equality-and-diversity/

Archives & Records Association Diversity Allies page includes a downloadable list of external sources https://www.archives.org.uk/diversity-inclusion-allies and a series of blogs outline case studies and developing practice https://www.archives.org.uk/diversity-allies-blogs

Historic England *Inclusive Heritage Advice Hub* includes a range of practical advice with both a workforce and audience focus that might be transferable to archive services https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/training-skills/heritageskills-cpd/inclusion/.

South West Museums *Museum Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Roadmap* offers a basic approach that might support the needs of independent archive services or https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Road-Map-Brochure.pdf

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine *Decolonising Archives* presents an example of inclusive practice actions at a service level https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/library-archive-open-research-services/archives/decolonising-archives

Gloucestershire Archives *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy* is an example of an archive service level policy that builds on the policy of the wider organisation (in this instance the County Council) https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/policies/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-policy/

Investors in People - https://www.investorsinpeople.com/

Investing in Volunteers - https://investinginvolunteers.co.uk/

National Equality Standard https://www.nationalequalitystandard.com/

Advance HE Race Equality Charter https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/equality-charters/race-equality-charter

## 1.2 Governance and management structures

**Significance**
Governance is important because it influences how an archive service can operate. For example, an archive within a charity will have different expectations and restrictions on it to one in a business. Assessors need to understand the governance to understand the operating environment for the service and its authority to collect archives. Governance information also helps assessors to identify any material opportunities or risks for the service as a result of the governance and management structure.

**What assessment is looking for**
This requirement asks you to explain and provide relevant documentation for the governance and management arrangements for archive services. Accredited Archive Services should be clear regarding their relationship with their governing body. In many circumstances archive services are managed by partnerships or are part of much larger organisations with different priorities. An Accredited Archive Service will have clear governance arrangements in place and be able to describe how these arrangements work in practice.

There are no typical governance and management arrangements for an archive service, as services exist in organisations of many types. This requirement consequently asks for some data that is not applicable to all types of governance and management arrangements, and applicants do not need to provide all data requested unless appropriate.

### *Q20 Describing the legal status*
The archive service needs to either have its own legal status or be part of a larger entity with a clear legal status so that the service has the powers to undertake its business (e.g. entering into agreements to accept collections or agree copyright terms). If your service does not have a specific legal status but your parent body does, this is acceptable.  If the archive service is under the responsibility of a private individual or family simply state this on your application form.

### *Q24  Management arrangements*
For ease of assessment, management arrangements are divided into 4 groups. The applicant should decide which best describes their arrangements. Guidance on specific situations can be sought from home nations assessor bodies.

| No | Management arrangement | Example |
|----|------------------------|---------|
| 1 | The governing body manages the archive service and does not have a wider remit | Joint committee of partners e.g. Archives+ partnership |

| 2 | The governing body has set up a managing committee(s) to manage the archive service | Local government University |
| 3 | A legally separate managing organisation manages the archive service | Archive service itself is a charity e.g. The Working Class Movement Library Commercial archive without a wider purpose |
| 4 | The governing body has a wider remit | Local government (without a specific Committee) University (without a specific Committee) Business e.g. Unilever, Network Rail Charity with wider aims e.g. RNIB, Red Cross, Museum |
| 5 | Other | Private individual/family ownership |

### *Q25 Describe the management arrangements*

Applicants are asked to describe the management arrangements for their archive service, providing evidence of who has ultimate oversight of the archive service and on what basis they have this oversight. Answers should take notice of the following guidelines and provide suitable supporting evidence. The response should include the names of the relevant organisations or committees, where financial responsibilities lie, and reporting mechanisms.

**Management arrangement 1**
This arrangement might apply when a group of organisations provide a joint service that is not legally constituted separately. This management arrangement should be described and any agreements submitted as evidence of the arrangements.

**Management arrangement 2**
You should provide the name of your managing committee, describe its purpose, composition and outline the reporting arrangements between your managing committee(s) and the governing body. These may consist of a memorandum of understanding or a more formal agreement, which should be provided.

**Management arrangement 3**
You should provide the name of your legally separate managing committee and describe the management arrangements that are in place. Such arrangements may consist of:
- Memorandum and articles of association

- A deed of trust
- Other charitable constitution

**Management arrangement 4**
These arrangements can vary widely but might include:
- Supervision by a staff member without any committee/group oversight
- Local government portfolio or cabinet system

You should describe the management mechanism, providing evidence of these arrangements through job descriptions or portfolio descriptions and reporting structures.

**Management arrangement 5**
If none of the above categories fits the legal and management status of your archive service, please select category 5, Other, and explain the position in full.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
*Local authority archive services:*
Need not provide a copy of the current constitution unless services are being provided by another organisation (e.g. Trust, Community Interest Company). In these cases, a service level agreement or equivalent should be provided.

*Joint/shared local government services:*
Such services should provide details of their managing organisation e.g. Joint Committee.

*Private and third sector archive services Type 1*
These services should show that the ownership of the collection is clear and that responsibility for the archive is clearly defined, probably in a single document.

*Private and third sector archive services Type 2&3*
Here the archive should come under professional archival management, with a formal reporting line to a designated member of the governing body's management team.

***Q26 Supporting documentation needed***
Archive service current constitution/service level agreement
Organogram or flowchart, illustrating how the archive service management relates to governing body
Partnership agreement or Memorandum of Understanding
Remit of managing committee

***Q27 Major changes of governance***

Please note any expected or definite changes in legal status that will have material impact on the service. Do not include changes in line management unless this is connected with a change in legal status.

**Where evidence may be found**
Certificate of incorporation
Charity registration document
Founding minute of committee
Act of Parliament

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- What is the legal basis for the existence of your archive service?
- Does the constitution of the archive service's governing body have the correct legal arrangements to cover its activities?
- Is the management structure (form, composition, remit and responsibilities – both delegated and advisory) of the archive service and its relationship to the governing body clear and appropriate?
- Are there opportunities to report upwards and to escalate issues appropriately?

**Tools and resources**
The National Archives Strengthening Governance - advice on local authorities and devolved governance.
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/strengthening-governance/

AIM (Association of Independent Museums) Successful governance in independent museums – a useful introduction to governance for independent museums, which is also relevant to archive services - https://aim-museums.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Successful-Governance-for-Museums-2020-1.pdf

AIM (Association of Independent Museums) Hallmarks of Prospering Museums – indicators to assess the status of a museum including governance. The indicators are a useful reference for heritage organisations of many types. Includes a link to additional onsite resources from AIM.
https://aim-museums.co.uk/helping-organisations/aim-hallmarks/

ARA-Accreditation resilience indicator is a self-assessment tool to identify overall service resilience. Many elements relate to the service's position within its parent organisation(s) and can contribute to understanding key relationships:
https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

**1.3 Forward Planning**

**Significance**

The forward plan is concerned with execution and delivery.  It is the route by which the mission of the archive service is achieved through the practical management of the service. Forward planning is a useful exercise for a service of any size. It gives an opportunity to lay out the objectives you want your service to achieve and to plan what needs to be done to get there.

**What assessment is looking for**

There should be an explicit forward planning process, which clearly lays out the objectives and expected actions of the archive service across all aspects of its work, usually over the next two years at least.

The forward planning should be clearly informed by the service's mission and based on evidence e.g. using Preservation Assessment Surveys to inform conservation planning, audience research to inform development of services. The plan should be an 'active' document or set of documents which clearly drive the service's priorities and actions, and against which the service's activities are measured. The forward plan should inform the service's response to all the requirements of the Accreditation Standard i.e. Organisational Health, Collections and Stakeholders.

There should be evidence of at least an annual review of performance against the forward plan to show that the work of the service is informed by forward planning and to ensure the forward plan is regularly updated to reflect circumstances.

Where the forward planning for the archive service sits within a larger forward plan (e.g. in a library or museum) the objectives and actions specific to the archive service must be clearly identified in that larger plan.

Planning around environmental sustainability assesses how an archive service is approaching environmental sustainability within the operating context of the archive service. An archive service should demonstrate an awareness of issues around environmental sustainability and can demonstrate their approach to mitigation and adaption of environmental changes through positive change.

Archive Service Accreditation recognises that this is a developing area for many services and that the current approach will be dependent on the individual context of the archive service.  The archive service may already be delivering in this area or be in the early planning stages.

*Q28 Provide a forward plan*

At the point of assessment, the forward plan should cover the archive service's current and subsequent planning year. Detailed objectives and actions for the next

planning year may be at an early stage of development, but there should be a strategic framework in place. Make a plan within a timescale that works for your service. A forward plan does not need to be complicated and you will often already know the core elements of your service's work in the next few years.

A useful forward plan will be a living document, subject to on-going review and assessment. Part of this review is to assess and disseminate achievements and to learn from those elements that did not work. When writing your plan, use this as an opportunity to reflect on whether planning has been effective in the past, and what factors have caused plans to change or underachieve.

The archive service's forward plan should set out the objectives of the service and identify the actions needed to achieve those objectives, in order to deliver its mission. Plans should clearly observe service and organisational policy.

Plans are written in many forms and may be tiered from high level and long term to detailed and short term, e.g.

- Strategies (3-5 years)
- Business plans (annual)
- Project plans (time-bound pieces of work, which may vary in length from weeks to years)
- Divisional or departmental plans (may be annual, or longer)
- Individual work plans (usually tied to an organisation's annual performance review cycle or appraisal process)

Archive Service Accreditation is open to many types and sizes of organisation. There is therefore no standard template for writing a forward plan. Archive Service Accreditation recognises that plans will vary in length and presentation, according to the nature and context of each applicant organisation. For some services the forward plan will act as the only detailed planning document and will also provide evidence for sections 2 and 3 of the standard.

As a general guide, forward plans should reference, or include:

1. The archive service's mission statement (Requirement 1.1)
2. Archive Service Accreditation Standard
3. Review and evaluation of previous forward plan(s)
4. Analysis of the environment (internal and external) in which the archive service exists
5. Stakeholder consultation and an analysis of views
6. Strategic aims
7. Specific objectives beneath each strategic aim
8. Action plan(s)

9. Resource plan(s)
10. Date plan(s) will be reviewed
11. All applicants should show evidence of the approval of the key sections of the plan by a governing body or under appropriately evidenced delegated powers.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
*Private and third sector archive services Type 1*
There is a clear statement of how the archive fits into the organisation's activities as part of the general statement for the archive's mission and it is supported by a budget.

*Private and third sector archive services Type 2&3*
As well as a clear statement of how the archive fits into the organisation's activities, these archives should have a development plan that at least includes resource and action plans. These plans should be based upon an analysis of the requirements of the collection.

### Q29 Integrated or split forward plan
Where an archive service is part of a larger operation or lacks its own legal identity, e.g. part of a University Library or within a historic house, it may not have its own forward plan but rather be included in the wider organisation's or department's forward plan. Where this is the case, the role and development of the archive service should be clear and identifiable within the forward plan.

Sometimes the forward planning for the archive service can be split across several documents. Please identify and briefly describe the purpose of all relevant documents.

### Q30 How your forward plan has been developed
Explain the process, who was involved and any driving factors.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Forward plan(s) (current year, though past plan may be needed for explanation)

**Where evidence may be found**
Business plan/forward plan(s)
Strategy documents
Corporate/Divisional/Departmental Annual plan
Project plans

**Questions to consider when formulating responses overall**
- How can we develop a forward plan that has the support of key stakeholders and workforce?
- How does the forward plan relate to the mission statement and values?

- How can we develop a forward plan that is evidence-based and builds on use of self-assessment tools (such as Equality, Diversity and Belonging Rapid Assessment Tool)
- How do we communicate the forward plan to those who need to know about it or have to work with it?
- Have we reviewed progress from our previous forward plan?
- How can we best demonstrate that we have an effective forward plan?
- How do we ensure this remains relevant and supported by top management?
- How can we demonstrate the links between the forward plan of the archive service and the plan of the managing organisation?
- How do we reflect the resource requirements for delivering the plan?

**Questions to consider when formulating a response to Q34**
- Can the service demonstrate an awareness of environmental sustainability and how this will impact on areas affecting the delivery and development of the service? For example, example, by attending training around environmental sustainability, which may include Carbon Literacy.
- What would the archive service like to achieve in terms of their current and future approach regarding environmental sustainability within the context of your service?  This might be across one or more areas of service delivery, including collections management and access and engagement.  What are your priorities?
- Do you have any written plans or a written statement or policy?  This may be a separate document or included in another document or be an organisational wide policy.
- Have you undertaken any risk assessments regarding environmental predicted climate changes.  For example, heightened risk of water risk and have these been used to inform the development or delivery of the service? to inform on planning?
- How does the operation of the archive service impact on environment sustainability, for example the current carbon footprint of the service? Are you able to mitigate any negative impacts?
- Has the archive service considered the environmental impacts of digital activities, including digital preservation?
- How do environmental changes impact the operation and delivery of the archive service and what the service can do to mitigate these?
- Are you planning to implement any changes to improve the environmental sustainability of the archive service or to adapt the service to environmental changes? Changes might be small-scale or large-scale, initiated by the service itself or as part of a wider organisational initiative.

**Tools and resources**

South Western Museum Development Forward Planning Toolkit – a guide to forward planning for museums which is also relevant for archive services - https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/resources/forward-planning/

TNA Website – a variety of archive-specific guides to help with planning for your service - https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/forward-planning/

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/managing-performance/

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/research-reports/

Association of Independent Museums (AIM) *Successfully managing archives in museums* – a practical introductory guide to looking after archive collections in museums aimed at non-archivists https://aim-museums.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Successfully-Managing-Archives-in-Museums.pdf

Rebuilding Heritage, Business Planning in Uncertain Times (2021) – a recorded webinar to help with planning during uncertainty: https://rebuildingheritage.org.uk/resource/rebuilding-heritage-business-planning-in-uncertain-times/

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including how it is included in planning and strategy. Support to improve is provided via Level Up with DPC RAM, including use in forward planning. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

Archives West Midlands, *Equality, Diversity and Belonging Self-Assessment Toolkit* enables a quick appraisal of an organisation's current position with regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging across archive service functions and is the basis of Q19 in Section 1.1. https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EDIB-SAT-Beta-version.pdf

Archives & Records Association provides some useful environmental case studies https://www.archives.org.uk/environment-case-studies

The Arts Green Book gives advice on sustainable buildings - https://artsgreenbook.com/sustainablebuildings/

DPC Technology Watch Publications include exploring good practice with regard to digital sustainability https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/discover-good-practice/tech-watch-reports

The National Archives website: Environmental Sustainability https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/environmental-sustainability/

Archives Supporting Environmental Sustainability: You Tube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohRGIhTefjE&t=2680s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzfJrt98fyc&t=17s

## 1.4 Resources: spaces and storage

**Significance**

Adequate space to work is key to delivering effective collections care and meeting audience needs (Sections 2 and 3 of the Archive Service Accreditation standard). Examples of possible activities which require sufficient space and facilities include conservation and preservation, sorting and cataloguing large collections, digitisation, delivering group events, providing access to original material and group work for volunteers. This requirement is not just about physical space. It is important to ensure your service has sufficient capacity for digital collections both now and in the future.

**What assessment is looking for**

Assessment considers the stability, suitability and sufficiency of the accommodation for all relevant activities. The quality of buildings for collections storage and of digital repositories for preservation is covered in Section 2.4 Collections care and conservation.

Where an on-site service is offered, this should provide sufficient secure space for readers to consult original material, in line with the expected number of on-site users. Where on-site services are offered to groups, provision should include sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of group visits offered routinely and those that are included in the forward plan/audience development plan. This section therefore asks you to reflect on on-site visitor facilities, and whether these meet the needs and numbers of visitors.

Assessment asks how the service is planning to manage space where there is less than five years expansion capacity, and how future storage space will be guaranteed (e.g. through the type of lease).

The assessment also needs to understand the service's digital storage requirements to help assess how digital collections and other digital material (e.g. digitised material) are managed. Where third party provision of digital storage is used, assessment seeks to understand how the risks of such an arrangement are managed.

When off-site stores are used, assessment needs to understand how these are managed and what provision there is for appropriate collections management activity to be undertaken on the outstored collections, whether on-site or at the outstore. Section 2.4 asks for information on the management of risks to collections being transferred from off-site stores. Section 3.3 asks about stakeholder access to collection held off-site.

*Q35 Size of analogue holdings*

This question informs the assessment process about how large your collections are and the availability of vacant storage in the context of overall collection size.
The preferred unit of measurement for physical archive storage and collections is cubic metres. If you have this information in linear metres only, please divide this figure by 12 to reach a cubic metre result. You can multiply cubic feet by 0.028 to reach cubic metres. The same unit of measurement should be used throughout the application. To calculate your capacity for expansion, first estimate the average annual quantity of accessions over the last 5 years (A). Measure the amount of empty shelving and add it to a calculation of the space, which could be created through deaccessioning (B). Divide this figure B by the average annual quantity of accessions (A) to reach the estimated expansion time in years (C). Please provide details of the amount of deaccessioning and free space included and your plans for carrying out the deaccessioning.

Please include ALL buildings used by your archive service for collections storage or access. Buildings used for access on an infrequent basis (e.g. location of adult education classes, exhibitions) should not be included.

Storage capacity for born digital records and digital materials is covered in this section. It is measured in gigabytes (GB) or terabytes (TB) or Petabytes (PB) depending on which is most suitable for the size of your digital holdings. Please include digitised material as well as born digital material in this figure.

Specialist storage refers to storage for specific media e.g. analogue audio-visual collections or photographs.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local authority archive services:*
The figures required for the Building and Storage Headlines section can be found in your CIPFA return.

### *Q36 Expansion capacity*
If you have under five years expansion capacity, explain the key risks your service faces with regard to storage, how these are managed and what long-term solutions are being developed.

### *Q38-Q42 Storage for born-digital or digitised collections*
The purpose of these questions is to provide a brief overview of the arrangements for digital records to be stored, including delivery, infrastructure and capacity. They are not asking for a description of digital preservation processes. Section 2.4 covers preservation actions and risk management for digital preservation.

These questions cover all approaches to providing storage for digital preservation including provision by third-party providers and/or involvement in collaborative solutions e.g. regional/national digital preservation projects.

### Q46 Any other significant factors relating to accommodation

This question is to identify any other potential future changes that could have a material impact on the service that have not been covered elsewhere in this section e.g. new neighbours that could bring an increased risk to collections, proposals sharing space with additional services in the future.

### Supporting documentation needed

Tenancy agreements
Agreements with third party digital storage providers

### Where evidence may be found

Collections management plans
Forward plans
CIPFA Return for Archive Services (local government)

### Questions to consider when formulating responses

- Is the tenure of our buildings secure? How can we evidence this?
- Have we accounted for all buildings mentioned?
- How do we ensure we have sufficient storage for our digital collections?
- Do we have effective management of risks around the provision of digital storage by third parties?
- Do we have adequate expansion capacity for each type of storage?
- Are arrangements for future expansion adequate? If not, what are the plans?
- What percentage of the collections is housed at each site?
- Is the building adequate for visitor and workforce numbers and needs?

### Tools and resources

The National Archives, *Assessing and Managing the risks of split-site archive services* – a guide to analysing the impact of split-sites including impact on different stakeholders, how to assess sites, how to assess and manage the subsequent risks to collections plus case studies for different types of archive services.
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/split-site-services.pdf

Digital preservation guidance from The National Archives - a whole range of advice on a wide range of topics including the DPC Digital Preservation Handbook, digitisation, tools including PRONOM and DROID, file formats and redaction as well as The National Archives' own research.
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/manage-information/preserving-digital-records/

The National Archives, *Planning a new record repository*. – a very brief overview to help a service start thinking with guidance on a presentation of the case for new accommodation to obtain funding; choice of site; preparation of brief for architect; consideration of architects' feasibility study, outline plans and preliminary estimates; preparation and acceptance of architect's detailed plans and estimates. Published in 2004 it quotes out-dated standards, but the advice is still fundamentally sound. http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/memo2.pdf

Digital Preservation Coalition – a wide range of expert guidance and tools from a leading digital preservation advocate. The site includes The Digital Preservation Handbook, Technology watch reports, preserving different types of content, file formats, advocating for digital preservation and training events. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres

**Precedents**
Services which did not plan effectively to manage a lack of expansion capacity against expected volumes of acquisition had not been Accredited. It was recognised that lack of space for adding to collections was a frequent challenge for archive services, and that whose which planned effectively and had mitigation in action would be Accreditable.

When insufficient information on risk management for collections in commercial outstorage arrangements was provided, it could be a reason for applications to be unsuccessful. The need for ongoing communication from commercial outstore providers on any changes to storage arrangements and/or risk profile was underlined and should be part of contractual arrangements.

## 1.5 Resources: finance

**Significance**

It is essential that archive services have the financial stability to deliver their stated mission/purpose and to ensure the archives are secure and accessible for the long term. Archive Service Accreditation recognises that different organisational types will manage their finances in different ways but requires that all services provide outline financial information to enable an assessment of financial stability to be made. Archive services are particularly encouraged, where appropriate, to diversify their income streams and to seek out new sources of funding in order to improve financial security.

**What assessment is looking for**

This requirement seeks to assess the financial stability and capabilities of the archive service. It examines how the service is financed and the adequacy and security of that funding. This includes understanding any major changes (positive or negative) to that funding over the next two years and how the service is planning to deal with these changes. As digital preservation emerges as a central activity for many archive services, assessment also explores how this is funded, and whether the financing is from core budgets or another source.

*Q49 Evidencing financial basis for two full financial cycles*

If the archive service has been in existence for less than 2 years then evidence of a sound financial basis for the governing body, where that body has been in existence for longer than 2 years either in its current governance structure or in a former governance structure, should be submitted. If the archive service has been in existence for longer than 2 years, but the governing body has not, then please submit evidence from the previous governing body.

*Q50 Copies of two years financial basis*

Organisations with a legally separate managing committee must submit headline accounts from that organisation in addition to the governing body. This includes arrangements where an archive service has been contracted by another organisation to provide the service.

*Q52 Budgets for sustainable digital preservation*

This question focuses on the funding available for digital preservation. It includes using third-party digital preservation providers and/or participation in collaborative solutions.

*Q53 Breakdown of income sources*

Archive services are asked to show the % of funding from each funding stream. It may be difficult to provide accurate figures in which case an approximate breakdown is acceptable.

### Q55 Anticipated changes to core funding

Please provide details of possible or definite changes in your service's core funding over the next two years that would materially alter the service's activities e.g. anticipated budget cuts, emergence of a new funding partner, increase in commercial activity.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Private and third sector archive services type 1 & 2*
The archive service should demonstrate a formal commitment of resources through the employment of staff and/or availability of funds for regular purchases of equipment and supplies.

*Private and third sector archive services type 3*
The archive service should demonstrate a formal commitment of resources through the employment of staff and availability of funds for regular purchases of equipment and supplies. In addition, there should be an identifiable budget that covers provision of the archive service.

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
2 years relevant actual accounts/estimated summary of archive service expenditure
An overview of the sources of funding

**Where evidence may be found**
Estimated summary of archive service expenditure (2 years)
Year-end budget statements (2 years)
Annual final accounts (2 years)
Fundraising strategy

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- What is the role played by archive service managers in financial decision-making?
- Are the financial resources available to the archive service sufficient to deliver their plans and responsibilities?
- Are all elements of budget for the archive service managed together – what is the impact if elements such as digital preservation are funded through other streams?
- Is the archive service financially stable? Are arrangements in place to deal with any problems?
- Is the archive service diversifying its income streams and being innovative in seeking out new sources of funding?
- Do we anticipate any substantial changes to the value or type of funding?

**Tools and resources**

TNA Website – *Finding Funding* – a substantial resource providing advice and access to training on all areas of funding including identifying different sources, fundraising, raising commercial income and dedicated grant programmes including the National Lottery.
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-funding/

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) *Funding and Income* – whilst aimed at charities this provides a basic introduction to understanding funding and income with links to useful tools. On the same section of the NCVO website is information on fundraising, grants, delivering public services, trading and social enterprises and social investment
https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/funding-income/#/

Directory of Social Change runs a course on finance for non-finance managers numerous times a year
https://www.dsc.org.uk/category/finance-law/finance/

'*Funding the Archive Sector'* Research Report September 2012. The National Archives and the International Centre for Archives and Records Management Research and User Studies (ICARUS), University College London – this study looked at how UK archive services are funded, what areas of funding are underdeveloped and what training and advice The National Archives provide to increase use of these sources by archive services.
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/funding-the-archive-sector.pdf

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including how it is financed. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

## 1.6 Resources: workforce

### Significance

Looking after archival collections is a skilled process. It requires a workforce that has the appropriate skills and is large enough to undertake all the activities required of a professional archive service. The eligibility criteria for Archive Service Accreditation state:

> *Competent staff must manage your archive service[1], with access to professional archival expertise appropriate to the type and nature of the organisation and collection.*

Furthermore, the skills and capacities required of the service will change as good practice and standards develop, new types of collection appear and new audiences and services become a possibility. As a good employer an archive service should ensure that staff are encouraged to develop skills, reflect on their practice and strive for the best possible standards.

Please note the definition of workforce includes both volunteers and paid staff. Archive Service Accreditation supports the Archives and Records Association policy on volunteering in archives (2011) which states:

> *The ARA believes that archive services require the range of skills and experience of qualified, employed, staff directly accountable to their governing body who can advise that body and lead on such matters as legal compliance, digital preservation, physical storage and security, conservation, cataloguing and access. It does not consider that volunteers can or should be used to replace appropriately experienced professional or para-professional staff as the principal stewards of the United Kingdom and Ireland's unique documentary heritage.*

### What assessment is looking for

Assessment considers whether the workforce is appropriate to the archive service mission and governance arrangements, is well managed and is provided with sufficient development opportunities Assessment considers the workforce in its widest terms including paid staff, contractors and voluntary posts.

It will look at the structure of the workforce in terms of the responsibilities of each post, its relationship to the rest of the workforce and the skills required of that post. Assessment will consider whether those in post are sufficiently skilled and how workforce development is ensured. It will also assess how the size of the workforce compares with the responsibilities of the archive service. However, every service

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[1] As described in BS EN 17820 "Competent person - someone who has the necessary training, knowledge, experience, expertise and skills, sufficient to complete their allotted task"

applying for accreditation is expected to have access to professional archival expertise.

Accreditation also recognises that staff that are not professional archivists or conservators may be involved with looking after the collections. This may include curators, librarians, IT professionals or education and outreach professionals. The service should ensure that they are able to carry out their responsibilities in relation to the archives competently and that they receive suitable professional development.

There should also be appropriate management procedures to ensure good personnel management, support inclusion and promote well-being. These should include recruitment procedures, personal development procedures, appraisals, sickness management, performance management etc.

Responsibility for the archive service should be designated to a named individual. In organisations operating an integrated collections management approach, this individual should be the head of that integrated service. It is not a requirement that archives should be managed separately from other analogous collections.

### *Q56 Workforce chart*
This chart should indicate:
- Entire workforce
- Full time and part time staff
- Project staff
- Temporary staff
- Paid interns
- Roles and basic responsibilities
- Line management
- Whether outsourced or not

The chart should include the job title of the role and indicate any members of the workforce for which the role is responsible. The chart should indicate whether the role is frozen, full time, part time or job share. Permanent, temporary and project staff should be included in the chart, with their status and period of employment included. If the role is externally funded, please state the funder. Please clearly and briefly describe roles and responsibilities either in the organogram or in an accompanying table.

For archive services integrated with other services, please provide details of those working directly in the archive service and an indication of the time spent supporting the archives. If a fully integrated collections management service is offered and staff time is not disaggregated, please state here.

### *Q57 Employment of qualified staff*

It is expected that all publicly funded archive services will employ one or more professionally qualified staff. Accreditation recognises that for some services non-archivists will be engaged in caring for archive collections, e.g. curators and librarians. Furthermore, Accreditation accepts that the smallest services may be limited in both the number of professionally qualified archivists and paid staff generally. It may be that volunteers deliver certain responsibilities. However, every service applying for accreditation is expected to have access to professional archival expertise appropriate to the type and nature of the organisation and collection. Some small private archive services may not employ a professional archivist on staff but will be expected to have access to professional archival advice e.g. formally contracted support from a professional archivist.

It is also important to have access to professional archival conservation expertise. Please explain how this is accessed in your response.

### *Q58 Copy of role profile and responsibilities*
This evidence substantiates the response given in Q57.

### *Q62 Employment contract*
This requirement also seeks to ensure that all members of the workforce are clear about their roles and responsibilities. For paid employees this should be in the form of a contract of employment and documentation setting out roles, responsibilities and expectations.

### *Q63 Development opportunities*
This requirement further assesses whether the workforce is being supported to develop the professional knowledge, skills and experience required to deliver a successful archive service. Where applicable this includes both staff and volunteers across all aspects of the service.

Development opportunities might include:
- Work shadowing
- Mentoring/co-mentoring/buddying
- E-learning
- Knowledge sharing in team training or feedback sessions
- Reflection and review
- Attending conferences, courses and workshops
- Reading
- Research, writing and publication
- Professional training courses with recognised qualifications
- On-going professional CPD opportunities such as ARA's Registration Scheme

- You should also think about any reasonable adjustments or additional support you provide to allow staff to access development opportunities (these may be referred to in Q65)

### Q64 Ensuring qualified professional staff
Describing your recruitment and development practices can evidence this.

### Q65 Policies and procedures for supporting a diverse workforce
This question invites broad reflection on being an inclusive employer or place to volunteer. You should try to consider both organisation-wide activity and that specific to the archive service. Your answer should build on your use of the EDIB Self-Assessment (Q17) and consider how you are evaluating the impact of these policies and procedures.   Reponses to this question may be made by explaining a service approach or by uploading existing documentation which demonstrates your service understands the need to support staff and volunteers inclusively and has ways to ensure this.

Examples could include approaches to diverse recruitment and different entry points into the workforce, wellbeing and flexible working support, supporting neurodiversity, managing offensive terminology in the records and the impact of this on those working on the records, and recognising faith needs. In larger services, this work may include analysis of how reflective the current workforce is of the archive service's community. Please do not respond with any detailed demographic data regarding your service workforce for any groupings with under 5 people, or which might otherwise identify individuals.  It is recognised that relevant policies such as on recruitment, retention, diversity and inclusion may be at an institution-wide level beyond the archive service itself.

**Where evidence may be found**
Findings from Section [H] 'Recruitment, Selection & Retention' in Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool (see Q19)

### Q67 Introduction to members of the governing body and management committee
Recognising that general lack of awareness of the work of archive services is a common concern, a recommendation has been included in Archive Service Accreditation to undertake induction training for new members of the workforce. Included here are members of the governing body and top management. Whilst it is not a requirement that archive services do such introductions it is strongly recommended to enable the service to develop a profile within its parent body. Those with a direct management and oversight responsibility for the archive service are specifically expected to receive appropriate induction.

### Q68 EDI Training

Recognising the importance of awareness of equality(equity), diversity and inclusion in the workplace, many organisations have instituted training in this area to address this need, to support the areas covered in the EDIB Self-Assessment tool (Q19). If your answer is yes, please describe the form this training takes in Q65 or related supporting documents. If your answer is no, please address this in Q71 and/or Q72.

### Q69 Identifying future development needs

In Q60 you have outlined existing opportunities. Q67 describes your future development plans. In this question you should demonstrate how you build on the former and consider changes to service requirements to develop the latter. For inclusive practice, you may wish to refer back to your response to Q19.

### Q72 Volunteer agreement

For volunteers this should be an agreement setting out roles and expectations, as described by NCVO's guide to volunteer agreements (https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/recruiting-and-welcoming-volunteers/writing-a-volunteer-agreement/#/ ). This should clearly state that the agreement is voluntary, to avoid creating an arrangement which may be seen as an employment contract.

### Q73 Work of volunteers

Please list areas where volunteers play a role and the approximate numbers involved. Archive Service Accreditation uses the Volunteering England definition of a volunteer:

> *We define volunteering as any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation*

For archive services this may involve volunteers playing a role in:
- Collection care
- Delivery of learning and engagement activities
- Governance of the organisation as a trustee
- Friends organisations
- Partnership projects e.g. Indexing via special interest groups
- Remote and online volunteering, e.g. transcription, tagging
- Work experience and honorary posts

While volunteering has many positive benefits, Archive Service Accreditation recognises that in some services the nature of the records held means that volunteer involvement is not appropriate.

**Q74 Volunteer development**

'Development' covers any activity that extends the volunteer's knowledge or skills. This can include training, increased responsibilities, new areas of work, visits to see other departments and organisations. You should also think about any reasonable adjustments or additional support you provide to allow volunteers to access development opportunities (you may want to refer to your answer to Q62).

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local authority and other public sector archive services*
Archive Service Accreditation requires that all publicly funded archive services will employ one or more professionally qualified staff.

For professional archivists, qualified means possessing a postgraduate qualification recognised by the Archives and Records Association (ARA) or equivalent experience. For a film archivist, qualified means possessing a postgraduate qualification in Film Studies with Film Archiving or equivalent experience. For both of these there should also be evidence of on-going professional development, including the Archives and Records Association's Competency Framework and Professional Development Programme.

For professional conservation staff, qualified means holding a recognised qualification in Conservation or equivalent and evidence of on-going professional development. This should include participation in Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR) or engagement with the Archives and Records Association's Competency Framework and Professional Development Programme.

*Private and third sector archive services*
Type 2 and 3 archive services probably require a full time, professional archivist and access to professional conservation staff to care effectively for collections. Type 1 requires access to professional support at a minimum. There should be a job description for any paid staff.

**Supporting documentation needed** *(NB some documentation as indicated should not be submitted with an application but may be requested during a validation visit)*
Workforce chart
Role profile and responsibilities of senior staff
Information on experience of workforce – available on request
Details of induction procedures – available on request
Workforce management procedures – available on request

**Where evidence may be found**
Externally accredited award (e.g. Investors in People, Investors in Volunteers)

Training plan
Continuing professional development plan
Equality, diversity and inclusion policy or strategy
 Volunteering policy
Example volunteer agreement
Skills gap analysis
Succession planning
Findings from Section [I] 'Knowledge and Understanding of EDIB within Archives' in Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool (see Q17)

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Have we adequately described our workforce?
- Is the workforce adequate to meet our obligations and if not how do we intend to manage this?
- Is the relationship with other parts of the organisation clear, particularly with regard to access to shared services?
- Do we have procedures for identifying training and development needs? How do we fulfil those needs?
- How is our workforce supported, recognising a range of different individual needs?
- If we do not have a professional archivist on the staff, how do we access professional expertise and ensure that it is adequate to meet our obligations?
- If we do not have a professional conservator on the staff, where do we draw professional advice from and how is this arranged?

**Tools and resources**
Archives and Records Association *Competency Framework* – the professional development framework for the archival sector covering all aspects of the profession from volunteers through to senior professionals.
https://www.archives.org.uk/professional-development

The National Archives provides guidance on recruitment
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/writing-a-job-description/ and apprenticeships
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/careers-in-archives/archivist-and-records-manager-apprenticeships

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including how it is staffed and how this can be improved.
https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram  The accompanying Competency Framework gives structured assessment options for understanding

workforce digital skills: https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/prof-development/dp-competency

See Section 1.1. for tools and resources on *equality, diversity and inclusion.*

*Investing in Volunteers Standard 2010* – a quality standard for using volunteers in an organisation's work. The website includes nine useful indicators and the Standard which can be downloaded. Organisations can pay to be accredited under the standard
https://iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk/

The Archives and Records Association has a wide range of resources including support for inclusive working practice and case studies, a guide to managing archives and research into volunteering in archives. These can be downloaded primarily from https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

Museum of London *Volunteer Training Bank* – a collection of material to enable organisations to train their own volunteers in house over a variety of subjects including customer care, disability awareness, working safely with children, creating tours for family audiences and an introduction to museums
https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/supporting-london-museums/resources/training-bank

Wales Council for Voluntary Action – information sheets covering a broad range of topics with regards to working with volunteers such as recruitment, policy and strategy, expenses, welfare, the law, working with harder to place volunteers, insurance and diversity https://wcva.cymru/volunteering/

Volunteer Development Scotland – research into volunteering in Scotland and the UK as well as the benefits of volunteering and how to calculate the economic impact of your service's volunteering. The wider website also provides guidance for volunteers including a map of volunteering opportunities
https://www.volunteerscotland.net/volunteer-practice

Make Your Mark Inclusive Volunteering Toolkit https://makeyourmark.scot/for-organisations/toolkit

Volunteer Now (Northern Ireland) – encourages volunteering in Northern Ireland including a 'Match me' function.  The 'Improving Practice' section has resources for individual organisations to use in developing their own volunteering activity.
http://www.volunteernow.co.uk/

The National Archives website – has numerous resources looking at volunteering and the wider workforce.

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/developing-your-workforce/
Research Reports https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/research-reports/
Case Studies: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/case-studies/

**Precedents**

It had been considered appropriate to accredit services where a long-serving staff member did not have an archives qualification but was qualified in a related area, had demonstrable equivalent experience to an archive professional and had pursued an employer-supported development programme to acquire the specific skills needed to care for archive collections. This would not be acceptable when seeking to recruit or replace staff, and actions would be set to reflect the requirement for professional archive expertise in future job descriptions.

Accreditation would not be awarded in cases where volunteers are inappropriately involved in delivering the service. It is recognised that this will vary in line with scaled expectations for different types and sizes of archive service. Professionally staffed services asking volunteers to identify closure periods for material subject to security clearance had been felt to be inappropriate. Volunteers should also be supported in cases of working with potentially traumatic material.

**SECTION 2: Collections**

This section looks at the systems that are in place to continuously improve:
- Collections development
- Collections information
- Collections care and conservation

This section seeks to explore collections based upon the following definitions:

*Collections development*: Collecting new items, researching and reviewing the existing collections and removing items in accordance with the collecting organisation's policies and priorities.

*Collections information*: Information an organisation collects, creates, holds and maintains about its collections and/or collected items.

The words conservation, preservation and collections care are applied variously and often interchangeably within collections vocabulary. Archive Service Accreditation uses the following definition:

*Collections care:* Range of activities intended to safeguard a collection. These activities can include organizational policies, security, storage, cleaning, maintenance, handling, scientific investigation, environmental monitoring and control, exhibitions and loans, conservation, provision of surrogates and emergency planning.

*Conservation:* Interventive techniques applied to a physical item to achieve chemical and physical stabilisation for the purpose of extending the useful life of items to ensure their continued availability.

Requirements in each of these areas are divided into policies, plans and procedures, using the following definitions:

*Policies* describe the overall intentions and direction of an organisation or service, as formally expressed by top management. They describe the strategic approach.

*Plans* are forward looking documents that set out the objectives of the organisation and identify the actions needed to achieve those objectives, in line with the organisation's policies and in order to deliver its mission. These arise from the policies that the archive service has outlined.

*Procedures* describe a specified way to carry out an activity or a process (a set of interrelated or interacting activities), in order to deliver a particular output or

outcome. Procedures may be documented in the form of operational guides, manuals, handbooks, instructions, flowcharts etc.

Policies, plans and procedures should all be regularly reviewed to ensure currency and effectiveness.

## 2.1 Collections Management

**Significance**

Archive Service Accreditation supports the principle of an integrated approach to collections management. One way for services to achieve this is through the provision of an overarching Collections Management Policy. This policy connects the four core areas of collections management activity – collections development, information, care and conservation, and access – and explains how they work together, in order to support the archive service's mission (as defined in requirement 1.1).
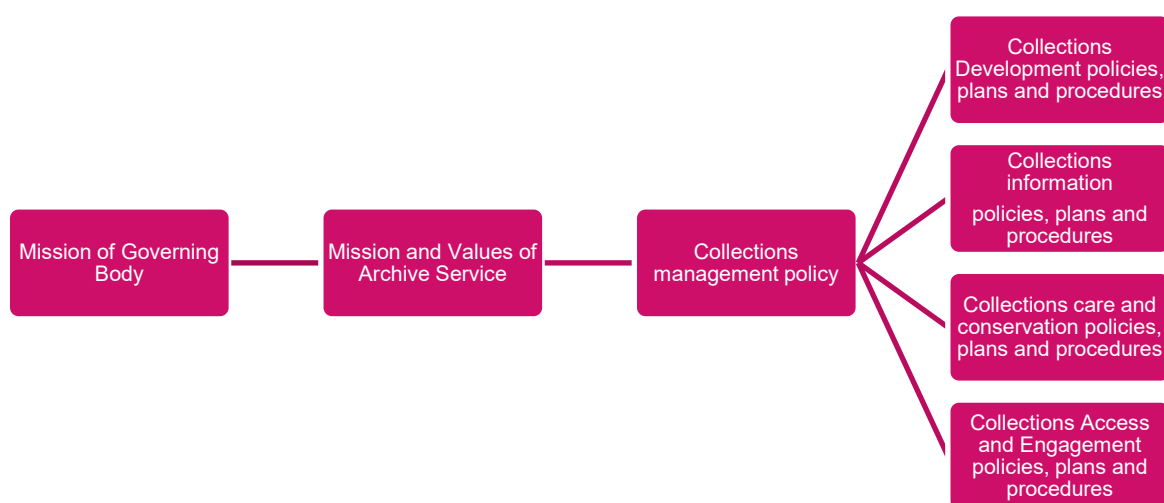


Figure 2 Connections between mission statement, collections management policy and areas of collections management[2]

**What assessment is looking for**

Archive Service Accreditation does not require a separate Collections Management Policy; however, services may find it useful for ensuring a co-ordinated approach to their collections management activity. Further details of this approach can be found in BS EN 17820: 2023 *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for the management of moveable cultural heritage collections.*

A Collections Management Policy should identify the overall legal and statutory environment in which the archive service operates and include or reference the individual policies on collections development, information, care and conservation

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[2] Based upon figure showing areas covered by collections management framework in PAS 197: 2009, Code of practice for cultural collections management.

and access. The detailed requirements for each of these specific policy areas are covered by the sub-requirements in Sections 2 and 3.

### *Q75 and Q76 Collections Management Policy and coordinating collections management activity*

If services do not have an overarching Collections Management Policy, they should describe how they ensure an integrated policy approach to the four core areas of collections management activity – development, information, care and conservation, and access.

**Scaled Guidance: relevant to specific archive types and scale**

*Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives (type 2) & Private and third sector archives (type 3):*
The archive service should be able to explain, whether in a formal policy or in the application itself, how different staff members or staff teams work together across the different elements which make up collections management, to ensure a coherent approach. It should be possible to demonstrate effective interaction between the elements of collections management.

*Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives (type 1) & Private and third sector archives (type 1&2)*
Archive services of this size tend to have small staff teams and lone professionals may not find it difficult to demonstrate a coherent management approach across the service. It may be appropriate to have a single collections management policy for the archive service that is used to address multiple requirements of the Accreditation Standard.

## 2.2 Collections Development

### 2.2.1 Policies on Collections Development

**Significance**

Policies on collections development analyse the principles of collecting archives, stating the scope, priorities and limitations on collecting. A collections development policy describes how, when, why and by which mechanisms archives are transferred to the archive service. It should also identify gaps for future collecting.

**What assessment is looking for**

Assessment is looking for a clearly thought out, strategic approach to collecting archives with a sensible, defined collecting mechanism. This approach may also define what the service will not collect. It may also articulate the right of the service to appraise material both before it enters the service's collections and once it is held by the service. In so doing the service is laying out how it ensures focused, effective collecting.

***Q77 Collections development policy (or suite of policies)***

Archive Service Accreditation does not provide a standard template for a collections development policy. The policy may be expressed in a single document, or in a suite of related documents with appropriate cross-referencing.

Policies on collections development should address the following areas:
- The archive service should describe the arrangements that are in place to ensure that records transfer from semi-current and current records to the archive service (where appropriate). This is particularly important for records of the parent body but applied also to records accrued from other bodies. The policy should also cover principles and methods for the appraisal of accessions and the deaccession of collections (where appropriate).
- Policies should cover any standard questions of collections' status i.e. ownership status, any transfer of intellectual property rights and access restrictions.
- Archive services should identify gaps in their holdings and/or priority collecting themes and seek to acquire collections accordingly. Acquisitions should be appropriate to the mission and purpose of the archive service.
- The collections development policy should explain the policy on maintaining contact with depositors, particularly major private depositors of material, where appropriate to the mission of the archive service.
- The policies should specifically cover both analogue AND digital material where relevant to the service's mission and purpose. It should also be explicit where classes or formats of archives are NOT covered and whether there are arrangements in place to deposit specific types of archives elsewhere, e.g. film archives or records of a nationwide body that are held locally.

Collections development policies should be produced in consultation with other organisations collecting in a similar community and this should be evidenced. The policies should have the explicit support of the top management and be reviewed regularly.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Places of Deposit for Public Records*
Archive services that act as Places of Deposit should describe their relationship with Public Record bodies, outlining their communication methods and arrangements for timely transfer.

*Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives & Private and third sector archives (type 3):*
Archive services should undertake a collections development analysis following guidelines in The National Archives, *Collections Development Tools and guidelines* (https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/collection-development-tools-and-guidance.pdf).

The collections development policy (or suite of policies) should be available to the public.

**Q78 Transfer of records from parent body**
Please include in your answer the nature of the archive service's relationship with the parent organisation's records management function. Archive Service Accreditation recognises that there are situations where the archive service's mission and purpose does not appropriately include transfers from its parent organisation (e.g. university special collections where there is a separate records and archives service).

**Supporting documentation needed**
Collections development policy (or suite of policies, cross-referenced)

**Where evidence may be found**
Collecting/acquisitions policies
Terms of deposit/transfer
Disposals policy
Appraisal/selection policy
Collections development policy
Revisiting archive collections project report
Findings from Section [K] 'New Collections – Acquisition of items reflecting/of interest to diverse communities' in Archives West Midlands' *The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool* (see Q17)

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**

- Has the collections development policy (or suite of policies) been approved by the correct body and produced in consultation with other collecting bodies? How is this evidenced?
- Does the policy fit with your mission statement?
- Are your policy and collections descriptions clear enough to guide future acquisitions and/or disposal/ deaccessioning as appropriate?
- Does the policy cover different media sufficiently and specifically cover analogue and digital materials where relevant?
- Are your proposed areas for future collecting reflected in your Forward plan?
- Where appropriate, is the collections development policy available to the public?

**Tools and resources**

The National Archives Collection Development guidance – including a checklist for collections policies, guidance on writing a collections policy and collecting plan, and guidance on deaccessioning and disposal
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/developing-collections/collection-development/

The National Archives Loan (deposit) agreements for privately owned archives and guidance on accessions registers
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/documenting-collections/loan-agreements-and-accessions-registers/

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including acquisition and appraisal. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

Archives West Midlands, *Equality, Diversity and Belonging Self-Assessment Toolkit* enables a quick appraisal of an organisation's current position with regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging across archive service functions. Elements of the SAT engage with collections development, and can support active planning  https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EDIB-SAT-Beta-version.pdf

Archives and Records Council Wales *Revealing the Lived Experience of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic People in Wales – Diversity Toolkit*
https://archives.wales/archives-and-records-council-wales/arcw-projects/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-communities-in-wales/

Arts Council England, Collections Development Policy Template – this template has been designed for museums working towards Museum Accreditation. It does have an archives section and can provide a useful starting point for an archive thinking

about writing a policy, including reference to spoliation and repatriation work
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/20861/download?attachment

For information on spoliation of works of art during the Second World War, see:
https://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/contributing-sector/spoliation/spoliation_statement/

### 2.2.2 Collections Development plans

**Significance**

The collections development plan specifies the actions the archive service will take to appraise and rationalise existing collections, and identify, prioritise and fill gaps for future collecting. It is the basis for managing the development of collection content to ensure collections remain a coherent resource, relevant to the service's stakeholders and makes the best use of the resources available for collections development.

*What assessment is looking for*

The plan should describe how and when this work will be undertaken. Archive Service Accreditation recognises that an archive service acts in accordance with the mission and scale of its governing body and this will affect planning for collections development. Your forward plan may cover collections development, in which case your application should refer to the relevant sections.

The plans should specifically cover both analogue AND digital material where relevant to the service's mission and purpose. It should also be explicit where classes or formats of archives are NOT covered and whether there are arrangements in place to deposit specific types of archives elsewhere, e.g. film archives or records of a nationwide body that are held locally. Such a plan will, where appropriate, reflect collecting from the parent body as well as acquisition of records from outside the organisation.

If your service has a specified approach to deaccessioning and/or has the intent to deaccession, this should be highlighted in the collections development plan. Collections development plans should be produced in consultation with other organisations collecting in a similar community and this should be evidenced.

Plans should also be developed in consultation with depositors, including private depositors where appropriate. Furthermore, where the service plans to diversify the profile of depositors and communities that are reflected in the collections this should be included in the plan.

**Q80 Representativeness of existing collections**

The question asks for evidence that you have considered how far your collections represent the mission that you have identified for your archive service, whether that is largely institutional, geographical, subject-driven or another form of collecting remit. It also asks for an indication of any work that you are undertaking to address areas of underrepresentation identified. It is recognised that this evidence may be incorporated in the collections development policy and plan, which can be referenced as the response.

The plan should respond to any issues identified in Q17 concerning inclusive practice. If you are involved in any post-custodial or co-curation work with community groups or other organisations you may refer to this here or provide reference to relevant answers in Section 3. Post-custodial situations are where records creators continue to maintain archival records with archivists providing management oversight or support. Co-curation might involve an archive service working with partners in the identification, selection and interpretation of archival materials.

**Q82 Limitations on collecting**
As active collecting has resource implications, this question asks about any restrictions your service has recently faced on collecting which are not covered by arrangements with other archive services.

**Q83 Legal status of collections**
Responses to this question will vary depending on the type of records collected and may include material held on deposit. Specific collections in a limited number of archive services may be subject to disputed provenance or requests for restitution; in this case, please explain the institutional approach or submit evidence of policy.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
None

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
Collections development plan or cross-reference to relevant areas of forward plan

**Where evidence may be found**
Collections development plan
Forward plan
Digital collecting and/or web archiving strategy
Accessions reported to The National Archives

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- How and when do we plan to appraise our collections?
- What is the plan for deaccessioning and/or disposal of items where appropriate?
- How will we seek to plug gaps in our collections and collect in priority areas? Where are these items and how will we acquire them?
- How are we collecting material in digital formats and is this approached differently to analogue? (e.g. by proactive donor liaison to ensure material is acquired in formats we can preserve, or by harvesting key websites within our collecting areas)
- Where we are not the owners of collections, do we have good relationships with the owners that allow us to develop these collections with confidence?
- How do we address any issues identified in Q17 concerning inclusive practice

**Tools and resources**

The National Archives, *Developing Collections* – advice on developing collections and on how to contribute content to The National Archives' Discovery Portal for archival resources in the UK
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/developing-collections.htm

The National Archives, *Collection Development Tools and Guidance* - a toolkit to enables services to review and develop their collections, identify gaps and risks in content, safeguard their collections, consider short and long term needs for preservation and access.
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/developing-collections/

The National Archives *Loan (deposit) agreements for privately owned archives*
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/documenting-collections/loan-agreements-and-accessions-registers/

Arts Council England, Collections Development Policy Template – this template has been designed for museums working towards Museum Accreditation. It does have an archives section and can provide a useful starting point for an archive thinking about writing a policy
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/20861/download?attachment

There are also numerous examples of collections development policies online from effective archive services, public and private, large and small.

For information on spoliation of works of art during the Second World War, see:
https://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/contributing-sector/cultural-property/spoliation/

Scottish Council on Archives *All Our Stories: Inclusive Practice for Archives* Webinar Series presents case studies of collections development and inclusive cataloguing
https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/latest/all-our-stories-inclusive-practice-for-archives-webinar-series/

## 2.3 Collections Information

Collections information is fundamental to the work of an archive service. It is the bedrock for all access and collections management. If we do not know what is in our collections, we cannot look after it or alert potential users to its presence. Collections information needs to be high quality, accurate, accessible and secure. Generating collections information is resource-intensive so requires careful planning to ensure the maximum return on the investment.

Here we look at the policy on collections information and finding aids, their quality and comprehensiveness. This section covers all information written and gathered about collections, whether during the transfer or accessioning processes, during cataloguing or subsequently. Collections information includes cataloguing, accessioning, information about disposals and intellectual property rights.  It should specify what information is gathered and created and which standards are followed in cataloguing.

### 2.3.1 Policies on Collections information

**Significance** The collections information policy describes the history of collections information and cataloguing in your services, explaining what cataloguing systems and professional standards are employed and have been used in the past. In creating the policy, services find it a useful mechanism for reviewing professional practice and questioning whether that approach is still appropriate. Where past descriptive practice, particularly of marginalised communities, is a barrier to current usage, it may be helpful to explain how you are developing approaches to addressing this over time. The policy also works as an advocacy document explaining the approach and requirements of the service and the benefit of a vital but often 'hidden' process.

**What assessment is looking for**
Assessment is looking for a structured approach to capturing collections information that applies best practice in a manner suitable to the context of your service. Whilst there is no standard template, The National Archives' guidance suggests the following content:
- Providing context to your overall approach
- Legislative context
- Systems used for recording collections information
- Point of deposit and accessioning
- Disposals and withdrawals
- Location and movement control
- Cataloguing
- Staffing and funding
- Protecting your collections information

- Approach to revisiting past terminology and descriptive practice for marginalised groups

The policy may state what measures you have taken to improve existing catalogues and how you have reached your current policy on levels of cataloguing. It is recognised that the level of collections information is dependent on the size of cataloguing backlogs being tackled and will differ between service types. The policy may also reflect on legacy issues of adequacy in description, identifying any areas which are inadequate, offensive and/or a barrier for current audiences.

The policy should cover both analogue and digital material where appropriate. The presentation facilities and information architecture for digital materials should be capable of supporting retrieval and use of digital archives by users.

The use of user input into collections information should be considered and, if implemented, the policy should cover how the data will be managed

In particular, the archive service should examine its policies regarding the information held on the ownership and legal status of its collections, especially legacy issues, which arose before current policies and procedures. The purpose is to ensure the Service is aware of and where possible managing risks around the ownership of collections. Accreditation recognises that there can be issues over depositor terms, particularly where there is a legacy of past practice that would not be acceptable by modern standards.

This requirement covers ownership, intellectual property rights and specific record keeping legislation/guidelines such as the Public Records Acts, Manorial Documents Rules and the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978.

### Q85 and Q86 Cataloguing standards
Accreditation recognises that whilst ISAD(G) is the common standard for cataloguing standards it may not always be appropriate or may not have been utilised by the service for some or all of its collections.  If this is the case please use Q88? to explain your service's policy and approach to ensuring high quality collections information.   Note that questions relating requirement 2.3.2 also provides an opportunity to explain the service's approach to planning cataloguing practice.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
*Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives & Private and third sector archives (type 3):*
The archive service should provide quality finding aids that meet the mandatory requirements of ISAD(G). Archive services should aim to provide collection level descriptions of their entire holdings and create more detailed descriptions according to a defined plan.

*Private and third sector archives (type 1&2)*
The archive service should provide quality finding aids that meet the mandatory requirements of ISAD(G) in accordance with their organisation's mission. Archive services should aim to provide collection level descriptions of their entire holdings and create more detailed descriptions according to a defined plan.
Archive Service Accreditation recognises that it is not always appropriate for organisations of this type to make detailed catalogues available externally. However, some form of collection level description should be made available.

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
Completed application form
Collections Information policy

**Where evidence may be found**
Cataloguing handbook/policy
Examples of online catalogues with link
Example catalogue

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- What is the process for creating collections information and how will that information be managed?
- Does this policy reflect the aspiration of our mission and values and forward plan?

**Tools and resources**
BS 6879/ISO 3166-2: 1998, Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions, Part 2

International Council on Archives, General International Standard of Archival Description (ISAD (G)), 2nd edition, 1999

International Council on Archives, International Standard Archival Authority for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (ISAAR (CPF), 2004)

National Council on Archives, Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names:

The National Archives
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/documenting-collections/

Archives and Records Association *Guide to Archival Standards*
https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

The National Archives, Risk Assessment for Communicating Potentially Upsetting Histories https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/inclusion/resources/risk-assessment/

The National Archives compendium of research reports https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/research-reports/

The National Archives Case Studies: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/case-studies/

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including metadata management for preservation and discovery https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

Archives West Midlands, *Equality, Diversity and Belonging Self-Assessment Toolkit* enables a quick appraisal of an organisation's current position with regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging across archive service functions. Elements of the SAT engage with collections information and presentation of collections, and can support active planning https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EDIB-SAT-Beta-version.pdf

A. Chilcott, 'Towards protocols for describing racially offensive language in UK public archives', Archival Science 19(4):1-18 (2019).

The National Archives, Risk Assessment for Communicating Potentially Upsetting Histories https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/inclusion/resources/risk-assessment/

Archives and Records Council Wales *Revising Archival Descriptions* project presents a methodology to identify biased and offensive language in archival catalogues https://archives.wales/archives-and-records-council-wales/arcw-projects/revising-archival-descriptions/

Scottish Council on Archives *All Our Stories: Inclusive Practice for Archives* Webinar Series presents case studies of collections development and inclusive cataloguing https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/latest/all-our-stories-inclusive-practice-for-archives-webinar-series/

### 2.3.2 Collections Information Plan

**Significance**

Writing a plan enables the service to look across its whole collections, identify its priorities for collections information and decide how it will resource the work. Having a collections information plan means that a service will also be able to apply for funding quickly should the opportunity arise because it has already identified outstanding collections requiring documentation, the resources needed and how such work contributes to the mission of the service.

**What assessment is looking for**

Accreditation recognises that there may be a backlog in cataloguing collections, and a history of both poor cataloguing, outdated terminology and inadequacies in early accession records. This may take many years to resolve.

Consequently, Accreditation is looking for a clear analysis of the current situation and a realistic long-term plan that identifies priorities, outcomes, responsibilities and resources.

The collections information plan should be based upon the analysis of collections information in the archive service in the collections information policy. It should describe how the archive service will implement the collections information policy described in 2.3.1 above and should identify priorities for action and provide a plan for their implementation over a time limited period.

*Q87 Collections information plan*

The collections information plan should cover:

- How you plan to improve existing collections information
- A plan for collections information about newly acquired collections
- How you plan to manage information about collections long held without complete catalogues (backlog collections). This should be based on the scaled guidance at 2.3.1
- Any plans to review legacy descriptive information, such as to review offensive terminology or to uncover different aspects of the records
- How you plan to collect and maintain information regarding collection status (ownership, intellectual property rights and specific record keeping legislation/guidelines)

**Q91 Legacy descriptive information**

This question asks you to consider your findings from Section [J] 'Inclusive Collections Information' in Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool (see Q19) and to comment on the position. If you have not yet undertaken any review or this is not applicable to your collections,

please indicate accordingly. If this issue is explored in documentation already uploaded, please indicate where; there is no need to repeat the information.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
Archive services with 'closed' collections, with limited accruals, and with a good level of description, may have limited need for further cataloguing. Collections information planning may focus on dissemination of information, the enhancement of description with user content or, if relevant, establishing ownership of poorly documented holdings.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Collections information plan (or suite of documents) or cross-reference to relevant areas of Forward plan

**Where evidence may be found**
Cataloguing plans/strategy
Forward plans
In-house prioritisation of collections
Assessment of uncatalogued collections in-house or through other recognised methodology e.g. Logjam
Findings from Section [J] 'Inclusive Collections Information' in Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool (see Q17)

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- What are the priorities for the archive service cataloguing programme and how have we reached them?
- How will we create information about newly acquired collections?
- Has the archive service examined legacy information issues and does it have a plan to tackle them?
- Who is responsible for issues of information about ownership and status of collections?
- How will we reduce the backlog of uncatalogued collections?
- What is our plan for providing collections information and how will we achieve it?
- How do we provide information about born-digital collections and how does this integrate with analogue collections information?

**Tools and resources**
Greene, Mark A; Dennis Meissner (2005). "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing". *American Archivist* 68: 208–263

Archives and Records Association Guide to standards relating to metadata – a comprehensive list covering cataloguing and other metadata, indexing, thesauri,

XML DTD and schema, interoperability, digital preservation, reference models and frameworks, file formats, identifiers and security standards.
https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

The National Archives guidance on documentation
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/documenting-collections/

### 2.3.3 Clear and documented procedures for core collections information

**Significance**

The archive service should document its core collections information procedures and ensure they are understood and applied by the workforce (including volunteers). It provides the opportunity for systematically describing processes which can be used to ensure that all staff and volunteers understand why collections information is generated in a specific way and how that information should be generated and captured so providing consistency and a level of quality in collections documentation.

**What assessment is looking for**

These procedures should cover the full range of collections information procedures including:

- Establishing and recording collection status (ownership, terms of deposit, access legislation, access restrictions and intellectual property rights)
- Appraisal
- Accessioning, including condition checks, metadata for digital accessions
- Acquisition: Marking and labelling items
- Cataloguing and authority indexing
- Location and movement control
- Loans in and out
- Deaccessioning and disposal
- Collections Audit (stocktaking)

The procedures should specifically cover both analogue AND digital material where appropriate.

***Q96 Integration of collections information on analogue and digital records***

Accreditation recognises that procedures for managing information about born-digital archives may be at a developmental stage and may involve use of different software to the finding aids provided for analogue collections. This question asks for reflection on how the service ensures that users are able to find information on collections regardless of format. Where relevant, the procedures should cover support for staff in describing offensive and/or traumatic records, and/or opportunities for users to identify inadequate, offensive or unsuitable descriptions with a view to prompting a review.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
None

**Supporting documentation needed**

Where relevant, procedural manuals will be required to be presented as evidence during validation visits

**Where evidence may be found**
Accessioning & Cataloguing manual
Strongroom procedures
Documentation procedural manual
Reading room procedures
Security plans

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Are these procedures robust, regularly reviewed, well understood and comprehensive?
- Do the procedures follow the collections information policy and implement the collections information plan?
- Do the procedures follow the collections care and conservation policy and implement the collections care and conservation plan? – with particular reference to location and movement control and audit
- Are the procedures monitored to ensure quality control?
- How do we confirm ownership and intellectual property rights of collections transferred, deposited or donated?

**Tools and resources**
The National Archives *Documenting Collections*
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/documenting-collections/

The National Archives *Cataloguing and Archive networks*
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/documenting-collections/cataloguing-and-archives-networks/

## 2.4 Collections care and conservation

### 2.4.1 Policies on collections care and conservation

**Significance**

BS4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections* states that 'a conservation policy is one of the essential corporate documents required by all collecting bodies and is intended to exist alongside and in association with other related policies. The collecting body should define a conservation policy for the collections it holds and is planning to hold.'

The fundamental role of an archive service is to ensure the longevity and usability of their collections. The service needs to articulate its ethical responsibilities towards the conservation of collections and the resultant strategic approach in a conservation policy. This informs conservation planning to ensure good use of resources on clearly prioritised work. But a policy is also important for advocating to stakeholders why the service undertakes conservation work and to seek support for that work.

**What assessment is looking for**

A collections care and conservation policy should outline the strategic approach to caring for and conserving archive collections, explaining how the archive service intends to act and why. It should be clearly informed by relevant standards. A collections care and conservation policy should reference and take into account the best practice laid down in these documents. It should explain the conservation philosophy and any analysis behind collections care and conservation decisions. Such decisions will be based on the organisation's mission. There should be a clear link between the policy and the assessment of risk and of stakeholder needs and interests.  The collections care and conservation policy should be explicitly informed by the collections development and collections access policies.

Detailed guidance for the standards of collections care and conservation are found in BS4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections*, and BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections*. Assessment recognises that services will have previously been working towards PD5454 (with its predecessor, BS5454, influencing older building design) and PAS 198 and will take a practical approach, which recognises this changeover in collections care standards.

***Q99 Copy of your policy on collections care and conservation***
Issues which may be covered in your collections care and conservation policy include:
- Security
- Buildings/Storage

- Access (reprographics, exhibitions, handling, surrogates)
- Treatments/Remedial conservation
- Digital preservation including third party provision
- Housekeeping
- Environmental monitoring
- Environmental control
- Packaging
- Disaster recovery and continuity
- Managing risk to material in outstores and in transfer between locations
- Finances
- Statement of responsibility
- Approach to risk assessment and management

The British Standard BS4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections* includes guidance on conservation policies and many elements of repository management. The European standard BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections* provides the standard for archival accommodation.

The collections care and conservation policy can be a single policy document or a suite of policies, which must be approved by top management and reviewed regularly.

The policy should particularly describe how services source the appropriate level of professional conservation advice and support. It should describe the storage facilities and how the service will ensure the appropriate quality of storage, with reference to BS4971 and EN16893 (incorporating PD5454 if appropriate to the date of construction).

If digital materials are included in the collections care and conservation policy, the policy should indicate the process for deciding which characteristics of digital records need to be preserved and describe the methods of preservation.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local Authority, Other Public Sector and Private and third sector type 3*
These archive services should outline their arrangements for professional conservation support for all aspects of collections care and conservation, with reference to requirement 1.6 Workforce.

*Local authority Type 2, Other Public Sector Type 2, Private and Third Sector Type 3*
These archive services should aim to achieve all the levels of collection care described in BS4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections*

and BS/EN 16893 *Conservation of Cultural Heritage - New Sites & Buildings Intended for the Storage & Use of Collections.* This includes the appropriate storage environment (including parameters of temperature and humidity), building site and construction, and fire protection and prevention.

*Local authority Type 1, Public Sector Type 1 and Private and third sector Type 1&2*
These archive services should aim for at minimum broad compliance with BS4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections* and BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections*. This includes the appropriate storage environment (including parameters of temperature and humidity), building site and construction and fire protection and prevention.

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
Collections care and conservation policy

**Where evidence may be found**
Collections care and conservation policy
Digital preservation policy
Conservation statement (Heritage Lottery Fund requirement)
Benchmarks in Collection Care report
Preservation Assessment Survey report
Environmental strategy

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Is our collections care and conservation policy appropriate to the size and importance of our collections?
- Is the collections care and conservation policy reflected in the Forward plan?
- Does the policy cover all aspects of our collections, including digital collections, web archiving etc?
- Is the management of the building adequately covered?
- How do we ensure that we secure appropriate professional advice and support for our preventive and remedial conservation activity?

**Tools and resources**
BS 4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections* – this is the current British Standard for conservation of archival material, replacing PD5454 but excluding archival building specifications which are covered in the European standard BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections*. It includes:

- Conservation policy
- Conservation strategy

- Preventive conservation
- Environments for storage
- Protecting collections from damage from dust, mould and pest infestation
- Environments for reading rooms and exhibitions
- Handling and use
- Packaging
- Storage equipment
- Remedial conservation

BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections* - the standard introduced in 2018, which informs archive building design
https://landingpage.bsigroup.com/LandingPage/Standard?UPI=000000000030324475

*Digital Preservation Coalition: Digital Preservation Handbook:* - guidance on strategic, organisational and technical elements of digital preservation.
http://dpconline.org/handbook; case studies:
https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/discover-good-practice/case-studies

ISO 14721: 2012 *Space Data and Information Transfer Systems – Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model*

The National Archives *Caring for archives*
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/caring-for-archives/

National Conservation Services, *Benchmarks in Collection Care 3.0* – a practical and very widely used toolkit for assessing current collections care to inform planning and upgrading of collections care: http://www.ncs.org.uk/benchmarks3.php

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Digital Preservation Business Case Toolkit*:
https://wiki.dpconline.org/index.php?title=Digital_Preservation_Business_Case_Toolkit and *Procurement Toolkit* https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/procurement-toolkit

*Screen Heritage UK Moving Image Collections Assessment Toolkit* -a basic guide to caring for and making accessible moving image collections. It covers collecting, inspecting, storing, handling, preservation copying and documentation.
http://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/screen-heritage-uk-moving-image-collections-handbook/

EN17429: 2020 *Conservation of cultural heritage. Procurement of conservation services and works* outlines the principles, processes and best practice for procuring conservation services and works for cultural heritage across many types of externally procured service and different scales of work.

ARA, *Volunteering in Collection Care Best Practice Guide* – a summary guide and 19 case studies looking at: policy and agreements; advertising and interviews; increasing diversity; planning and task descriptions; induction, training and supervision; complaints or problems; evaluation and documentation. https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including policy-level preservation commitments. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

**Precedents**
Repositories that had lower than PD5454:2012 (replaced by BS 4971:2017 and BS/EN 16893)-standard storage for much of their holdings had been Accredited in a number of cases. Realistic and effective identification, mitigation and management of risk was key to being able to accredit in these circumstances. Risks unidentified or unmanaged by the service would have made it impossible. A required action would always be set to continue to manage, monitor and/or improve storage conditions in these cases.

When insufficient information on risk management for collections in commercial outstorage arrangements was provided, it could be a reason for applications to be unsuccessful. The need for ongoing communication from commercial outstore providers on any changes to storage arrangements and/or risk profile was underlined and should be part of contractual arrangements.

### 2.4.2 Collections Care and conservation plan

**Significance**

The plan explains how the policy will be implemented. It is the 'how' to the policy's 'why'. It lays out the priorities and the resourcing required, so is a central element in a service's planning process and the practical route by which the physical integrity of the collections will be assured.

**What assessment is looking for**

The plan describes how the collections care and conservation policy will be delivered. It is the result of the policy statement combined with an assessment of the collections care in the archive service, and aims to improve collections care over time. It should be clearly informed by relevant standards BS 4971:2017 *Conservation and care of archive and library collections* and BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections*. Predecessor standards may be noted where relevant to the period of construction.

The plan should clearly identify and assess key risks and how these risks will be managed. It should also identify future plans for interventive conservation, including an approach to prioritisation. It should also include a realistic assessment of future risks and potential changes along with their potential impact and how they will be dealt with.

Issues that may be covered include:
- Security
- Buildings/Storage
- Mitigation of risks due to site of building(s) and/or known collections care issues
- Access (reprographics, exhibitions, handling, surrogates)
- Treatments/remedial conservation
- Housekeeping
- Environmental monitoring
- Environmental control
- Digital materials

The plan should cover all buildings and sites housing collections including outstores and should cover both physical and digital materials (where relevant).

Disaster recovery and continuity is dealt with at requirement 2.4.4 but should be cross-referenced to the collections care and conservation plan.

Your forward plan may cover collections care and conservation, in which case your application should refer to the relevant sections.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale
None

**Supporting documentation needed**
Collections care and conservation plan or cross-reference to relevant areas of Forward plan

**Where evidence may be found**
Management and maintenance plan
Plan for increasing capacity to preserve digital materials

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- What are the key risks to the longevity of our collections, what are their possible impacts, how likely are they and how should we mitigate those risks?
- How will we deliver the collections care priorities described by our collections care and conservation plan?
- Is our plan based on a robust assessment of collections care using Benchmarks in Collection Care or Preservation Assessment Survey or similar methodologies?
- Do we have fully developed plans appropriate to different media held, including for audio-visual, digital and paper/parchment materials where relevant?
- Where remedial conservation is undertaken, is it based on clear priorities and evidence?

**Tools and resources**
BS EN16893:2018, *Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections*
https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030324475

National Conservation Service, *Benchmarks in Collection Care* – the very popular and long-standing assessment tool to identify collections care issues to inform planning, now updated to v3.
http://www.ncs.org.uk/benchmarks3.php

PAS 198:2012 *Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections* **–** this has been superseded by BS4971 but still contains a lot of useful information about managing collections and uses a risk-based approach which can help inform your work.

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Digital Preservation Handbook* – a guide to the organisational and operational issues to achieve digital preservation
http://dpconline.org/handbook

*Screen Heritage UK Moving Image Collections Assessment Toolkit* - a basic guide to caring for and making accessible moving image collections. It covers collecting, inspecting, storing, handling, preservation copying and documentation.
http://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/screen-heritage-uk-moving-image-collections-handbook/

ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property *A guide to risk management of cultural heritage* – a detailed methodology for identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating and monitoring risk to cultural heritage
https://www.iccrom.org/sites/default/files/Guide-to-Risk-Managment_English.pdf

The National Archives guidance on caring for archives including links into other resources: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/caring-for-archives/

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/our-role/collection-care/heritage-science-research-and-development/

The Archives and Records Association Best Practice Guidelines – cover a range of topics including conservation subjects and looking after film collections
https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

Digital Preservation Coalition, *Rapid Assessment Model,* provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including continuous improvement. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

### 2.4.3 Clear documented procedures for collections care

**Significance**

The procedures guide the actual implementation of collections care. They set the standards for how collections care will be undertaken and thus inform the quality, consistency and methodology of collections care. They are pivotal to the longevity of collections. They guide the work of both staff and volunteers

**What assessment is looking for**

The archive service should document its procedures for routine collections care and ensure they are understood and applied by the entire workforce (including volunteers). The full range of collections care procedures should be covered, including:

- Documenting condition of collection: preservation survey
- Environmental monitoring and control: temperature
- Environmental monitoring and control: lighting in strongrooms, including switching off overnight
- Environmental monitoring and control: relative humidity
- Fire detection
- Fire suppression
- Water detection/protection
- Pest monitoring and control
- Cleaning regimes
- Handling and movement including from off-site storage
- Storage and packing
- Security: access/ key control, including contractor supervision
- Security: bags, coats, umbrellas etc.
- Security: use of cameras/ photographic equipment
- Security: incident reporting, including accidental damage, suspicious behaviour and theft
- Security: IT security and integrity for information and collections held digitally (including by third parties)
- Managing risk to material in outstores and in transfer between locations
- Using and creating surrogates
- Identifying material unfit for production

Guidelines on many of these issues are found in BS4971:17 and BS EN16893:2018

The procedures should specifically cover both analogue and digital material where appropriate and should cover strongroom, searchroom and workforce working areas.

Only authorised staff should have access to repository and immediate areas. All archive services should have an awareness and where possible mitigation of risks of water penetration and/or damp.

For digital preservation, assessment needs to understand if your digital collections do or will warrant preservation and if so the progress made towards enabling digital preservation. This should include evidence of organisational approval for developing a digital preservation function.

Assessment recognises that not all organisations will have a coherent digital preservation function in place and that some organisations have not yet undertaken any work towards digital preservation. However, it does require that if your service holds digital material (including digitised surrogates of analogue originals) or will hold digital material in the future, the service should be starting to put in place means to develop that function. This includes evidencing organisational approval for developing a digital preservation programme, identification of current and potential future digital holdings, managing risk to existing digital holdings, engagement with digital preservation initiatives such as regional collaborative projects and up-skilling of staff to develop awareness and capacity.

### Q101 and Q102 Assessment and management of analogue risk

Archive services should examine the risks to their collections and manage those risks. These risks might arise from any of the 10 agents of deterioration: physical forces; thieves and vandals; dissociation; fire; water; pests; pollutants; light; incorrect temperature and incorrect humidity. This risk assessment should be regularly reviewed and updated. Where material is stored away from the location it is produced, such as in an outstore or commercial storage, risks which may arise during the transfer process should also be assessed. The risk assessment should also cover these outstores, including conditions offered by commercial providers.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Private and third sector archive type 1*
The minimum level should be: basic packaging of archives using archive quality materials (e.g. boxes, Melinex sleeves). Clear set of access rules that protect sensitive materials. Basic research access rules (reading room - pencils only, invigilated access).

*Private and third sector archive type 2*
The minimum level should be basic packaging of archives using archive quality materials (e.g. boxes, Melinex sleeves). Clear set of access rules that protect sensitive materials. Basic research access rules (reading room - pencils only, invigilated access). Basic monitoring of temperature and humidity with weekly checks.

*Local authority, other public sector archives and private sector type 3*
Larger archives: full fire risk management strategy, which may include automatic fire suppression and does include appropriate detection and alarm systems covering sensitive alarms within repository and detection/alarms for whole building. Environmental conditions are monitored, controlled and data can be produced to evidence this in at minimum broad compliance with current standards. If water risk is identified include water alarms, maintenance regime. Security: alarm system linked to constant monitoring or directly to emergency services. Where digital collections are held, periodic checking of data integrity is essential in addition to security and control of the storage environment.

### Q103 Storage not meeting PD5454:2012 or BS4971/EN16893
If a service has storage that does not meet either of these standards in full this does not automatically preclude a service from being accredited. However, the service does need to demonstrate a full understanding of the risks arising from the storage situation and explain how these risks are managed.

### Q104 Environmental monitoring data
Applicants for Archive Service Accreditation are asked to produce 12 months of environmental monitoring records. This should be for the most recent 12-month period for which you can provide data.

The records should be in the form of an overview chart no more than 2x A4 size for each strongroom. If you have an existing reporting document that shows the environmental conditions over the period then please submit this instead. If you are unable to generate an overview chart for all storage areas then please provide the information in a report format. Records should only be submitted in PDF format to guarantee that all assessors can read them.

If you have acquired a newly built or adapted storage area within the one-year period, then please provide the temperature and humidity records as requested but note issues at the relevant question.

### Q106 Assessment and management of digital preservation procedures
This question asks you to undertake a self-assessment using a recognised maturity model for digital preservation, with commentary on how you have arrived at your self-assessment. If you already use the NDSA Levels of Preservation or DPC Rapid Assessment Model and have a completed self-assessment, please upload it here. Please note that the DPC RAM is a broader self-assessment model, covering some areas reviewed elsewhere in Accreditation. Assessment for this requirement will focus primarily on the Service Capabilities area of the model. Uploaded self-assessments should be sufficiently recent to cover your current digital preservation arrangements.

If you do not have a prepared self-assessment, please complete the matrix in the form, which is based on the NDSA's Levels of Preservation. This considers five functional areas of digital holdings. Use the comment box to explain areas of complexity, key risks and barriers to progress. The basic NDSA model is shown below, but for more information see https://ndsa.org/activities/levels-of-digital-preservation/ and particularly the Implementation Guide https://osf.io/nt8u9/ which explores the approach in full.

### *Q107 Assessment of digital preservation risk*
This question asks about how you have understood the level of risk to the digital collections which fall within your collecting remit. Your answer should encompass digital materials held in managed preservation systems/workflows and where relevant also material on legacy media or awaiting transfer until you have arrangements in place to manage preservation of digital collections. Where the self-assessment used in Q106 identifies areas where scores are lower than you would like, this may specifically be discussed. You may also have used a recognised risk tool such as DiAGRAM or CHARM which can be referenced here.

| Functional Area | Level | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Level 1 (Know your content) | Level 2 (Protect your content) | Level 3 (Monitor your content) | Level 4 (Sustain your content) |
| Storage | Have two complete copies in separate locations<br><br>Document all storage media where content is stored<br><br>Put content into stable storage | Have three complete copies with at least one copy in a separate geographic location<br><br>Document storage and storage media indicating the resources and dependencies they require to function | Have at least one copy in a geographic location with a different disaster threat than the other copies<br><br>Have at least one copy on a different storage media type<br><br>Track the obsolescence of storage and media | Have at least three copies in geographic locations, each with a different disaster threat<br><br>Maximize storage diversification to avoid single points of failure<br><br>Have a plan and execute actions to address obsolescence of storage hardware, software, and media |
| Integrity | Verify integrity information if it has been provided with the content<br><br>Generate integrity information if not provided with the content<br><br>Virus check all content; isolate content for quarantine as needed | Verify integrity information when moving or copying content<br><br>Use write-blockers when working with original media<br><br>Back up integrity information and store copy in a separate location from the content | Verify integrity information of content at fixed intervals<br><br>Document integrity information verification processes and outcomes<br><br>Perform audit of integrity information on demand | Verify integrity information in response to specific events or activities<br><br>Replace or repair corrupted content as necessary |
| Control | Determine the human and software agents that should be authorized to read, write, move, and delete content | Document the human and software agents authorized to read, write, move, and delete content and apply these | Maintain logs and identify the human and software agents that performed actions on content | Perform periodic review of actions/access logs |
| Metadata | Create inventory of content, also documenting current storage locations<br><br>Backup inventory and store at least one copy separately from content | Store enough metadata to know what the content is (this might include some combination of administrative, technical, descriptive, preservation, and structural) | Determine what metadata standards to apply<br><br>Find and fill gaps in your metadata to meet those standards | Record preservation actions associated with content and when those actions occur<br><br>Implement metadata standards chosen |
| Content | Document file formats and other essential content characteristics including how and when these were identified | Verify file formats and other essential content characteristics<br><br>Build relationships with content creators to encourage sustainable file choices | Monitor for obsolescence, and changes in technologies on which content is dependent | Perform migrations, normalizations, emulation, and similar activities that ensure content can be accessed |

**Supporting documentation needed**
Assessments against digital preservation maturity models
Procedural manuals will be required to be presented as evidence during visits

**Where evidence may be found**
Preservation manual
Risk assessment including use of recognised assessment tools
Evidence of achievement of stable conditions, pest monitoring outcomes, fire brigade liaison etc.
Procedural manuals including volunteer handbooks

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
• Have we identified the specific risks to our collections and managed them as far as possible, across media types?
• Are these procedures robust, regularly reviewed, well understood and comprehensive?
• Do the procedures follow the collections care and conservation policy and implement the collections care and conservation plan?
• Are the procedures monitored to ensure quality control?
• Do we have good established relationships with external providers who support our collections care procedures (e.g. facilities management, fire brigade, security monitoring services, expert conservation advice when not available in-house, third party software and storage providers, IT security providers)?
• Do we have sufficient provision for preservation of digital materials at present, and if not, what are our plans to develop this?

**Tools and resources**
ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) A guide to risk management of cultural heritage – a detailed methodology for identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating and monitoring risk to cultural heritage https://www.iccrom.org/sites/default/files/Guide-to-Risk-Managment_English.pdf

Collections Trust Collections Procedures – a whole range of procedures around managing objects, which can inform archive procedures http://collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum/procedures/

 The National Archives guidance on caring for archives including links into other resources https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managingyour-collection/caring-for-archives/ https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/our-research-and-academiccollaboration/our-research-projects/

National Conservation Service Benchmarks in Collection Care – the very popular and long-standing assessment tool to identify collections care issues to inform planning: http://www.ncs.org.uk/benchmarks3.php

Library of Congress guidance on care of different formats plus wider preservation issues: http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/

London Fire Brigade, Fire Safety Guidance: Heritage and Buildings of Special Interest – useful overview of risk management approaches GN80 - Heritage and Buildings of Special Interest (london-fire.gov.uk)

British Library Basic Preservation Guidance https://www.bl.uk/conservation/guides Screen Heritage UK Moving Image Collections Assessment Toolkit - a basic guide to caring for and making accessible moving image collections. It covers collecting, inspecting, storing, handling, preservation copying and documentation. http://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/screen-heritage-uk-moving-image-collectionshandbook/

The Archives and Records Association Best Practice Guidelines – cover a range of topics including conservation subjects and looking after film collections https://www.archives.org.uk/resources. Specific guidance on security is provided https://www.archives.org.uk/security-guidance/security-guidance

The National Archives Assessing and Managing the Risks of split-site archive services – guidance on the issues and how to manage them of having archive services on more than one site http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/split-site-services.pdf

Digital Preservation Coalition, Digital Preservation Handbook – a guide to the organisational and operational issues to achieve digital preservation http://dpconline.org/handbook

Digital Preservation Coalition, Rapid Assessment Model, provides a means of understanding the organisational health of a digital preservation body, including active preservation at bit-level and above. https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/dpc-ram

The National Archives, DiAGRAM, a tool to help archivists to identify, understand and manage risks to their digital collections https://diagram.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

Maureen Pennock, The CHARM Digital Preservation Risk Model: a model, tool and conceptual framework for understanding digital preservation risk https://discovery.dundee.ac.uk/en/studentTheses/disentangling-digital-preservation-risk

### 2.4.4 Disaster recovery plan and procedures

**Significance**

If a service is faced with a sudden threat to its collections, such as a flood or fire, it must be able to respond promptly and sensibly to minimise the risk to collections. The best approach is to be proactive in foreseeing the possibility rather than reactive once the event has happened. A plan is vital to provide information on which prompt decisions can be made, possibly in a chaotic situation. A good plan also provides the basis for the service continuing to function and returning to normal once the immediate threat has passed, ensuring business continuity. Finally, preparing a disaster recovery plan enables a service to identify and mitigate potential threats, develop good conservation practices, identify priorities in collections and can provide the opportunity to develop staff, and create cross-service and cross-departmental working,

**What assessment is looking for**

Disaster recovery and continuity plans are of particular importance and should be based upon a risk assessment of the potential threats. Archive services should consider:

- Risk assessment of threats
- Procedures and processes to be followed before, during and after an emergency event
- Arrangements for the workforce, visitors, collections and business continuity, on all sites and how these are communicated appropriately to different stakeholder groups
- Identification of priority areas of service delivery and planning and resources to deliver these according to circumstance
- How the plan will be developed, disseminated and tested
- Evidence of how the archive service works with the emergency services, and of any other relevant emergency plans
- The procedure for reviewing the disaster recovery and continuity plans

This requirement should cover both analogue and digital materials where appropriate. Disaster plans need to take account of broader circumstances and wider institutional disaster planning and available resources. Plans should be reviewed and approved by top management. Disaster planning may include commercial providers and/or an element of regional/local planning to offer mutual support in the event of a disaster.

There should be evidence that the plan is regularly tested and amended accordingly.

If the collections are housed in commercial storage for which the archive service does not have direct responsibility, the service should have specific plans for disaster recovery at these sites.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Private and third sector archive type1*
A minimum provision would include: a list of important material to be salvaged in priority order; disaster box with key contact information. Have a basic analysis of risks and threats to the collection and identified steps to reduce them e.g. know where the stopcocks are, fuse boxes, and clear risks like valley roofs in need of regular clearing. There may be agreements with larger archive services in the area to provide support in the event of an emergency. Where appropriate, a wider organisational disaster or business continuity plan should acknowledge the needs of unique collections.

*Local authority, other public sector archives, Private and third sector archive type 2&3*
Full disaster plan, perhaps with support from an external provider. This may be part of a wider institutional plan where relevant but should have clear provision for unique collections.

***Q109 Have a disaster plan available for inspection***
A disaster recovery and continuity plan should be in place but should not be submitted with an application for Archive Service Accreditation for security reasons. However, it will be examined on a validation visit.

***Q110 Development, dissemination, testing and use of disaster recovery plan***
Disaster recovery plans and procedures should be tested and reviewed annually as a minimum. The review should include personnel changes and contact information for staff and support services, changes to buildings, sites and collections. Testing should comprise of a salvage exercise with staff and a visit by fire brigade staff where possible.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Disaster recovery plan and manual – make available on request

**Where evidence may be found**
Preservation manual

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Are risk assessments complete?
- Are all sites covered, including commercial storage?
- Are these procedures robust, regularly reviewed, well understood and comprehensive?
- Are the procedures monitored to ensure quality control?

- Are the procedures tested on a regular basis, with the emergency services where appropriate?
- Are digital materials covered sufficiently including response to cybersecurity incidents?

**Tools and resources**

The National Archives *Protecting archives and manuscripts against disasters* – a guide to preparing reacting to flood, fire and terrorist/bomb attach plus writing a recovery plan
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/memo6.pdf

The US National Archive and Records Administration *Disaster response and recovery* - a series of online guides for dealing with damaged material
https://www.archives.gov/preservation/disaster-response

IFLA *Disaster planning* – a guide for libraries and archives covering prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
https://archive.ifla.org/VI/6/dswmedia/en/pdf/txt_sini.pdf

ISO21110: 2019 *Information and documentation — Emergency preparedness and response*: an international standard for emergency planning, response and recovery for all types of an archive, library or museum collections in light of other existing plans. It provides responders and other stakeholders with an outline for planning, responding and recovering, and outlines a cycle of preparing for and reviewing a plan.

**SECTION 3: Access and Engagement**

Archive Service Accreditation recognises that archive services are established to meet the needs of different communities and therefore have different approaches to enable access and engagement.

This section seeks to explore access and engagement based upon the following definitions:

*Communities:* the standard is based on the concept of a community or communities that the archive service is constituted to serve. In this specific sense the word 'community' does not necessarily refer simply to the population of a political unit or physical area (e.g. a local authority or town). For many archive services the communities will extend beyond the formal boundaries of its responsible body (government, educational institution, private or voluntary organisation). The archive service will probably serve multiple communities: local, national and international; different communities of researchers and of other types of direct and indirect users and of non-users. Different elements of the communities may attract different priorities, types and levels of service. The 'communities' to be served are defined through the stated purpose of the archive services.

*Access:* Right, opportunity or means of finding, using or approaching items and/or information about items. This is a wide definition of access that includes on-site and off-site access, support for the core business of the governing body, digital access and outreach and learning activities. Related to access is:

*Engagement:* Engagement means more than simply contact with archives and archive services; it also involves understanding and a sense of personal value, ownership, and empowerment. Engagement may be with internal and/or external stakeholders.

**Participation:** Levels of participation are a way to measure how much people are involved in a project or decision, the extent to which they are engaged with your archive service. These levels can range from no influence or interest to having the power to make decisions about the service.
- **Informing**: Providing information about your service
- **Consulting**: Asking for public input into your service through surveys and other feedback mechanisms
- **Involving**: Responding to feedback
- **Collaborate**: Working together to develop the service
- **Empower**: People have power to make decisions about the service

## 3.1 Access and Engagement Policies

**Significance**

Ultimately archives are collected so they can be used. Having a clearly thought out and planned approach to providing access to and engagement with collections ensures that the service is identifying and meeting the needs of its communities specific to their own service be they the general public, internal to the organisation, onsite or remote, current or potential service users. The policy provides the rationale and aspiration for access and engagement and drives for planning and implementing how people and communities are engaged with collections.

**What assessment is looking for**

Your policy (or suite of policies) should show how you meet the requirements relating to access and engagement. It should outline all the methods of access to collections and means of engagement with people, internally and externally to the archive service, including virtual and on-site activities areas such as outreach and education where relevant. The policy should describe any restrictions placed upon access as part of collections care, statutory compliance or policy of the governing body. The policy needs to ensure that it is easy for everyone to understand how and to what extent they may engage and participate with collections and the service.

Archive Service Accreditation acknowledges that levels of collections access and engagement should be appropriate to the organisation's mission statement, values and the nature and scale of its collection.

The policy, and all other access and engagement documentation, should be appropriate to the type of communities served. Some services are primarily focused on providing services internally so their access offer will be focused on internal users or selective external audiences. Smaller services may have a smaller range of communities than large services and so will deliver a smaller scale access and engagement offer and documentation that reflects this.

**Q112 Provide a copy of the access and engagement policy (or suite of policies)**

As a general guide, policies on access and engagement should include:

- a definition of the community or communities served (including internal) and a description of how the organisation aims to provide access to its archive services, collections and facilities, in line with its mission statement.
- a commitment to identify and comply with relevant legislation and ethical codes in relation to access and engagement.
- a commitment to plan and develop access and engagement, including seeking to meet the needs of communities.

- information on the restrictions and responsibilities surrounding the use of archives and how these are communicated to all.
- information on means of access e.g. use of surrogates, handling, exhibition and display, copying and reproduction.
- a commitment to use/promote (or not) certain forms of access to archives e.g. publication of research, external access audits, consultation on specific topics with community outreach to groups, promotion on intranet, use of social media, appearances in exhibitions internally and externally, support for institutional fundraising.
- a commitment to promoting a culture of customer care, ensuring that everyone, provided with courteous, effective assistance.

*Access and engagement methods*

Policies should cover how access is provided on-site and off-site, both digital and physical, provided by the archive service, through a parent body or through partnerships. They should outline when and how surrogates are available to users. The archive service should also consider the different needs of different communities, alongside any access restrictions for different groups, and make these explicit in the policy.

*Access restrictions*

Policies should cover how people can engage with the archives on-site and off-site, both digitally and physically, whether provided by the archive service or through partnerships. They should outline how this is managed and how risk of damage is mitigated. The responsibility of the users in delivering this should be clear and communicated.

The archive service should examine and provide details of any legislative impact on access. It should also advise of any charges that may be incurred i.e. commercial licensing, media work. The policy should describe the management of any access restrictions by depositors or as the result of legislation or organisational policy. A non-exhaustive list of legislation that might impact on the work of the service includes:

| | |
|---|---|
| • Local Government (Records) Acts 1962 | • Freedom of Information Act 2000 |
| • Local Government Act 1972 | • Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 |
| • Public Records Act 1958, as amended 1967 | • Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994 |
| • Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 and predecessors | • Current Data Protection legislation |
| • Public Records (Jersey) Law 2002, as amended 2006 | • Tithe Document Rules 1960 and 1963 |

| | |
|---|---|
| • The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 | • Parochial Records and Registers Measure |
| • Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 | • Environmental Information Regulations 2004 |
| • Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 s60 | • Manorial Document Rules 1959 and 1967 |
| • The Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923 | • Isle of Man Public Records Act 1999 |
| • Companies Act 2006 and predecessors | • Charities Act 2006 and predecessors |
| • Equality Act 2010 | • Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 |
| • Equality Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 | Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 |
| • Safeguarding regulations | |

*Additional considerations for Access and Engagement*
All archive services should have an up to date directory entry in discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The access and engagement policy or suite of policies should be published online.

The policy should be supported by top management and reviewed regularly following feedback to ensure that barriers to use are removed where possible.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives*
The policies on collections access and engagement should state why and how specific classes of records have restricted access under the Freedom of Information, Data Protection and other similar acts.

The archive service should provide details of the opening hours of its public searchroom and details of its remote services.

For Type 1 Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives the policies may be part of the policy of a larger organisation. In this instance these provisions should be mentioned specifically.

*Private and third sector archives*
It is understood that these archive services may have a more internal focus than other types of archive services and this should be explained in the policy (or suite of policies). The provisions for internal and external access should be clear and well promoted to all sections of the community or communities.

The access policy (or suite of policies) should state why and how specific classes of records have restricted access under organisational policy or legislation. It should clearly indicate how decisions on granting access to collections are made.

The provision of some form of public access to collections is an eligibility criterion for the Archive Service Accreditation Scheme.  This can be via a publicly available searchroom or through mediated methods such as online provision or research by the archive service workforce. The archive service should provide specific details of how it meets this criterion.

*Organisations that provide services to people in Wales*
The Welsh Language Act 1993 establishes the principle of language equality and notes specific steps to be followed by public bodies such as local authorities, health boards and government agencies – including organisations outside Wales that provide services to people in Wales.[3]

There are a number of schemes which externally validate visitor assurance or customer service accreditation/awards e.g. Customer Service Excellence. These could be used to demonstrate the effective implementation of your access policies and are requested as evidence if you have acquired them. They are not obligatory for Archive Service Accreditation as it is recognised that externally validated visitor awards are not appropriate for all types of services.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Directory entry in discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk
Access and engagement policy or suite of policies/documents for engaging with stakeholders
Externally validated visitor assurance accreditation/award (if available)

**Where evidence may be found**
Access and Engagement policy
Community Engagement policy
Outreach policy
Inclusion policy
Safeguarding policy
Social media policy
Service Charter
Statement on access to restricted materials
Loan policy
Exhibition and display policy
Media policy
Web policy

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http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/38/contents

Externally validated visitor assurance accreditation/award

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Who are the primary communities the service serves? What do they require from the service and how can/could they benefit from the service?
- Do we know who the service is not reaching?
- Do we know who the service could reach and how could they benefit from engagement?
- Do we understand and engage with internal communities proactively? How is this demonstrated in policy and planning?
- Does the service provide a range of means to engage with its archives that are proportionate to its mission and purpose and in line with its values?
- Does the level of provision of public access meet the scaled requirements outlined above? Is the level provided appropriate to the organisation's mission statement and the nature and scale of its collection?
- Is it clear and publicised to all how they can engage with the collections?
- Are any restrictions to access clear and publicised?
- Is the balance between collection care and access planned and explained?
- Have we identified and applied all relevant legislation? Have the legal limitations applied been explained to all?

Does the policy include information regarding:
- Definition of communities
- Commitment to meet relevant legislation and ethical codes
- Description of the access restrictions and responsibilities
- Information on the means of access
- A commitment to use/promote (or not) certain forms of engagement
- A commitment to promoting a culture of customer care

**Tools and resources**
PSQG *Standard for Access to Archives 2008* – enables services to assess how they provide access
https://www.archives.org.uk/resources

The National Archives *Inclusive Practice* - A range of resources to help develop inclusive practice within an archive service
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/inclusion/introduction-to-inclusion/

Archives & Records Association Diversity Allies page includes a downloadable list of external sources https://www.archives.org.uk/diversity-inclusion-allies and a series of blogs outline case studies and developing practice
https://www.archives.org.uk/diversity-allies-blogs

Historic England Inclusive Heritage Advice Hub includes a range of practical advice with both a workforce and audience focus that might be transferable to archive services https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/training-skills/heritageskills-cpd/inclusion/

Art Fund, Community Engagement Toolkit – a resource which provides guidance on different types of community engagement, how to align community engagement with strategy and how to plan community engagement projects. https://bibli.artfund.org/m/a4c124fb3c881ff/original/ArtFund_GoingPlaces_CommunityEngagement.pdf

The National Archives *Legislation and Regulations* – guidance on how statutory requirements affect archives and their provision of access to collections https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/legislation/

The National Archives *Research Reports* – includes a section on ''Developing your archives' and 'Demonstrating Impact' https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/research-reports/

### 3.2 Access and Engagement Plans and Planning

This section is about how your service analyses the needs of your existing and potential communities and how the service is planning to meet that need. Throughout the planning process, it is vital to ensure that access and engagement encourages diversity of use and to consider those who are not currently using the service. This may be delivered in partnership or through wider organisational activity such as education and outreach teams with a wider remit.

### 3.2.1 Understanding your communities, and responding to their needs

**Significance**

A service can only meet the needs of its communities when it understands the nature of those communities and their needs. When a service understands the communities it aims to work with, it can develop services and activities which are relevant, inclusive and accessible, thus ensuring the service remains relevant and valued and use of collections is optimised. By understanding the communities, the service can also prioritise where it will focus its activities and thus maximise the return on the investment of resources in engagement work. This understanding helps the service to justify the use of its resources to funders and decision makers and demonstrates how the archive service delivers for and with communities. All services should have a clear understanding of how their work supports the mission of their governing body.

Understanding communities also enables the service to reflect on what it delivers and consider what it should continue, discontinue and begin to do. It provides the opportunity to look at the service holistically, looking at how its collections shape its communities and vice versa, and how the service can integrate activities across collections management and engagement to meet the needs of the communities it serves.

**What assessment is looking for**

This section requires the archive service to assess the needs and interests of its communities and to think about how communities are both represented and engaged in future work. This enables the archive service to plan to meet the requirements of existing and potential users and improve the service offer. This includes examinations of access preferences, identification of barriers to participation and feedback on levels of awareness of the service.

You should take specific note of the definitions of communities and consider people engaging from a parent organisation as well as external users. For example, your community may include depositors, other teams within your organisation, funders and local communities as well as direct service users. Some services may have a formal audience segmentation and analysis systems in place and others may assess

needs through user/visitor forums, academic round tables, community surveys or through analysing who engages with the service and who does not.

The archive service should use all the information gathered on communities to influence forward planning access and engagement activities, and all areas of collections management, including collections development, information and care and conservation. This should be undertaken in line with the organisation's mission and values and the scale and nature of the collection. For example, a national institution would be expected to have a detailed plan covering numerous communities and diverse methods of service delivery. A small Type 1 organisation might have a much simpler and smaller scale plan.

Accreditation recognises that some services will primarily engage internal or non-public audiences/communities. This may be the main focus of their analysis and the resultant planning to ensure they are providing appropriate services to meet the needs of their communities. Public-facing services should in turn ensure that they also consider the needs of their internal audiences/communities to support the service's resilience and ability to deliver.

### Q121 How do you measure the impact of your activities on your communities?

This question is designed to capture information on how you benchmark and evaluate the work you do with your communities. Your response should include reference to the tools you use. This may include tracking use (both virtual and in person), using an outcomes framework, feedback forms, survey responses, focus group reports or user group meeting reports. In a smaller organisation, one to one feedback may be a vital element of understanding impact.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local Authority and Other Public Sector Archives & Private and third sector archives (type 3)*
The archive service should have a number of regular methods of finding out the needs of all communities and should be proactively working to expand the reach of the service to identified communities. This can be achieved in a number of ways, for example, focus groups, user groups/panels, visitor books, comment cards and questionnaires. These should be analysed to produce a clear view of the current usage and influence the intended audience for engagement work, whether this means offering more to key communities and/or seeking to reach out to new communities. The archive service should be able to show how the results of the needs analysis are fed back into the forward planning and policymaking process.

*Private and third sector archives (type 1&2)*

The main focus for these archive services is not standardised but is often to serve internal communities. The service should examine how it consults with its communities and should describe this consultation. It should have a clear understanding of how the service fits into communities and the governing body, and how its work can support the wider mission of the governing body.

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
Examples of types of identification and analysis

**Where evidence may be found**
ARA Survey of Visitors to UK Archives results
ARA Distance Enquiry Services Survey
Analysis of user figures
Analysis of levels of use of online resources (internally and externally to the organisation)
User survey or report on internal use
Audience development plans
Reviews of internal communications methods
Heritage Lottery Fund Activity plans
Marketing plans
Focus group or user group meeting reports
Service Forward plan
Digitisation strategy
Community Engagement plans
Findings from [F] 'Stakeholder engagement', [L] 'Existing Collections – Reinterpretation / Re-presentation of items' and [M] 'Audience engagement' in Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool (see Q17)

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- What is the community or communities we are constituted to serve?
- How do we understand the key groupings within our communities?
- Do we know who are the main communities for the service and what they require from the service and how they can/could benefit from the service? How far do we already reach these?
- Who are our potential beneficiaries who are not already engaged and how could they benefit from the service?
- How do we find out their needs/barriers to access?
- Have we examined off-site and on-site engagement equally?
- How do we use data on use of digital collections to understand our communities/audiences?
- Are our digital collections fully accessible to all users?

**Tools and resources**

The National Archives Inclusion Hub – a resource hub for ways of working which support an inclusive service.
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/inclusion/

The National Archives *Talking to your community* – a range of online advice about understanding and engaging your community developing formal and informal learning, and developing audiences generally
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/talking-to-your-community/

ARA-Accreditation resilience indicator is a self-assessment tool to identify overall service resilience. Many elements relate to the service's engagement with wider stakeholders and can contribute to understanding key relationships:
https://www.archives.org.uk/what-we-do/resilience-indicator.html

Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge and the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) An Ethical Framework for Collaborating with Communities – includes a framework which can be used as a starting point for working with communities
https://le.ac.uk/-/media/uol/docs/research-centres/rcmg/publications/an-ethical-framework-for-collaborating-with-communities_final.pdf

University of Leicester Trans-Inclusive Culture: Guidance on advancing trans inclusion for museums, galleries, archives and heritage organisations
https://le.ac.uk/rcmg/research-archive/trans-inclusive-culture#:~:text=In%20the%20context%20of%20growing,has%20developed%20comprehensive%20guidance%20on

Wellcome Collection and University of Leicester An ethical approach to interpreting disability and difference: Guidance https://wellcomecollection.org/works/jywe7h9f

UAL: Decolonising arts institute and Contemporary Art Society – Doing the work, embedding anti-racism and decolonisation into museum practice – a provocation piece.
https://www.arts.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/359321/4_Barokka_compressed.pdf

OF/BY/FOR ALL Partner Power: A technique for building authentic community partnerships
https://blog.ofbyforall.org/tools/partner-power

### 3.2.2 Documented plans to improve access and engagement

**Significance**

Plans are the means by which the service's mission and policies are implemented. Planning for engagement provides the mechanism by which a service prioritises the communities it works with and works out the range, type and scale of access and engagement methods it will use. In so doing the service must decide what resources this will require, what resources are available and how it will meet gaps in that resourcing (e.g. seeking grant funding, using volunteers, developing staff skills). Once the service has a plan it can use this to explain its work to and with communities., It can also be used to feed into other planning and decision-making processes, engage potential partners and advocate for resources.

The plan also provides the benchmark for measuring the performance of the service and individual staff. Well thought-out planning enables a service to make best use of its resources, advocate for its needs and present a professional attitude to all.

**What assessment is looking for**

This requirement follows on from those that analyse audiences/communities, their needs and interests. Archive services are required to develop this analysis into a plan to improve access and engagement for their identified communities. The archive service should create the plan based on clear evidence of needs and interests, in line with the organisation's mission and values. Planning documentation should be proportionate to the organisation's scale.

This section assesses your plans for a range of activities. The types of activities that may be included here are:

- Publicity, internal and external
- Digital, analogue and outreach activities
- Internal promotional activities and liaison with key teams/departments
- Contributing content to museums or wider organisation education offers and participation activities
- Learning projects and programmes
- Engagement projects with specific groups or communities
- Events programmes
- Exhibitions and displays
- Use of social media
- Provision of digitised material online
- Web accessibility
- Publications
- Research services
- Volunteering
- Partnership working

- Contributing data to national and international portals

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local government and publicly funded archive services*
Here you should describe in detail your approach and plans to provide a range of access and engagement activities. You should describe your target audiences, engagement activities and means of evaluation. All but the smallest archive services will undertake some form of this work independently, but most services will also undertake such work in partnership with others.

*Private and third sector archives (type 1&2)*
The main focus for these archive services is not standardised but may be to serve internal audiences. Internal audiences should be aware of the archive service and how to engage with it. The archive service should use a variety of promotional methods to reach their target audiences and should test these methods.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Planning documentation on access and engagement improvements

**Where evidence may be found**
Improvement plans
Audience development plan
Publicity/communications plan
Volunteering strategy
Corporate heritage or cultural strategy
Access and engagement plan
Inclusion plan
Learning plan
Cataloguing plan/Catalogue backlog plan
Forward plan
National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity plan

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- How can we best meet the needs of, engage and empower our communities?
- How can we remove barriers to access and engagement?
- What are our priorities for improving access and how will we achieve them?
- How do we balance online and onsite access and engagement?
- What are our planned methods of engagement?
- What partnerships do we engage in to broaden our access offer?
- Do we need to review opening hours and/or our online offer to meet community needs?

**Tools and resources**

Archives West Midlands, *Equality, Diversity and Belonging Self-Assessment Toolkit* enables a quick appraisal of an organisation's current position with regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging across archive service functions. Elements of the SAT engage with audience engagement and presenting collections to varied audiences, and can support active planning [https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EDIB-SAT-Beta-version.pdf](https://www.archiveswestmidlands.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EDIB-SAT-Beta-version.pdf)

Art Fund, Community Engagement Toolkit – a resource which aims to provide guidance on the types of community engagement and how to align community engagement with strategy and how to plan community engagement projects. [https://bibli.artfund.org/m/a4c124fb3c881ff/original/ArtFund_GoingPlaces_CommunityEngagement.pdf](https://bibli.artfund.org/m/a4c124fb3c881ff/original/ArtFund_GoingPlaces_CommunityEngagement.pdf)

The Government Digital Services *Service Standard* helps to understand interconnections and to think and plan user requirements in digital services: [https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/service-standard](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/service-standard).

### 3.3 Access and Engagement Activities

This section of the standard covers:

- How the archive service seeks to provide a range of access and engagement activities
- How the service provides access to information about collections and services, on and off-site

Please note that for the purposes of access 'off-site' refers to delivery of services off-site, not collections held off-site. 'Off-site delivery' means any service that does not require the user to come to the service's premises and includes both physical and digital services.

### 3.3.1 A variety of means of access and engagement with the collections and archive services is available.

### Significance

Engaging and connecting with communities is an essential element of managing an archive service. This section requires that services develop their offer in response to and in partnership with their communities. Developing and delivering a range of engagement opportunities with communities' users can empower participants and enable the most efficient service delivery.

People's familiarity with and knowledge of archives varies widely. Some are very experienced, seeking detailed information across many collections and aiming to spend a long time with original material. Others want precise and fast answers to particular questions including for immediate business requirements, and others are entirely new to accessing archives, needing guidance and support, and perhaps encountering only a small selection of material. They may approach the service through analogue or digital means, on-site or virtually.

The purpose of engagement with the service also differs greatly. Some users have personal, possibly sensitive or emotionally powerful reasons for undertaking research. Internal audiences may be seeing to engage with archives for legal, branding or communications purposes. Others seek to develop skills or achieve qualifications. Some are undertaking work activities, either for commercial reasons or as a professional academic. Some come for leisure purposes and the sheer joy of delving through historical documents. There will be those who find the service or collections by accident and may, if working online or encountering the collections through off-site work with partners, never really appreciate the existence of the service itself. Such communities require different types and levels of service, within the capacity of the archive service to deliver varied opportunities.

### What assessment is looking for

All archive services should provide appropriate ways for their communities to engage with the collections and archive services. These may include exhibitions, events and

activities, research services, community websites, volunteering, to working with archive staff on branding exercises. The range will vary according to the organisation's mission and community, and the nature and scale of its collection.

**Scaled guidance**: relevant to specific archive types and scale

*Local government, publicly funded archive services and private and third sector archives (type 3)*
Here you should describe the ways in which your communities can engage with archives and archive services. You should describe how you provide learning and volunteering opportunities with archive collections. All but the smallest archive services will undertake some form of this work independently, but most services will also undertake such engagement work in partnership with others.

*Private and third sector archives (type 1&2)*
The main focus for these archive services is not standardised but may be to serve internal communities. Internal communities should be aware of the archive service and how to engage with it. The archive service should use a variety of methods to enable audiences to engage with and use the collections. There should be some form of public access to be eligible for archive service accreditation.

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
Information on application form

**Where evidence may be found**
Service plans
Activity plan
Examples of project outputs
Publicity programme
Events Programme

*Q125 What access and engagement activity (or activities) are you most proud of, and why?*
This question provides an opportunity for you to highlight a specific example of an activity or range of activities which demonstrates the strength of the service's engagement activity and the impact it had on participants and the service.

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- How can people become involved and use the archives besides undertaking research?
- To what extent have communities helped to shape activities?
- How do we engage communities?
- How does my organisation use the archives to support its wider mission?
- How do our partnerships provide opportunities for access and engagement?

- Do we offer activities both on and off-site, and does this allow our users to engage with our services?

**Tools and resources**

The National Archives *Developing Access and Participation*
[http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/developing-access-and-participation.pdf](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/developing-access-and-participation.pdf)

The National Archives *Understanding Your Community toolkit*
[https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/talking-to-your-community/understanding-your-community/](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/talking-to-your-community/understanding-your-community/)

The Managing Business Archives website shows a range of ways that corporate archives are used to support wider business activity:
[https://managingbusinessarchives.co.uk/case-studies/](https://managingbusinessarchives.co.uk/case-studies/)

For voluntary sector archives, case studies are available at
[https://www.voluntarysectorarchives.org.uk/case-study/](https://www.voluntarysectorarchives.org.uk/case-study/)

Tate *Access and archives toolkit* – sharing of the learning of Tate during its five-year programme which digitised over 52,000 items and pieces from Tate's Archive while developing associated engagement activities at Tate Britain, on the Tate website, and with partners across the UK. Guidance includes funding and managing a digitisation project, designing an archive digitisation project, publishing archive collections online and supporting learning and participation with archives.
[https://www.tate.org.uk/art/archive/archives-access-toolkit](https://www.tate.org.uk/art/archive/archives-access-toolkit)

Research Libraries UK *Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Libraries* is a series of recorded talks giving examples of different approaches to presenting and making archives accessible - [https://www.rluk.ac.uk/icil-on-demand/](https://www.rluk.ac.uk/icil-on-demand/)

National Lottery Heritage Fund pages on inclusion provide guidance and links to a range of resources
[https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/good-practice-guidance/inclusion](https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/good-practice-guidance/inclusion)

### 3.3.2 Access to and information on collections and archive services

**Significance**

Archive services need to offer a realistic and reliable level of service to their communities, within the resources available. Services should engage actively with their communities to explain how they can access collections and related services, and to ensure communities are aware of how they can participate and have a voice within the archive service. Creating a service offer that does not meet community needs can create additional barriers. A structured assessment of how your service provides information on accessing collections and services will enable you to identify good practice, gaps and opportunities for developing methods of communicating information as well as identifying potential audiences and appropriate messages. Such information can be an opportunity to promote the service and present a particular 'brand'.

**What assessment is looking for**

This requirement covers providing access to the content of archive collections and how this is communicated. It examines opening hours, location, service delivery interfaces, public facilities, published information and online presence. Where material is stored off-site, assessment also seeks to understand how this can be accessed and how information is presented about this.

Services should have examined how best to provide access to collections and services, while both protecting and allowing ease of access to the collections. In some cases this will be via staff undertaking research on behalf of users or by providing online access to digital images only. There should be practical information on how to access this service. Archive Service Accreditation acknowledges that some questions in this area are not relevant to archive services that provide only online access.

Access information should be regularly reviewed and updated.

At a minimum published information about the archive service should cover:
- Location of archive service and how to get there, if relevant
- Details of archive services and facilities
- Opening times and arrangements
- Out-of-hours and appointment-only arrangements, if relevant
- Accessibility arrangements

**Q132 Addressing access and inclusion needs of communities**

This question is not just about your processes and polices but also about your culture, so consider things such as staff training and raising awareness as well as practical solutions. Include online and other remote services as well as on-site.

**Information and supporting documentation needed**
Information on application form

**Where evidence may be found**
Entries in discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk, Archives Hub, AIM 25, Archives Wales, Your Scottish Archives or similar.
Archive service website
Archive service/Governing body intranet site
Social Media or networking sites
Findings from '[N] Access restriction decisions' in Archives West Midlands' The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Self-Assessment Tool (see Q17)

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Is it easy to find information about the archive service?
- How do community members find out information about the archive service?
- Is it easy for people to find specific records and items of interest in the collections?
- How easy is it to access finding aids?
- Is access information regularly reviewed and updated?

**Tools and resources**
Many different types of archive services have advice on accessing collections online. This can provide a useful starting point. For example, The National Archives website may give you some ideas
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research

W3C *Web Accessibility Guidelines* - essential guidance on providing accessible websites to users with a variety of needs.
https://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/accessibility

UK public sector websites are currently expected to meet WCAG 2.1
https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/

### 3.3.3 Procedures for access and engagement

**Significance**

It is important to ensure that procedures and standards for access are practical, suitable for the type of user and ensure the continued security and accessibility of collections. Systematically reviewing these processes and standards also gives the service the opportunity to identify opportunities for improvement, streamline processes, overcome gaps in provision and refresh the practical application of standards.

**What assessment is looking for**

This requirement ensures that effective procedures and standards are in place for access services and that these are communicated to all.

Procedures for access will vary according to the mission and scale of the archive service, but may include:

- Reader registration for on-site and/or online access
- Seat reservations and booking systems
- New user induction
- Procedures for internal organisational users where these differ from public procedures
- Use of finding aids
- Ordering and returning documents
- Making an off-site enquiry
- Special access to restricted access or 'unfit' documents
- Access to documents stored off-site
- Document handling
- Obtaining copies (on and off-site)
- Accessing born-digital records
- Making a comment or complaint
- Accessing records or indexes on partner websites
- Research service (paid or otherwise/ internal and external)
- Photography procedure
- Arranging to use services offered to groups

These procedures should be adequate for the expected engagement levels, both on and off-site.

Access processes should be regularly reviewed and updated.

**Q138 Providing access to born-digital records**

It is recognised that many archives are in the early stages of providing access to digital records. This question is an opportunity to discuss how you are providing access to born-digital records. You may find it useful to reference the DLF Levels of

Born-Digital Access to outline areas where you make provision and where you are aware of needing to develop further.

**Supporting documentation needed**
Procedures to be available or explained on request as not all procedures may be documented.

**Where evidence may be found**
Procedural handbook
Feedback through questions in ARA visitor survey on service quality or other visitor surveys and feedback mechanisms
Service website: information for visitors
Promotional literature for the service

**Questions to consider when formulating responses**
- Can people easily access information about your services?
- Are procedures in place to support all relevant methods of engagement, providing inclusive access to collections and collections information?
- Do the procedures align with your organisational values?
- Are procedures the same for people internal and external to the service?
- Are they communicated effectively to internal and external audiences?
- Is there capacity to deal with the numbers of off-site and on-site audiences?
- How do you manage bookings for visits/off-site enquiries?
- What facilities are there for group activities?
- Is your service easy to use and effective in helping the user find information or engage with collections?
- Are access processes regularly reviewed and updated?
- Is there anything else you could be doing to improve access?

**Tools and resources**
Digital Library Federation, Levels of Born-Digital Access – a first attempt to define what effective born-digital access looks like. This is a maturity model similar to the Levels of Preservation referenced at 2.4.3, and may similarly be useful to explore strengths and weaknesses of the approach. https://osf.io/r5f78/

International Council on Archives, Guidance on Access to Childhood Records. This guidance provides best practice on managing access to archives related to individuals who were either adopted of placed in care during childhood. Please refer to other service specific guides where required.
https://www.ica.org/resource/guidance-on-access-to-childhood-records-access-rights-of-adults-to-documents-relating-to-their-own-childhood-experience-of-adoption-or-being-in-care/

Information Commissioner's Office *Guide to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*
https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/

An online search for 'procedures for accessing archives' will bring up the written procedures made available to the public for a large number of archive services.