Testing new and amended inclusion questions for Archive Service Accreditation

Definitions:
The following represents the Archive Service Accreditation Committee's intentions in developing the standard further.

Equality, diversity and inclusion refers to addressing the impacts of inequality and exclusion which may come from discrimination around the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 ((1) Age, (2) Disability, (3) Gender reassignment, (4) Marriage and Civil partnership, (5) Pregnancy and maternity, (6) Race, (7) Religion or belief, (8) Sex or (9) Sexual orientation). The Equality Act 2010 also gives the duty to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and to foster good relations between them.

Exclusion may also arise through factors such as socio-economic background, educational background, lack of digital access and geographic isolation. While some factors are consistent across the population, other factors are distributed differently across the UK, its regions, nations and communities. Individual archive services serve communities that have a different balance of these challenges, and their responses will take account of communities' needs and expectations.

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

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

purposes of this work, we have chosen to refer to 'communities' plural to emphasise the need to engage across this range of different groups and individuals, with diverse needs and interests. An archive service's communities extend well beyond those who already routinely use the service.

Questions

Please indicate where your archive service sits on Archive Service Accreditation [scalability](#):

Type of service	Please tick one only
Local authority type 1 (small)	
Local authority type 2 (large)	
Other public sector type 1 (small)	
Other public sector type 2 (large)	
Other public sector – National remit	
Private and third sector type 1 (small)	
Private and third sector type 2 (medium)	
Private and third sector type 3 (large)	

Accreditation offers scalable expectations for archive services of different types and sizes. Some scaled guidance is included below, but when you come to making your feedback about the questions and guidance, please consider what further guidance or expectations would be helpful for your type of archive services in terms of scalability.

Module 1: Organisational Health

Requirement 1.6: Workforce

1) **What policies and procedures do you have in place for supporting a diverse workforce?**
   Please give details of any activity you are undertaking to increase inclusiveness in your recruitment activity, and your staff and volunteer support. If this is detailed in a document, please upload it here, or refer to documents uploaded elsewhere in this application.

Name of document	Means of approval	Date for review

2) **As your service changes and develops, please describe how you identify the development needs of your archive service workforce, e.g. with regard to inclusive practice, to increasing digital preservation capacity**

Requirement 1.6 Question-specific guidance:

1) This is a new question. The term "workforce" is used throughout Archive Service Accreditation to cover both paid staff and volunteers. This question invites broad reflection on being an inclusive employer or place to volunteer. Please explain your service's approach or upload any existing documentation that demonstrates how your service understands the need to support staff and volunteers inclusively, and that is has ways to ensure this approach when responding to this question. Examples might include approaches to diverse recruitment and different entry points into the workforce; supporting neurodiversity; managing offensive terminology in the records and the impact of violent language; recognising faith needs. Some relevant policies such as policies

covering recruitment, retention, diversity and inclusion may already exist and may be at an institution-wide level.

Scaled guidance to question 1: Local authority type 2, Other public sector type 2, Private and third sector type 3

In larger services, this work may include analysis of how reflective the current workforce is of the archive service's community. Please do not respond with any detailed demographic data regarding your service workforce for any groupings with fewer than 5 people, or which might otherwise identify individuals.

2) This is an amendment to a general question, with additional text that s designed to draw out ways in which your workforce is being supported to understand diversity and inclusion, and to work in more inclusive ways. This question does not only refer to formal training, although this may form part of your service's response. For the purposes of testing this question, you do not need to answer the wider question around staff development planning, unless it provides useful context to your response.

References:

The Public Sector Equality Duty guidance (2011)

The National Archives, *Matrix for Inclusive Practice in Archives* (forthcoming)

The National Archives, *Inclusive Recruitment* guidance (forthcoming)

Access for All Self-Assessment Toolkit: Checklist 2: *Cultural Diversity for Museums, Libraries and Archives*: https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20050302055624/http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/cultural_diversity_checklist.pdf

Module 2: Collections

Requirement 2.2.2 Collections Development Planning

3) **How far do the collections held by your archive service reflect the breadth of your collecting remit and the communities the archive is constituted to serve?** Please give details of any activity you are undertaking to increase the representativeness of collections. If this is detailed in a document, please upload it here, or refer to documents uploaded elsewhere in this application.

Name of document	Means of approval	Date for review

4) **Please describe the key issues and risks relating to the legal status of your collections, with regard to loans and legacy deposits , unclear or disputed provenance, spoliation or other requests for restitution especially, and indicate how these issue are being addressed** (cross reference to relevant forward plans submitted with this application)

Requirement 2.2.2 Question-specific guidance:

3) This is a new question. The question asks for evidence that you have considered how far your collections represent the collecting remit identified as in the mission statement, whether it is largely institutional, geographical, subject-driven or another form of collecting remit. It also asks for an indication of any activity that you are undertaking to address areas of underrepresentation. This could be through proactive collecting approaches, building relationships for the future, partnership working or addressing past descriptive practice.

Responses to this question may be addressed in full in the collections development policy and plan that in a full application are uploaded elsewhere against the collection development requirements 2.2.1 and 2.2.2. If so, please

indicate this briefly (and attach the relevant document(s), for the purposes of piloting).

4) This is an amended question that now makes explicit reference to issues of disputed provenance and requests for restitution. This question already covered issues of legal status but has been tightly interpreted to cover collections on deposit usually. This additional wording will not apply to all archive services, but please indicate how you would answer if this element is relevant to the collections held in your archive service. For the purposes of testing this question, you do not need to answer the more general question about legal status, deposited collections etc unless it gives useful context.

Reference materials:

The National Archives, *Collection Development Tools and Guidance* - a toolkit to enables services to review and develop their collections, identify gaps and risks in content, safeguard their collections, consider short and long term needs for preservation and access.

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/collection-development-tools-and-guidance.pdf

Arts Council England, *Collections Development Policy Template* – this template has been designed for museums working towards Museum Accreditation. It does have an archives section and can provide a useful starting point for an archive thinking about writing a policy, including reference to spoliation and repatriation work http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/document/collections-development-policy-template

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

Module 2: Collections

Requirement 2.3.1 Collections Information Policies/2.3.2 Collections Information Plans/2.3.3 Collections information procedures

New questions are not planned currently for this area, which focuses on services' collections information activity, such as accessioning and cataloguing. However, the guidance has been amended to include specific reference to policy, plans and procedures potentially including work on legacy descriptions and approaches to offensive terminology within records. It includes the guidance point "Where past descriptive practice, particularly of marginalised communities, is a barrier to current usage, it may be helpful to explain how you are developing approaches to addressing this over time".

The guidance also now states when describing content of collections information documentation that "Whilst there is no standard template for the [policy/plan/procedures], it may include...

- [Policy] the institution's approach to revisiting past terminology and descriptive practice for marginalised groups
- [Policy] identifying any areas of legacy description which are inadequate, offensive and/or unsuitable for current audiences
- [Plan] any plans to review legacy description, such as to review offensive terminology or to uncover different aspects of the records
- [Procedures] where relevant, the procedures should cover support for staff in describing offensive and/or traumatic records, and/or opportunities for users to identify inadequate, offensive or unsuitable descriptions with a view to prompting a review"

5) For the purposes of testing the question, please can you upload or note below anything your service would use to evidence work against any of the above criteria, whether at the level of setting policy, current plans or any procedures in place.

Name of document	Means of approval	Date for review

References:

Intersectional GLAM 'Respectful descriptions of marginalised groups':
https://intersectionalglam.org/2018/11/22/archives-and-inclusivity-respectful-descriptions-of-marginalised-groups/

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

The National Archives, *Risk Assessment for Communicating Upsetting Histories* (forthcoming)

Module 3: Stakeholders and their experiences

3.1 Access and engagement policy

As with collections information, specific new questions are not planned for this requirement, which reviews policy in terms of how people engage with the archive service. However, the section has been renamed "access and engagement policy" to emphasise approaches that go beyond access to records in a search room setting. Guidance on relevant documentation against this requirement already lists options such as user services policy, community engagement policy, outreach policy and asks about how archive services manage access to restricted records in ways that meet the needs of the communities they serve.

6) For the purposes of testing the changes, we would like to know what (if any) other externally facing policies the archive service has in place to support inclusive approaches to the communities they serve. For example, is there specifically an inclusion policy? If there is a clear inclusion focus in access and engagement documents that you would already have used to answer this question, please attach these too.

Name of document	Means of approval	Date for review

Module 3: Stakeholders and their experiences

Requirement 3.2.1 Understanding your community and analysing its needs/

7) How do you identify and analyse the needs of communities and stakeholders in relation to providing access?

Requirement 3.2.2 Documented plans to improve access

8) Please describe your plans for improving access to collections and services and reaching new audiences in response to the needs and interests of your communities.

Requirement 3.2.1/3.2.2 Question-specific guidance:

7 and 8) These are amended questions to encourage archive services to think beyond their existing users when seeking to understand the needs of their communities and stakeholders. This should include analysis of current user profiles against the archive service's definition of its community (which is defined in responses to a previous question). Analysis and planning include exploring why some stakeholders do not engage with the service and what barriers may be addressed in future plans.

Reference materials:

The Audience Agency has created reference materials for exploring and meeting community needs: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/talking-to-your-community/understanding-your-community/

The National Archives, *Creating Equitable Partnerships Model* (forthcoming)

The National Archives, *Risk Assessment for Communicating Potential Upsetting Histories* (forthcoming)

The London Mayor's Commission's Task Force on African and Asian Heritage, *Delivering Shared Heritage* report (2005) – although originally issued in hard copy, it is possible to find online versions, including via academia.edu.

Module 3: Stakeholders and their experiences

Requirement 3.3.1 Access to collections and services

9) What procedures do you have in place to support a diverse audience?
Please give details of any activity you are undertaking to create an inclusive offer to your archive service's communities. If this is detailed in a document, please upload it here, or refer to documents uploaded elsewhere in this application.

Name of document	Means of approval	Date for review

Requirement 3.3.1 Question-specific guidance:

9) *This is a new question* Responses to this question should recognise the diverse needs of the archive service's communities, based on the knowledge and analysis of the communities' needs and any barriers identified in previous sections. Responses relating to onsite access may reference a range of options such as language policy, prayer rooms, adult changing facilities, gender neutral toilet facilities. Responses relating to online access should include consideration of accessibility needs. Wider approaches may be supported by inclusion policies shown in evidence elsewhere in the application either specific to the archive service or in those relating to the parent organisation.

Note that there is an existing question specifically about addressing the needs of users with disabilities and particular access requirements, which will be retained. This question is designed, therefore, to have a broader focus.

Scaled guidance: Local authority type 1, Other public sector type 1, Private and third sector type 1 and type 2

*S*maller archive services with limited public space may face challenges providing multiple onsite facilities as standard. It is recognised that a responsive approach such as setting aside space on request for users with particular needs may be appropriate.

Reference materials:

The National Archives, *Risk Assessment for Communicating Potentially Upsetting Histories* (forthcoming)

The National Archives, *Disability Access Resource List* (forthcoming)

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Reflective feedback on the draft questions
We would very much appreciate your thoughts and feedback on the following areas.

 Feedback on the updated and new questions and guidance:

a) Were you unclear about how to answer any of the questions? If so which ones? What guidance would you need to feel more confident in responding to these questions?

b) Were you unsure about the terminology used in any of the questions? If so please provide details.

c) Which questions (if any) were you unable to answer, as this is not an area of current service delivery or practice? What training or support would be useful to help your archive service progress delivery or practice in these areas?

d) Which questions (if any) did you feel were not relevant to your service's context and mission? Please explain your answer.

Feedback on framing:
e) Section 2.3 Collections information: as stated, there are no current plans to include specific questions about reviewing offensive terminology and legacy descriptive practice, but to expect these areas to be covered, where relevant, in service policy/planning/procedures. Does this approach give sufficient weight to the issue?

f) Section 3.3.1 Question 10 on Access procedures: the scaled guidance aims to strike a balance between meeting communities' needs and being realistic about constraints on smaller services that have limited public space. Does this balance work, from your perspective?

General feedback
g) This first phase of developing Archive Service Accreditation follows the existing structure of the standard and makes incremental changes to the application process. Which aspects (if any) of your archive service's work on

inclusion could **<u>not</u>** be reflected through this approach? Did the existing the structure of the standard constrain how you would like to provide your response and if so, how?

h) The reference section is under development for all questions. Please include here any other guidance/resources you have found useful in developing your service's approach to inclusion.