

Terms of Reference for The National Archives' User Advisory Group – updated June 2016

The role of the User Advisory Group is to:

Provide an opportunity for users of The National Archives to get involved in the organisation's planning and decision making process at an early stage and a strategic level.

Provide an opportunity for The National Archives to seek structured advice and feedback from our user communities on specific developments and decisions, via a formal closed group, which reflects the diverse interests, concerns and agendas of our user communities.

Provide balanced and holistic representation from the diverse sections of our user community and an opportunity for dialogue.

Act as a two way communications channel between The National Archives and our user communities.

Provide a voice, through representation, for users who may not be able to make use of the other engagement channels provided by The National Archives.

The role of the User Advisory Group is distinct from:

The role of the [User Forum](#) which is an open forum held regularly on site at The National Archives. However, it is likely that there will be links and communication channels between the 2 groups, in both directions.

Executive responsibility of The National Archives' formal governance structure, including all of its constituent parts.

Any other consultative or advisory group or body not listed above.

Structure and membership

The User Advisory Group consists of invited delegates who represent key sections of our user community. The following communities are currently represented, and the structure of the group is reviewed annually to ensure that it reflects any changes in the organisation's remit and / or stakeholders:

- On site, personal interest researchers
- Independent (paid) researchers
- Academic researchers
- Researchers based primarily in the Map and Large Document Reading Room

- Researchers interested in the diversity / inclusion / access agenda
- County / external archives
- Genealogy / family history societies
- Online users
- Students
- Early academic Career researchers

Individual membership will be reviewed annually, with the aim of cycling membership so that approximately a third of the individuals in the group are replaced each year. The maximum period of membership for an individual will be 4 years.

The National Archives commits to:

Manage and Chair the meetings effectively, to promote productive communication and discussion.

Set the dates of the meetings in advance and communicate these effectively so as to allow delegates to plan their attendance.

Circulate agendas and minutes of the meetings in a timely manner.

Communicate effectively with delegates interregnum, as appropriate.

Delegates should commit to:

Respect the roles and opinions of the other delegates, the Chair and other staff in attendance.

Make every effort to attend the meetings and act as a representative for a minimum of one year (4 meetings). Delegates are expected to attend a minimum of 2 meetings each year.

Make every effort to effectively represent, feed back to and communicate with their user community; to include the publication of their names and contact details.

Show discretion in communicating what is discussed at the meetings and maintain confidentiality where instructed by the Chair or other staff members.

Sign and adhere to confidentiality undertakings to ensure confidentiality as above.

Constitution of the User Advisory Group

The User Advisory Group will meet 4 times a year with:

The Director of Public Engagement

Additional members of staff will be made available depending upon agenda topics. Agendas for meetings will be published in advance of, and full minutes will be published following the meetings.

Resources

The National Archives will make limited resources available to support the User Advisory Group as follows:

Publicise the dates of the meetings and the contact details of delegates, online, onsite and in publications where appropriate.

Provide meeting space, refreshments and facilities for the meetings, as required.

Where appropriate, provide reasonable resources to allow delegates to communicate and meet with members of the communities they represent (to include space on our notice boards and meeting rooms where available).

Provide a standing agenda item at the next User Forum meeting following each UAG meeting for a nominated UAG delegate to provide an update to the wider user audience.