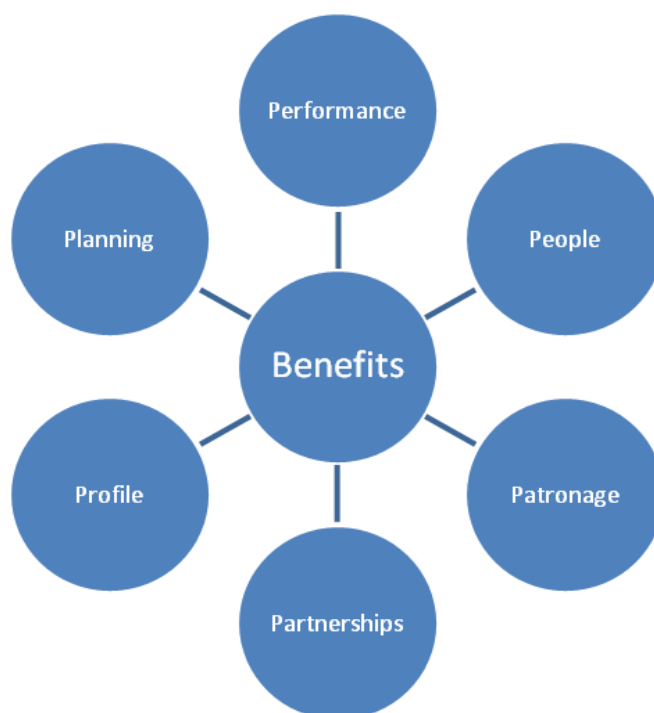


Archives Accreditation Scheme FAQs

What benefits will Archives Accreditation bring?

Research at the scoping stage of Archives Accreditation identified a range of benefits for organisations and their governing bodies. These are summarised in the six Ps:

1. **Performance:** a UK wide quality standard which offers a benchmark and stimulus for gauging performance, recognising achievement, ensuring value for money and driving continuous improvement
2. **Profile:** a mechanism for raising awareness and understanding of archives, building confidence and credibility both within parent organisations and externally
3. **People:** a process to help archive-holding organisations adapt and respond to user needs and interests and to support workforce development
4. **Partnerships:** a tool to help archives examine their offer more widely and to encourage collaborative working within and between organisations
5. **Planning:** a robust framework for facilitating forward planning, improving procedures and policy, and reducing organisational risk
6. **Patronage:** a badge of recognition which demonstrates quality services to supporters, donors and grant-making bodies, strengthening funding applications, attracting philanthropic giving and fostering investor trust



What archives will be eligible?

The scheme will be open to all types of archive including business archives, charitable trusts, local authorities, universities, museums and other specialist organisations which also hold archives. The eligibility criteria will be tested in the co-creation and piloting phases.

What will the new standard cover?

We don't know precisely what the final standard will look like – that is dependent on the outcome of the co-creation phase (as we've already said, this is your chance to shape the future!) We are not starting with a completely blank piece of paper – there are a number of existing archives standards and benchmarking tools to draw on. What we do have are the underlying themes, which give structure to the standard. These are the same as those established and tested in the Museum Accreditation Scheme:

- overall management, governance and organisational health
- users and their experiences
- collections management and development.

How will it be assessed?

It has been proposed that the assessment process will include peer review and approval by a peer panel. We will recruit peers during the pilot phase.

How does it fit with existing archives standards?

The new standard is not being created from scratch. It draws on existing standards with the intention that Archives Accreditation will eventually replace The National Archives' standard and inspection regime.

How does Archives Accreditation link to Museum Accreditation?

In December 2011 Arts Council England (ACE) launched the revised scheme designed to act as a more focused development tool for museums aiming to improve. Accreditation has been benefitting all types of museums and their visitors since 1988. It sets the standard that museums and galleries should aspire to for the benefit of users, today and in the future. It sets out what good practice looks like and is the recognised quality standard for UK museums and galleries. www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/museums-and-libraries/museums/accreditation-scheme/ The new Archives Accreditation standard will align with the museum scheme and we're working closely with ACE to ensure we build on their recent experience revising the museum standard and to ensure processes are coordinated.

What is co-creation?

A significant departure is that the new standard will be written by those who work in or have an interest in archives as decision maker or user, together with the partners who will manage the scheme once it is operational. This process means that the new standard will be fully owned by the archives sector.

How do I get involved?

We are holding workshops in the New Year for those who responded to the open invitation to participate. This is only the start of the process. To ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate, wherever they are in the country and whatever type of archive they work in or stakeholder interest there will be a webinar. This will be followed by focussed online development work of each component of the standard. We will be tweeting #archivesaccreditn, blogging and emailing updates to the sector through the Archives NRA jiscmail list.

Further questions?

Further information about the project can be found on our Archives Accreditation Scheme page. We'll update it regularly as the project progresses. Alternatively, contact Anna Siddall, Transition Manager asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk +44 (0) 20 8876 3444 (x2044)