

Review and refresh of the Archive Service Accreditation programme - phase 1

Final report

Version	Description	Authors
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1. Introduction and methodology

1.1 Archive Service Accreditation

Archive Service Accreditation is the United Kingdom (UK) **management standard for archive services**, supported by the UK Archive Service Accreditation Partnership of the Archives and Records Association (UK), Archives and Records Council Wales, National Records of Scotland, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Scottish Council on Archives, The National Archives, and the Welsh Government. The programme provides a Standard and supporting documentation, which can be freely used by archive services to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to develop and improve over time.

The **Archive Service Accreditation Standard is made up of three sections**: 'Organisational health,' 'Collections' and 'Stakeholders and their experiences.' Each section is broken down into requirements which are further grouped into:

- Policies – describing the overall intentions and direction of an organisation as formally expressed by top management.
- Plans - 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.
- 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.

The **Archive Service Accreditation Committee is responsible for reviewing policy and considering matters of quality assurance** relating to Archive Service Accreditation. The Committee is made up of representatives from the partnership and recruited members. It is chaired by a representative nominated by the Archives and Records Association (UK).

Members of the Committee are also responsible for **approving accredited archive services through the Archive Service Accreditation Panels**. The Committee forms regular Panels to consider applications and make awards. An archive service makes an application through its home nation assessor body. An assessor reviews the application. A percentage of applications are validated by an assessor visit, in some cases accompanied by a peer reviewer (an archive professional with relevant experience). Based on the application form, supporting documents (and findings of the validation visit where appropriate) the assessor writes an assessment report and makes a recommendation on whether to award Archive Service Accreditation.

1.2 10-year review

Archive Service Accreditation was developed collaboratively through a co-creation process with archives across the United Kingdom in 2012-2013. The first awards were made in November 2013. As the programme neared its 10th anniversary, **the Accreditation programme partners wished to review and update the programme through further sector consultation**, addressing areas which have been identified as requiring further focus including:

- Embedding inclusive practice
- Digital preservation delivery
- Environment and sustainability
- Audiences and future user expectations

The National Archives on behalf of the UK Archive Service Accreditation Partnership **commissioned Kazky** (a trading name of Kevinjbolton Ltd) to carry out the first phase of the review - consultation and research. The Kazky team consisted of Kevin Bolton, Larysa Bolton, Caroline Sampson, and Sarah Wickham. They were supported by Dr Safina Islam of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust on the embedding inclusive practice theme.

The research aimed to:

- Understand how well the current Standard and delivery model meets the needs of archive services and current archival practice.
- Identify what changes and improvements may be needed to keep the Standard and delivery model relevant to archive services and their ongoing development.
- Use the results of consultation to develop recommendations for phase 2 identifying further work areas and approaches to delivering the required change.

The review methodology consisted of four strands:

- Desktop research (September 2023)
- Interviews with partners and stakeholders (September-October 2023)
- Survey (October 2023-January 2024)
- Focus groups (January-February 2024)

Following each strand, a report was created outlining the findings. This final report brings these together into one report. The review was funded by the Welsh Government, the National Records of Scotland, and The National Archives.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Desktop research

Desktop research was undertaken in September 2023 focusing on the four themes. The aims of this research were to:

- Identify what consultation/research has already been undertaken in the archives sector and what this tells us.
- Identify what standards for the themes already exist that could be used by Archive Service Accreditation.
- Inform the design of data collection and analysis for the consultation.

The desktop research focused primarily on documentation relating to the archives sector, but occasionally brought in relevant documentation from the wider cultural and heritage sectors.

1.3.2 Partner and stakeholder interviews

Interviews were undertaken in September-October 2023 with the following **partners and Committee members**:

- Archives and Records Association (United Kingdom and Ireland) (2 people)
- Archives and Records Council Wales (4)
- The National Archives (5)
- National Records of Scotland (2)
- Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (1)
- Scottish Council on Archives (2)
- Welsh Government (3)
- Recruited Committee members (6)

These interviews aimed to explore the following questions:

- Which parts of the Archive Service Accreditation Standard work well, and why?
- Is there anything that the Standard does not adequately cover? Does any part of the Standard need to be updated?
- In terms of the management of the programme, what works well and what could be done differently?

In addition, **interviews were undertaken** with the following **external stakeholders**:

- Arts Council England – staff responsible for the Museum Accreditation and public libraries Accreditation scheme (2)
- Archives and Records Association Diversity Allies (6)*
- Archives and Records Association Environmental Sustainability Group (2)
- Digital Preservation Coalition (1)

*This group were keen to emphasise they work collaboratively to amplify marginalised voices in the sector and are allies, rather than marginalised practitioners.

The aims of these interviews were to:

- Understand key standards or developments in the four themes – to help inform the desktop review.
- Obtain their views on how the Archive Service Accreditation programme could be updated or changed to reflect these themes.

Notes were created for each interview and thematic analysis of these notes was undertaken. Participants had an opportunity to confirm or amend the notes.

1.3.3 Survey

A **survey was opened on 31 October 2023 and closed on 8 January 2024**. SmartSurvey was used as the digital platform with which to carry out the survey. The survey was provided in English and Welsh. Respondents could complete the survey as an individual, on behalf of an archive service or on behalf of an organisation. **82 responses were received**, with the majority from England (74%). Most services (38%) were Local Authority/Local Authority funded, with Higher Education/Further Education (21%) and archives in museums (17%) also well represented. Participants also worked in business archives (13%), charities (8%) and other private services (1%). A summary of the type of respondents can be found in Appendix B.

The survey included questions arranged in the following sections:

- About you
- The Standard (with different questions for those who were familiar or unfamiliar with the Standard)
- Delivery for the programme

- Themes: embedding inclusive practice, digital preservation delivery, and environment and sustainability
- Focus group participation

A copy of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix F.

The survey was aimed at those working in the archives sector and was advertised on various channels including:

- Archives-NRA JISCMail
- The National Archives' regional newsletter
- ARA Today (Archives and Records Association)
- Social media channels including Twitter and LinkedIn
- 10-year Celebration of Archive Service Accreditation (in-person & online events)

Descriptive analysis was undertaken on the closed questions/qualitative data. For open questions which captured qualitative data, thematic analysis was undertaken using the category coding function in Smart Survey. For some of the thematic analysis, we also used a filter to understand any differences between those who responded from accredited or a non-accredited service.

Limitations of the survey methodology include that is a convenience sample and might not be representative of the UK archives sector. In particular, it should be noted those who are familiar with the Archive Service Accreditation or accredited appear more likely to have completed it. 81% of respondents were somewhat/very familiar with Archive Service Accreditation. However, we did receive a reasonable response from those services which are not accredited/those who work for non-accredited services (34%). A summary of the type of respondents can be found in Appendix A.

1.3.4 Focus groups

Participants who were not Accreditation Assessors were recruited through respondents to the survey, direct contact from the Programme Accreditation team at The National Archives, and an advertisement on the Archives-NRA JISCMail. Accreditation Assessors were contacted directly by The National Archives.

Five focus groups were held online in late January and early February 2024 for:

- Primarily larger Accredited services

- Primarily smaller Accredited services
- Accredited services (any size)
- Services which are currently not Accredited
- Assessors

31 people participated with the majority from England (74%). Most services (38%) were Local Authority/Local Authority funded, with Higher Education/Further Education (21%) and archives in museums (17%) also well represented. Participants also worked in business archives (13%), charities (8%) and other private services (1%). A summary of the type of respondents can be found in Appendix B.

Both the review brief, and thematic analysis of the survey responses, suggested Section 3 (Stakeholders and their experiences) needed development. The focus groups therefore examined Section 3, along with the themes of embedding inclusive practice, digital preservation delivery, and environmental sustainability and carbon cost.

Descriptive analysis was undertaken for quantitative data about the participants, obtained using interactive slides. Thematic analysis was undertaken of the notes made of the focus group discussions. All focus group participants had an opportunity to confirm or amend the notes. In taking notes and reporting on the content of each focus group, we have not allocated equal weight to all comments or attempted to quantify the time spent on discrete points, seeking instead to reflect on the balance and breadth of views overall.

Limitations of the focus group methodology include that is a convenience sample and might not be representative of the UK archives sector. In particular, comparatively low levels of participation from Scotland should be noted, with no participants from Northern Ireland.

1.3.5 Developing recommendations

During the desktop research, the consultancy team were strongly influenced by the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust's 2022 report [If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes](#) and its relevance for Archive Service Accreditation. As a result, we approached Dr Safina Islam, Director of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust, about doing some work with them on this theme. This involved a workshop on 1 March 2024 with Dr Safina Islam, Larysa Bolton and Kevin Bolton which focused on:

- Sharing and discussing the results of the consultation relating to embedding inclusive practice.
- Developing the recommendations for Archive Service Accreditation.

Following the workshop we worked with Dr Safina Islam to further refine and develop the recommendations relating to this theme. We also met with the Accreditation Programme Team, Dr Melinda Haunton and Jane Shillaker, to present and discuss the report's recommendations.

2. Findings

2.1 Embedding inclusive practice

2.1.1 Context

Embedding inclusive practice refers to practice that allows persons to feel both represented (through increased diversity in the workforce, narratives discussed and audiences) as well as empowered by being included in decision-making. For collections institutions, this specifically includes considering what is collected or not collected, and how it is described, as well as thinking about the people involved with the collections.

The Accreditation partners identified this as a priority for current work and have made light updates to the programme since 2021. In 2023 a series of sector workshops based on external challenge explored the issue further.

2.1.2 Desktop research

Tola Dabiri's [2018 report on diversity in the workforce](#) was produced for the **Archives and Records Association (ARA)** and recommends the **use of Archive Service Accreditation to push diversity in the workforce. It discusses staff, collections, audience development and the widening of entry routes and recognises clearly how they intersect and produce greater diversity.** The report also warns of “hand wringing, hand washing and DIY” and “done to us not by us / at us not with us” approaches, arguing for systemic change as the ultimate goal.

Better accountability for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and anti-racism across the museums, libraries, heritage, and archives sectors in England is also recommended by Maya Sharma, Marta Riccardi and Safina Islam of the **Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust** in their 2022 report [If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes](#). It recommends that “organisations should ensure that EDI work is everyone’s responsibility, although it is the leaders who are accountable and responsible for driving the work forward. **Funders and sector networks should take a tougher approach where they see poor practice, and a lack of interest and commitment.**” Specifically, it recommends **“Actively driv[ing] change through goals, responsibilities, and accountability... Targets and goals are an essential part of driving action.** It is important that any EDI outcomes, goals, and targets are embedded into organisational business and planning cycles (such as Accreditation renewal for museums) to support progress and successful outcomes.”

The report lists the challenges in implementing EDI across the sector – not considered relevant or a priority, an absence of adequate funding, training, and staff capacity, navigating “culture wars” and the government’s stance, and geography. However, the report takes these challenges and threads them into a clear and practical outline of what effective EDI looks like and provides a menu of actions for developing a way forward for organisations, which could be incorporated into the Archive Service Accreditation Standard and / or Guidance.

On “actively raising standards” it recommends sector support organisations (Section 7.2) should:

- Provide clear guidance as to what effective EDI work looks like, and provide tools, training, and advice to support consistent improvements and high standards across the sector.
- Prioritise and provide EDI focused training and development.
- Match the supportive enabling approach with action to ensure minimum standards are defined and met - perhaps developing a framework of minimum requirements or standards relating to EDI which is monitored and has consequences for not meeting.
- Work collaboratively with other sector support organisations on this, as a shared approach will result in greater consistency and impact.

The above recommendations are very relevant to Archive Service Accreditation.

The [Excellence in DEAI Report](#) highlights the results from **American Alliance of Museums Excellence in Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Task Force** and is intended to be a starting point for spurring conversation and action that advances excellence in DEAI in the museum field. The report lays the “groundwork for a common set of Core Concepts and Key Indicators of excellence in DEAI.” One of the task force’s main recommendations was that **“DEAI should be embedded within and throughout the Continuum of Excellence rather than be a stand-alone focus area. Given that DEAI work must be a focused and intentional effort that weaves throughout different levels and departments within a museum, so too should it be throughout accreditation.”** In terms of their Accreditation and Museum Assessment Program (MAP) the report recommends that the American Alliance of Museums should do a self-review of these programmes to ensure:

- DEAI is prominent in the Accreditation process description and guidelines and addressed in the materials (e.g., Self-Study and Site Visit Report Form).
- Peer reviewers are paying adequate attention to DEAI and have the training and tools they need to ask pertinent questions on-site.

Research by **Shared Intelligence** in 2022-2023 on behalf of the Archive Service Accreditation Committee undertook workshops and interviews to understand what inclusivity means to different organisations and relate this back to archive services. This included interviews with individuals from inside and outside the archives sector. Their findings are published in the report [Archive Service Accreditation: Challenge paper on inclusive practice](#). A wide range of challenges are identified around organisational health, collections management, and digital archives.

Following this first phase, the Archive Service Accreditation Committee asked Shared Intelligence to test the challenge paper with a working group of practitioners from archive services through a series of workshops. Those workshops were intended to explore with the sector how feasible each challenge was in terms of Archive Service Accreditation and the importance of each challenge. The unpublished report from this research outlines that the following are rated of high importance by stakeholders and suited to being tested via Accreditation:

- The service has a community engagement approach which is two-way – not just about one-off acquisitions or projects, but long-term relationships between communities and archives.
- The service has a community engagement approach which can identify and reach underrepresented groups in their community.
- The service has a community engagement approach which includes discussing ownership of materials with communities.
- The service has policies to ensure treatment of materials aligns with the expectation of the communities to whom the materials relate, including acquisition, appraisal, storage, and deaccessioning.
- The service has policies for dealing with treatment of highly contentious material including offensive or sacred material including removal or re-cataloguing.
- The service has an approach which recognises the added risks of underrepresentation surrounding digital and born-digital materials.
- The service has policies to “create equally positive experiences for all.”
- The service has data and insight about how welcoming their space, services and their guidelines are for different users – including gaps and areas for improvement.
- The service reviews the skills and knowledge of staff in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and has policies and processes for improving skills and knowledge around inclusive practice.

The report also identifies “three cross-cutting themes” which include:

- Talking to stakeholders – “inclusive practice begins with archives services talking to their stakeholders and to find out who is underrepresented – in collections, audiences, and workforce. Without this understanding, implementing any further changes related to inclusive practice becomes far more difficult. It was mentioned in several workshops that this could be helped by services using a framework or maturity model that would help them better understand what they have in place.”
- Skills and knowledge – “in order to develop inclusive practice, the workforce needs the necessary skills and knowledge. Without this, they might not know what to do or how to do it, or they may know *what*, but lack the knowledge or confidence on *how* to do it.”
- Sector leadership “is not just the role of accreditation, but the role for sector leaders to support archives services to take on these challenges by providing CPD opportunities and resources, frameworks and other resources, alongside visible leadership and direction.”

A challenge paper should challenge existing assumptions in the sector and stimulate ideas or solutions to influence the direction of travel. However, **the findings from this research have a strong focus on the “challenges” or constraints facing the sector** - there is an element of the “hand-wringing” and “hand-washing” described by Tola Dabiri’s report. The first report claims the interviews were used “to gain insight and examples of deliberate action by organisations to improve their inclusive practice” – but it is difficult to see these clearly in the report. Even the second report which attempts to develop ideas for the Archive Service Accreditation Standard has a focus in parts on why things cannot currently change and, unlike [If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes](#) and [Excellence in DEAI Report](#), **is unable to articulate what effective inclusive practice looks like or what change it wants to see.**

In recent years, organisations have created a number of **good inclusive practice resources and guidance**. These are summarised in the report we created for the desktop review. The majority of these resources are currently not referenced in the Archive Service Accreditation Guidance. They are also held in different places so can be difficult to navigate and find.

Archives West Midlands is developing a [self assessment tool](#) to enable “a quick appraisal of an organisation’s current position with regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) relating to the collecting, management and access of its archive collections. Establishing a baseline will help guide decisions about how to address the EDIB agenda”. Although currently in a beta version, it will be useful to discover more about the practical implementation of this tool as it emerges and whether there is scope to include it in Archive Service Accreditation. This is the closest thing we have seen for the archives sector that

meets what [If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes](#) describes as “**clear guidance as to what effective EDI work looks like.**” However, the tool might benefit from ensuring that elements of PAS 1948 (see below) and the organisational recommendations (Section 7.2) from [If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes](#) are incorporated.

In terms of **national standards**, it is worth highlighting the British Standards code, [PAS 1948 Diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace. Code of practice](#) (2023). This gives practical guidance on how to develop and implement an effective diversity, equity and inclusion framework in any workplace. It is intended to be used as a practical implementation guide for other framework standards, such as [BS ISO 30415](#), [BS 76000:2015](#) and [BS ISO 45003:2021](#). It includes good self-assessment tools and resources for creating actions. Whilst the [National Equality Standard](#) is the “UK’s leading Diversity, Equity and Inclusion standard” and is aimed at both the public and private sectors – it helps organisations assess where they are and develop action plans.

2.1.3 Partner and stakeholder interviews

The partners and Committee members felt it was **important that inclusive practice is included in the Standard**. A few felt very strongly about this – for example:

“It has to be integral (not just nice to have).”

“I hope it does not get too watered down.”

Areas highlighted as relevant to the Standard included workforce recruitment, collecting, collections information (particularly language), access, and engagement. One partner highlighted the current lack of anything around EDI strategy, planning and commitment in Section 1 of the Standard. However, some emphasised the need for it to be embedded across the whole Standard and not just one section. The need for any **new requirements to be scalable and flexible to meet the local context** was also highlighted. Others emphasised the importance of having **training and resources on inclusive practices** to help archive services with any new requirements.

One of the external stakeholders highlighted:

- All archive services are different - how can the sector be more inclusive, without saying there is only one way to do things?




- The need to have a wider view of accessibility - it needs to go beyond website accessibility including other digital platforms such as catalogues and also include the accessibility needs of archives staff.
- Developing inclusive practices requires changing priorities and resources. For example, why is cataloguing everything perfectly to ISAD(G) viewed as more important than inclusive cataloguing?
- Inclusive practice in the sector can mean giving up power to users and communities or developing reciprocal relationships with currently under-represented groups.
- With inclusive practices there is often a difference between what an organisation's policies say and what it is actually delivering in practice – how can this be assessed?
- Having inclusive practices embedded in Archive Service Accreditation will help archive services advocate for the need for training in this area, as well as develop services and professional skills.

Some partners and Committee members discussed **whether the programme could be opened up to community or volunteer-led archives**. In general, there was a feeling that the programme would not be realistic for most community archives to go through this level of assessment and the need for professional staff could make it difficult. Some suggested a separate programme or type of award might be needed and the focus should be on archive services/networks supporting community archives. However, one external stakeholder felt it was disappointing that such archives were not included in the programme and highlighted their importance in terms of inclusive practices.

2.1.4 Survey

In general, **respondents felt it was important that the embedding inclusive practice is reflected** in the Standard – 67% thought it was “very important” and 33% thought it was important. The majority of respondents felt any changes should be part of existing requirements (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1 - Are these best represented as separate new requirements for the Accreditation Standard or do they form part of existing requirements?

Answer Choices - embedding inclusive practice			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Separate new requirements		14.86%	11
2	Part of existing requirements		55.41%	41
3	Unsure		29.73%	22

For each theme, we asked an open-ended question “What would you consider a reasonable expectation for archives of the type(s) and size(s) you are most familiar with to deliver against this area? Or have you any other thoughts on how the Standard could be developed or changed to reflect this area?” The results of the thematic analysis for embedding inclusive practice included:

- Any requirements will need to **be scalable and realistic in terms of the size and the context** of the archive service (20).
- Others mentioned diversifying collections (14), inclusive cataloguing/updating collections information (12), diversifying audiences and access (13), inclusive recruitment (11), and embedding EDI in policy development & action planning (12).
- When we undertake the analysis for non-accredited services only inclusive collecting (6), embedding EDI in policy development & action planning (6), inclusive cataloguing/updating collections information (5) and inclusive recruitment (4) are mentioned. However, scalability (3) and diversifying audiences and access (2) were emphasised less.

For example, responses included:

“It need to be realistic, so something like all services needing to at least include recognition of its importance, and providing a small amount of firm evidences. For some services it will be difficult to provide statistics, so perhaps evidence of one activity which is in the inclusive direction? For larger services they should need to show more.”

“I think this forms part of archives services reflecting the communities in which they serve, which really means that the expectations might have to be scaled depending on the type and size of service.”

“An archive service should be able to evidence their recognition of and commitment to and actions taken in these areas, on a scale appropriate to their situation. For example, as a larger institution we have access to institutional programmes for workforce diversification but smaller services probably do not.”

“Doing something is always better than doing nothing so some kind of work or planning in this area should be a reasonable expectation for all.”

“As an absolute minimum I would expect to see that archives are assessing how they could embed inclusive practices in their services (across all areas) but ideally progress would be made in embedding at least one area of inclusive practice into the service delivery.”

“Something which acknowledges the need for organisations to embed inclusion into collecting, staffing, etc. etc, and to ensure that this is referenced in policies, & action plans.”

“At this point I would say planning and evidence of working towards great inclusion. Some aspects of the work are within our control, but others are not.”

“EDI benchmarking and action planning. Embed across collections and audiences”

“Demonstrating a commitment to an inclusive work and archive environment could be part of the standard.”

“I would not want this to be a tick box exercise - another policy or guideline that is there to make a service look good but that is not actioned, reviewed or worked on until the policy is updated for accreditation renewal - I think there needs to be things that a service commits to a bit like Continuing Professional Development and that they are measured against this at the next round of accreditation.”

“Reviewing and updating collections information to ensure they meet standards for inclusivity - Increasing inclusivity in recruitment- Ensuring collecting policy and practice engages with the inclusivity agenda.”

“It would be reasonable to expect a service to have a collections development policy that sets out how they intend to diversify their collections and make them accessible to a wider, more diverse audience. Inclusive cataloguing policies/guidance on creating inclusive metadata would not be an unreasonable expectation of a service.”

“Understanding their audience, and who they aren't reaching and some sort of plan or thoughts on how to reach them. How they are dealing with decolonisation and addressing 'difficult' or 'sensitive subject'. How they highlight different under-representative narratives in their collections.”

“Reasonable expectation is that inclusive language/terminology is standardised and employed going forward. More challenging to retrospectively upgrade catalogue descriptions due to lack of staffing.”

“Outreach events focused on connecting with diverse audiences. More targeted approach to ensure that marginalised groups within our communities are introduced the archives, aware of the importance of archives and have the opportunity to tell archivists what should be collected to accurately reflect their group. Listen, in order to give voice to those who are under represented in collections or indeed not represented at all.”

2.1.5 Focus groups

Survey respondents felt that inclusive practice should be embedded throughout the Standard. We explored this in more detail in the focus groups by suggesting different parts of the Standard in which this theme might be relevant and asking participants to vote (mission statement, forward planning, workforce, collections development, collections information, access plans, and access information, procedures, and activities). Table 1 below summarises the results.

Table 1 – Number of votes by focus group participants on whether areas for inclusive practice should be included in Accreditation

	<u>All</u>	<u>Smaller services</u>	<u>Larger services</u>	<u>Unaccredited Services</u>
Mission statement	19	2	8	4
Forward planning	20	5	8	3
Workforce	23	5	8	4
Collections development	25	8	8	4
Collections Information	18	5	8	2
Access plans	24	6	8	4
Access info, procedures and activities	21	7	8	3

Note -26 people voted

It is noticeable that larger services voted unanimously in favour of all of the suggested areas, whereas those working in smaller services or those that are currently not accredited appear to feel more cautious. Collections Development scored highly in all groups, whereas Collections Information consistently ranked lower than other areas of the Standard.

Participants had thoughtful discussions about where the balance lies between **organisational level and service-level evidence**. Services might typically have more control over inclusive practice with regards to Collections Development and Collections Information, for example, than they would over organisational mission statement and workforce. In the areas where a service has more control and influence, participants felt they should be invited to submit evidence of how that weaves into their policies and evidence of change, even if that change is small.

Archive Service Accreditation could do better at specifying **what types of evidence** it wishes services to submit. Breaking it down into more specific questions might address this. A

mixture of checklists and longer free-text questions might work, but the latter would need prompts to indicate what content is being sought.

Participants felt that everyone should be able to work towards more inclusive practice, but it will look different in **different contexts**. Participants emphasised the need for inclusive practice to remain **scalable** and with free-text opportunities for services to explain their circumstances, who they are trying to reach and why, and what progress they have made.

Participants noted that larger services may be able to run projects to change past/offensive/harmful language, but these are resource intensive. However, even smaller services should be able to submit plans for change and evidence of an overall direction of travel, even if change cannot be implemented quickly.

Focus group participants noted the value of **updating the guidance to include examples** of what types of activity might be relevant for individual questions but it must be explicit that this is not prescriptive and services are not expected to do everything. The **assessment visit** was cited as an opportunity to take a 'deeper dive' into what services are attempting and achieving in the specific context in which they are working.

Some felt that the Standard should explicitly explore the extent to which an archive is making adjustments to premises to accommodate disabled visitors.

Many groups were keen to see a **strong lead** from **sector lead bodies** in this area of activity, including robust guidance from sector lead bodies on inclusive language, clear statements on what can be expected from smaller organisations, etc.

2.2 Digital preservation delivery

2.2.1 Context

Digital preservation delivery refers to ensuring that in addition to having effective policy and planning, archive services are able actively to undertake preservation of digital objects. The archives sector has made progress with policy, planning and staff awareness on digital preservation but any revised Archive Service Accreditation Standard and programme must support and assess delivery of preservation of content at risk of loss and increasingly at scale.

2.2.2 Desktop research

The **Plugged In, Powered Up programme evaluation – key findings document** (unpublished, 2022) undertook research into improvements in digital knowledge and skills in the archives sector as a result of the programme (2019-2022) using an online survey and focus groups. In terms of Archive Service Accreditation, the report states **there is a high correlation between those who have relatively well-developed digital preservation capabilities and those who hold who were considering Archives Accreditation**. It also claims “there is certainly anecdotal evidence that Archives Accreditation has played an important advocacy role for services looking to increase their digital preservation activities.” The survey also asked respondents to score themselves on a scale of 1-5 on how confident they are in “assessing your organisation’s preservation capability (e.g. using DPC-RAM or NDSA levels)” and the mean score was 3.1.

In Archive Service Accreditation there is a requirement to undertake a self-assessment using the [Levels of Digital Preservation](#) by the **National Digital Stewardship Alliance** which considers five technical areas. The Levels of Digital Preservation do not cover access, but the [Levels of Born-Digital Access](#) created by the **Digital Library Federation** attempts to define what effective born-digital access looks like. This is referenced as a potential tool in the Archive Service Accreditation Guidance when answering Q129 Providing access to born-digital records.

Other **benchmarking tools and resources** were identified during the desktop research including the [Rapid Assessment Model \(RAM\)](#) (Digital Preservation Coalition), [Competency Framework](#) (Digital Preservation Coalition) and [DiAGRAM](#) (The National Archives). The Digital Preservation’s companion resource [Level up with DPC RAM](#) is designed to help organisations work out how to move up the levels of RAM and is a useful resource for those archive services who wish to move from planning to delivery of digital preservation.

Several digital preservation resources and standards are summarised in the report we created for the desktop review. This includes **practical guidance and training** developed by the Digital Preservation Coalition, The National Archives, and the Archives and Records Council in Wales. Many of these are not referenced in the Archive Service Accreditation Guidance.




2.2.3 Partner and stakeholder interviews

Most partners and Committee members felt the Standard **should have a stronger emphasis on the implementation of digital preservation**. However, it was also recognised by some participants that it can take a long time for archive services to deliver change in this area. One partner and some of the Committee members raised the lack of requirements around collecting public records and the records of the parent authority of the archive service as a weakness in the Standard.

2.2.4 Survey

In general, respondents felt it was **important that the digital preservation delivery theme is reflected** in the Standard – 84% thought it was “very important” and 15% thought it was important. The level of importance placed on ‘digital preservation delivery’ between accredited and non-accredited services is worth noting - 100% very important versus 60% very important. The majority of respondents felt any changes should be part of existing requirements (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2 - Are these best represented as separate new requirements for the Accreditation Standard or do they form part of existing requirements? (digital preservation)

Answer Choices - digital preservation delivery			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Separate new requirements		23.61%	17
2	Part of existing requirements		58.33%	42
3	Unsure		18.06%	13

For each theme, we asked an open-ended question “What would you consider a reasonable expectation for archives of the type(s) and size(s) you are most familiar with to deliver against this area? Or have you any other thoughts on how the Standard could be developed or changed to reflect this area?” The results of the thematic analysis for digital preservation delivery included:

- Requirements need to be **scalable in terms of the size of the archive service** (24).
- There needs to be a **minimum standard or the standard needs to be stronger** (24).
- However, others thought it important, especially for those archive services with limited resources, to be able to **show they are working towards meeting the requirements** (14).
- When we undertake the analysis for non-accredited services only scalability (10) and being able to show they are working towards meeting the requirements (9) are emphasised. However, the need for a minimum standard or the Standard needs to be stronger (6) is emphasised slightly less.

For example, responses included:

“It's all about scale, and it could be measured/judged on that basis.”

“I think there should be more of a requirement for this, services have had time to think about it. Organisations should have a safe repository and resource to take digital preservation forwards.”

“At this point, I think it would be reasonable for the type of services that I am familiar with to me implementing digital preservation delivery.”

“I think all archives should have somewhere that they can securely store born digital records and a basic procedure for cataloguing and accessing them. OAIS benchmarks could provide further levels to this.”

“It is important to move beyond capacity building and planning stages.”

“In order to support and sustain DP in a multi-service institution like a council, the standard should also be firm and strict enough to command attention from employers amongst competing resources.”

“I think its really important that accredited archive services can demonstrate active preservation of digital objects. I think it is still a big challenge for many repositories, but at a minimum, there should be a digital preservation policy and plan in place-and that steps are taken to ensure digital objects are kept in safe and adequate digital storage with fixity checks in operation.”

“These need to be realistic but also stretching an archive service - in my experience smaller services are not dealing with this - the service is becoming more obsolete as it is no longer collecting material of a digital nature.”

“this is really tricky - it's important that this is included, but might present a barrier to accreditation for organisations (such as ours), where there is currently a disconnect between historical archives and digital recordkeeping.”

“Given how under-funded and under-staffed so many institutions are, digital preservation delivery should be included but should allow for organisations working towards this being achievable.”

“I feel that a policy should be a requirement to reflect knowledge of what is needed regarding digital preservation, however I do not feel that it should be a requirement to implement it. A working towards attitude should be adopted for archives with limited assets of people and money.”

“Evidence of policy, planning and delivery.. Explanation of direction of travel and reasons for this in the context of your archive service (recognising the significant resource implications of digital preservation and the barriers this creates)”

“Is it already graded? e.g. a service needs to meet this standard to pass but expected to have developed to the next stage on the graded standard by the time they go for reaccreditation”

“I suppose I think the most important thing to assess about any service seeking accreditation is whether they have a sensible and proportionate plan for how they might implement DP- will they upskill existing staff, recruit specialists, buy in a system or try open source.”

“By this time, to at least have a plan in place even if you are still arguing about budgets.”

2.2.5 Focus groups

All focus groups endorsed the current, largely **scalable** approach using the NDSA levels, although opinions varied as to whether these were “too technical”/detailed – or too simple. One group noted that level 4 is not appropriate for all collections/services to reach, but using a tool with levels may imply that Archive Service Accreditation expects all applicants to reach a certain level. Some participants felt that introducing the NDSA levels had been instrumental in helping Accreditation to implement an incremental approach to including digital preservation within the Standard, and that this approach had been beneficial (and could be taken for other “new” areas in the Standard). Accreditation had been a good tool for leverage and advocacy within a parent body for some services, and resources for digital preservation had been secured – although this was not the case for all services. Moreover, other services were not applying for Accreditation because they feel they have no chance of addressing digital preservation at all.

Whilst the NDSA levels provide a snapshot in time, some participants felt the Digital Preservation Coalition’s Rapid Assessment Model (DPC RAM) showed better evidence of planning and progress, and several groups were keen for Archive Service Accreditation to include DPC RAM in addition or as an alternative. Premis and METS were also suggested, but this was a minority view with the majority of participants across the focus groups supporting the **use of NDSA levels and/or DPC RAM** as good evidence in this area. However, Assessors felt that anything beyond the self-assessment element of the NDSA levels could be challenging for them to fully test in the assessment process based on the current recruitment and training of Assessors.

There was consensus that regardless of the tool(s) used in Archive Service Accreditation, assessment should focus on **how services understand and are managing their risks** in their own context. Some participants felt submissions should be able to share a narrative about digital preservation to demonstrate their understanding, their progress (e.g. with migration of formats, provision of storage space), and evidence of the outcomes of their digital preservation actions. Most participants recognised that effective digital preservation does not necessarily require acquiring a specific system (e.g. some services have a system but no space to ingest material, others have good manual workflows even without a system) and that Accreditation should avoid giving this impression. The role of the visit in providing this narrative at present was mentioned by some participants. One participant felt that services may provide more limited access to digital records than to analogue because they feel that digital records contain more inherent sensitivities. The DPC RAM includes access/discovery where the NDSA levels do not.

All participants felt Archive Service Accreditation **should not require services to meet a minimum standard**, as scalability remains crucial, and services are in very different circumstances. Setting an unachievable minimum might prevent some services using Accreditation as an advocacy tool for investment in resources or changing priorities, although for others this has worked well in securing resources. However, a small minority felt that a minimum standard might be appropriate for Type 1 services, or holders of digital Public Records. More participants felt that expectations might be higher in proportion to the size of the service, for Places of Deposit, and/or where services have a larger or increasing proportion of overall holdings in digital form, particularly where services are actively collecting digital records or creating digital surrogates.

For some participants, Archive Service Accreditation should require evidence of **continuing progress with digital preservation**, including in relation to providing access. Training and development (even if substantive improvements are not currently possible) should be recognised, possibly with a distinct question. The Standard and Guidance should make it clear that implementing a full-scale technical package is not required. One participant raised the idea of digitally literate leadership: understanding the parameters required by collections/access in services' contexts and how services are planning for these. The Standard could test the extent of digital literacy within a service and how that is being incorporated into workflows more generally (access as well as preservation).

A majority of participants articulated the principle that archives should be managed appropriately regardless of their format, and that analogue and digital should be integrated in practice and throughout the Standard. However, there was a very clear majority view that **a separate digital preservation section in the Standard** remains helpful to focus on digital preservation as a distinct element, emphasising its importance. Processes and responsibilities in services still tend to distinguish digital and analogue formats, although this may change over time and Accreditation could encourage an integrated approach in a future version of the Standard. Assessors commented that digital preservation performance could benefit from a separate assessment criterion as at present a service's performance in relation to digital records may be poorer compared to analogue, but the two must be combined with a "partially met" plus a clarifying statement.

2.3 Environment and sustainability

2.3.1 Context

Environment and sustainability refers to issues around climate impact of archive service activities and/or service vulnerability to climate change and its costs. This is an emerging area of concern for archive services.

It is worth noting that the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) distinguishes between adaptation (or adjustment) to actual or expected climate change, and mitigation or activities limiting emissions of greenhouse gases/reducing their levels in the atmosphere.

2.3.2 Desktop research

A [2021 article](#) by **Georgina Robinson** undertook a survey of information professionals and argues that they “were motivated by duties to preservation and access to mitigate the impact of the information sector on the environment. However, sector-specific climate action, such as introducing passive storage conditions or decreasing collection sizes, is **limited by insufficient resources, organisational hierarchies and cultures, sector support and a perceived conflict with the duty to preservation.**” This article also includes a good literature review of research into archives and record management and climate change.

The **ARA Environmental Sustainability Group** recently carried out a survey of its members to investigate current sustainability practices within the sector and to see where best to focus the resources and efforts of the group. The [findings](#) included “members are concerned with the impact of analogue and digital record keeping” and “**members were most interested in three forms of environmental impact affecting them: Power Usage, Air/Environmental Conditioning, and Insulation.**”

In 2022, **The National Archives** held an event focused on the role of the archives and cultural heritage sectors in supporting environmental sustainability. A summary of some of the main themes to emerge during the event is provided in a [blog by Jenny Bunn](#) and the recordings are available on [The National Archives' YouTube](#) channel. One of the themes highlighted in the blog included “sustainability needs to go beyond ‘just’ the environment.....and the wider framework of the **UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals** was addressed in presentations.”

Several **standards and resources** are summarised in the report we created for the desktop review, including standards relating to collections storage and resources on digital preservation. However in general there are very little other standards or guidance specific

to the archives sector, but **there are resources for the cultural sector which may be relevant to the archive services.**

2.3.3 Partner and stakeholder interviews

As with inclusive practice, the partners and Committee members **felt it was important that this was included**. However, some admitted it was challenging to articulate how this could work in practice in the Standard – although it would **need to be scalable**. Others suggested it might be more appropriate to update the Guidance in this area initially rather than the Standard. It was also felt that the **constraints that some archive services are under**, particularly relating to buildings, needs to be acknowledged.




Suggestions from the partners, Committee members and one of the external stakeholders included applicants needing to:

- Understand or assess their current carbon footprint.
- Deliver carbon literacy training for their staff.
- Have a strategic planning statement - depending on the scale of the organisation it may be a separate document or included in another document.
- Think about location planning and building design with regard to assessing floods and other risks from climate change.
- Show they have considered environmental sustainability in digitisation, digital preservation decisions, conservation and building design.

2.3.4 Survey

In general, respondents **felt it was important that the environment and sustainability is reflected** in the Standard – 59% thought it was “very important” and 39% thought it was important. The majority of respondents felt any changes should be part of existing requirements (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3 - Are these best represented as separate new requirements for the Accreditation Standard or do they form part of existing requirements? (environment and sustainability)

Answer Choices – environment and sustainability			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Separate new requirements		35.21%	25
2	Part of existing requirements		42.25%	30
3	Unsure		22.54%	16

For each theme, we asked an open-ended question “What would you consider a reasonable expectation for archives of the type(s) and size(s) you are most familiar with to deliver against this area? Or have you any other thoughts on how the Standard could be developed or changed to reflect this area?” The results of the thematic analysis for embedding inclusive practice included:

- Any new requirements will need to be **scalable in terms of the size of the archive service** (18).
- Services should be at **least showing awareness of their impact and developing plans** for improvements (19).
- Some services will have **limited control/influence** and this needs to be recognised (19) and it can be challenging for archive services without investment (12).
- On a practical level **building management/storage** was mentioned frequently (18).
- When we undertake the analysis for non-accredited services only building management (6), challenging archive services without investment (5) and at least showing awareness of their impact and developing plans for improvements (4) are emphasised.

For example, responses included:

"Again, as in digi pres, most orgs wont have the financial capacity and staff resources to invest in this in a substantial way, so the expectation should reflect that."

"I think I'd want to see this in the buildings section of the standard in the main, but I think how you would judge this area is a difficult one, as services will vary so much in terms of what is possible."

"Awareness of the impact of archives services on the climate, and evidence of planning in place to mitigate the impacts where possible."

"The exact measures an archive can take will vary considerably, but services should be able to show that they are seeking to understand their climate impact and reduce it across different areas."

"For larger services, policy and procedural recognition. For smaller services, ideally the same, but more probably small practical steps that nod towards it."

"I would say that services need to at least demonstrate a keen awareness of this even if they don't have the means to deliver on it immediately."

"Again, don't set the bar too high in the current local government financial climate: it has the potential to lead to too many failures when it comes to assessing the submission."

"Very difficult for archive services to take action when they are often in shared buildings and subject to actions and decisions made by a larger parent authority"

"There are clear pathways of action to moving towards negative carbon position etc. However, the average archive will not be able to do the necessary steps because they will not be able to access meaningful data or have control of the factors (e.g. heating systems). Unless they are a standalone organisation they will only be able to make small moves on their own. The standard should include this area but be realistic about the very limited control most archive services have over their own situation."

"I would have to use my organisation's approach to the environment and sustainability at top level and then go straight to things we can effect. I mean, I can't choose my energy supplier but I can by biodegradable products. It is good to ask, as a lot of organisations will have looked at sustainability to some degree and this is likely to increase over time."

"Difficult to measure and prove, and some of this (e.g. energy costs) might be coordinated by the parent body rather than the archive itself - maybe this has to be a more generic type "what are you doing in this area"?"

“Maybe at the moment this is one where services should be required to show they have considered these issues and have a plan in place to work towards reducing their climate impact? Again, though, this would need to be scaled.”

“But also be conscious of the fact that choice of energy suppliers will be outside influence of archive staff. Likewise the procurement policies of parent organisation will impact choice of suppliers for packaging and digital storage.”

“For smaller archives or small services in larger institutions it might be more about being able to demonstrate how they have thought about this/ align with wider policy/procedure as they may have little agency to make significant changes themselves.”

“I suppose I think the most important thing to assess about any service seeking accreditation is whether they have a sensible and proportionate plan for how they might increase the environmental sustainability of their service.”

“I’m not sure how much agency small independent archives have in this area. In my own service, I have very little freedom to do anything meaningful.”

“I think a small archive could show awareness through some of the conservation requirements which relate to environment and disaster awareness. It may be that the wider organisation has looked at these issues as they effect their establishment and there are wider documents that could be produced. I think these are difficult issues for a small service to tackle on their own.”

2.2.5 Focus groups

All the focus groups recognised the **importance of environmental sustainability and carbon cost**. There was a clear steer from most focus groups that services should be considering activities, adaptations and/or mitigations appropriate to their scale, even if their ability to achieve large-scale mitigation is limited (e.g. capital investment in buildings required). Small “wins” and little things were felt to be important, and a wide range of examples of activities were given (see Appendix C). All focus groups felt it is reasonable to ask a specific question about environmental sustainability, drawing parallels with the introduction of digital preservation to the Standard.

There was little appetite for Archive Service Accreditation setting minimum standards to drive change in this area, with participants clearly articulating the high impact in this area of the **policies and practices of parent organisations**, and resources – both positive and negative. Progress within archive services is dependent to a large extent on the commitment by the broader organisation. If there are high level green strategies, archive services have a

chance to make more headway - although they may struggle to disaggregate their impacts in this area from the wider organisation (e.g. quantifying the cost saving of using energy efficient approaches is difficult in a large organisation where energy bills are processed centrally).

Participants felt that the Standard must therefore be clearly **scalable** for services of different sizes, and – regardless of size – must also take account of the constraints posed by historic and/or listed buildings. Archive Service Accreditation must acknowledge that many services work in imperfect buildings and that mitigation options may be limited, and that circumstances across the sector are very varied. Environmental sustainability and carbon cost should not be a pass/fail area, nor should smaller services be penalised for not being able to undertake specific actions in this area: they may find it especially difficult to allocate any capacity.

One focus group suggested ‘establishing an environmental sustainability baseline dataset’ appropriate to the service could be considered as a minimum level for services to achieve as “it is important to capture some **evidence of the thought processes taking place within the service**” in relation to the key issue of our time.

Across all focus groups there was a clear demand for **sector-specific guidance, carbon literacy training**, and more information about what others are doing.

Participants suggested that environmental sustainability and carbon cost “filters through everything” and could appear throughout the application form. On balance there was a preference for a **single open question** linked to forward planning in Section 1 (Organisational health): What are your plans? What would you like to achieve? What are the environment-related risks to collections? This could be supported by existing documents such as a specific environmental strategy and action plans, including carbon footprint responsibilities (buildings/digital footprint) and advocacy/outreach, where these exist.

Some participants felt they had already been able to include evidence of changing practices (e.g. experimentation with moving to a more passive approach to environmental control) in the application form. So the Standard in its current form was felt to accommodate changing practices in specific areas, particularly the storage environment aspects of collections management. Archive Service Accreditation could also encourage services to provide evidence of where approaches have been trialled and failed – “space to acknowledge you’ve tried even if the realities of your situation run counter to trending advice” (particularly in the context of reducing emissions from maintaining the strongroom environment). However, it was acknowledged by several participants that activities relating to environmental

sustainability and carbon cost go beyond the storage environment for collections, with a wide range of examples provided, and that services should be encouraged to think **broadly about what this area means in their context.**

2.4 Audiences and future audience needs

2.4.1 Context

Audiences are already a focus of the Standard, but this theme seeks to explore whether existing coverage gives space to discuss the offer to all audiences relevant to a service's mission and purpose, and whether expectations adequately reflect any emerging changes in audience expectation since the launch of Accreditation in 2013.

2.3.2 Desktop research

During April 2020, The National Archives conducted a survey into the **impact of COVID-19 disruption** on the wider archives sector in the United Kingdom. Key [findings](#) relating to access and engagement include the use of digital channels – for example 38% of respondents utilised social media channels to engage with audiences. A [blog](#) by Kevin Bolton uses data from the Taking Part Survey and COVID-19 Cultural Participation Monitor to show there were good levels of digital engagement with archives in England during this period, especially when compared with other cultural activities.

The **COVID-19 Recovery Survey** was undertaken by The National Archives in England in 2022 and the [findings](#) report an **increase in archive services providing digital services and a decrease in onsite visits and volunteer engagement**. The [findings](#) from the Spring 2023 wave of the Cultural Participation Monitor (England) reports “1/3 still report attending arts and culture less than pre-pandemic.”

The Archives and Records Association’s **Survey of Visitors to Archives 2022** covers the United Kingdom and its [report](#) highlights:

- An increase in both first-time and regular users.
- A significant uplift in the level of academic research and a turndown in those undertaking local history research.
- A greater proportion of those who searched archives’ online catalogue to find records / reserve documents.
- Fewer visitors combining something else with their visit to the archive.
- Visitors staying for longer compared to both 2018 and 2016.
- The split between male and female visitors is getting larger, in favour of males.
- More people of working age visiting archives.
- An increased proportions of visitors living in the least deprived areas, with those living in areas of high deprivation visiting less.

There is perhaps surprisingly a **lack of standards or guidance** relating to access and engagement to archives. The [PSQG Standard for Access to Archives 2008](#) enables services to assess how they provide access. This is referenced as a potential tool in the Archive Service Accreditation Guidance in Q105 (access and engagement policy) but is very out of date. The National Archives have also created a page on their website [Developing your audience](#) which includes links to guidance and resources including their [Developing Access and Participation 2012 Guidance](#) and [Understanding Your Community toolkit](#). In 2023, The National Archives commissioned a two-part online course, delivered by consultants Janice Tullock and Emma Parsons, to introduce audience development and its principles to those who work in archives. There are also resources for the cultural sector which may be relevant to archive services and these are summarised in the report we created for the desktop review.

From a **digital access** perspective the Digital Preservation Coalition have created guides on [Understanding User Needs](#) (members only) and [Developing an Access Strategy for Born Digital Archival Material](#). Research Libraries UK have created the [Virtual Reading Rooms \(VRRs\) Toolkit](#). Virtual Reading Rooms (VRRs) “provide human-mediated remote digital access to collections which do not depend on digitisation.”

Libraries Connected and Arts Council England are developing an **accreditation scheme for public libraries** in England. Their [draft scheme](#) has a strong focus on community and understanding their needs – with the first requirement being “a high impact public library service is built upon a detailed understanding of the needs of the local community, delivering a service which meets those needs, and having data and information to know whether the service has a positive impact.”

2.4.3 Partner and stakeholder interviews

In general, the partners and Committee members felt the Standard was working well – particularly the structure and the first two sections (Organisational health and Collections). However, most partners and Committee members felt that **Section 3 (Stakeholders and their experiences) was the weakest section and archive services often struggled with it**. A wide range of interpretations were given for this, including:

- The section collects less fact-based information or quantitative measurements - the applicants need to interpret more.

- There needs to be a stronger emphasis on audience development - archive services often place the emphasis on current audiences over a need to understand other audiences and how to engage with these.
- In addition to this, applicants do not always do themselves justice because they do not acknowledge the full range of their activity in this area including internal use, working with partners, digital access/engagement, and statutory forms of access.
- The section is not focused enough on the outcomes the archive service is delivering or its impact.
- People run out of steam by the time they get to this section. The definition of the archive service's community could be brought forward in the application form.
- The Guidance for this section needs to be more helpful to applicants to improve the quality of responses.

2.4.4 Survey

Those familiar with the Standard rated each three sections of the Standard highly in terms of quality and relevance, but **Section 3 (Stakeholders and Their experiences) section was rated slightly lower than the other two sections** (see Figure 4 below). Thematic analysis of the open-ended question "Which parts of the Standard and Guidance do you think work well?" revealed that the Section 1 (Organisational health) section was mentioned the most (22) followed by the Collections section (17).

The responses to an open-ended question about changes in audience expectations¹ were more wide-ranging, but four themes emerged:

- It needs to **recognise wider forms of access more strongly** e.g. internal use, engagement/outreach, and community engagement (21)
- The **importance of remote/digital access and engagement** (17).
- Section 3 (Stakeholders and their experiences) needs **greater clarity** (16).
- The importance of **diversifying audiences and engaging new audiences** (14).
- When we undertake the analysis for non-accredited services only the importance of diversifying audiences and engaging new audiences (4), needs greater clarity (4), and the needs to recognise wider forms of access more strongly (4) are emphasised.

¹ "Do you feel the existing coverage of the Standard relating to audiences gives space to discuss the archive service's offer to all audiences? Does it reflect any changes in audience expectations since the launch of Accreditation in 2013?"

For example, responses included:

“The audiences section is very confused. It feels like you're repeating yourself but at the same time not saying anything! I think services need to be pushed much harder on understanding their audiences, diversity and how they are improving/addressing these.”

“My experience of discussing the standard (esp with non-archivists) is that there is always an issue about varied understandings of the terms 'audience' 'user' 'community' 'stakeholder' which need to be addressed for people to see how Section 3 works in their context.”

“Feel many of the audiences questions are generic and repetitive, could be streamlined and more focused. Also, broader approach to different types of access should now be given post COVID.”

“The Standard talks about stakeholders rather than audiences which could cause confusion?”

“I think this needs to be more robust. Ideally, I would like to see it assessing an organisation's audience development plans, including outreach, profiling and digital engagement.”

“It doesn't currently contain the words 'audience' or 'audience'. This is slightly different to 'stakeholders' so the language of the standard could be reconsidered.”

“What I have found with the section on stakeholders and their experiences is that it seems to be rather repetitious in what it asks, which is tedious and seems unnecessary.”

“The last time I submitted I did have to shoe-horn in a lot of equality and diversity activities as I couldn't find anywhere obvious to put them.”

“Although access has its own separate section this is met last and its requirements are arguably far less stringent than the previous two sections in terms of the quantity of plans and policies you have to produce.....I spend at least half of that time in audience engagement, potentially more. So, I do feel that accreditation may not reflect the significance of that work to my organisation.... I also find it difficult to separate access and engagement from much collections management, particularly collections development and information. I'm not sure how well this is reflected in the process.”

“I think the standard does still perhaps lean towards asking the repository to focus on continuing to serve the same community (the community it is established to serve).”

"There could be more emphasis on attracting diverse audiences, and on remote access, but it doesn't need a full overhaul."

"I'd like better audience segmentation e.g. we have an internal and external audience and that external audience consists of different segments. I can't really represent this but as a business it demonstrates significant movement into new audiences in a way that a number doesn't represent."

"Consultation and inclusion of the community should be a fundamental part of an archive's forward planning especially it's outreach and it's collecting policy, keeping it relevant and engaged."

"I think the idea of 'the community it is established to serve' could be updated to acknowledge underrepresented and marginalised audiences, and that the Standard could cover accessibility and stakeholder mapping in more detail."

"The standard has expanded to include digital but I'm not sure it captures audience expectations of digital and how this is changing. It is weakest on audiences....it pushes developing audiences but gives limited scope to celebrate how a service is developing its offering to its existing audiences."

"This has always been the section we've found the most challenging to answer. The research room is only a small proportion of what we now offer. Needs to reflect on-site, off-site and on-line. Also traditional and new audiences."

"The emphasis is still focussed on access via visiting the searchroom when other forms of access such as online outreach have become more important"

"It might have been nice to have space for a little more detail on the sheer range of audiences, and uses, seen in our archive, whether through allowing more text in the relevant box(es) or through allowing more attached documentation."

"Also I think the Standard can be very outward focussed in terms of audiences, when services are also doing a great deal to reach and develop relationships with audiences internal to the organisation also."

"As a business archive, the audience element is quite a hard one for us to match in the way that other repositories might."

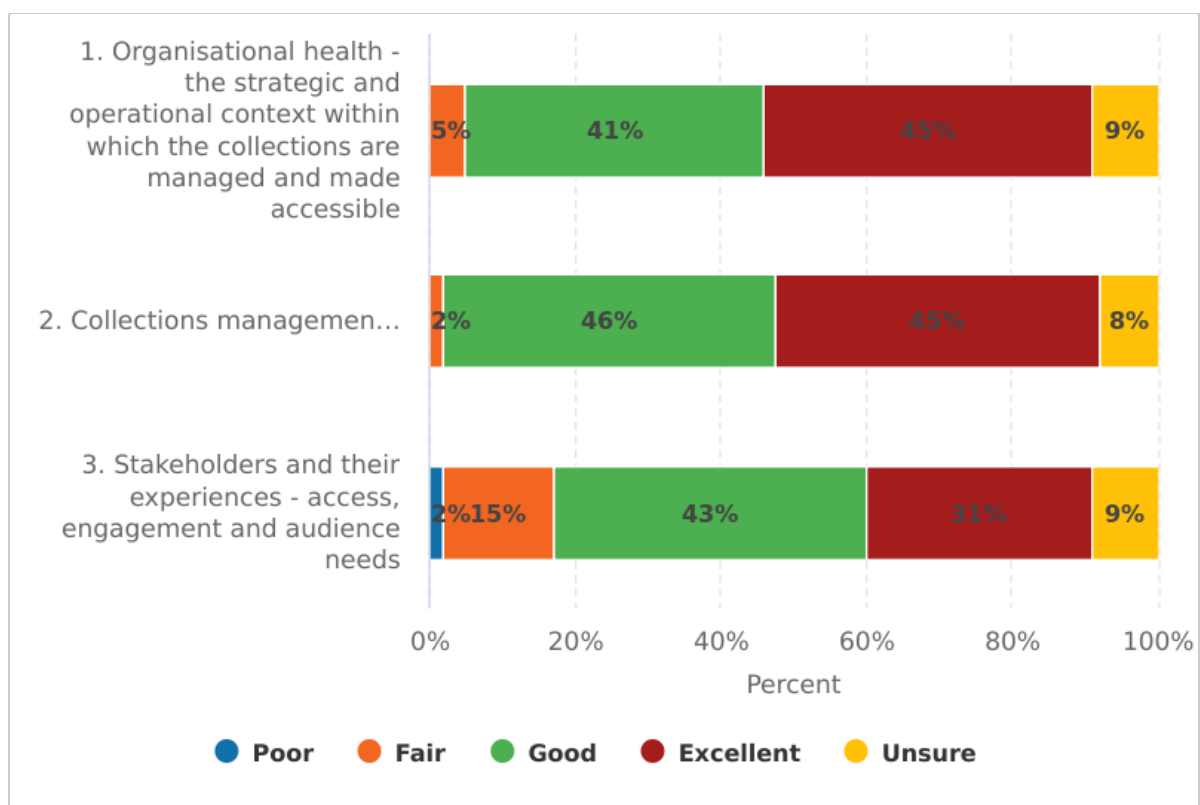
“This is a difficult balance between offering a standard that is achievable for all archives and supporting archives to consider collections in relation to expanding who might be interested in the material held.”

“I think more work could be done to support and stretch archives into diversifying stakeholders and audiences.”

“Audiences are now much broader, owing to the ubiquity of new technologies. Engagement implies a passive role for Archives, as a service function, not as ideas-makers and initiators of projects, services and tools.”

Figure 4 – How would you rate the quality and relevance of the three sections of the Archive Service Accreditation Standard? (familiar with the Standard)

Responses=66



2.4.5 Focus groups

Navigating the standard; mapping activities and evidence to questions.

Overall, participants indicated that **repetition and overlap** were more of an issue than failing to find somewhere to report on their achievements. They find it confusing when there are multiple places in which they feel they could or should submit the same piece of supporting evidence, causing them to question whether one upload is enough or whether they should keep submitting the same documentation to fulfil multiple requirements.

There were mixed views as to whether adding more questions would be helpful or a hindrance in this respect. There was an overall preference for not making the form too unwieldy and in favour of reducing the number of questions. A **mixture of checklists and free text seemed popular**. This would allow applicants to capture the stakeholder groups relevant for their service and submit evidence of the impact and quality of their work with those stakeholders, not simply statistical information, policies, plans, and procedures.

Two groups commented that ‘access’ and ‘engagement’ are two different things but that the Standard and Guidance use them interchangeably. Interestingly, each group chose different ways of describing the difference between the two terms. Similar confusion arises with the use of the words ‘stakeholder’ and ‘community’ which are sometimes conflated and sometimes not. The lack of **definition and consistency of terminology** contributes to confusion about what is required under each question and could usefully be addressed in a future iteration of the documentation.

Clarifying the scope

Participants felt that the following activities are relevant to Section 3 and should be more explicit in the Guidance:

- Work to support public inquiries/internal (business) reviews/high level organisation-led programmes such as contaminated land investigations.
- Work to support or contribute to an activity led by a separate team or organisation but which nevertheless impacts on or brings benefits for collections and stakeholders.
- Work taking place to identify and address barriers to access.
- Increasing accessibility by people with particular access requirements
- Work which seeks to expand the range of communities you work with – non-users.

- Innovative, non-traditional outreach activities that are unusual within the sector as a whole.
- The role of a catalogue as an access tool.
- Digital engagement.
- Teaching sessions.
- Fundraising, including with Friends groups.
- Activities involving donors and depositors.

A number of participants felt that the current application form and Guidance do not make it sufficiently clear that **'business as usual'** activities also belong in here and are no less relevant or valuable than innovative project work. This is particularly important for smaller services where capacity for innovation is limited but a high impact, high quality 'business as usual' offer is of great significance to users.

Suggestions for improvement

Many participants, including assessors, praised the **value of the assessment visit** with specific reference to Section 3, leading to a suggestion that the visit could play a more prominent role in assessing Section 3. The composition of the assessment visit team was challenged, requesting that it should include people with experience of a similar operating context / model, rather than just people from large organisations. One participant advocated for having more than one assessment visit, with an additional visit by the assessment team during the preparation of the application to answer questions and offer mentor-style support.

A number of focus group discussions considered **how and in what order information and evidence should be provided** on the form.

Some participants challenged the validity of the **"Policies, Plans and Procedures"** approach to Section 3. This overshadows the **critical importance of the impact of access and engagement work** which should come much more to the fore. Smaller organisations felt that relying on an evidence base comprising an organisation's overarching planning frameworks and strategies may not work particularly well, especially in non-memory institutions. Plans may be no more than a 'to do list' in the 'one-person band' services. Some participants also felt that the activities relevant to Section 3 are more likely to be ad hoc / reactive and that these are not well catered for on the current form.

Some were in favour of introducing Section 3 by asking applicants to complete a **pre-populated checklist** to indicate the different types of stakeholders relevant for their service.

This could then be supplemented by more **open questions** with longer word limits, making this section more scalable for smaller services. Some participants advocated strongly for a more **narrative approach**, beginning this section with a free text ‘describe your community’ type question and opportunities to submit evidence of ‘what you are most proud of.’ There was also support for an approach which encourages services to identify their stakeholders and talk about their strategies, plans, actions, and impacts in relation to them.

The **importance of harmonising the Guidance and the application form** was drawn out, with some commenting that the numbering of each does not always match.

Many spoke in favour of **clear, precise wording and definitions** to demonstrate the differences between what each question is asking the applicant to provide. Furthermore, the language used on the form and in the Guidance does not always obviously match the terminology in use within a service. Some were uncomfortable that the questions seem to focus on ‘searchroom’ and ‘old-fashioned’ ways of delivering, with applicants finding it harder to work out where to talk about more innovative or unusual activities such as partnerships with local communities or bottom-up commissioning activities. A **glossary** which makes it clear how individual terms might map to local practice was seen as valuable, as was clearer guidance which draws on and is consistent with the glossary. One group commented that in an attempt to keep the language in the Standard and Guidance neutral we may be in some danger of masking what we actually mean. There was also support for including good practice **case studies** within the Guidance to illustrate what types of evidence and activities could be submitted for individual questions. It was also felt to be important that examples in the Guidance should not be biased towards local authority practices and services.

Specific prompts for **on-site, off-site, and on-line forms of access** would encourage evidence of a broad spread of activities. Participants noted that this is of increasing importance post-Covid-19, and that Archive Service Accreditation can play a useful role in affirming that services should not be judged solely on the numbers of site visitors.

2.5 Programme delivery and other themes

2.5.1 Partner and stakeholder interviews

In addition to discussion focusing on the themes for the review partners and stakeholders raised a variety of issues during the interview. These are outlined in more detail in the report for this phase, but in summary:

- **Eligibility.** There were some discussions with partners and Committee members around what constitutes “professional staff” or a “professional archivist” in the Guidance and Eligibility Criteria.
- **Scalability.** In general, partners and Committee members thought scalability was working well, although some partners and one external stakeholder thought it could be an onerous process for smaller archive services.
- **Guidance.** In general, the quality of the Guidance was often praised – especially by those who are also practitioners and had used it with their service. However, some partners felt the Guidance and supporting documentation can be overly long in places (although they also recognised that this is often required). Others emphasised the importance of having training and resources on inclusive practices and environmental sustainability to help archive services with any new requirements.
- **Administration.** In general, all the partners and Committee members felt that the administrative and programme support provided by The National Archives works well. There was particular praise for the programme staff at The National Archives.
- **Benefits of Accreditation.** Partners felt that Archive Service Accreditation had helped deliver service improvement. However, some partners and one of the external stakeholders highlighted the need to demonstrate the benefits of the programme to archive services.
- **Inclusion.** Interestingly, none of the partners talked about the importance of inclusive practices in the delivery of the programme (although we did not prompt on this). However, one of the Committee members highlighted the importance of ensuring the Committee is representative. One of the external stakeholders also highlighted the importance of this. For example, are the assessors and peer reviewers inclusive practitioners? Are they representative of society?
- **Chair.** A couple of partners asked whether the election of the Chair should be a more open and transparent process. They are currently nominated by the Archives and Records Association. It was emphasised that this is an issue of process and openness rather than any lack of confidence in either the current or previous Chairs. However, others pointed out that the Archives and Records Association is the only partner which covers the whole of the United Kingdom and has an element of independence.

- **Assessments.** Some partners and Committee members felt that the assessment reports were not always consistent in the amount of detail they provide. They felt it would be useful to have guidance or training on the level of detail expected and for there to be more consistency across the assessment teams. Some Committee members highlighted the importance of having people with archives experience in undertaking the assessments and decision-making. Others emphasised the importance of representation in this area (see above).
- **Panels.** In general, partners and Committee members felt the panel meetings and decision-making worked very well.
- **Length of award.** The majority of partners and Committee members felt the current length of the award was correct. However, some asked whether it would be worth clarifying whether the review stage needed to be at a fixed point, bearing in mind that a fundamental change can happen at any time.
- **Removal of Accreditation.** Some partners felt that there needed to be clearer internal guidance on the process for the potential removal of Archive Service Accreditation and the differences between removal, suspension, or postponement of a decision.
- **Museum Accreditation.** Some partners and Committee members emphasised the importance of continuing the relationship with Museum Accreditation to ensure that the programmes are aligned.

2.5.2 Survey

In general, the quality of the **delivery of the programme was rated very highly in all areas by respondents** (see Figure 5 below). However, it is worth noting that the “frequency of status review” and “online application system” scored slightly lower than other areas. There was a small amount of negative feedback (5) about the online application system.

In the open-ended question about what works well, respondents praised the **programme staff** (12) and the **support provided** (11). In terms of what needs changing, there were a wide range of responses with no strong themes emerging, but some emphasised that no change is required (6). A small number (4) thought the timescales for revalidation and reapplication were too frequent, but others (5) highlighted this as working well.

For example, responses included:

“The team are efficient, professional, patient and ever-helpful.”

“No issues with the support received, the application system, or general communication. Understandably this all comes from TNA; given the volume of work I think the team does a fine job on this.”

“Lead staff are very invested and represent the programme brilliantly.”

“The programme staff were helpful throughout the process.”

“Excellent support from TNA.”

“Good supporting documentation and clear process on the website. Communication is helpful, appropriate access to support.”

“The core has been the commitment by TNA staff running the programme to answering queries, showing understanding of timescales and difficulties, illustrating supportive rather than pejorative responses and showing great professionalism and interpersonal empathy. It is important for the programme that this is 'future-proofed'.”

Figure 5 - How would you rate the quality of the delivery of the Archive Service Accreditation programme in the following areas?



The responses to the open-ended question about what else is not covered or missing **were quite wide-ranging**, although some thought that no change was required (7). The themes of digital preservation (12), inclusive practices (7) and environmental sustainability (4) were mentioned by some (note – at this point in the survey they had not been asked about these themes yet). Some also emphasised the repetition and duplication of questions – especially in Section 3 (5).

In the final question “Do you have any other comments you would like to make about Archive Service Accreditation or changes in archival practice?” some reemphasised how they view the programme as a positive and/or supportive (17). For example, responses included:

“Process works well and is supportive and effective.”

“Archive Service Accreditation has been really useful in the sector in defining and encouraging best practice.”

“Its great and very supportive of change and developments in plan, do let me know if we can pilot or help.”

“Archive Service Accreditation has been an Archive-changing process for us. As part of a wider organisation, we are used to frequent change, new priorities, meeting every-changing business needs and I feel that the Accreditation has helped us build an Archive service that can adapt and stay relevant to the organisation.”

“I think the Accreditation process is a very strong tool for archive services. It supports stakeholder engagement, advocacy, service development and improvement and we have used it as a huge morale boost for staff.”

“It has pushed up standards and proven a useful tool across the sector as well as being respected and recognised. It provides an immediate shorthand for excellence with all types of stakeholders.”

2.5.3 Focus groups

In addition to discussion focussing on the themes for the review, **participants raised a variety of issues during the focus groups**. Appendix D includes a full list of the suggestions for “the single biggest change” and Appendix E of participants’ final thoughts. High level themes among these comments include:

- Archive Service Accreditation remains valuable to service development and driving improvement within the sector and is valued by the sector.
- Recognising capacity, constraints and lack of resources particularly impacting smaller services – in general, and specifically in relation to an Archive Service Accreditation application and assessment.
- Processes supporting applications, such as structure and language of the application form and Guidance, scalability/eligibility and a “tiered” approach, follow-up for services which apply and are not successful, and an increased/different role for the visit.
- Changes/additions to specific areas of the existing application e.g. how effectively do services deal with cataloguing backlogs, discharge Place of Deposit functions, or manage cyber-security or outstores.

3. Recommendations

These recommendations for phase 2 of the review identify further work areas and approaches to delivering the required change.

Inclusive practice

3.1 A new equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) requirement is added to Section 1

(Organisational health) of the Standard which outlines how, in the words of *If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes*, EDI work is “at the heart of organisational activities” of the archive service and that it has “a clear vision of the change it wants to see, and priorities, actions, (monitored) targets and resources to realise this change”. This should include how the archive service has

- Embedded EDI in its mission statement, policies, plans, and procedures.
- Conducted an assessment of current EDI levels.
- Created an action plan to deliver change with transparent and explicit goals, responsibilities, and targets.
- Allocated financial and/or staffing resources to deliver the change.
- Identified governance arrangements and/or responsibility for delivering the change.

3.2 The **existing requirements of the Standard are updated** to reflect that, in the words of *If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes*, EDI should be embedded “into all aspects of” the archive service. For example, this should include (not an exhaustive list):

- 1.6 Resources: workforce (inclusive recruitment and employee lifecycle).
- 2.2 Collections Development (inclusive collecting, making collections representative).
- 2.3 Collections Information (inclusive cataloguing)
- 3.2 Access Plans and Planning (understanding needs, diversifying audiences, and access).
- 3.4 Access Information, Procedures and Activities (inclusive access).
- A greater emphasis on working respectfully and ethically with communities in Sections 2 and 3 of the Standard.

3.3 Update the guidance, application form, and glossary to reflect the above – **including examples of the evidence required for each requirement and how these can be applied in a scalable way**. The evidence provided must focus on demonstrating impact and change in the archive service, rather than inputs such as processes or outputs. It needs to demonstrate the difference it has made.

3.4 The Archive Service Accreditation Partnership should **critically reflect on whether it can lead by example on inclusive practice**. For example, could the Partnership and its partners meet relevant parts of the new Standard? What does the Partnership need to do to be able to lead by example? Delivering recommendations 3.1-3.3 above and demonstrating there will be consequences if these are not met in itself will also demonstrate that the Partnership is providing sector leadership on this matter.

Reasoning: 3.1 and 3.2 are based on the recommendations in *If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes*. The importance of EDI strategy, planning and commitment and the themes in 3.2 also emerged from the consultation. A new separate requirement is critical since it will help drive change and improvement and means that there are consequences (an unsuccessful Archive Service Accreditation application) of archive services not meeting it. In the words of *If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes* there should be “consequences for heritage organisations that do not meet their diversity commitments.”

The importance of scalability was emphasised during the consultation, and this is reflected in 3.3. The importance of evidence demonstrating impact and change developed from our conversations with Dr Safina Islam of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust. 3.4 emerged from some of the stakeholder/partner interviews and focus group discussions.

We also advise that once the new EDI elements of the Standard have been in place for a while (e.g. after 5 years and/or 10 years) a review(s) is undertaken. Over time, archive services will hopefully be able to demonstrate more EDI maturity and the Partnership should capture that more nuanced change as they grow.

Digital preservation delivery

3.5 Add the **Digital Preservation Coalition’s Rapid Assessment Model** in the guidance/application form as an alternative option to using the NDSA levels of digital preservation.

3.6 Consider introducing **some minimum standards for certain types of archive services** e.g., type/size of archive service, proportion/significance of digital collections.

3.7 For remaining archive services, update the guidance and application form to **bring out risk management more strongly**. For example, if the archive service does not have a coherent digital preservation function it will need to demonstrate a full understanding of the risks arising from the situation, explain how these risks are managed, and have actions to enable digital preservation.

3.8 For assessment, **allow scoring of digital and analogue collections differently** in Section 2 (Collections).

Reasoning: Using Digital Preservation Coalition's Rapid Assessment Model (3.5) emerged from the focus groups. During the consultation, some felt there should be a stronger emphasis on the implementation of digital preservation and/or minimum standards. However, others thought it important, especially for those archive services with limited resources, to be able to show they are working towards meeting the requirements. 3.6 and 3.7 offer a compromise - minimum standards for certain services and a focus on risk management/improvement for others (which matches the approach Accreditation takes with analogue collections). 3.8 developed from the stakeholder/partner interviews and focus groups.

Environment and sustainability

3.9 **Determine and define the most appropriate terminology** to use for this theme and apply it consistently in the documentation. "Environmental sustainability and carbon cost" was used with the focus groups. Include the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change distinction between adaptation and mitigation.

3.10 **Update Requirement 1.3 Forward Planning in the Standard** to incorporate archive services showing an awareness of environmental issues. Incorporate a new question in Section 1 (Organisational health) to enable services to demonstrate what this means in their context, and what forward plans they are making.

Reasoning: The distinction between adaptation and mitigation emerged from the desktop research. The idea of a new question (3.10) emerged from the focus groups. Survey respondents also emphasised the importance of showing awareness and planning. This theme will need to be looked at again in future reviews to reflect changing priorities and challenges. An incremental approach like that adopted for digital preservation was recognised as valuable.

Audience and future audience needs

3.11 **Review and simplify the language of Section 3** (Stakeholders and their experiences) to ensure clarity and consistency across the Standard, Guidance, application form, and glossary.

3.12 Update the Guidance to **make it clearer about the different types of access that can be incorporated** (e.g., search room, enquiries, digital use/engagement, internal use, statutory use, outreach/learning, and community engagement etc.). The application form will need streamlining and updating to make it easier for applicants to articulate this. For example, this could include supplementing 'policies, plans and procedures' with prompts, checkboxes, and free text questions. As with inclusive practice, this may include focusing on impact and change, rather than inputs.

Reasoning: The issue of language and clarity (3.11) emerged strongly from the survey and focus groups. The importance of incorporating different types of access (3.12) more effectively also came out strongly across the consultation. Having a stronger focus on audience development also emerged from parts of the consultation – we have not included specific recommendations about this but hope that delivering recommendations 1.2, 3.11 and 3.12 will bring this out more strongly.

Delivery of the programme

3.13 Consider **publishing more advocacy materials** for Accreditation, with information disseminated about trends, examples of change, improvements etc.

3.14 Communicate clearly the **role and purpose of the visit** to applicants.

3.15 A process for **checking in with unsuccessful applicants** is put in place.

Reasoning: The value of the data and evidence of changing trends and emerging initiatives emerged in several focus groups. (3.13). There is a perception that routinely collating, interpreting, and sharing these data and evidence in the form of regular reports would contribute to overall levels of awareness across the sector, create a useful advocacy tool and play a part in driving change and improvement. The possibility of aggregating data gathered from accreditation submissions alongside data gathered from the now The National Archives-led annual benchmarking exercise was viewed as offering opportunities to enhance the data set and to streamline data collection for services; inputting data once to serve more than one purpose. The role and value of the assessment visit (3.14) emerged as




a strong discussion theme in all focus groups, with a tendency for participants to seek to expand their role. This may in part result from the difficulties some experience currently in finding appropriate places on the application form to submit evidence, preferring instead to “show and tell” with an assessor. The assessors’ focus group highlighted a gap in accreditation programming with respect to unsuccessful applicants (3.15), in that while sector lead bodies may offer support by way of follow-up, the programme itself makes no provision for so doing. This may deter unsuccessful applicants from trying again.

Sector support bodies






3.16 Sector support bodies in the United Kingdom **develop training, resources, and guidance to support archive services** in meeting any new requirements in the Standard – especially in the areas of inclusive practice and the environment.

Appendix A - Type of respondents to survey





Are you responding to the survey as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Individual		45.12%	37
2	Organisation - archive service		51.22%	42
3	Organisation - other		3.66%	3

What nation do you live or work in? / What nation is your archive service or organisation based in?











Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	England		74.39%	61
2	Northern Ireland		1.22%	1
3	Scotland		13.41%	11
4	Wales		9.76%	8
5	Other		1.22%	1

How familiar are you with Archive Service Accreditation?








Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Not at all familiar		4.88%	4
2	Slightly familiar		14.63%	12
3	Somewhat familiar		28.05%	23
4	Very familiar		52.44%	43

What best describes you? (individual only)





Note – respondents were asked to select all that apply.

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Archive Service Accreditation assessor		2.70%	1
2	Archive Service Accreditation Committee member		2.70%	1
3	Archive Service Accreditation peer reviewer		24.32%	9
4	Freelance/consultant		24.32%	9
5	Study or teach archives or records management		5.41%	2
6	Use archives		8.11%	3
7	Volunteer in archives		8.11%	3
8	Work for an archive service		56.76%	21
9	Work in records management		10.81%	4
10	Other (please specify):		16.22%	6




What best describes your type of archive service? (archive service only)

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Archive in a museum		9.52%	4
2	Business		4.76%	2
3	Charity		4.76%	2
4	Local authority/local authority funded		45.24%	19
5	Other public sector		7.14%	3
6	Other private		0.00%	0
7	University or Further Education		16.67%	7
8	Other (please specify):		11.90%	5

If you work in archives, does your archive service currently hold Archive Service Accreditation? (individual only)

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes - accredited		35.14%	13
2	Yes - provisionally accredited		10.81%	4
3	No - not accredited		29.73%	11
4	Unsure		0.00%	0
5	Not applicable		24.32%	9

Does your archive service currently hold Archive Service Accreditation? (archive service only)

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes - accredited		52.38%	22
2	Yes - provisionally accredited		7.14%	3
3	No - not accredited		40.48%	17
4	Unsure		0.00%	0

Appendix B - Breakdown of focus group participants by type of service

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Smaller services</u>	<u>Larger services</u>	<u>Any service</u>	<u>Not accredited</u>	<u>Assessors (2 groups)</u>
Number of participants	31 attended (37 booked)	7	9	6	4	5
Country	Eng: 23 (74%) Scot: 4 (13%) Wales: 4 (13%)	Eng: 6 Scot: 1	Eng: 7 Scot: 1 Wales: 1	Eng: 6	Eng: 1 Scot: 2 Wales: 1	Eng: 3 Wales: 2
About your archive service/you	Work in Accredited services - 20 (65%) (19 full/1 provisional) Work in not Accredited services – 4 (13%) Assessors – 5 (16%) Consultant – 2 (6%) Also peer reviewer – 3 (10%)	All 7 services Accredited.	All 9 services Accredited (1 provisional) Some services Accredited across multiple sites or have sites not yet Accredited.	All 4 services accredited. 2 attendees were consultants. 3 of the participants were peer reviewers.	All 4 services unaccredited	n/a
Type of service	Business – 3 (13%) Charity – 2 (8%) HE/FE – 5 (21%) LA/LA funded – 9 (38%) Museum – 4 (17%) Other private – 1 (4%)	Business: 3 Charity: 1 HE/FE: 1 LA: 1 Other private: 1	HE/FE: 2 LA: 5 Museum: 2	LA: 2 Museum: 2	Charity: 1 HE/FE: 2 LA: 1	n/a

Appendix C - Sample activities relating to environmental sustainability and carbon cost (focus groups)

Included (items in **bold** mentioned most frequently)

- Exhibition themes. Tell different stories using your collections. Incorporating environmental sustainability in exhibitions, even if it is not the main theme of the exhibition, can raise awareness. Climate change can be explored in the context of collections e.g. climate change impacts in the Global South contributing to migration.
- Baselining data against which you can measure change and impact.
- Carrying out audits of waste e.g. paper towels as well as auditing procurement, travel, electricity, gas, and water. Resources from Julie's Bicycle mentioned as useful in baselining and measuring these.
- Adopting green travel policies, obliging visitors to use public transport, and preventing visitors using cars on site.
- Using pest control procedures to monitor the variety of species and their geographical spread, thereby adding to intelligence about the geographical distribution of species.
- Accessioning collections about the environment
- Cataloguing environmental records
- Collections development with respect to climate related protests, etc.
- Public awareness events and public-facing activities: the sector has a role to play through outreach and engagement.
- Organisational improvement projects such as phasing out fluorescent lighting, installing solar panels or heat pumps across all buildings.
- Undertaking Carbon Literacy Training
- Reducing plastic use
- Considering environmental sustainability in a procurement context – considered decision making about where to source products.
- Artists in residence being asked to explore and reflect on topics such as biodiversity.
- Recycling nitrile gloves
- Sourcing supplies ethically
- Mapping flood risk for forward planning/disaster planning
- Examining digital footprint and the environmental impact associated with it. As services digitise collections, they take responsibility for the energy costs of maintaining both the physical and digital collection. Digital preservation is perceived as energy intensive, and some organisations have chosen different levels of standards for different types/values of content. Considering the environmental impacts of digital activity: digital preservation and use of open/interoperable standards come with a climate cost.
- **Changing lighting to more efficient LEDs, and/or moving to lighting in strongrooms controlled by timers or motion-sensors.**
- **Adopting passive approaches to strongroom management or changing strongroom controls/management parameters to adapt to changing local conditions.**

Appendix D - Participants' single biggest change/barrier (focus groups)

Focus group participants (larger services, smaller services, and assessors) were invited to share the single biggest change they would advocate for as part of the Archive Service Accreditation Standard refresh. Representatives from unaccredited services were invited to share the single biggest barrier to applying. Many of the suggestions were developed as part of the focus group discussions and have been included above. The list below comprises additional thoughts.

Workflow and programme management

- Could accreditation operate at two levels – full accreditation and foundation level (not for PoDs)? This would motivate and reward services who cannot achieve full accreditation. This might be something akin to Museum Accreditation “working towards accreditation” category. Though Museum Accreditation brings eligibility for ring-fenced funding, unlike Archive Service Accreditation. It was suggested that a “Foundation” level could enhance Accreditation Standard’s utility as a development tool and could improve the targeting of help and resources towards weaker areas in unaccredited services.
- Lack of workflow for services that apply and are not successful. Once they have been informed of the outcome of their application, there is no follow-up/ further stage in the process (unless they are a PoD for example) to support them in addressing their areas for improvement
- Section 2 Collections should include an additional question for PoDs to drill down into how effectively they are carrying out their PoD functions. The person who advocated for this felt is a serious omission and if not addressed via the accreditation process, it needs to be picked up in another way which could be more onerous for both TNA and individual services.
- Better detail around benchmarking against other services and maybe different statistical gathering

Scalability

- Recognise the particular challenges of small services by having scaled expectations. Digital preservation is a particular capacity problem for small services.
- Scalability/how smaller archives can show best practice when they generally have less resource and assessors are from larger/better resourced contexts.
- Less geared to local authority archives

Other

- Data for environmental conditions in storage areas needs more guidance rather than simply submitting 12 months.

- Further emphasis on cataloguing: is a service making an impact on its backlog? (e.g. Compare number of boxes accessioned vs. number catalogued in a year). A huge effort is needed by large services with a large backlog to change the overall % of catalogued etc. Cataloguing often is lowest priority compared to customers/partners/funders etc.
- Better language for business archives in relation to “communities/stakeholders”
- Digital storage as well as analogue storage accounted for
- Reference to environmental sustainability for digital archive management, preservation, and access

Barriers

- Time to pull together an application or gather a body of evidence is simply not possible in some services.
- Need for capital spend, accommodation in listed buildings and other constraints on services can’t be resolved in the short-term and are barriers.

Appendix E - Final comments (focus groups)

At the conclusion of each focus group participants were invited to make any final points which they felt had not been covered. These have been grouped thematically.

Archive Service Accreditation remains valuable and valued

- Fundamentally accreditation does still work. Services don't need too much encouragement to take part and there is an appetite to achieve accredited status.
- There is a good understanding of the value of accreditation.
- Archive service accreditation is perceived as more robust than Museum accreditation and this gives it credibility. Museum accreditation is increasingly seen as a 'paper exercise' and this would not be desirable for archives.
- Accreditation as a driver of service improvement and change is highly valued – both to celebrate what's been achieved, and to advocate for additional support/resource to make change.
- Accreditation drives service improvement - 'Accreditation works' - but perhaps reporting of these wider outcomes could be upgraded? A report which identifies trends and patterns with respect to required and improved actions was seen as valuable.
- Positive about the review process
- There is value in learning from your service's previous accreditation submissions when you join a new service.
- Accreditation was originally 'advertised' as being a beneficial shorthand for quality (e.g. in external applications): is there evidence that it is accepted as a quality mark (e.g. by Lottery)? Whilst NLHF is interested in museums being Accredited, it doesn't seem to be interested in Archives Accreditation in the same way. So maybe more advocacy for Accreditation is needed with the archives' sector's own stakeholders?
- Accreditation has been a positive process overall.

Maintaining value

- A large number of services aren't accredited or have not yet renewed/resubmitted where this is due.
- The threat of losing accreditation is not treated particularly seriously within some parent bodies, linking into the need for more advocacy with senior managers with responsibility for archives but who are not qualified archivists themselves.
- Some accredited services are within broader organisations which are on the point of failure. This raises questions about whether it is appropriate for accreditation to be withdrawn because the archive service is unavoidably doing less than they were before.
- A number of services are facing major challenges. Accreditation can take an iterative approach, looking again at the review or re-application stages. This is similar to services that seem to be stuck at provisional accreditation – not moving forward with the actions needed to take them to fully accredited. "You can't just keep kicking it down the road". What should the accreditation process do to remove these blocks?

- Accreditation needs to acknowledge the financial climate but needs to remain at an appropriate level. If the standard is progressively compromised it ceases to do what it was designed to do.
- If the accreditation standard is not being met due to failures at parent body level, should accreditation be withdrawn in a different way? 'Suspension' rather than 'withdrawal' perhaps? The group felt that the responsibility of the parent body rather than the archive service should be visible in this decision.

Workflow and programme management

- Wales is fully committed to carrying out assessment visits for 100% of applicants. The assessment visit is perceived as immensely valuable.
- The timing/pacing of the review stage may not work well especially for smaller services. If a lot has changed it can feel like a full reapplication rather than a light touch review. It was noted that the Covid-19 emergency may have had more of an impact here. Could there be a simpler review for smaller services?
- Actual application form is "very clunky".
- Being able to re-use answers/work for accreditation is helpful (e.g. In TNA's recent archives survey). TNA have tried to streamline funding applications recently – perhaps this can carry in Accreditation – only ask critical questions??
- Form and documentation don't match (and there are some spelling errors in questions)

Scalability

- Scalability remains very important (focus group attendee was specifically asked to raise this by their manager, indicating the importance of this point)
- Some services fall between different service types. Can this be made more flexible/clearer/simpler?
- The eligibility criteria need to be reconsidered in order to remove some existing grey areas. Some specialist services are interested in applying but don't currently meet the criteria. For example, a service which gathers private collections, scans them, and then returns them to their owners. They have a large database but no physical collection. Or a service which solely collects photographs which is more archival in nature than either a library or a museum.
- If you work in a building with constraints, e.g. Grade I listed, you are very limited in what you can do and may well have no environmental control or limited expansion space. To do anything would be a very long process. Accreditation currently doesn't take this into account.
- Could a revised standard acknowledge physical building constraints alongside service type to provide context?

Other

- The standard should make an explicit statement about the use of outstores and external storage to ensure services are managing the level of service provided rather than passively passing responsibility to the provider. Confirming SLAs are actually being met is important.

- Should the standard include reference to cybersecurity (possibly in Organisational Health)? This may well require policy statements and security guarantees for digital records and services from the parent body. Accreditation can perform a useful role in raising awareness of the risks.
- Would it be possible to make the format in which data is requested consistent with CIPFA/TNA stats and SCONUL? And having achieved the consistency, could Accreditation draw down the statistical data from the annual benchmarking survey to save services having to re-present the data?
- Allied to the above, a “state of the nation” summary drawing on the rich dataset of information about archive services could be useful. Perhaps this information contributed by individual services is being used, but this use isn’t visible? Dissemination of information like trends in improvement actions could be very beneficial, for example: the DPC provides trend information to its members from the DPC RAMs submitted, as well as specific feedback to a member submitting a DPC RAM.

The group acknowledged that this is complex e.g. for reasons of confidentiality, data wouldn’t be comparable between organisations because of change over time. However, there may still be benefit to the sector, for example advocacy materials could be useful - perhaps aimed at higher level management with responsibility for archive services (but who do not have professional archival training). Could there be a role for peer support among archive services facing similar issues?

Peer reviewers in the group commented that they benefit personally from this kind of insight into the services they are involved with, but this could also be beneficial to others in the wider sector.

The group also wondered whether Accreditation could signpost case studies/good practice, and recognised there are many sources of these already, which may not be looked at. The value of case studies as a means of improving practice across the sector was questioned: they can be effective but are not the only or possibly the most reliable way of driving change. Overall, the group recognised that promotional activity of this nature might help with accreditation applications, but it is not necessarily the role of accreditation to provide them.

Appendix F – Survey instrument (English)

1. Introduction

[Archive Service Accreditation](#) is the UK standard for archive services. The standard defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging and supporting development. Archive services within the UK may apply for Accreditation by completing an application form to demonstrate their compliance with the standard.

With 178 archive services now accredited, The National Archives on behalf of the UK Archive Service Accreditation Partnership are undertaking a second review of Archive Service Accreditation, five years after the last review in 2017/2018 and ten years after its initial launch in 2013.

The review itself is an essential element of Archive Service Accreditation that allows all of us to reflect on how well the standard meets the needs of archive services, current archival practice and ever-changing circumstances and to think about what changes may be needed to keep the standard relevant to archive services.

This survey offers you the opportunity to provide feedback on Archive Service Accreditation - on both the Standard and its delivery. It is primarily aimed at those who work in the archives sector in the United Kingdom. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The deadline for responses is Monday 8 January 2024.

If you would like this survey in an alternative format please contact Kevin Bolton at kevin@kevinjbolton.com.

A Welsh version of the survey is available at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AdolygiadAchreduGwasanaethauArchifau2023>

Privacy

This survey is being administered by Kazky (trading as Kevinjbolton Ltd) on behalf of The National Archives and the UK Archive Service Accreditation Partnership. They have been appointed to carry out the first phase of the review. At Kazky we are serious about protecting your privacy and maintaining the security of any personal information collected or received from you. At the end of the survey we ask for a contact email address for those who are interested in participating in a focus group. This will be kept separately to the

survey response and will only be used by us for the purposes of arranging the focus groups. The data will be destroyed at the end of the project. For more information about we manage personal data please see our [privacy policy](#). We also hold Cyber Essentials certification.

In any reports we create for The National Archives and UK Archive Service Accreditation Partnership we will ensure that the results are anonymised.

If you have any questions about the survey then please contact Kevin Bolton at kevin@kevinjbolton.com

2. About you

Are you responding to the survey as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? *

- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Organisation - archive service
- ☐ Organisation - other

3. About you (individual)

What nation do you live or work in?

- ☐ England
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Wales
- ☐ Other

What best describes you? (select all that apply) *

- ☐ Archive Service Accreditation assessor
- ☐ Archive Service Accreditation Committee member
- ☐ Archive Service Accreditation peer reviewer
- ☐ Freelance/consultant
- ☐ Study or teach archives or records management
- ☐ Use archives
- ☐ Volunteer in archives
- ☐ Work for an archive service
- ☐ Work in records management
- ☐ Other (please specify):

If you work in archives, does your archive service currently hold Archive Service Accreditation? *

- ☐ Yes - accredited
- ☐ Yes - provisionally accredited
- ☐ No - not accredited
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Not applicable

How familiar are you with Archive Service Accreditation? *

- ☐ Not at all familiar
- ☐ Slightly familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Very familiar

4. About you (archive service)

What nation is your archive service based in?

- ☐ England
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Wales
- ☐ Other

Has your archive service applied for Archive Service Accreditation before? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Does your archive service currently hold Archive Service Accreditation? *

- ☐ Yes - accredited
- ☐ Yes - provisionally accredited
- ☐ No - not accredited
- ☐ Unsure

What best describes your type of archive service?

- ☐ Archive in a museum
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Charity
- ☐ Local authority/local authority funded
- ☐ Other public sector
- ☐ Other private
- ☐ University or Further Education
- ☐ Other (please specify):

How familiar are you with Archive Service Accreditation? *

- ☐ Not at all familiar
- ☐ Slightly familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Very familiar

5. About you (organisation)

What nations does your organisation cover?

- ☐ England
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Wales
- ☐ Other

What best describes your type of organisation?

- ☐ Library
- ☐ Museum
- ☐ Professional group/section/network (archives or records management)
- ☐ Professional group/section/network (non archives)
- ☐ Other (please specify):

How familiar are you with Archive Service Accreditation? *

- ☐ Not at all familiar
- ☐ Slightly familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Very familiar

6. The Standard (unfamiliar with Archive Service Accreditation)

This section asks about the [Archive Service Accreditation Standard](#). The Standard lists the requirements services must achieve to meet Archive Service Accreditation and the outcomes which can be expected.

How important is it that these areas are reflected in the Archive Service Accreditation Standard?

	Low importance	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Unsure
Organisational health - the strategic and operational context within which the collections are managed and made accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collections management - the systems that are in place to continuously improve collections development, collections information, collections care and conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stakeholders and their experiences - access, engagement and audience needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What else would you expect a management standard for archive services to assess?

7. The Standard (familiar with Archive Service Accreditation)

This section asks about the [Archive Service Accreditation Standard and Guidance](#). The Standard lists the requirements services must achieve to meet Archive Service Accreditation and the outcomes which can be expected. The Guidance provides help in understanding and meeting the requirements of the standard and completing the application form.

How would you rate the quality and relevance of the three sections of the Archive Service Accreditation Standard?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Unsure
1. Organisational health - the strategic and operational context within which the collections are managed and made accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Collections management - the systems that are in place to continuously improve collections development, collections information, collections care and conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Stakeholders and their experiences - access, engagement and audience needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which parts of the Standard and Guidance do you think work well?

Do you feel the existing coverage of the Standard relating to audiences gives space to discuss the archive service's offer to all audiences? Does it reflect any changes in audience expectations since the launch of Accreditation in 2013?

Do any other parts of the Standard and Guidance need to be updated or are there any areas that are not adequately covered? Are there any areas that should be removed?

8. Delivery of the programme

This section asks about the delivery of the Archive Service Accreditation programme.

How would you rate the quality of the delivery of the Archive Service Accreditation programme in the following areas?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Unsure
Application process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication with the programme administrators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision making about awards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eligibility to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequency of status review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information on the website about the programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online application system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have selected poor for any areas can you explain why?

In terms of the delivery of the programme what works well?

In terms of the delivery of the programme is there anything that could be done differently?

9. Themes

The Archive Service Accreditation Committee and initial conversations with the archives sector have identified the following themes as a focus for this review, although other areas of focus may emerge as the work progresses:

Embedding inclusive practice: refers to practice that allows persons to feel both represented (through increased diversity in workforce, narratives discussed and audiences) as well as empowered by being included in decision making. For collections institutions, this specifically includes considering what is collected or not collected, and how it is described, as well as thinking about the people involved with the collections.

Digital preservation delivery: ensuring that in addition to having effective policy and planning, archive services are able actively to undertake preservation of digital objects.

Environment and sustainability: issues around climate impact of archive service activities and/or service vulnerability to climate change and its costs.

How important is it that these areas are reflected in the Archive Service Accreditation Standard? *

	Low importance	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Unsure
Embedding inclusive practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital preservation delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment and sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What other areas should be considered as part of this review of Archive Service Accreditation?

10. Embedding inclusive practice

If embedding inclusive practice was added, what would you consider a reasonable expectation for archives of the type(s) and size(s) you are most familiar with to deliver against this area?

Or have you any other thoughts on how the Standard could be developed or changed to reflect this area?

Embedding inclusive practice: refers to practice that allows persons to feel both represented (through increased diversity in workforce, narratives discussed and audiences) as well as empowered by being included in decision making. For collections institutions, this specifically includes considering what is collected or not collected, and how it is described, as well as thinking about the people involved with the collections.

Are these best represented as separate new requirements for the Accreditation Standard or do they form part of existing requirements?

- ☐ Separate new requirements
- ☐ Part of existing requirements
- ☐ Unsure

Comments:

11. Digital preservation delivery

If digital preservation delivery was added, what would you consider a reasonable expectation for archives of the type(s) and size(s) you are most familiar with to deliver against this area?

Or have you any other thoughts on how the Standard could be developed or changed to reflect this area?

Digital preservation delivery: ensuring that in addition to having effective policy and planning, archive services are able actively to undertake preservation of digital objects.

Are these best represented as separate new requirements for the Accreditation Standard or do they form part of existing requirements?

- ☐ Separate new requirements
- ☐ Part of existing requirements
- ☐ Unsure

Comments:

12. Environment and sustainability

If the environment and sustainability was added, what would you consider a reasonable expectation for archives of the type(s) and size(s) you are most familiar with to deliver against this area?

Or have you any other thoughts on how the Standard could be developed or changed to reflect this area?

Environment and sustainability: issues around climate impact of archive service activities and/or service vulnerability to climate change and its costs.

Are these best represented as separate new requirements for the Accreditation Standard or do they form part of existing requirements?

- ☐ Separate new requirements
- ☐ Part of existing requirements
- ☐ Unsure

Comments:

13. Other

Do you have any other comments you would like to make about Archive Service Accreditation or changes in archival practice?

14. Focus groups

Would you be willing to participate in an online focus group (2 hours) on Archive Service Accreditation in January and February 2024?

The focus groups are aimed at those who work in the archives sector in the United Kingdom. *

☐ Yes

☐ No

15. Focus groups (continued)

Thanks for agreeing to participate in a focus group.

Please supply some additional details which will help us plan and organise the focus groups.

Your name and email address will only be used by Kazky (trading as Kevinjbolton Ltd) for arranging the focus groups and will be stored separately to the survey response. It will be deleted at the end of the project (March 2024) *

Name

*

Email
address

*

Name of
archive
service/or
organisation
(if
applicable
)

*

Which focus group(s) would you like to attend?

We are defining 'small' services as those who have less than 100m3 and/or 20GB of collections, but if you are not sure do not worry - simply pick either session! *

- ☐ For those who work in 'small' accredited services - Wednesday 31 January 2024 10.30am (2 hours)
- ☐ For those who work in 'large' accredited services - Thursday 1 February 2024 2pm (2 hours)
- ☐ For those who work in services which are currently not accredited - Wednesday 7 February 2024 2pm (2 hours)
- ☐ For those who work in accredited or not accredited services (any size) - Thursday 8 February 2024 10.30 (2 hours)