Listening to the Past,  
Speaking to the Future  
The report of the Archives Task Force

Annex G: Archives Workforce Study

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council  
National Council on Archives  
University of Sheffield
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is designed to ‘help archives recruit, retain, support and develop a workforce appropriate to current and future service needs’ (Resource). The aim of the report is to provide the archives sector with information about its key workforce issues and make recommendations for improvements.

The research investigated the following areas:

- Employers’ needs and the course curriculum
- Career choice
- Recruitment and selection
- The retention of professional staff
- Training and development
- Career aspirations and opportunities
- Leadership and succession planning

In the course of this research data have been gathered which show that there are a number of interrelated issues which are having a negative influence on the sector in terms of: attracting people to work in the sector; developing employees to meet employers needs (since there is now very limited scope to increase the content of professional qualification courses and the provision of training varies greatly across the sector); balancing the supply of and demand for employees; facilitating career progression and professional development.

There is a skills gap in terms of leadership within the sector and confusion about sectoral leadership. Due to the overlap between some issues a number of areas have been combined within this report.

Findings

Employers’ needs and the course curriculum, and Training and Development

On the whole there was a general recognition that the professional courses were doing a good job under difficult circumstances. The research shows that in terms of core skills, the courses are educating people in the key skills that
organisations require. There was discussion about the need for students to specialise within the courses. There is an acknowledged problem with this approach, as the sector also requires generalists with skills in all areas. There were mixed opinions about whether the courses should be teaching general/management skills. Some data pointed towards the need for these skills to be taught on the courses, and some respondents indicated that they should be provided by the employer post-qualification.

A number of key areas were highlighted as training needs in the sector, including electronic records and legislation. Other needs highlighted relate to the location of courses, since some people find they must travel substantial distances in order to obtain training. Respondents also mentioned the need for more in-depth post qualification training to enable people to develop specialist skills or learn about new areas which have developed since they qualified. There is also a demand for short courses, run over one or two days to update people on the key developments of the year. Difficulties with the current registration scheme along with the need for a more systematic and assessed programme of CPD were highlighted.

Career choice
A number of issues were identified in relation to career choice in terms of 'barriers to entry' and the attractiveness of the profession as a whole. These start from the invisibility of the archive profession, the poor quality of information and promotional material available to students, and the negative image of the profession. The process which people need to go through to become qualified is also fraught with difficulties, in terms of acquiring work experience, the quality of work experience, and obtaining funding. In addition to this the limited scope for career progression and comparatively low long-term remuneration are also said to discourage potential entrants. Due to the very limited promotion of the profession people tend to find their way in through chance and generally have an interest in history. Consequently most people who enter in this way want to become an archivist per se and this is becoming problematic in terms of limiting the supply of records managers entering the sector.
Recruitment and selection

There is a recruitment problem in the sector since demand is now outstripping supply. Projections indicate that this situation is only likely to get worse with a further increase in demand for qualified archivists and records managers being brought about by new legislation (Freedom of Information, Data Protection) and short-term contracts. Recruitment difficulties varied depending on location, development opportunities, type of contract (short-term or permanent), type of records, salary, and ‘reputation’ of the office. There are differences in recruitment for the different professional groups, with conservators and records managers being the most difficult to recruit. Concern was expressed due to other professional groups taking over areas of work that come under the remit of records managers. Particular concern was expressed about conservators, some fearing that the profession could disappear altogether due to a decreasing ‘critical mass’ of professionals able to pass on their skills.

The retention of professional staff, and Career aspirations and opportunities

Retention is an interesting issue in the archives sector. Some respondents believed that professionals were leaving the sector and this is problematic because it tends to be the dynamic, ambitious people that leave. However, some managers indicated that negative retention was more of a problem for them, as some employees joined their organisation and then did not progress, became ‘stagnant’ and had no intentions of leaving a secure job. This caused problems for people below them because there was no opportunity for them to progress. This situation is exacerbated by the limited scope for career progression because most departments are small, only having a limited hierarchy and often people must relocate if they want to progress.

Career opportunities in terms of development of skills, and career progression were key issues within this research. They were mentioned in relation to, and impacted on every topic area covered. They are a key issue for retention as they are the most significant factor in terms of staff turn-over.
Leadership and succession planning

Leadership was discussed on a number of levels including the individual, organisational and sectoral. There were differences of opinion in relation to the 'lack of leadership potential' within the sector. Some respondents indicated that the ‘wrong’ people were being attracted to and selected into the archive profession (i.e. those without leadership attributes). However, another opinion expressed was that there are plenty of people within the profession with leadership potential, but they were not being developed as leaders. Suggested methods of leadership development met with varied reactions. Succession planning was seen by some as unworkable in small departments yet examples were given of it being used successfully. Fast tracking was seen as problematic and unworkable in the current structure. There were also a number of different objections about the fairness of the system and the resentment it could cause. A great deal of confusion surrounded sectoral leadership, in terms of the role and remit of different organisations and government departments (Resource, DCMS, Society of Archivists, Records Management Society, and the NCA), and how they relate to each other. There was also concern about how different organisations took account for all the complexities of the archives profession and the need to create an agenda that included all areas of the profession and types of organisation.

Recommendations

On the basis of this work it is recommended that:

Career choice

- The archives profession is promoted more systematically, and ‘barriers to entry’ minimised. Work currently being undertaken by the Society’s Continuing Development sub-committee may help progress this

- One of the major potential barriers to entry is pre-course training, as such, the necessity of this and the form it should take needs to be reviewed.

Recruitment and selection
A group of stakeholders (with the ability to have immediate influence on this issue) is established to address the following issues:

- recruitment and training process for conservators
- finding a means of making the sector more attractive. If salaries cannot be increased other ways of improving people’s career prospects must be found.

**Employers’ needs and the course curriculum, and Training and Development**

- representatives of the relevant associations, the course directors, the employers and other interested bodies such as Resource should be established to address the following issues:
  - the most appropriate way for people to gain entry to the profession
  - the essential core competencies and at what stage they should be taught
  - how to review these competencies to ensure they still represent the needs of the sector
  - the best way to promote records management to students
  - how employers can be encouraged to take more responsibility for post qualification training
  - what form CPD should take
  - how to ensure equitable access to training in terms of location.

- a database of training providers should be established,

- consideration be given to providing parts of the Masters courses on a modular basis, to help meet key training needs.
The retention of professional staff, and Career aspirations and opportunities

- Accurate statistics need to be kept to determine the extent of staff turnover and the impact of short-term contracts.
- Options for improving career opportunities within the archives sector need be evaluated.
- The Society of Archivists should assess the benefits of developing an external mentoring system for those on short term contracts

Leadership and succession planning

- A strategy is required to ensure that potential leaders are attracted to the profession and that such potential is developed. This will require the involvement of all stakeholders.
- Leadership of the sector needs to be clarified and communicated
CHAPTER 1  INTRODUCTION

Museums, archives and libraries belong at the very heart of people’s lives – contributing to their enjoyment and inspiration, cultural values, learning potential, economic prosperity and social equality.’ (http://www.resource.gov.uk/8.10.02) indicated a range of concerns about the quality, quantity and leadership of people employed in the archives sector. In many ways these reflected the findings of the Sheffield workforce research in the public library sector (Usherwood, Proctor et al 2001) and those identified in other areas of public service.

Previous research has demonstrated that the nature and quality of a workforce can also be affected by the attitudes, practice and curriculum in university departments (Usherwood and Vessey 1988). The NCA document indicated that this might also be true in the archives sector. The NCA document also argued that the need to identify those factors that would aid the retention of good quality staff. It was therefore important to ascertain if there was anything that could be learnt from other areas of employment, about keeping and encouraging the brightest and the best. Is a ‘fast track’ scheme worth testing? What are the constraints on professional development? What is the experience of the newly qualified and what might that tell us?

Clearly, professional practice, work and employment patterns are also changing in ways that make training and development more difficult. The NCA indicated that archive and records management professionals need also to consider the leadership skills and personal attributes that are going to be required if their services are to be a major force. What are the barriers to success? How can leadership skills be identified and developed?

Aims
The aim of the project is therefore to help the archives sector, retain, support and develop a workforce appropriate to its current and future needs. It seeks to create a coherent framework for future professional recruitment, education, training and development, and help to improve responsiveness to change. It is intended to increase the amount and quality of information available to managers, educators, and selectors, and lead to more effective decision-making. The study includes the following areas of investigation:

- **Employer’s Needs and the Curriculum.** To what extent do University curricula meet the needs of the market? What is the most appropriate way of combining theory and practice? How might educator/employer partnerships be developed? How does the curriculum influence attitudes to the service? How do the perceptions of educators and employers re skills differ? What are the core subjects for professional education in relation to pre-professional experience and post professional training?

- **Career Choice.** What are the influences that determine students’ choice of career? How effectively is the profession promoted? How do careers advisors, graduates, undergraduates, and students on archives and record management courses, perceive the sector? How important are trainee schemes and work experience opportunities?

- **Recruitment and Selection.** What is the extent of recruitment/selection difficulties? What are the employers’ perceptions of their causes? How do entry and subsequent salaries compare with those of alternative career opportunities? Has the relative competitiveness of a career in archives or records management changed over the past decade? Are there significant differences according to sector and or region? Have financial and other constraints on employers such as the ‘Bidding culture and short-term contracts, affected the quality of the workforce? How might equal opportunities’ requirements best be met?

- **The Retention of Professional Staff.** What factors affect the retention and / or loss of staff in the archives and records management workforce? What is the experience of new professionals? How far are their expectations being met? What practical support is given for example with regard to induction?
• **Training and development.** How relevant to the archives sector are strategies adopted by other organizations? What are the strengths and weaknesses of training and development initiatives currently adopted in the sector?

• **Career aspirations and opportunities.** How might they be better matched and professional stagnation be minimised?

• **Leadership and Succession Planning.** What are the leadership skills and personal attributes that are required if the sector is to respond positively to the challenges of the new century? How might such skills and attributes be best developed?

This first section of the report sets out how the issues which relate to the archive sector fit into the wider context of the cultural/heritage sector and Resource’s Strategic Plan for Archives, and shows how the archives sector interacts with Resource and the heritage sector. The main areas of investigation are discussed and literature from these areas is reviewed.

**Resource and the Cultural Sector**

Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries was launched in April 2000, replacing the Library and Information Commission and the Museums and Galleries Commission. It is the strategic government body with responsibility for overseeing and facilitating the collaboration between Museums, Archives and Libraries. The role of Resource is to make recommendations to Government and the sector in relation to development of museums, archives and libraries (Resource, 2001a: p4)

Resource’s strategic objectives concerning archives are:

- ‘To provide strategic leadership and promote change;
- To act as an authoritative advocate and champion for our sector;
- To advise on best practice and delivery of specific objectives.’ (Resource, 2001a; 4)

Resource acts as an advocate by demonstrating the role that archives have in the ‘delivery of a wide range of government, cultural and business objectives'.
and outcomes.’ (Resource, 2001a: 2). Resource intends to give strategic support and help to develop archives no matter where they are located, be it in the public or private sector.

**Strategic Plans**

If museums, libraries and archives are to work together in a unified manner it is necessary to gauge the position they are at now and where each area is to be developed for them to come together on an equal footing. (Resource, 2001a)


All three plans attempted to establish and develop issues of interest that occur in the three domains. Common difficulties have been identified with ‘collections management, the development of learning-focused services, reaching and developing new audiences, managing technology change and developing new skills’, and it is believed that the different parts of the sector will be better able to respond to these issues together than on their own. (Resource, 2001a: 4). It should be noted that although there are areas that are similar across the domains it is also important to recognize the differences between them. The importance of effective archives services and their uniqueness has been emphasised by Resource:

‘Archives and records management services play a key role in the effective and efficient management of both public and private business. The dual roles of management and implementing information policy (such as Freedom of Information, Data Protection, and enabling citizens to exercise their rights to access information), and managing current records are one of the key differences that set archives apart from museums and libraries.’ (Resource, 2001a: 11)

The Strategic Plan for Archives recognises their central role in the new cultural landscape, and that for archives to participate fully in conjunction with
museums, libraries and other cultural institutions, it is essential that they are allowed the opportunity to progress as equals. (Resource 2001a).

Three key priorities were established:

1. ‘Identify strategic needs and priorities based on user needs and perceptions’
2. ‘Exploiting the potential for archives to contribute to the learning and access agenda’
3. ‘Promoting training, career development and skills’ (Resource, 2001a: 12)

It was in order to meet the third of these that Resource commissioned the National Council on Archives to produce this report. Recognising that the development of an effective workforce is dependent upon a number of different factors, in this report they wish to address ‘career choice, employers’ needs, recruitment and selection, retention of staff, training and development, career aspirations and profiles, leadership and succession planning and workforce diversity issues’ and the report is designed to ‘help archives recruit, retain, support and develop a workforce appropriate to current and future service needs.’ (Resource, 2001a:14)

Only once Resource has a clear understanding of these issues will they be able to formulate specific policies to develop the archives sector. As Resource (2001a) indicated:

‘There is a clear need to develop staff at every level, and look critically at organisational structures to consider what is necessary for the profession and its users as a whole. Our report will be designed to help archives recruit, retain, support and develop a workforce appropriate to current and future service needs.’

Changes in the sector
The need for this research lies in a number of areas, including the closer working of museums, libraries and archives under Resource, the changes that have taken place in the cultural sector as a whole e.g. legislation and
government policy, and recent changes in the archive sector which are now having an impact on the profession. A number of studies have highlighted the changes which have occurred in the archive sector and emphasised a number of problematic workforce areas (Ellis and Greening, 2002; Eveleigh, 1999; Davies and Ellis, 2002; Davies and Ellis, 2003; Ford, 2002; National Council on Archives, 2001; Pickford, 1999; Society of Archivists, 2001).

Davies and Ellis (2002:3) described the rapid changes that have occurred in employment patterns, the expanding needs of professional development in the workplace, the need to make sure that the education/training provided for archivists is in line with the requirements of the sector:

All periods of change merit evaluation to inform understanding of the current position and the direction of future planning, and the appropriate research in an essential foundation for any well-informed debate on future professional development. The archives profession is no exception, having experienced major upheavals during the 1990’s, but the additional imperatives of cross-sectoral agendas add further weight to the need to take stock and to prepare for future developments.’

They noted the lack of statistical information about professional growth in the sector, and how archival training has responded to these changes. They indicated the following factors as likely to continue to have an impact on the archive workforce:

- **The advent of new professional standards**, especially in relation to archival description and electronic data exchange, has meant that archival training is becoming increasingly technical.

- **Alteration in the balance of professional priorities.** As Records Management has grown in profile the balance of archival and records management responsibilities is changing to meet the advent of electronic media and new legislation.

- **Changes and developments in the use of ITC.** All government organisations have been set the target of storing and retrieving their
records electronically by 2004 which has implications for the way that records will be processed both in the short and long term. (Cabinet Office 1999).

- **Increase in outreach and access.**
- **Project funding and the ‘bidding culture’** which has had the effect of destabilising the supply of trained archivists, previously more closely linked to the needs of the market.
- **New strategic emphasis on cross-sectoral alliances and changes in the regional structure** which has consequences for working practices, training and employment practices.
- **Legislative changes** The Freedom of Information Act (2000), Copyright Legislation, and the Data Protection Act (1998) will lead to changes in the role of the archivist and an increased demand for records managers.
- **Constant demand for a wide range of traditional and new skills.** Some employers ask for specific skills and interests (computer skills, communication skills, knowledge of specific types of records). There is also a demand for traditional skills (palaeography, Latin, medieval French, and specific European languages). Sometimes specific ranges of knowledge are required (chronological, regional, or subject specific).
- **Changes in the process of archival cataloguing.** There is an increasing demand for the ability to use modern cataloguing standards and methods (ISAD(G), ISAAR, NCA rules, electronic data exchange, and Encoded Archive Description). Although training providers are aware of this they are said to have difficulty in meeting demand.
- **Increase in short-term contracts,** leading to a demand for specialised rather than general skills. Fixed term posts rose from 23 in 1993 to 149 in 2001.
- **Increasing scarcity of trained archive professionals.** Although the number of people qualifying as archivists has risen slightly over recent
years this has not kept pace with the rise in demand for qualified professionals.

- **Indication that existing career development programmes and scope for career progression are inadequate.** People on short-term contracts are often employed to perform a specific task and therefore may not receive the career opportunities/development that they need and desire. There is a need to further develop a comprehensive CPD programme which will address the generic skills needed for management posts, such as leadership, financial planning, project management, and fundraising.

- **Increased demand for people to fill senior level and policy/strategic/development level posts.**

- **Need to develop research.** Research in the archives sector is not as developed as that in Museums or Libraries, and there is a need to develop research skills within people entering the profession.

- **Increasing need to establish the core competencies needed within archival training programmes.** Courses are full to capacity, yet there is an increasing need to add new components to the curriculum

- **Changes in the provision of training.** The UK network of National Training Organisations (NTOs) including the Cultural sector NTO ceased to be recognised by government on 31 March 2002. A new Sector Skills Council (SSC) network is currently being developed to replace this by the Sector Skills Development Agency. (National Training Organisation, 2002) [http://www.nto-nc.org/](http://www.nto-nc.org/) - 18.12.02). The full implications for the archive sector have not yet been established.

- **Development of Regional Agencies**. Resource is developing nine regional single cross sectoral agencies that will bring Archives, Museums, and Libraries together. These Agencies will influence collaboration across the sector and tackle areas such as ICT, funding, leadership, workforce development, and so on. (Resource, 2002a).
• **Specific changes in the conservation profession** - Ford (2002) has outlined the changes that have occurred in preservation over the past 20 years and speculated about the future of the profession.

**Breakdown of the different professional groups within the archive sector**

The term ‘archive sector’ is here used to cover three distinct professions: Archivists, Records Managers and Conservators. There is some overlap between the job role of Archivist and Records Managers and in some organisations people perform a dual role. Conservators are a distinct group.

It is difficult to know exactly how many archivists, records managers and conservators in total are currently working in the UK. Membership of the professional societies (Society of Archivists, Records Management Society, Institute of Paper Conservators) is not compulsory, and many individuals opt to belong to all three, to one or two, or not to join at all. It is also probable that many working as records managers in the private sector would not describe themselves as such because their job title does not contain that description. What can be said is that it is a small sector compared to both museums and libraries.

**Archivists**

Archivists are responsible for retrieving, selecting, appraising and storing records of all types which are regarded as being of historical interest and importance. They make them available for research by the public and offer help and guidance on their use. (Feather, and Sturges, 1997) The usual entry route is through a post graduate qualification, offered through full-time, part-time and distance learning, Diploma or Masters courses. All graduates are eligible to apply but students usually come from a history or languages background. A minimum of a 2:1 honours degree is normally essential. (Society of Archivists, 2002)

**Records Managers**
Records Managers are responsible for the information created in and received by organisations in whatever medium it may have been produced. Their primary function is to make sure that the records are organized and protected in order to meet the requirements of an organisation and ensure that it is operating its business legally and effectively. (Feather, and Sturges, 1997)

Entry into records management can be quite varied. Specific records management qualifications were not available until recently, and records managers came mainly from a librarianship or archives background. All the training courses offer qualifications in archives and records management, and there are now two courses offering a specific records management qualification. (University of Wales, Aberystwyth; University of Northumbria). Many records managers, particularly in the private sector, progress into their posts through internal promotion and then seek a formal qualification. (Society of Archivists, 2002)

Conservators
Conservators are responsible for the preservation and conservation of all types of archives: manuscript books and documents, maps, photographs, film and magnetic recordings, machine readable records, electronic and digital material. The job requires a unique set of practical and academic skills, such as a high level of manual dexterity, an understanding of chemistry, patience and concentration. The majority of conservators are employed in local authority archives, library and university archives, local history centres and museums. Some work freelance, for private organisations, and individuals. There are also opportunities to work abroad with many UK trained conservators finding employment in Europe, America and Australia. (Lester, 2002)

Current courses available
Until recently there were two main routes into the profession for archivists and records managers. First, a limited number of universities (Liverpool, University College London, University of Wales, Aberystwyth and University College Dublin) offer post-graduate courses, which lead to professionally recognized
qualifications in Archives and Records Management at Diploma or Masters level. In addition, there are specific records management courses offered at the University of Northumbria and at the University of Wales Aberystwyth. The second route was until recently provided by the Society of Archivists through a distance-learning Diploma course, which enabled people who were unable to complete a full time course but were employed in the field to become professionally qualified. This course has now been suspended, but a new Distance Learning course is now being offered at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth and has already proved very popular. Davies and Ellis (2002) have found that the supply of qualified archivists from these courses has remained relatively constant with 65 graduates in 2001 compared to 57 in 1993. However, the demand for suitably qualified archivists has increased significantly during this period.

Ellis and Greening (2002) indicate that there is a growing problem in recruiting students onto postgraduate courses across the board due to the increasing levels of student debt generally, and funding changes for students wishing to study the information sciences. The bursary system, which, has been transferred from the Royal Academy to the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB), has created increased competition for grants. Recent changes in the way the AHRB allocates its funds will make funding even more difficult to obtain in the coming years.

There are varied routes into conservation which draw people in from numerous backgrounds including arts, crafts, humanities and sciences. Entry requirements vary and enquiries regarding this need to be made with individual colleges.

The following routes have been highlighted by the Society of Archivists (2002) as routes into the profession:

- **Training posts**
- Record offices occasionally offer training posts, within which the trainee undertakes the Society of Archivists (2001a) Conservation Training
Scheme. This three year block release course provides practical and theoretical training from certified instructors.

- **S/NVQs**
- S/NVQs in Collections Care and Conservation at Levels 3-5 are available.

- **General courses**
- It is also possible to take general courses in conservation and specialise in books and archives. Courses are available from Camberwell College of Arts (London), De Montfort University (Lincoln)

- **Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR)**
- In addition, the Society of Archivists, United Kingdom Institute of Conservation, and the Institute of Paper Conservation offer appropriately experienced conservators Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR). PACR is a scheme which verifies the competence, skills, and continuing professional development (CPD) of conservators. It is nationally and internationally recognised and entitles conservators to use the letters ACR (Accredited Conservator-Restorer) after their name. This scheme has been a ‘novel approach to professionalisation’ (Society of Archivists 2001b) and aims to help with the improvement of standard and service.

Throughout this report the terms ‘archive sector’ and ‘archive professions’ will be used to describe all three strands, unless otherwise specified.
This section provides an overview of the choice of methodology and the research process. This is followed by a discussion of the ethical considerations relating to this research and the process used to ensure the reliability and validity of findings.

2.1 Choice of research methods

The primary concern when choosing a research methodology is to select the best tools for the job and to relate them to the purpose of the research. If research is measuring concepts that have already been defined in theory, then quantitative methodologies are better. However, if the research aims to gain an understanding of a participant’s contextualised knowledge then qualitative approaches are more useful. (Pidgeon and Henwood, 1997)

The methodology used was based on that used in the Public Library Workforce Study. (Usherwood et al 2001). Qualitative (questionnaire, interviews, focus groups, and expert workshop) and quantitative (questionnaire) methods were chosen in this instance. This choice was based on the aims of the study. There has been a great deal of anecdotal evidence about workforce issues in the archive sector and this has been supported from literature from other similar professions and academic theory. Thanks to this there were a number of measurable aspects, which were investigated quantitatively. There were also a number of areas where there is more ambiguity and limited data, and here qualitative methods have been used to gain a wider understanding of these issues.

2.2 The research process

2.2.1 Questionnaire

The postal questionnaire (see Appendix A) was sent to 220 senior practitioners based in public (national and local government), university, voluntary, and private organisations. It was designed to cover the main areas of investigation, and addressed organisational characteristics, leadership and succession planning, career choice, recruitment, retention, training and
development, career aspirations and opportunities, and employers' needs and the course curriculum.

Random sampling was not used to select where the questionnaires were sent. In line with recommendations made by Rudestam and Newton (2001) selective theoretical sampling was used as a means of increasing the likelihood of obtaining a wider range of data. Organisations were chosen to ensure that a representative sample of the sector was obtained in terms of types of organisation, size of department, types of staff, funding, and location.

The questionnaire design was based on a questionnaire used for the study carried out for the Libraries sector (Usherwood et al 2001). In addition to this, an expert in the archives sector made recommendations about key areas of investigation and questions. Questions were also formulated for the areas of concern highlighted by Davies and Ellis (2002). Quantitative questions were asked where it was possible to give a numeric answer, or to establish the parameters of the question, enabling tick boxes to be used. For some questions it was necessary to ask more open questions to establish what the main issues were.

Both quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative analysis techniques were used to analyse the results.

- **Qualitative**

  The qualitative information generated in the questionnaire was transferred into one document, within which all the responses to a particular question were amalgamated into one section. The data were coded by looking for recurring themes in the responses given to each question. Once all the themes were established the number of respondents who emphasised a particular theme was calculated, giving an indication of the factors that are most important in relation to a particular area. For the majority of questions frequencies and percentages were calculated. For some qualitative questions the total percentage of respondents who highlighted
all the factors may add up to more than 100%. This is because some respondents highlighted more than one factor.

An example of this would be in the recruitment section where, in response to the question ‘In what circumstances, if any, would you appoint to a professional post candidates without a qualification in archives/record management/conservation?’ a respondent indicated ‘Candidates with the right personal qualities, ability and relevant experience, who is willing to undertake professional training’. This response is counted in two categories ‘relevant experience’ and ‘further qualifications’. The percentages given therefore represent the percentage of respondents who highlighted a particular factor and not a percentage of the total number of quotations.

The calculations of mean and frequency data provide an insight into the most important factors and issues in relation to particular areas. However there is a certain amount of subjectivity within the coding process and it must be noted that this information provides a way of assessing the relative importance of themes in relation to each other rather than providing precise numeric information.

- **Quantitative**

  Quantitative information was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists). For the majority of questions frequencies and percentages of responses were calculated.

### 2.2.2 Interviews and focus groups

Once key themes had been established through the questionnaire, interviews and focus groups were carried out to gain a deeper understanding of the key issues. The interviews and focus group inventories were based on the same general areas as the questionnaire and attempted to obtain additional information in relation to the research aims.
Practitioner Interviews

Twenty respondents were interviewed for this study. Respondents were able to provide an insight into all or some of the topic areas to be covered in the interview. The respondents were made up of people who indicated on the questionnaire that they would like to be interviewed. A cross section of respondents was chosen to represent different types of organisation (national and local government, university, voluntary, and private sectors), size of department, type of staff they employ, location, and funding. Random sampling was not used, with respondents being chosen precisely for their specific knowledge. The theoretical sampling used in this instance is in line with the recommendations of Lincoln and Guba (1995) who indicate that it increases the range of data exposed. The respondents are seen as experiential experts in the issues under investigation (Rudestam and Newton, 2001).

In data collection a point will be reached where additional data collection ceases to add to the information already gathered; this is known as theoretical saturation (Bryman, 2001). In this instance theoretical saturation was seen to occur at the point where only a small amount of new information was being gained by additional interviews.

The aim of the interviews was to gain more information about the key areas under investigation and identify the most important issues and themes in relation to these areas. The interview schedule was devised in line with advice put forward by Robson (1993) about good practice in interviewing. Semi-structured interviews were chosen, because they provide a means of keeping a structure and ensuring key themes are covered, yet still allow for some flexibility and for interesting responses to be probed. Questions were formulated in advance, but were sometimes reordered and adapted depending on the way the interview progressed. The advantage of formulating questions in advance is that wordy, leading, and biased questions can be eliminated. Open-ended questions were used to allow for further probing. The length of interviews varied, with the shortest being just over half an hour and the longest lasting over two hours.
A dictaphone was used to record all interviews as this allowed for more in-depth analysis. The interviews kept to the conventional interview layout as summarized by Robson (1993). The introduction covered the aim and purpose of the study, confidentiality, permission to record and take notes, and access to the final report. Following this, ‘warm-up’ questions were used to put the respondent at ease. The major interview questions were then tackled as the key topic areas were worked through. The questions were sometimes asked in a different order and unique topics were allowed to emerge determined by the respondent’s expertise. ‘Cool-off’ questions were used to close the interview, giving the respondent a chance to address issues of importance to them. The same schedule was used for all respondents to ensure that all the key areas were covered. (See Appendix 2 for an outline of the schedule.) All but one of the interviews were conducted over the telephone.

The coding of data involves breaking down data into constituent parts and the naming of these parts (Pidgeon and Henwood, 1997). The interview tapes were transcribed onto a word processor to make coding easier. Data were coded in accordance with the techniques put forward by Pidgeon and Henwood (1997). The data were coded to correspond with the key research areas, and themes were looked for within the coded data. For example, any comments made about ‘retention’ were coded in this category. The interview data were then examined again under each heading to see how they could be further categorised. So for example, the code ‘retention’ included categories such as ‘reasons people leave the archive sector’ and ‘negative retention’. This procedure was sustained until all the major themes had been established.

Focus groups
Focus groups were chosen as a research tool as they provide a means of obtaining a great deal of evaluative information about a particular area (Morgan and Krueger, 1997) The underlying notion of using focus groups is that they facilitate people’s ability to determine and organise their views about
issues that are more difficult to obtain in an interview (Kitzinger, 1995) Focus groups are good tools for investigating concepts, generating ideas, drawing out opinions and assessing agreement levels about different issues. Different group members stimulate ideas as they seek to express their own opinions. They provide a means of obtaining a range of opinions and do not automatically give a homogenous perspective. The use of interaction can elicit new insights and ideas and questions. They can also be used to understand complex behaviours and motivation because these decisions are frequently made on a sub-conscious level, for example ‘why people choose a particular career path’. The focus group process within which members externalise their opinion about an issue can help others to formulate their own thoughts (Mitchell and Branigan, 2000). Focus groups are also said to elicit more critical discussions than interviews (Kitzinger, 1995).

Seven focus groups were used to gain information from different groups within the archives professions, as follows:

- Students currently undertaking archives courses (x 2 focus groups)
- Conservators
- Records Managers
- Lower grade/newly qualified professionals
- Middle managers who have been in the professions for some time
- Directors of Archive and Records Management training courses

The sampling for each of the focus groups varied. For the students all those currently on the archives/records management courses in question were invited to attend, and the majority of students chose to do so. A similar approach was taken to course directors, with all being invited to attend and again the majority did so. The conservators’ focus group comprised the members of one region and took place during one of their regular meetings. For others, the attendees were made up of a random sample. For records managers, newly qualified professionals, and middle managers, requests were put on the relevant list servs and people were asked to volunteer to attend. In addition, some departments were contacted directly to see if they
had anyone who wished to attend. It can therefore be seen that theoretical and random sampling was used in order to gain focus group members. The method employed reflects the easiest and most appropriate way to gain access to different groups within the profession.

The groups were homogeneous in certain aspects, i.e. career stage, profession, and sector. However not all of these aspects applied to each group. For example, members of the conservators’ group were homogeneous in relation to their profession, but could be at any career stage, and the middle managers were at the same career stage but could be from any profession. The focus group participants were chosen to provide an ‘expert’ view and to gain an insight into different career stages, professions, and working environments. Power is an important issue in workplaces and existing hierarchies can be problematic in focus groups, with subordinates’ ability to discuss issues openly likely to be inhibited (Mitchell and Branigan, 2000). In order to ensure this did not occur in the focus groups for this study, it was stipulated that people could not attend if they had line management responsibility for another participant.

The focus group inventories (see Appendix 3) were designed in line with recommendations made in the literature (Mongan, and Krueger, 1997). All of the key research areas were discussed, though in some instances some sections were omitted if they were not relevant to a particular group. The questions varied slightly between groups although there were some similarities between inventories.

In addition to the research questions formulated at the start of the study, the focus groups also attempted to address the issues that arose through the questionnaire and interviews. As with the use of interviews they provided a means of assessing the universality of previously emerging themes from the interviews and questionnaires.

Within focus groups either topic guides or fully developed questions can be used (Mitchell and Branigan, 2000). In this instance, because the
questionnaire analysis had generated a clear idea of the issues that needed to be addressed in the focus groups, fully developed questions were used rather than topic guides. This also enabled more efficient analysis of the data (Mitchell and Branigan, 2000). All the pre-formulated questions were asked in the corresponding focus group. In addition to this, if an interesting subject came up, more probing questions were asked which were not pre-formulated. As in the interviews, respondents were given the opportunity to raise issues that were important to them, and scope was given for deviation away from the pre-defined inventories.

The type of questions asked within a focus group depends on the information you are attempting to obtain. If the information you wish to obtain is relatively clear-cut, questions will be asked that confirm / refute pre-existing information. Alternatively, when there is uncertainty about a particular area of investigation questions will be less clearly defined (Morgan, and Krueger, 1997). The type of questions used in this instance reflected the need to confirm the themes which had emerged within the questionnaire and interviews and gave people an opportunity to raise new issues.

The focus groups followed a similar format to the interviews in terms of introduction, warm up, main body and cool down. In the focus groups it was of key importance to emphasise the need for confidentiality and participants were asked not to discuss what was talked about within the focus groups with work colleagues after the event. This is because the archive sector is small and there was a high probability that people would know who someone was talking about if they mentioned their managers. Therefore if people were to talk freely and frankly they needed to have the assurance that what they said in the focus group would not have a detrimental effect on them in the future.

In order to help respondents feel at ease and limit biased answers the neutrality of the researcher was emphasised. This is in line with recommendations made by Mitchell and Branigan (2000).
Analysis for the focus groups was undertaken following the same thematic approach as for the interview data.

The fact that much of the research carried out in this study is qualitative could be seen as problematic in terms of its reliability and validity. However, a number of measures were taken to ensure the rigorousness of research findings.

- By establishing consistency and reliability by ensuring that data are collected in a way that is comprehensible to others and arriving at themes and conclusions that others would understand. (Rudestam and Newton, 2001)
- Through corroboration of findings through triangulation: a process of checking that data from one source corroborate the findings of another source (Rudestam and Newton, 2001). Using three different research methods, and checking the themes that emerged within each of them has allowed for extensive corroboration of key themes within the research.
- Peer review is another method which has been suggested as a means of ensuring the validity of research findings (Rudestam and Newton, 2001). Within the research process this has been used extensively, as the project team are derived from different disciplines and therefore interpret information from different perspectives. In addition to this interim findings have been presented to experts within the sector at Management Board meetings, Steering group meetings, Professional meetings, and at the final workshop, which was designed specifically for this purpose. This has allowed for numerous interpretations of the data to emerge.

Within this study, there was the ability to gain access to the opinions of approximately 150 people through the various research methods used. By selectively sampling to ensure a diverse cross section of the professional archival population the generalisability of findings is possible. One of the measures that can be taken to make the data more trustworthy in qualitative research is the selection of an “appropriate” sample (Morse, 1998).
means that information has been chosen purposefully rather than randomly, to meet the theoretical needs of the study. This was one of the methods used in this study to ensure the validity of the findings, and make them more generalisable/transferable.

By using these thorough research processes, a high level of confidence can be placed in the reliability, validity and generalisability of the research findings.

**Workshop**

The final part of the consultation process was a workshop which took place towards the end of the research period, and at which the initial findings were presented to an invited group of 35 participants from different organisations. Participants in the workshop were divided into groups to discuss the different key themes which had emerged from the research. All groups then came together to share the results of their discussions, and to put forward suggestions for recommendations.

The workshop was funded by an additional grant from Resource.

**2.3 Ethical considerations**

Bryman (2001) and Robson (2003) have highlighted a number of ethical considerations in relation to conducting research. In line with their recommendations the following considerations were made within the research process. In both the interview and focus groups there was potential to bring up difficulties or stressful issues for participants. Although some respondents did talk about difficult situations which they had faced, (such as bullying in the workplace) no signs of distress were shown by any of the respondents, during the interviews and focus groups or in debriefing afterwards. Harm to participants also relates to confidentiality. All participants were informed that all the information that they gave would be anonymous and that their name and that of their employer would not be referred to within the study.

Furthermore, due to the size of the sector extra care has been taken to make sure it is not possible to identify respondents from the information given. In
terms of informed consent in relation to participating in the research process, a number of considerations were made. It was made clear to people in the interviews and focus groups that they could talk about things ‘off the record’ if they wished. The benefit of this was that they were able to be more open about all the issues that they were facing. Although the information could not be used in the final report, if someone else mentioned a similar issue (on or off the record) it enabled a clearer picture of the sector to emerge. On a number of occasions people indicated that they did not want the information they gave to be used in the final report. Participants were also told that they could remove the data they had given at any time. This again gave them the scope to speak more freely although nobody requested that data be removed.
CHAPTER 3 CAREER CHOICE

‘Career choice is a major construct in career development’ (Meier 1991). ‘It is used to refer to a person’s statement about the area of work or occupation they intend to follow as well as to the actual area of work or occupation finally entered.’ (Hesketh, 1998: 46)

3.1 Introduction

Individuals are influenced by numerous factors when choosing an occupation, with factors such as ‘socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, intelligence, aptitude and interests, as well as the community from which people come’ being highlighted as influential. (Furnham, 1997: 93)

There is a sizeable amount of literature addressing career/vocational choice (see Furnham, 1997 for an overview), with vocational guidance being one of the oldest areas of applied psychology (Furnham, 1992). There is literature in this area addressing the decision making process (Vroom, 1964; Hirshchfeld, et al., 2002; Hodkinson, 1995), the influence of person-job fit (Mount and Muchinsky, 1978), the influence of personality and academic performance (see Furnham, 1992 for an overview), and how an employers can appeal to high achievers (Trank et al, 2002). However only the most relevant literature to this research is outlined in detail here.

A vast array of theories relate to vocational choice. Expectancy theory has been widely applied within the field of decision making and argues that vocational choice and career choices are determined by the values or what a person wants from a job (e.g. money, social status, freedom) and the expectation that they will obtain these things by joining a particular vocational group. Complex equations have been developed to explain and illustrate this decision process, but the essential points to grasp are that people make career decisions by evaluating their options in terms of what things are important to them within a career (e.g. in the archive sector this could be the ability to develop their interest in history). It is equally important to note that when people have inappropriate or unobtainable expectations (e.g. about pay
or conditions) this can lead to disappointment and reduced productivity (Farnham, 1997).

Mount and Muchinsky (1978) have argued that regardless of the personality of an individual some environments are intrinsically more satisfying than others. Furnham and Koritsas, cited in Furnham (1997) have also argued that certain jobs are simply more attractive and sought after. Environments that fit with an individual give job satisfaction because they are around other people with similar tastes and values, in addition to being able to carry out enjoyable tasks. Certain environments contain people who are easy for the majority of individuals to get on with. Mount and Muchinsky also suggested that even when an individual’s abilities would be more in line with different job characteristics, if they find the social environment interesting they will be able to glean enough satisfaction from it. (Furnham, 1992:p103).

In terms of a career within the archive sector it is possible to investigate what factors influence the decision making process. From this the factors which deter people from entering the sector (i.e. the sector does not meet their expectations) can be determined. This information will enable the sector to address these factors and make the sector more attractive in terms of career choice.

3.2 Career choice in the archive sector

There is only a limited amount of literature regarding career choice in the archive sector, although there has been some anecdotal comment on the ability of the sector to attract people. The literature about occupational decision-making has therefore been used to inform this research.

From pre-research discussions it became apparent that salary was an important issue within the sector. As part of the literature review, information was obtained about graduate salaries in archives and other professional areas.
From the Prospects Directory (2003) which provides careers information to students and graduates, it was possible to gain a picture of how the archive sector is presented, compare its characteristics with similar posts, and see how it competes with other career options in terms of salary. Table 3.1 gives the range of typical salaries in first professional post and at age 40. These figures are derived from surveys of actual salaries in different employment sectors. The table gives salaries for professions highlighted on the website as ‘Related Jobs’ to ‘Archivists’ and ‘Records Managers’.

Table 3.1
Average starting salaries and salaries aged 40 for Archivists and Records Managers, related and unrelated professions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title (when the data was collected)</th>
<th>Typical starting salary</th>
<th>Typical salary aged 40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archivist (Aug. 02)</td>
<td>£15,500 - £16,500</td>
<td>£19,500 - £25,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic librarian (August 02)</td>
<td>£14,000 - £19,575</td>
<td>£23,000 - £39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum/art gallery curator (Aug. 02)</td>
<td>£12,000 - 16,000</td>
<td>£20,000-£30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records Manager (Nov. 02)</td>
<td>£22,000 - £23,000</td>
<td>£35,000-£70,000 (6-7 yrs experience upwards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database administrator (Jan. 03)</td>
<td>£16,000 - £25,000</td>
<td>£25,000 - £45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information office/manager (Jan.03)</td>
<td>£12,000 - £19,000</td>
<td>£25,000 - £40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent Agent (Feb. 03)</td>
<td>£15,000 - £25,000</td>
<td>£50,000 - £170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party research officer (Jan. 03)</td>
<td>£17,000 - £25,000</td>
<td>£28,000 - £35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public librarian (June 02)</td>
<td>£12,171 - £17,319</td>
<td>£18,000 - £23,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social researcher (Aug. 02)</td>
<td>£15,000 – £21,000</td>
<td>£25,000 - £70,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-related fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Typical starting salary</th>
<th>Typical salary aged 40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solicitor (Oct. 02)</td>
<td>£14,000 - £35,000</td>
<td>£40,000 - £100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school teacher (April 03)</td>
<td>£18,105 to £26,460</td>
<td>£28,668 - £33,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel officer (Dec. 02)</td>
<td>£15,000 - £18,000</td>
<td>£33,500 - £60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical chemist (Aug. 02)</td>
<td>£14,000 - £25,000</td>
<td>£23,000 - £45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is possible to see that in terms of initial starting salaries, those in the archive sector are comparable to the average starting salary of all graduates, at least at the bottom end of the range. It does appear, however, that more starters in
related professions manage to achieve a much higher starting salary than the minimum. It is when salaries are compared at age 40 that the differences between the archive sector and other areas of graduate employment become more apparent. In all but one of the other professions are able to achieve a higher salary.

It should be noted that the table excludes data for conservators since the website only refers to museum/gallery conservators, and no survey has taken place since 1998. However, it can be seen from section 3.4.1 below that salaries for archive conservators are generally lower than those for other archive professionals.

Prospects Directory (2003) also outlines a number of different surveys which have given figures for graduate starting salaries in general. It is interesting to note that depending on the source and sample taken (i.e. whether the survey included posts which could be described as 'non-graduate' posts, and for which the salaries were generally lower), starting salaries ranged from £10,000 to £45,000 in 2003 with an average salary of £18,502.

**Recommended salaries in the archive professions**

The Society of Archivists recommends that the minimum salary paid to newly qualified archivists, records managers and conservators is no lower than £17,823 and will not accept job adverts in which the starting salary is less than £15,741. (ARC Recruitment, 2002)

**3.3 Research findings**

The questionnaire asked respondents which three factors they thought attracted people to and deterred people from entering the archive professions. They were also asked at what salary they would appoint newly qualified archives professionals. The interviews and focus groups went on to probe these issues in more depth.
3.3.1 Factors which attract people

When asked about the top three factors, it is interesting to note that there is a difference between the proportion of different responses given as first second and third answers. For instance an interest in history was listed very frequently as a first response but less so as a second and not at all as third. The response to public sector work / public service demonstrates a different pattern, as this was only mentioned once as a first response but was the highest second and third choice. From this it is possible to speculate about the possible importance of the different factors in relation to each other.

The results are shown in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2
Factors that attract people to the archives sector – Frequency of citations and % of respondents who cited the factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>No. and Frequency of citation (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in history</td>
<td>31 (34.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in work</td>
<td>24 (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector work / public service</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career opportunities / training</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety / stimulating career</td>
<td>10 (11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working environment – e.g. stress free / pleasant colleagues</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>7 (7.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to use first degree / academic skills</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous contact with the profession</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in problem solving</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands-on work / conservation</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From this table it can be seen that:

- Overall with 40 (49.4%) citations ‘an interest in history’ was the most cited factor. This was thought to be more so for archivists than records managers. A number of responses went slightly further citing a ‘desire to work with primary historical sources’ or ‘the chance to manage the raw material of history.’

- 36 (40.5%) of the respondents indicated that an interest in the work or the nature of the work attracted people, seeing it as ‘requiring academic discipline and standards.’

- 25 (28.1%) respondents indicated that public service / public sector work attracts people, who want the ‘Satisfaction of providing public service and helping the public’ and ‘A sense of doing something important now for the future’.

- 22 (24.7%) cited good career opportunities and training. Their responses covered the variety of different types of working environment; the opportunity to specialise; the existence of a recognised career structure; the prospects for progression and opportunities for development particularly in records management.

- 21 (23.6) of the respondents cited the ‘variety of academic, administrative and practical work’ and a further 16 (18%) thought that working environment with the ‘opportunity to work with intelligent, like-minded people’ was important. The prospect of job satisfaction was cited 11 (12.4%) times, a view encouraged by those already in the sector who offered ‘evidence of job satisfaction from contacts already in the profession.’

- The prospect of working in a non-stressful environment was seen as appealing due to the ‘belief that the work is not stressful and is not undertaken in a pressurised atmosphere.’

- The opportunity to use a first degree subject or the skills learnt within it was cited by 11 (12.4%) respondents, but there was also a negative
view that the archive professions offered one of the few options open to people with a history degree other than teaching.

- Salary was cited seven (7.9%) times, either as ‘Reasonable salary levels’, or ‘Not the money!'

- Previous contact with and increasing awareness of the profession was given as a response 7 (7.9%) times. citing examples of the ‘Increased profile of archives e.g. through Resource, RACs etc.’ and ‘Publicity about the profession…to make it an option in people’s minds’.

- Job security and factors relating to it were listed by 7 (7.9%) respondents

- Finally six (6.7%) respondents highlighted ‘making order out of chaos’ and ‘An interest in solving organisational problems’. While five (5.6%) referred specifically to conservators for whom ‘the main attraction is usually the craft element.’

In addition to indicating the top three reasons respondents were given the opportunity to make additional comments, some of which served to reiterate the main themes set out above, as the following quotes illustrate:

‘...a straw poll taken here suggests that historical and antiquarian sensibility is still an important factor in attracting entrants to the archive profession. Records managers seem quite frequently to come from other professions, as a result of being deputed to solve record-keeping problems and becoming attracted to the kind of problem solving involved’

‘it is essentially the chance to work with archive material and to help preserve the evidence for the future (both physically and intellectually) which attracts. However, to actually boost the number of entrants we need to plant the idea of becoming an archivist in the minds of many who may not have thought of the profession as an option.’
'Most of the ‘pre-course’ students we see here as volunteers cite the ability to deal with historical documents/public or use their history degree in a meaningful way, as the primary attraction to the profession.'

‘...it’s not that easy to get a job with an arts degree and graduates tend to gravitate towards museums/libraries/archives if they don’t want to teach.’

‘Records management may appeal to those with orderly minds and a fascination for management structures whilst conservation appeals to those interested in working at a skilled craft.’

3.3.2 Factors which deter people
Practitioners were then asked to indicate the three most important factors which they felt deterred people from entering the archives sector. Table 3.3 provides a breakdown of their responses:

Table 3.3
Factors that deter people from entering the archives sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>Frequency of citation (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>55 (61.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career structure/career limiting factors</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image/Profile of the profession</td>
<td>17 (19.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to entry</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factors</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work conditions</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary contracts</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Low salaries were cited by 80 (89.9%) respondents. Some respondents did give further explanation ‘Salaries do not compare well with other
professions, though idealism can overcome this fact (this is true of both archivists and conservators). There was a 'Lack of upward career progression and long term earning potential', with location (South East England) and type of employer (local government) noted as being particularly bad.

- Career limiting factors were the second most frequently cited factor, with 56 (62.9%) respondents highlighting this. Within this there were a number of sub issues but the general feeling can be summarised as 'Poor career structure- starting salaries are low, but lack of progression is worse.'. Very short career ladders, limited promotion opportunities 'waiting for dead men’s’ shoes’, especially in offices with small numbers of staff, and lack of career development opportunities were all cited. By contrast, it is interesting to note that 24% of the respondents indicated that good career opportunities were an attracting factor.

- The image and profile of the profession was cited by 39 (43.8%) respondents. Responses covered people’s perceptions of the archivist profession, its general invisibility, lack of contact with the sector ‘because even at Universities the majority of students do not use original sources’, negative perceptions of what the job involves and the negative image of archivists in particular, summed up by one respondent as: Image of the profession as odd - only for clever people who can read strange handwriting, or ‘book-anoraks’ with curious obsessions.

- 17 (19.1%) respondents highlighted factors, such as the need for and difficulty in gaining pre-course experience, the inaccessibility of post graduate courses – limited number, location, cost and limited information about how to become qualified

- 17 (19.1%) respondents also identified lack of status as a factor, with employers perceiving archives and record management to be unimportant: ‘the archivist is seldom a particularly important presence
in the political and administrative scheme of things, nor are records regarded as an urgent priority.

- Location was cited by 14 (15.7%) respondents, with the concentration of posts in London and the South East, and the need to relocate in search of promotion being particularly noted as problematic.

- 7 (7.9%) respondents mentioned the physical environment, ‘Spending time in basements.’ working hours, a desire not to work with people, and poor management.

- 5 (5.6%) respondents indicated that the increasing use of temporary contracts could put people off

A number of other factors were highlighted by a small number of respondents. These included:

- Under funding
- The decline of local government
- Lack of job security in local government/arts environments.
- No interest in the area
- Limited scope for people to use all they skills have
- The prospect of working in isolation
- Perceive the job as being pressurised

In the additional comments section, these themes were reiterated as shown by the following comments:

‘We are still treating the profession as a “paid hobby”. This is not a suitable approach.’

‘In 10 years you can rise to the giddy heights of a head of repository on £30-40k per annum, but how many archivists earn more?’

‘The records management profession needs to consider improved marketing particularly in light of FOI and e-records management.’
‘the insistence of the...courses on pre-course experience must be deterring many otherwise good candidates. Disappearance of virtually all trainee posts (due to funding difficulties in local government) has hit conservation training particularly badly’

‘The profession is not actually suited to everybody, and efforts to redress the image problem need to be carefully judged, that they do not actually give a false impression at the other extreme.’

‘There are still a number of archivists at senior level, normally socially inadequate would-be academics, who show no interest in acquiring the management skills they need’

‘...it’s not a profession in which an ambitious person can go far ...archivists are never going to be key members of staff within most organisations – they will always be regarded as less important than staff dealing with finance, strategy and policy, personnel, marketing etc.’

3.3.3 Interview and focus group findings
Within the interviews and focus groups key themes highlighted by the questionnaire were explored in more depth. The invisibility of the archive professions, and associated negative images were themes established within the questionnaire. Respondents referred to, ‘the relative invisibility of the professions and their image, and suggested that they “may be seen as reclusive, exclusive and middle aged to elderly.”’

The interview and focus group findings reiterate the questionnaire findings and provide additional information about the way different individuals found their way into the archive professions. It is interesting to note that there are more diverse entry routes for records managers and conservators compared to archivists.

‘In fact, there are quite a lot of people who haven’t come in from a degree background. The administrative side for instance, a lot of people started off doing the filing for companies and ended up being records managers by default, and there’s a huge pool of experience at that level without degrees.’
This has implications for the diversity of staff within their respective employee populations. Although the data are limited to a relatively small sample, it was seen that records managers often find their way into the area through an administrative role. What all the professions seem to have in common is the reliance on people finding their way into the profession by chance rather than proactively attracting people.

‘We’re all saying we fell into it, it happened accidentally.’

The advantage of this is that people who do enter already have a definite established interest in the field. However, the disadvantage is that it has produced a rather homogenous population of professionals. This would not necessarily be problematic, except for the fact that the majority of people who embark on a training course want to become archivists, not records managers. As one respondents observed,

‘To what extent are we still recruiting from the traditional history oriented people who like documents at the expense of attracting people...who don’t see it as being something they can go into...’

There is a clear need to attract people onto courses who want to progress there career in different ways.

Another issue that became apparent was the lack of high quality, up-to-date, accurate, promotional material. Not only is the profession invisible, barriers are set up for those seeking information. The Society of Archivists has recently improved its website. It is now more user friendly with links straight to the university courses. However, the information that careers services have is very poor. Many respondents indicated that the staff often didn’t know what archivists were, had an inaccurate image of the type of person suitable for employment, and provided them with poor quality information. Respondents who wished to promote the profession also cited the lack of high quality brochures and leaflets. Small numbers of poor quality photocopied pamphlets were not seen as sufficient incentives. The following quote describes a leaflet obtained from a careers library:
'...there was a picture on the front...graphics aren't particularly good...But the image was a conservator- it showed someone preparing a document and the heading was archivist...there's about one sentence on records management... it covered conservation and it covered archives. And that was...all we had...there's no information there for young people.'

3.4. Key themes emerging from the research

3.4.1 Salary levels

The questionnaire obtained information about the starting salaries for the different professional groups. From this it is possible to compare the salaries within the sector and evaluate their competitiveness with other professions, as can be seen in Table 3.4. As a number of respondents indicated the salary range for newly qualified staff, the ‘mean minimum’ and ‘maximum salaries’ have been calculated to reflect each end of the scale. The ‘mean salary’ is an average of the mid point within these salary ranges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession (N)</th>
<th>Mean minimum salary</th>
<th>Mean maximum salary</th>
<th>Mean salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archivists (77)</td>
<td>£17144.10</td>
<td>£19434.39</td>
<td>£18377.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records managers (37)</td>
<td>£17537.83</td>
<td>£19891.19</td>
<td>£18644.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservators (44)</td>
<td>£15949.11</td>
<td>£17986.16</td>
<td>£16909.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures show that as a profession record managers are on average receiving higher salaries than archivists and conservators. Archivists’ salaries are not a great deal lower than records managers but conservators are on average paid over £1500 less. It is also important to note that newly qualified professionals are likely to be appointed at the bottom end of the salary scale, meaning that the mean minimum salary is more likely to be indicative of actual starting salaries.

Salary and the financial burden associated with becoming qualified were seen as an important issue yet it was also apparent that people had become
somewhat resigned to the low salaries and offset this with the positive aspects of their job. The following quotes illustrate the range of opinions:

‘…. I think starting salaries remain, broadly speaking competitive…but somebody coming into the profession on eighteen or nineteen thousand a year, won’t see that increase at anything like the rate that somebody going into say the legal profession would do.’

“That was made very clear when I made the decision to go into archives was that it’s… not a particularly well paid job and that you do it for the love of the job and job satisfaction, not for its salary…in comparison to…friends…I’m the least well paid.’

‘As long as archivists accept jobs with low salaries, salaries will remain low’

‘I think that’s what’s tempting about records management, because it is a higher salary but a lot of people don’t see it as interesting as archives. Also in archives, if you want a high salary you’ve got to work in business.’

3.4.2 The need to eliminate barriers to entry
Promotion in the sector is poor and numerous respondents highlighted the difficulties they experienced, as shown by the following quotes:

‘Conservation is never going to cross the mind of…a university careers advisor.’

‘How do people find their way into archives if not by blind chance, and because they have an interest themselves in the first place?’

‘I was trying to find out about...Archives…even the stuff from the Society of Archivists that I found on websites was talking about basements…and I just thought oh how off-putting can you be in two sentences.’

‘I think we have to be much more proactive as a profession in terms of going into universities, and promoting to relevant student groups the advantages and opportunities that we offer. It is very, very hard to find out about it if you don’t know about it in the first place.’
The sector also needs to consider emphasising and promoting its strengths e.g. high levels of employment.

On the whole most respondents thought that the professional bodies (Society of Archivists and Records Management Society) should be responsible for promotion and producing promotional information. However, a large number of respondents also indicated that the whole of the archive profession had a responsibility.

### 3.4.3 Image

The negative stereotyped image was highlighted by a number of respondents thus:

‘I think there is an image of archives. And I think it’s dusty, it’s boring. The people are slightly eccentric…when I graduated the text message I got from one of my friends was “we can go out and buy your tweed suit and a set of pearls now”’

Interestingly, one also felt that the profession was in some ways happy to buy into the image:

‘I think that’s part of the problem- that we buy into that (image) even though we don’t look like we buy into it, by perpetuating it and saying it “oh an archivist it’s like a librarian but not quite…we work in dusty basements” and it just perpetuates it’

### 3.4.4 Promotion of the sector through work experience and pre-course experience

There were positive and negative aspects of work experience. Work experience was generally for a short time and often involved younger people (16-18 year olds). Although respondents were not certain if this type of experience did influence people’s career choice it was seen as a valuable promotional activity.

‘...it would be nice if they became Archivists but at least we will be spreading the word about what we do.’
‘... we try and give them an overview of what working in archives is like and what, ...your career options might be. In some cases I am sure, it...has fired the imagination and they have gone on to pursue the possibility of a career in archives.’

There was also a negative attitude to using this as a means of promoting the archive professions. This was not universal but needs to be addressed:

‘We have a volunteer at the moment ... I feel it’s important that the person should go away having had a positive experience. Even if they decide archives isn’t for them, .. unfortunately she’s been given all days of photocopying...and you can see that’s she’s becoming extremely bored and frustrated...She’s just been used as an extra body because of the serious understaffing.’

‘There’s an awful tendency to look at the 17/18 year old or student and think “what can I give you that’s totally boring so you go away and stop bothering us”’

3.4.5 The need for pre-course experience

The need for pre-course experience has been highlighted as problematic on a number of levels. There is a generally held view in the profession and among potential entrants that a year’s practical experience is mandatory. Course directors argue that this is not the case: experience should be judged on quality, not length of time. Their group FARMER (Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research) have recently produced guidelines on what should be covered in such placements, which will be beneficial to both potential students and offices and avoid situations arising such as: ‘On pre-course placements, you were treated like a dogsbody. You were bottom of the chain and you knew it.’

The information about paid training places is very limited, and is often not easily available. Some training places are poorly paid and require relocation. The financial pressure placed on people who have to gain this experience via voluntary work is considerable. The expectation that students will do voluntary work to gain experience could serve to further limit the pool to those who can afford to do so.
‘I do like the idea of a one year practical before going onto the course because it gives someone the opportunity to see whether they really are suited for archives...there really ought to be more because if the courses are asking for students to try and gain some pre-course experience if there aren’t enough paid places then you are expecting people to do it on a voluntary basis and they just can’t afford to do it.’

3.4.6 Paid traineeships

Given the number of comments made on the above subject, the question of introducing a system of paid traineeships was raised and discussed under various headings: career choice, employer’s needs, recruitment, and training and development. There was great support for the idea in principle, but realisation of the difficulties:

‘It’s a good idea. It’s a matter of having the budget for it. I don’t think it can take place in isolation. I would like to see the training providers working with employers to develop paid traineeships which actually took place in a training context’

‘Paid traineeships...I think they are very important and I think it would be worth exploring whether there are opportunity and incentives to encourage employers to offer paid traineeships as an alternative to more junior short term contracts or whatever’.

‘Paid traineeships is certainly a way that I think the profession will be required to move down as more and more of education and training is put back onto the employer.’

3.4.7 Attracting a wider range of people

The need to attract people from different backgrounds was emphasised. One of the focus groups noted that ‘we are all white and middle class here’. The need to attract people with an interest in records management was seen as crucial:

‘We need more people who are interested in modern records, interested in management, as well...I think we really need to look at how we recruit into the profession to start with.’
‘...students are just not selecting the records management options, there is still far more interest in the medieval side of archives and the very old records...they're not considering records management as a possible option and so they're not coming out with the skills that are needed...’

3.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

From this research it has been possible to determine numerous factors which have influenced people’s decisions to enter into a career in archives and these are predominantly an interest in history and an interest in the work. While these are obviously important they could also have negative consequences, especially for records management as this limits the number of people who are likely to enter the profession. This highlights the need to market the archive professions in new ways both to attract people from academic disciplines other than history and also to encourage those from a history background to consider records management.

It has also been possible to establish those factors having a negative impact on career choice including salary, and more specifically lack of salary progression; career limiting factors; the image and profile of the sector, the negative stereotypes, and invisibility of the sector as a whole. The invisibility of the area seems to be even more acute for records managers. ‘Barriers to entry’ are highly problematic and appear to have a very detrimental effect on the sector. Many of these issues could be easily addressed.

Promotion of the archives professions is of poor quality and inaccurate. Most people ‘bump’ into archives, mainly through an interest in history. When archives professionals have attempted to obtain promotional material to take to careers fairs this has been of very poor quality and out of date. When students have attempted to find out more from their careers service the information has been inaccurate, out of date and poor quality.

A number of stereotypes were identified although most respondents refuted their accuracy. Careers advisors were said to be unaware of archives, and
where they did appear to have some knowledge it was indicated that they perceived it as a ‘quiet person’s’ profession.

Work experience is seen differently to pre-course training. Such placements were viewed favourably by employers, as a means of promoting the archive professions. Even if people decided that a career in archives was not for them, at least they would know what an archive was and would tell other people about it.

The perceived need for pre-course training can act as a barrier to entry. Employers were asked about what level of work experience they believed to be necessary before entry onto an archives course (see chapter 4) A number of employers highlighted the need for this to be better co-ordinated across the sector. There needs to be more clarification about what is required, and what placements exist, both paid and unpaid. Employers taking pre-course students need to work within the guidelines drawn up by FARMER.

Literature on the subject of career choice shows that students do seem to be weighing up a number of different factors which ultimately influence their final decision. Students can only make a conscious decision if they are aware of the archive sector as an option. This research has ascertained that the majority of people find their way into archives by chance, and that when people tell people what they do most people have never heard of their profession. From this it is possible to speculate that there may well be large numbers of people who do not consider archives, records management, or conservation as an option simply because they do not know they exist.

Recommendations

- Promotion of the profession – serious consideration needs to be given to promoting the archive professions in order both to attract new entrants and to eliminate existing barriers to entry. Production of good quality, up to date careers literature, an up to date website, with case studies, particularly for records managers, and a pro-active programme of establishing links with local university, and schools careers offices are
vital. This should include assessing how best to attract people from other disciplines and backgrounds. The professions should consider employing a paid careers officer who would enable the various sectors to facilitate such moves. Work currently being undertaken by the Society’s Continuing Development sub-committee may help progress this.

- It is necessary to review of need for pre-course training, what form this should take, improved communication on existing placements and investigation of the possibility of a nationally co-ordinated scheme of paid traineeships. Course directors, associations, Resource and the employers need to discuss these matters.
CHAPTER 4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

This section of the report addresses the recruitment and selection of professionally qualified staff within the archives sector. There has been a large amount of anecdotal evidence which has indicated that organisations are having increasing difficulty in recruiting the professionally qualified staff they need. This research aims to investigate these problems more thoroughly and assess the extent of these problems.

4.1 Introduction

‘The major cost to most organisations is the salaries of staff. It is both a truism and true that people (i.e. staff, employees) are the most valuable asset of any organisation. The process of recruitment, selection and socialisation of staff is therefore absolutely fundamental for an organisation to succeed.’ (Farnham, 1997: 132)

The published literature in this area is vast and spans a variety of subjects. Borman et al (1997) and Hough and Oswald (2000) provide extensive overviews of recent research undertaken in the area of recruitment and selection. Areas of research investigation include including human resource planning, the validity and reliability of alternative selection methods, the design of the selection process, and the effect that recruitment/selection has both psychologically and behaviourally on candidates (Anderson and Cunningham-Snell, 2000: 70), advice on how to hire employees effectively (Luszez and Kleiner, 2000 Scholarios.and Lockyer,1999), what attracts people to particular jobs (Aiman-Smith, et al, 2001) The recruitment/selection process has been viewed from a number of different perspectives, such as the predictivist which examines organisational decision-making, and constructivist which highlights the participation of the applicant and the organisation in a two way decision-making process. (Anderson and Cunningham-Snell, 2000: 70). These differing perspectives can provide insights for this study, as assessing how the archives sector accounts for these key factors highlighted by the literature will provide an idea of their standards of recruitment and selection.
In addition, the problems relating to the recruitment of staff with the competencies needed by organisations have been highlighted in many professions. The Association of Graduate Recruiters (Prospects Directory 2003)) has highlighted numerous personal attributes and skills that they have difficulty finding when they are recruiting staff. A recent article by Howard (2003) has also highlighted the increasing shortage of ‘talent’ and urges organisations to ‘Prepare for War’. This problem is likely to get worse as there is likely to be further increases in demand, and as there is already a small number of people unemployed it is not going to be possible to increase supply. (Howard, 2003)
(Also see Chapter 5 ‘Employers needs and the course curriculum, and training and development’)

4.2 The archive sector
The majority of the problems faced by the archive sector have been described anecdotally and appear to be widely known and accepted. There have been a small number of recent studies which have ascertained that there is likely to be an increasing recruitment problem for the sector. Davies and Ellis (2002; 2003) note in particular:

- The increase in demand for archive professionals particularly records managers due to changes in legislation.
- The ‘bidding culture’ which has led to a destabilisation of the supply of archive professionals due to the increase in short-term contracts.
- There has been a general increase in demand for archives professionals.
- Although there has been a slight increase in supply of professionally qualified staff this has not kept pace with demand.
- A particular problem has been highlighted for conservators, who are said to be in very sort supply (Jackson, 2000)
4.3 Research findings

From initial discussions, which provided anecdotal evidence about recruitment in the archive sector, it appeared that many organisations were experiencing recruitment difficulties. This was supported by the literature (Davies and Ellis, 2002; 2003) and was therefore established as a key area of investigation. The questionnaire, focus groups and practitioner interviews all had sections on recruitment included within them.

4.3.1 Recent recruitment

The questionnaire obtained background information about recruitment in the last twelve months: what types of professionals were recruited and the sources of recruitment. 47% of respondents had recruited professional staff over the previous twelve months. Table 4.1 provides more detail about the types of professional recruited.

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Total number of people recruited (WTE)</th>
<th>% of the total number of people recruited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archivists (N = 87)</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records Managers (N = 86)</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservators (N = 87)</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note - WTE’s are Whole Time Equivalents (full time member of staff)

It can be seen that a total of 88.5 Whole Time equivalent (WTE) staff were recruited across these organisations. Archivists made up the majority of appointments at 73.2% of the total number. Records managers and conservators represent a much smaller proportion of the total number of people recruited at 11.0% and 15.8% respectively.

Table 4.2 shows the main recruitment sources for the sector, giving an indication of places from which applicants were recruited.
Table 4.2
*Total, Percentage, of WTE’s recruited from different recruitment sources*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of WTE’s recruited</th>
<th>% of total number of WTE’s recruited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Straight from archive/record management course</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From another archive repository</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From outside the archive sector</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From outside the profession</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From inside your own service</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note - WTE’s are Whole Time Equivalents, (full time member of staff)

The main recruitment source was from other archives, with 45.8% of people appointed coming from this source. The second largest recruitment source was straight from education at 27.1%. Appointments from inside an organisation’s own service were also common making up 16.9% of the total number of people recruited.

Recruitments from outside the sector and profession were less common making up 7.9% and 3.4% of the total number of people. It is interesting to see that people are being recruited from outside the profession and sector, as this could mean that they do not have a professional archival qualification.

### 4.3.2 Perceived difficulties in recruitment

In the questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate if they were having difficulties recruiting staff with the experience, skills, and personal qualities required by their organisation. Table 4.3 gives a breakdown of their responses.

Table 4.3
*Extent of difficulties experienced by practitioners when attempting to recruit people with the relevant experience, skills, and personal qualities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>14 (19.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>9 (13.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean scores for each factor are similar and are all very close to 3. This shows that a typical organisation is not finding it very easy or very difficult to find staff with the characteristics they require. There is not a great deal of difference between the three factors in terms of the distribution of frequencies and the mean scores are similar. A statistically significant relationship was found between experience, skills, and personal qualities. This means that some people are finding it very difficult to obtain all three factors, while others are finding it very easy to recruit people possessing the relevant experience, skills, and personal qualities.

Practitioners were also asked for additional comments relating to the problems they face when attempting to recruit staff. Table 4.4 gives an overview of their responses.

Table 4.4
Further comments made by respondents about the problems they have when recruiting staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No problems recruiting</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No problems recruiting but limited choice</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems recruiting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No problems recruiting archivists, but difficulties recruiting records managers and conservators</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not recruited recently</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that roughly half of respondents did not or could not add any further comments. The majority of those who did are having problems of recruiting in one form or another. It is also interesting to note that ten respondents indicated that they had problems recruiting records managers and conservators. When this is placed in the context of the small number of people who had attempted to recruit records managers and conservators (See table 4.1 above), it can be seen that a high proportion of people who did try to recruit experienced difficulties.
From the above table, the following can be seen:

- 7.9% of organisations indicated that they had experienced no difficulties recruiting.

- 15.7% of respondents indicated that although they had been able to recruit successfully they were unhappy with the number of applications that they received.

- 11.2% of respondents commented specifically on recruitment difficulties varying for the different professional groups ‘Qualified conservators and records managers very difficult, archivists less so’

- Respondents cited a number of different problems that they had experienced in relation to recruitment. Difficulties were mentioned in the following areas:
  - Personal skills / qualities
    I consider experience to be much less important than skills and personal qualities. Personal qualities underrated by the archives courses at the moment include application, self-discipline, and breadth of vision.
  - Limited availability of language skills (Latin, Welsh, German)
    We require bilingual staff (Welsh and English) and limited pool of archivists with this ability. I’m expecting more difficulties for the Medieval Latin cataloguing post now being advertised.
  - Specific skills (business knowledge, electronic records)
    When it comes to appointing an electronic records specialist I anticipate encountering serious difficulties in finding the right candidate.
  - Organisational / job characteristics
    All our experience of recruitment in the last ten years has been for fixed term contracts. The length of such contracts clearly affects this issue – with some candidates viewing them as good experience and others not happy with the lack of future security.
4.3.3 *Circumstances under which an organisation would appoint an unqualified candidate to a ‘professional post’*

Given the anecdotal evidence indicating the limited supply of qualified archives professionals, it seemed prudent to obtain information about the circumstances in which an organisation would appoint someone without a professional qualification to a professional post. The questionnaire addressed this issue.

Table 4.5
*Circumstances under which an organisation would appoint an unqualified candidate to a ‘professional post’ (f of citations and % of respondents who cited the factor)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Archivist</th>
<th>Records Manager</th>
<th>Conservator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>43 (49.4)</td>
<td>27 (41.5)</td>
<td>34 (57.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Experience</td>
<td>18 (20.7)</td>
<td>14 (21.5)</td>
<td>5 (8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further qualifications</td>
<td>11 (12.6)</td>
<td>10 (15.4)</td>
<td>11 (18.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In house training</td>
<td>7 (8.0)</td>
<td>8 (12.3)</td>
<td>5 (8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of applicants</td>
<td>7 (8.0)</td>
<td>5 (7.7)</td>
<td>4 (6.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six main categories of response emerged in relation to this area, and similar types of response were observed across the different professions.

- The majority of organisations would employ an unqualified person as an archivist or records manager under some circumstances (Archivists 50.6%, Records Managers 58.4%). 42.4% of organisations also said they would employ an unqualified person as a conservator.

- Some would take people with relevant experience, if they completed further courses, or completed in-house training.

- Other organisations indicated a more creative approach, and evaluated the possibility of adapting the job around the applicant by restructuring the department e.g. employing more support staff to free up archivists time.
A number of organisations indicated that they would consider recruiting people with relevant alternative experience.

Others indicated that they would only appoint an unqualified person if very specific skills were needed, such as ‘where digitisation developments or other advanced IT issues constituted the main part of the job description.’

Some organisations seemed more willing to take on unqualified candidates for short-term contracts. Organisations were also more likely to appoint an unqualified person if they felt that funding would be jeopardised: ‘*Only if the alternative was loss of funding – would look for relevant experience instead.*’

Some organisations would consider appointing people who ‘*were actively undertaking training for proper qualification*’ or who would be ‘willing to attend part time or participate in distance learning to qualify or suitable experience.’ Some indicated that this was particularly the case when specific skills were required.

‘*If advanced Latin palaeography and diplomatic were required we would provide the necessary archival introduction and encourage them to study for the relevant qualifications.*’

A number of organisations had the scope to train staff internally, so ‘*if no suitable candidates, we would appoint non-professional and train internally.*’ Others would only do this for existing staff ‘*an existing member of staff with suitable experience might be considered, subject to in-service training, if no suitably qualified candidates were available.*’

In general, options for appointing unqualified candidates were only explored when no qualified candidates were available. Organisations combined a number of responses when faced with the prospect of employing an unqualified candidate as illustrated below:

‘*We appoint to these posts on the basis of relevant experience, and expect candidates to work towards a qualification once in post… they receive on the job training and are not allowed to do anything they are not trained in.*’
A small number of organisations indicated that they had used / or would consider using a different type of response to the main category responses outlined above:

'We have deliberately created two Senior Archive assistants from one archivist post. These staff were recruited from within the service and take a lead role in running the archive reading room thus freeing the remaining archivists from the majority of this duty.'

From these responses it can be seen that some organisations are willing to make adaptations to the structure of their department. By evaluating the skills that their employees have to offer they are able to make alterations to the roles that different staff members perform to maintain the level of service that they require.

4.3.4 Importance of relevant experience when recruiting to graduate entry-level posts

A question was asked on what weighting practitioners give to experience when recruiting people to their first professional post. It can be seen from table 4.6 that the largest number of respondents give a score of 4 for the level of importance placed on experience, meaning that they see it as ‘important’.

Table 4.6
Importance of organisational experience when recruiting someone to a graduate entry-level post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Unimportant 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Very important 5</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (3.8)</td>
<td>11 (13.7)</td>
<td>18 (22.5)</td>
<td>34 (42.5)</td>
<td>14 (17.5)</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were also asked give an indication of what they class as relevant experience. There were two main responses to this with work experience and specific skills / knowledge being the most cited responses. This is summarised in Table 4.7
Table 4.7
Factors respondents indicate to be relevant experience - f of citations and % of respondents who cited the factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific skills / knowledge</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal skills</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments added to this response showed that:

- Most respondents were happy with any type of work experience gained ‘in a records repository whether …as part of a course assignment, as a volunteer or in a substantive non-professional post.

- Some organisations wanted a specific type of work experience such as:
  - Pre-course experience in a business archive, whether paid or voluntary, or at least a placement during the course as a minimum.
  - Practical records management experience for record management posts.

There were also differences between the amounts of work experience that organisations expected, ranging from a few weeks to a full year.

- Many organisations look for archivists in particular to have a wide range of skills. Archivists’ skills were more often focused upon than records managers and conservators, with some respondents listing these in full.

- Some organisations looked for skills that were specific to their organisation such as knowledge of business archives or industry economics.

- A smaller number of organisations emphasised the importance of personal qualities:
  - At this level I would look for evidence of general activities, not necessarily professional experience, that suggest that the candidate has the right personal qualities to grow in the job.
A couple of organisations mentioned other factors such as education and research undertaken as important factors when ‘relevant academic research work would also be considered relevant experience’

4.4 Focus group and interview findings
The interviews and focus groups were used to investigate more deeply into the themes established in the questionnaire, and address the research questions.

4.4.1 Selection process
Respondents were asked about the selection process in order to assess if it was reliable, valid and unbiased. Every interview respondent was knowledgeable about their selection process and demonstrated that this was linked to the job description and requirements. The selection methods used appeared fair as they used panel interviews which were structured and often competency based. However, some focus group participants indicated that there was at least a perception that some jobs were ‘spoken for’, and that senior posts always went to deputies.

4.4.2 Short-term contracts
There were many different opinions about short-term contracts. Some people thought that they were a good way of gaining experience, while others wanted the stability of a permanent job. This tended to vary with the career stage of the respondent. Students were more in favour than those in more senior positions. Some employers thought they were harder to fill and increased the salary accordingly, while others had no problems recruiting. The difficulty faced by people who could only get short-term contracts when they wanted to ‘settle down’ was also acknowledged, as people find it difficult to get mortgages. The following quotes illustrate the variety of responses:

*I’ve heard people say that they don’t actually want permanent contracts. They want to move around and get through a series of separate contracts at the beginning of their careers, and get diverse experience.*
I am sure from the management point of view, that the advantages of being able to
draw on short term funding for project work outweighs any disadvantages there are in
the recruitment market…the strategy that I have adopted is to…offer an increment on
the salary, to compensate for the short term nature of the contract.

A point must come though… when people …want or they need greater stability… it
really needs to be a permanent job that they can rely on, pay the mortgage and so
on.

Those (short-term contracts) are particularly difficult to fill, harder than the permanent
ones, because there are so many short-term jobs around and too few people to fill
them and the difficulty is that, I think everyone is getting into a bidding war and
having to offer higher and higher salaries…

4.4.3 Extent of recruitment problem

There were a number of recruitment problems highlighted within the
interviews.  These were related to the ‘quality’ of applicants as well as the
supply.  Some respondents thought that there had been a decline in the
quality of people coming out of the professional courses, while some
respondents thought that there was still a certain amount of snobbery in the
profession in relation to grades and academic institutions.  As in the
questionnaires, respondents highlighted the problems associated with
attempting to recruit records managers and conservators.

‘I get the impression that there aren’t the number of applicants… there’s not the
same ratio to places as there used to be and if anything the problem is more filling
the places than… selecting the right people for them.  Which may explain why
…sometimes when you speak to archivists who are in the course of training or just
recently qualified, you can’t help feeling …they just need a bit more oomph about
them.’

‘I think that one of the things that has changed perceptively in the profession in the
last twenty-five years is that there has been a perceptible decline in the intellectual
ability of the average newly qualified archivist…in the past the archives community
has had a level of intellectual rigour and ability which has helped it to overcome some
of the other disadvantages which it faced in terms of funding... we are losing by a watering down of the intellectual calibre of the people who come into the profession.’

‘… records managers, you know if you get a qualified records manager applying you are damned lucky in the first place’.

‘…we last recruited a senior records manager four years ago… We got one applicant for the post, and that was before the market got tight.’

‘On a gloomy day you could see conservation withering and dying.’

**4.4.4 Causes of recruitment problems**

A number of causes for the recruitment problems were highlighted including the lack of training opportunities for conservators, the lack of people on the professional courses who want to become records managers and the expansion in demand.

‘…the combination of...not training enough people and more people leaving, is giving us an ever more serious recruitment problem.’

‘...most of the trainee posts have gone, most of them were in local government, and so the conservators have gone... there are virtually no people being trained up.’

‘I think over the last few years, there has been a marked unwillingness of people to apply for records management jobs...if you advertise a records management job then you might get no applicants, if you advertise for an archives job, you will get applicants... there is always a need to be recruiting more people onto training courses who are specifically intending to become records managers...’

It was also thought to be generally easier to recruit in the South East, where there is a higher concentration of archive posts, or to places that are seen as ‘attractive’.

‘Within London there’s a very good broad range of jobs, lots of different levels, and it’s very easy to move jobs without needing to move house, and to have a career without moving house. Outside London that’s harder, and it’s therefore harder to recruit... certainly recruitment outside London is very difficult.’
4.5 Salaries

Issues surrounding salaries pervade the archive sector and have an effect on all the major issues touched upon within this research. This was addressed in relation to the competitiveness of salaries in the archives professions compared to others. The salaries in comparison to people working in libraries and museums were seen as competitive, but it was also noted that both museums and libraries offer more scope for progression and therefore greater opportunity ultimately to earn a higher salary. The salaries in comparison to other professions were not seen as competitive. It was felt that middle management salaries compared to other professions were poor. The limited opportunities for progression also ‘capped’ the earning potential of archives professional:

‘Broadly speaking the salary is probably better than library or museum professionals doing similar things, but the difference is that both library and museum professions offer longer career paths.’

‘The difficulty is …that the number of steps up the ladder is very short for archivists, and some of those steps are really quite tough to achieve, because the number of junior posts is much greater than middle management posts, is much greater than the number of senior posts. And there’s really only a few very large organisations which offer more than about three steps.’

‘…it affects people going into the profession. You don’t go into archives as a profession for the money.’

4.6 Competitiveness of archive professions

Respondents were asked to comment on the competitiveness of the sector as a career choice compared to other professions. There were mixed opinions about this. Some indicated that the profile of archives had increased which encouraged more people to see it as an option. However, due to changes in the economy, the flattening of careers structures, it was also seen as less competitive.
‘I don’t think we are as attractive as we were because, partly I think it’s because the management style has become flattened. …there’s not a career structure …esteem has gone from a lot of places.’

‘I think it has a higher and a better profile than it did, which is not necessarily related to competitive salaries, but it’s seen as a more vibrant profession to go into, than it has been…I think…financially, it has got slightly more competitive. …there are more business jobs than there used to be, that does drive the salary up’

4.7 Key points arising from the research

• It is apparent that there are real recruitment problems in the archives sector. There are too few professionals qualifying to cope with the increasing demand from the sector. There is a particular shortage of records managers and conservators.

• The main factor that appears to have caused these recruitment difficulties is the fast expansion of the sector (especially for records managers). Most respondents couched this in terms of supply and demand. It was also acknowledged by some respondents that the relative competitiveness of archives had changed. At one time the security of archives would have been a ‘selling point’, but now that it is relatively easy to get jobs, and the security has largely gone, particularly in local government, then higher paid professions are viewed more favourably.

• Entry salaries are comparable with other professions. Salary progression can be very limited especially when the level of qualifications required of and responsibilities expected as part of the job are considered. There do appear to be differences depending on the region. Where there is a higher concentration of posts, there is more chance of progression (e.g. London).

• Short-term contracts are causing problems for some organisations in that they are successfully obtaining funding but having difficulty filling the subsequent post. Some managers have increased the salaries for short-term staff to try and combat this.
• It should be noted that the majority of people entering the archives professions do not appear to be representative of the general population in terms of ethnicity, disability, and social class.

• As in other cultural sectors there is a shortage of people with the talent that employers need. This is likely to mean that the archives sector and individual organisations are going to need to compete more effectively to get the staff they require.

• Although interview respondents indicated that their recruitment and selection processes are fair (valid and reliable), this is not always how they are perceived by applicants. Employers need to ensure that their recruitment and selection process are transparent and that their selection tools appear relevant to the job being applied for.

4.8 Recommendations
It is imperative for all the archive professions that a group is established to tackle the recruitment problems as a matter of urgency. This group should consist of all stakeholders who have the ability to make immediate changes to address these shortages. Key areas that this group must address include:

• attracting more people into the sector especially those who want to become records managers.
• reviewing the recruitment and training process for conservators
• assessing the competencies needed in the sector and train/educate people in the skills that organisations require.
• finding a means of making the sector more attractive if salaries cannot be increased other ways of improving people’s career prospects must be found.

This recommendation should be considered together with those for chapter 5, as the issues are related.
The seriousness of the recruitment situation in archives must not be underestimated. It has been demonstrated by the work of Davies and Ellis (2002; 2003) that the demand for archives professionals is increasing and this is going to increase still further. Demand is already outstripping supply, and the mechanisms for increasing the number of qualified professionals is limited. This must be addressed in order to prevent a very severe recruitment problem occurring in the future.
CHAPTER 5  Employers needs and the course curriculum, and training and development

The research area of employer’s needs and the course curriculum has been combined with training and development in this section as they both deal with the creation and development of employee competencies (skills, knowledge, attributes).

Although this research takes place in a context of constant changes in training provision and education, it is not within the remit of this research to comment on the political implications for the archives sector in relation to the new Sector Skills Councils and other initiatives currently being undertaken. The aim of this research is to establish what the sector needs in terms of education and training provision.

5.1  Introduction

5.1.1 Definitions of education and training

Traditionally, training and education have been seen as two distinct disciplines. The following definitions are useful in clarifying the differences:

Education means:

‘Education’s primary purpose is to develop in an integrated way an individual’s intellectual capability, conceptual and social understanding and work performance. It therefore means more than simply developing their technical expertise or task competence. Used in a narrower sense, ‘education’ can also mean a course, programme or learning event that usually involves a period of study organised by an educational institution.’ (Harrison, 2000: 2)

Training means:

‘The systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts, or attitudes that result in improved performance in the work environment.’ (Goldstein, 1998)

Glaser (1962) tried to specify the differences between training and education by indicating that the objectives of education are general whereas those of training are more specific; training attempts to minimise individual differences whereas
education tries to maximise them. The changing nature of work and advances in technology have since distorted these differences. This seems to be particularly true of the archive sector as the education courses have a large vocational component.

5.1.2 Importance of employee development

Employee development within an organisation is a process which assists people to acquire the competencies that will:

- ‘Improve performance, quality, customer service and long-term organisational progress’
- ‘Aid recruitment and retention, and stimulate and support continuous individual development’
- ‘Help to enhance the skills and knowledge base of the organisation and of individuals.’ (Harrison, 2000: p1)

It is therefore a crucial process within an organisation as it has consequences for ‘productivity, performance, knowledge development and organisational progress’. It has numerous benefits for employees including ‘personal competence, growth, adaptability and continuous employability.’ (Harrison, 2000: p1)

5.1.3 Key skills

Numerous studies have investigated what skills employers expect to find in graduate recruits. Prospects Directory (2003) has summarised the ones rated as most important by graduate recruiters which include: motivation and enthusiasm, team working, oral communication, flexibility and adaptability, initiative/proactivity. The largest shortfall was found in the following skills: interpersonal skills, initiative/proactivity, managing personal development, business awareness, oral communication, and problem solving. It can be seen that these problems go across industries and sectors and are not specific to the archive sector.
5.2 Education and training in the archive sector

Ellis and Greening (2002) describe the providers of professional archival education as being ‘between a rock and a hard place’ in their article on archival training. They indicate that the curriculum of the university courses is pushing the bounds of what can reasonably be expected within a one-year Masters qualification. At the same time demands from employers and the need to keep up with professional development has increased pressure to add additional subjects to these courses, as new issues increase in importance within the archive sector (e.g. ‘specialist archive management software, the application of Encoded Archival Description (EAD), the new strategic framework in which archive services now operate, and the role of archives in such initiatives as life-long learning and social inclusion’). The increasing pace of change in technology has also compounded this. Course providers have the difficult job of balancing the need to produce students with an increasing range of skills while convincing the university that they are not demanding a higher workload of students than is reasonable when compared to other Masters’ courses. (Ellis and Greening, 2002)

There have been numerous articles on the subject of training across the whole sector (Edwards and Olawande, 2001; Vaisey, 2001) There is said to be a crisis in training in terms of a skills shortage and the supply of training available. Educators argue that it is not possible to expand course content further, and employers have difficulties in finding the skills that they need.

Edwards and Olawande (2001) investigated members’ perceptions of current training programmes in order to establish any gaps. They noted at the time that theirs was the first piece of research to evaluate members’ perceptions of training. In addition to evaluating their own training needs they also gave an indication of the needs of senior managers, and the ‘must have training for new employees’. (Edwards and Olawande, 2001: p238). They found that there were a number of factors that inhibited peoples’ ability to attend training courses. They made several criticisms of the training provision at that time including: lack of funding to run courses; non-availability of courses when required;
courses were fragmented and lacking direction; and financial restrictions and staff rotation systems which inhibited attendance at courses.

King (1996) found that records management practitioners required training in ‘managing electronic records’, ‘the role of records management within the organisation’ and ‘strategic approach to management’. Tomlin (1994) whose study focused on the north east of England found that Data Protection, archival storage, quality assurance, disaster planning and legal requirements were all highlighted as training needs. Jones (1999) indicated that managers were going to need a wide range of skills and knowledge about the management of business, information and communication technology, and interpersonal skills. Training courses would need to be established to address these needs.

Studies by Edwards (1999) and Rhys-Lewis (1997) both found that the training courses at that time were meeting the requirements of new entrants into the conservation profession.

The Archives Task Force has been asked to make recommendations and provide a framework for education, training and development within the archives sector. They are looking at training for both professional and para-professional staff, and have recommended a tiered training process.

5.3 Research findings: employers needs and the course curriculum
The present report aims to establish ways in which the education and training process can be improved, in order to increase the pool of skills available in the sector. It will also attempt to identify the most appropriate stage at which to educate/train people in specific skills such as management skills.

One of the aims of the initial questionnaire was to obtain information about what employers need from candidates being appointed to their first professional post in terms of education, skills, and personal attributes, and what their requirements were in terms of training provision for their employees. Information was sought on the match between the course curriculum and these needs, what importance was assigned to specific
personal attributes, and on where improvements could be made to the course curriculum.

5.3.1 **Course content**

The questionnaire presented respondents with a list of areas covered by the professional courses and asked them to indicate if a subject was an ‘essential’ or ‘desirable’ part of the curriculum, if it was ‘unimportant’ or something that could be left until ‘post-qualification’. A summary of their responses can be found in Table 5.1 (archivists); Table 5.2 (records managers) and Table 5.3 (conservators). These results show that the courses are providing education in line with the requirements of employers; all of the ‘core’ areas covered within the courses are classed by the majority of respondents as desirable or essential. Only a very small number of respondents rate any of these areas as ‘unimportant’ or as something that could be left to post-qualification training. This means that in terms of the core skills the professional courses are accurate in their choice of course content provision. However, when it comes to more general skills (see Table 5.4,) applicable to all 3 disciplines within the sector, there is a greater spread of answers: some subjects are seen as more important that others, for example, 38.4% of respondents rate ‘customer care’ as an essential part of the course curriculum, where as only 8.2% rate ‘web page design and authoring’ as essential. There is also much more variation in opinion about whether they should be taught/trained and at what stage.
Table 5.1  
**ARCHIVES  Practitioners view of course content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE CONTENT</th>
<th>Course Curriculum (%)</th>
<th>Post-qualification training (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and practice of archive administration (appraisal, collections management, acquisition, accessioning etc.)</td>
<td>85 (97.7)</td>
<td>2 (2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listing skills: familiarity with international archive standards and their practical application</td>
<td>81 (93.1)</td>
<td>6 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT skills: familiarity and practical experience of specialist archive software packages/use of Encoded Archival Description</td>
<td>56 (64.4)</td>
<td>29 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation skills: palaeography and diplomatic (to read and understand documents from all ages.)</td>
<td>53 (61.6)</td>
<td>30 (34.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation skills: a background knowledge of history and administration (to enable interpretation of the documents)</td>
<td>50 (58.1)</td>
<td>35 (40.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archive repository management (design, security, disaster prevention)</td>
<td>43 (49.4)</td>
<td>37 (42.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach skills (publications, dealing with different types of groups, giving talks etc.)</td>
<td>25 (28.7)</td>
<td>37 (42.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of non-traditional media (AV, film, etc.)</td>
<td>23 (26.4)</td>
<td>52 (59.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2
RECORDS MANAGEMENT: *Practitioners view of course content*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE CONTENT</th>
<th>Course Curriculum (%)</th>
<th>Post-qualification training (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and standards relating to records management</td>
<td>72 (100.0)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records audit/survey and analysis techniques</td>
<td>66 (93.0)</td>
<td>5 (7.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records organisation and retrieval techniques</td>
<td>65 (91.5)</td>
<td>6 (8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records retention management, including legal/compliance issues (Freedom of Information, Data Protection etc.)</td>
<td>64 (90.1)</td>
<td>7 (9.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing electronic records</td>
<td>57 (79.2)</td>
<td>15 (20.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records storage options and processes, including media conversion</td>
<td>51 (73.9)</td>
<td>18 (26.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records protection and disaster recovery planning</td>
<td>30 (42.3)</td>
<td>38 (53.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic management/understanding organisations</td>
<td>18 (25.3)</td>
<td>45 (63.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course content</td>
<td>Course Curriculum (%)</td>
<td>Post-qualification training (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrable skills in interventive conservation in a wide range of archive material</td>
<td>64 (97.0)</td>
<td>2 (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of assessment, analysis and conservation options prior to treatment, to include knowledge of packaging techniques</td>
<td>63 (95.5)</td>
<td>3 (4.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the composition, chemistry and factors in the deterioration of archive material</td>
<td>57 (87.7)</td>
<td>7 (10.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of issues relating to environmental conditions in strongrooms</td>
<td>56 (84.8)</td>
<td>10 (15.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of relevant standards</td>
<td>55 (84.6)</td>
<td>9 (13.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster planning</td>
<td>38 (57.6)</td>
<td>23 (34.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course content</td>
<td>Course Curriculum (%)</td>
<td>Post-qualification training (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer care</td>
<td>33 (38.4)</td>
<td>31 (36.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of electronic formats and associated skills</td>
<td>32 (37.6)</td>
<td>45 (52.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report writing</td>
<td>19 (22.1)</td>
<td>38 (44.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>18 (21.0)</td>
<td>34 (39.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff management and other personnel issues</td>
<td>12 (13.9)</td>
<td>36 (41.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising/Income Generation</td>
<td>11 (12.9)</td>
<td>29 (33.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting and financial management</td>
<td>10 (11.6)</td>
<td>31 (36.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing/public relations</td>
<td>9 (10.5)</td>
<td>39 (45.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web page design and authoring</td>
<td>7 (8.2)</td>
<td>30 (35.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The interviews and focus groups gave an opportunity to investigate a number of issues further, such as the most appropriate time to teach / train people in management skills, what changes would people like to see to the professional courses, and what training provision exists for management and leadership training.

In answer to the question about what the key issues were, opinions were wide ranging: some felt that ‘there is a huge gap between what the employers need and what the students get’ and others indicating that the courses are doing a good job under difficult circumstances and significant pressure:

‘...the one-year course is getting packed and packed with more and more every year...you come out jack-of-all-trades, master of none… that’s what it felt like’.

A number of respondents highlighted the need to focus on core skills rather than general skills:

‘I think the courses have historically had a bit of tendency to try and make sure that...people look as though they have flash got current skills... those are not core skills for the profession.’

‘My fear about the courses is that they are trying to do too much now and...they are concentrating too much on what I think are peripherals rather than core skills... things like management skills.. I would then expect an employer to offer training in those kinds of areas’.

The question of provision of management skills will be addressed in more depth below, in section 5.4.5

5.3.2 Suggested additions to the course content

The questionnaire also asked respondents to indicate if they required any additional areas to be covered by the courses. Only 16 respondents chose to indicate additional requirements or amendments. Some stated that it largely depended on the size of the organisation: smaller offices would like staff to have as wide a range as possible, including budgeting and project
management. Others emphasised the need for people to learn core skills then be trained in specifics later:

‘the course should concentrate on core professional skills since general management training is more likely to be available from employer, and will be easier for them to identify.’

Seven respondents draw attention to the need for improvements in the teaching of specific skills, which varied greatly but included:

‘conservation for archivists; digitisation and creation of other surrogates; application and interview techniques; minority archives – methods to engage marginalized communities, managing work loads and researching and writing publications.’

Four respondents highlighted the need for archivists to learn specific skills used by other professionals within the sector, such as conservation, preservation and records management.

Three respondents stressed the need for a generic understanding of the issues and organisations surrounding the archives sector, one respondent describing it thus:

‘Understanding of the archival spectrum, and the interrelationship of all the different elements (archive/records management/conservation) in ensuring appropriate preservation and accessibility…why archives matter, and the relationship to other areas of heritage and information management and use…training at this stage should be about professionalism, not about management!’

5.3.3 Personal attributes sought by employers

Respondents were asked to rate a list of specified attributes they would be looking for in candidates applying for their first professional post. They were asked to grade these as ‘very important’, ‘moderately important’ or ‘not important’. Table 5.5 shows the results and it is noticeable that the factors which score most highly all relate to interpersonal and communication skills, and enthusiasm. It is interesting to note that ‘specialist subject knowledge’
and ‘awareness of wider issues affecting the profession’ were not seen as being as important as the personal attributes.

Table 5.5

Importance Practitioners place on candidate attributes when recruiting new members of staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate attribute</th>
<th>Importance level - f (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm and interest in the job</td>
<td>88 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to communicate verbally</td>
<td>81 (92.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>79 (89.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to communicate in writing</td>
<td>77 (87.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational fit</td>
<td>54 (65.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of wider issues affecting the profession</td>
<td>40 (45.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist subject knowledge</td>
<td>20 (23.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were also given the opportunity to indicate any other factors that are important to them when looking at candidate characteristics. Table 5.6 gives a breakdown of the results. Note that as this was an additional comments section. Not all respondents chose to comment.

- The ability to work in a team was the most frequently cited quality, and was cited by 10 respondents.
- Nine respondents highlighted flexibility and adaptability. These include a willingness to try new things, take on new challenges, and the ability to perform a range of physical and intellectual tasks

  ‘Adaptability; willingness to take on new challenges; thorough and wide-ranging understanding of archive/RM/conservation (depending on post applied for) principles and techniques – i.e. ability to hit the ground running wherever they are placed in the organisation’.
• Various factors relating to the ability to think in a particular way and their general intelligence were emphasised by 9 respondents as important:


• Six respondents indicated that they would look for the ability to manage workloads effectively and organisational skills. Typical comments include: ‘Ability to work to targets and to deliver’, ‘Time management, organisation skills’.

• Smaller numbers of respondents highlighted a variety of additional areas, ranging from the Ability to work alone and take responsibility for the safe running of archive premises when alone’, physical fitness, lack of professional snobbery, persistence and ability to work under pressure. Some responses were purely subjective, such as ‘sense of humour’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team work</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility / adaptability</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellect / thought process</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management / organisation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of humour</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can work unsupervised / independently</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically capable of doing the job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management potential</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional snobbery</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work under pressure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factors (mentioned by 1 respondent)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.4 Alternative methods of course delivery

Due to the difficulties faced by the education providers in term of increasing course content, the limited capacity to increase numbers and the overall fall in
the numbers of those applying for the traditional full time Masters courses, respondents were asked about possible ways of overcoming these problems. Some of the ideas put forward include:

- Increased specialisation through a modular course format. Some respondents felt that it was no longer necessary ‘to train everybody to meet that range of requirements... we can begin to develop career paths for people that perhaps potentially take them beyond the boundaries of the traditional archives world if that’s where they want to go’ and that it might be necessary to revisit the idea of what are the core skills:
  ‘…the old core skills are going to be crucial but it may actually be that some of those become more options on the course... employers… may need to specify...So if somebody hasn’t actually done those specifically as part of their postgraduate training, …we don’t want them for that job.’

- Given the specific problems with recruitment in the records management field, it was suggested that the training ought to be developed as a separate specialise. The quote is included in full, as it raises a crucial issue:
  ‘…a lot of the people who find themselves in records management jobs, trained as archivists in the broader sense and end up in records management because that’s where the jobs are and where the money is…and I do actually wonder whether we shouldn’t be trying to adopt rather different strategies to train people for the two professions… I just wonder whether we shouldn’t be seeking to develop the two things more separately than they are at the moment.’

- A two-year Masters course combining education and practical training. Many saw this as the ideal solution, but were realistic enough to realise that with continued cutbacks in bursaries available, the increasing levels of student debt and the poor salary levels, it was probably not going to be the way forward. The following quotes summed up the general view:
‘...which would I think, be hard to do, given the salary levels, would be to extend the length of the course and maybe break it up, so more work placements...But I mean, it comes down to people are not getting paid enough, so they’re not going to risk spending that kind of money on a course.’

‘I don’t think it is realistic to extend a full time course to more than a year because of the financial implications of that for the students.’

- The importance of distance learning courses, with the following quotes summing up general enthusiasm for this as a way forward:

  ‘I think distance learning is...opening the career up to a lot of people who can’t simply afford to do the year.’

  ‘I have no particular doubt at the moment, about the value of the distance learning courses that the universities are running’.

The withdrawal of the distance learning diploma course offered by the Society of Archivists was not seen as likely to have a major impact on the sector, due to the course at Aberystwyth coming on stream. Some respondents believed that the higher cost of doing this university based course would make it difficult for some employers to support staff.

- The creation of an undergraduate course was raised but was not regarded with much enthusiasm, although some felt that ‘we need to give serious consideration to offering joint honours courses at undergraduate level, which includes an element of archives, as a way of bringing people into the archives world earlier.’

  ‘...one problem in archives at the minute, is that virtually nobody comes from a non-arts background... the range of experience people bring to their archive post graduate course is often really pretty limited.’

The general consensus was that it was ‘over-the-top to a certain extent, and also it then limits someone’s future prospects’, while one respondent felt that,
‘I can see that you could build into a three-year undergraduate degree programme all the things that are currently taught in a postgraduate master’s degree…’

Interestingly, when asked within the ‘recruitment’ section of the questionnaire, if they appointed people without the postgraduate qualification, a number of respondents indicated that they had found ways round the shortage of professionally qualified staff. This issue was probed further to see if they thought employees needed to be educated to Masters level. By far the majority of respondents then indicated that they wanted staff with a Masters qualification or equivalent and were ‘quite keen to keep the existing levels of qualification’ although the following respondent believed that graduate level was the important factor:

‘…it embodies levels of understanding about the context of the work and about an understanding of the wider parameters and absolute principles which affect the work which I think is the kind of thing…that comes with…graduate level. Whether it needs to be formally a postgraduate profession is another question …I think it is a postgraduate profession only because we have got ourselves locked into you do a year for a higher level of qualification after you’ve graduated from University’.

While it could be argued that this, and other comments indicated a favourable response to the idea of undergraduate courses, the majority favoured the status quo, and saw the increased provision of distance learning courses as being the way forward.

5.3.5 Communication between employers and the courses

Within the interviews respondents were asked about their current contact with the professional course providers. Not surprisingly there was a mixed amount of contact, where it did occur most of it was through informal links and personal relationships. Many indicated the need for more formal communication to ensure that there was better understanding of what employers wanted and needed.
‘...it may be that the training courses actually need more information on the current state of the job market. ...they could actually be adjusting...to what might be a more appropriate skills set for the way the jobs market was going. So if there was greater emphasis on records management ...they should actually be trying to roll a bit more of that into the training of the archivists...So I think they need to be keeping an eye on current developments. But how much flexibility they have got over changing the course curriculum I don’t know…’

5.3.6 Level of pre course experience necessary

One of the areas which has become an issue in relation to career choice and barriers to entry was the length of pre-course training. (see also section 3.4.5) Employers were asked about the length of training they believed to be necessary. There were wide ranging opinions about this, and this was often mediated by the time that the employers themselves had spent doing pre-course training as this quote illustrates:

‘...when I went train on the archive course I had been in a record office for approximately half an hour… I don’t think I was any worse as an archivist for not having clocked up a huge number of hours... Somebody will make more of half a day than somebody else will make of six months.’

‘...I would like to see more paid places...the majority of the paid places are within business.... there are very few of them in local government or in universities...there really ought to be more ...you are expecting people to do it on a voluntary basis and they just can’t afford to do it’

‘I see no point at all in making it harder... I think the level of experience just needs to be sufficient for them to understand what they’re getting into.’

‘The issue of the degree of pre-course experience needs to be reviewed but, that’s an issue where the training providers really are ...best placed knowing what the issues and pressures are...But ...we should be trying to avoid unnecessary barriers to entrants…’

It was generally agreed that the question of pre-course experience needed to be reviewed.
5.4 Research findings: training and development
The area of employers’ needs was explored further in relation to training and development.

5.4.1 Immediate training needs
Respondents were asked to indicate their top three training need over the next two years. This is summarised in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7
Training needs highlighted by practitioners as important to their organisation over the next two years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>FIRST CHOICE</th>
<th>SECOND CHOICE</th>
<th>THIRD CHOICE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITC</td>
<td>30 (33.4)</td>
<td>7 (7.8)</td>
<td>8 (9.0)</td>
<td>45 (50.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General skills</td>
<td>7 (7.8)</td>
<td>16 (18)</td>
<td>19 (21.3)</td>
<td>42 (47.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Records</td>
<td>17 (19.1)</td>
<td>7 (7.8)</td>
<td>9 (10.1)</td>
<td>33 (37.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation – e.g. freedom of information</td>
<td>7 (7.8)</td>
<td>16 (18)</td>
<td>9 (10.1)</td>
<td>32 (36.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation / preservation</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>14 (15.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core skills</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>7 (7.8)</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
<td>14 (15.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format of training</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>10 (11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records management</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>5 (5.6)</td>
<td>8 (9.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Inclusion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
<td>7 (7.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross domain training</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>5 (5.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff appraisal / CPD</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>6 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster planning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitisation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• With 45 (50.6%) of respondents highlighting Information and Communication Technology (ICT) it was the most frequently cited training need. The level of ICT training specified varied: some organisations required basic training and other having more specific needs such as ‘IT developments, connecting EAD to other resources, e.g. authority record database and subject database, and digitising material to increase access’ or ‘interoperability issues – metadata stuff, EAD.’
• 33 (37.1%) of respondents indicated training in electronic records to be one of the most important areas. The majority simply indicated the need for training in ‘electronic records management’, but some did elaborate ‘Electronic records – all aspects (management, preservation, access etc.), Appraisal and preservation of electronic records.’

• 32 (36%) respondents highlighted legislation. Some indicated a general need for training regarding legislation, while others referred specifically to the Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act, and copyright legislation. Some respondents indicated a need for training on what impact it will have on the service they provide and on their staff members.

• Conservation issues were highlighted by 14 (15.7%) respondents, several specifically linking this to the preservation of electronic records, while others had other specific needs, such as ‘training in order to undertake a conservation survey, or ‘storage of magnetic media; conservation of negatives.”’

• 14 (15.7%) respondents indicated a need to update the core skills within their organisation. The term core skills is used here to refer to knowledge/skills that you would expect a recent graduate to possess or something that would be learned over time on-the-job, such as ‘the organisation of large quantities or archives’ or ‘cataloguing skills (ongoing and permanently important)’

• 8 (9%) respondents expressed a need for training in records management but did not specify this further.

• A further 7 (7.8%) indicated training needs on social inclusion issues, including access, increasing awareness, and recognising changing needs ‘social inclusion – changing population of the city – making services relevant’.’
5 (5.5%) respondents emphasised the need for training to facilitate better understanding of libraries and museums and the skills used within them. Secondment / exchanges were also mentioned within which professionals could work within libraries or museums to get a better understanding of these areas.

6 (6.6%) respondents indicated a need for training in staff performance and development, including staff appraisal, performance management, and CPD.

3 (3.3%) respondents specifically indicated a need for training in disaster planning and management and a further 3 indicated a need for training on digitisation, including image capture, management and preservation.

Although no responses were coded under the category of 'knowledge of electronic formats and associated skills' it should be noted that some of the responses coded under electronic records, digitisation, and ICT could overlap with this category. It was felt to be more useful to categorise this information separately.

A large number of respondents indicated the need for training in ‘general skills’. This coding category ‘general skills’ has been used here to refer to the skills that employers’ thought should be included within the educational courses, which underlines their importance. Percentages of respondents citing a need for training are given in brackets after the topics, which include: staff management and other personnel issues such as leadership development, job evaluation, team building, and effective consultation (16.9%); marketing/public relations (7.8%); project management (5.6%); customer care (10.1%); fundraising/income generation (5.6%); and web page design and authoring (1.1%). Neither budgeting and financial management nor report writing were cited as a need by any of the respondents.
Although the information gained in the course of the research in relation to these general skills does demonstrate the necessity for acquiring competencies in these areas, it has not been possible to determine at which point it is thought most appropriate to teach/train people in these.

5.4.2 Strategic approaches to training

In the training literature great emphasis is placed on the need to plan training strategically. In order to assess the extent to which organisations were doing this, in the interviews respondents were asked about the objectives of training within their organisation. It became apparent that many organisations were using a strategic approach to training by looking for skills gaps:

‘Ours are to equip people to meet the changing challenges that we face in our work...we want training and development closely related to what the department is attempting to achieve’.

Others used training to ‘help the organisation reach its objectives. …Once we have identified our strategy we are keen to ensure that people get the appropriate training in order to meet those objectives.’ Many used an appraisal system to identify personal needs, as illustrated by the following quotes:

‘Very rigorous appraisal and performance development plan system ….the training is then built into the following year’s personal development plan …we will try and develop people in areas where they are lacking, and that’s not just archival skills.’

‘...in archives we recognise that there is a significant role for CPD in terms of developing people’s career potential and I would be very supportive of people who wish to take those opportunities…within the financial constraints upon us...’

The findings of the questionnaire found wide use of appraisal, though not all organisations were as structured in their approach, with some being more ‘ad-hoc’ as shown by this respondent ‘I don’t think our training and development is really very focussed. We tend to do it on a fairly ad hoc basis.’
5.4.3 Types of training and CPD used within the sector

Respondents were asked about their organisation’s use of training and Continuous Professional Development. The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate what use their organisations made of the different training providers and how they rated them in terms of importance. Their responses are summarised in Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10. A large majority of respondents indicated that their organisation used ‘in house courses’ (74 or 91.4%) and ‘on the job training’ (73 or 91.4%). These forms of training were rated as important or very important by most respondents. A large proportion also indicated that their organisation carried out induction training (57 or 70.4%), this was also confirmed in the interviews (see also section 5 ‘Retention, career aspirations and opportunities). This form of training was also rated as important or very important by the majority of respondents. ‘Self learning packages’ were not as widely used within the sector with only 35 (43.7%) of respondents indicating that their organisation used them. There was also a wider spread of opinion in terms of their perceived importance, with respondents more likely to categorise them as unimportant rather than important.

Respondents were also asked about their use of external training providers. The Society of Archivists and the Records Management Society were both rated as important training providers, with the Society of Archivists being much more widely used with 68 (84.0%) of organisations having used them over the last 12 months compared to 21 (29.6%) for the Records Management Society. Although private training consultancies and ‘other organisations’ were rated as unimportant by most respondents nearly a third of organisations (32.4%) had used them within the last twelve months.

Respondents were asked about the importance and usage of a number of aspects of Continuous Professional Development. Staff appraisal was the most highly rated method followed by a structured programme of CPD before and after registration. Mentoring and Coaching were rated as important but not as important as the previous aspects. National Vocational Qualifications and Investors in People were rated as unimportant. It should be noted that
the importance ratings did not always directly correlate with the usage patterns. Staff appraisal was widely used (88.3%), almost a half of organisations used IIP (46.7%), structured CPD for registration (45.7%), coaching (44.1), and mentoring (41.7%). Structured CPD post registration was only used by 19 (27.5%) of organisations, which does not reflect its high importance rating.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of training and development</th>
<th>Frequency of importance rating (%)</th>
<th>Use within the last 12 months (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unimportant 1 2 3 4 Very important 5</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In house courses</td>
<td>3 (3.6) 3 (3.6) 24 (28.6) 17 (20.2) 37 (44.0)</td>
<td>74 (91.4) 7 (8.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>2 (2.4) 1 (1.2) 7 (8.2) 10 (11.8) 65 (76.4)</td>
<td>73 (90.1) 8 (9.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self learning packages</td>
<td>12 (14.5) 21 (25.3) 35 (42.2) 12 (14.5) 3 (3.5)</td>
<td>35 (43.7) 45 (56.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction training</td>
<td>4 (4.7) 7 (8.2) 14 (16.5) 18 (21.2) 42 (49.4)</td>
<td>57 (70.4) 24 (29.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.9

Importance and usage patterns for different aspects of External Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of training and development</th>
<th>Frequency of importance rating (%)</th>
<th>Use within the last 12 months (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society of Archivists</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records Management Society</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private training or Consultancy e.g. TFPL</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 (16.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organisations e.g. CILIP (Library Association)</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 (15.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.10

*Importance and usage patterns for different aspects of Continuing Professional Development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of training and development</th>
<th>Frequency of importance rating (%)</th>
<th>Use within the last 12 months (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Vocational Qualifications</td>
<td>30 (39.0)</td>
<td>14 (18.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investors in People scheme</td>
<td>22 (27.8)</td>
<td>12 (15.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured CPD for registration</td>
<td>5 (6.6)</td>
<td>5 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured CPD after registration</td>
<td>5 (6.7)</td>
<td>9 (12.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>7 (9.1)</td>
<td>6 (7.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>8 (11.1)</td>
<td>8 (11.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Appraisal</td>
<td>2 (2.4)</td>
<td>6 (7.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.4 Use of CPD within the sector

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their organisations use of CPD. This was so widely referred to within the interviews and focus groups it has been highlighted separately. A number of themes emerged. Respondents expressed a need for a structured approach to CPD which encouraged people to develop after formal qualification and registration ‘there’s a growing realisation that it’s important and will become more important as time goes on’.

‘I do feel that a number of the management areas can be addressed by employers and other archival skills …should be addressed through CPD.’

This would need to be overseen and coordinated for the whole sector, and there were suggestions as to how this could be done:

‘I would like there to be more of a sort of national oversight of what the needs of the profession as a whole are, and more encouragement…for significant employers to play their role in ensuring that their workforce is skilled to the appropriate standards…I think that’s a role, which…a sector skills council type body could potentially fulfil, Resource, potentially could play a part.’

Some respondents went further and indicated that sanctions needed to be applied to those who did not develop themselves. ‘…until continuing professional development kicks in fully and…becomes mandatory, there’s an awful lot of people who make no…effort to keep up to date with the newer demands of the profession’.

‘Continuing professional development is really very important, but there also needs to be some form of sanction applied to it. It’s not going to be enough for it to be voluntary…We now actually have in our job description that we are looking for somebody who has got a commitment to their own continuing professional development …whether its conservators, archivists or records managers… We want to create a sort of learning culture within the record offices.’

This corresponds to the questionnaire findings which found that respondents rated CPD for and after registration as important. This is somewhat
contradicted in reality: there is still some controversy about the value of registration, and many opt not to enrol in the scheme, particularly records managers. The model currently being used by conservators should be looked at as a possible way forward.

5.4.5 Management training

Management skills are a contentious issue within the archives sector. Within the questionnaire it became apparent there was divergent opinion about the necessity of teaching management skills as part of the Masters course. Yet at the same time, they were highlighted as important training needs by questionnaire respondents. Wide ranging opinions emerged in the interviews and focus groups, with some respondents indicating that such training is a waste of time within the educational courses and others indicating the need to tackle them at this point. Some respondents strongly emphasised that it is an employers responsibility to train their staff in management skills ‘Employers often complain that they employ someone then have to train them…but that's how it should be!’ and questioned whether people did in reality end up working in isolation and thus needing the skills from the outset. Yet examples were found of people who had recently qualified and who did not feel they had been given the training / education they needed within their employment. The following quotes illustrate the range of opinions:

‘It’s got to focus on the professional needs… They are either going to have the spark… if fostered and if trained they will thrive in that direction. But they will learn that in the workplace and they will learn through the training, generally provided by their employer. It’s the core professional skills that are really the fundamental thing …there’s no time to waste on teaching them things that they will either pick up in the workplace or now realistically they should have picked up already’.

‘I do not think the courses should be attempting to become introduction to junior management courses or to providing and significant level of what they believe to be management training… I just want people to come off the course aware that there is such a thing as management and that it is something you can be trained in… there is no such thing as a one man band archivist. Archivists always work for somebody.’
‘I also need management skills, I need skills in how to write tenders and briefs and dealing with policy and strategy and they didn’t come really through on the archives course.’

‘s...some of my friends who came off the course went in and were straight first time archivist positions- they ended up setting up a service- writing all the policies… a job that’s really quite high level, requires a lot of understanding and knowledge.’

In order for the education providers to ‘drop’ management skills from their curriculum, no matter at how basic a level they are taught, the sector would need to demonstrate that it was capable of providing the training necessary for people to develop these competencies. With this in mind in the interviews respondents were asked about the provision of management and leadership training within their organisation. From this it became apparent that the provision varied greatly. Some organisations provided comprehensive management and leadership training for all levels of staff:

‘To a certain extent a lot of that is already provided by your host institution depending on how good and thoughtful an employer they are and how much money they have got to spend. But certainly I would expect to get managerial supervisory training...’

‘...an organisation like this has training courses in place...Increasingly it is now being seen as leadership rather than managerialism...There is obviously a training and development strategy...written down for the whole of the organisation...’

‘...in the culture change environment they need leadership they don’t just need management... leadership seems preferable to management, but you are obviously going to need a set of management skills as apposed to the ability of leadership...there are some things that are just training you about process so you know as a manager how to apply the process. Whereas other things are...about personal qualities...’

Others did not have any form of management training programme, as this quote shows ‘that just doesn’t happen here. And I think that’s a reflection of the local authority area, which is not good at this.’
A need was also expressed for external training to address management and leadership skills specifically for archives professionals and heritage professionals, with some seeing such training as an opportunity for cross sectoral working:

‘I think there may be scope within the archives world to develop more sector-based opportunities for leadership. The museums profession have been offering serious leadership courses for some time so I think it will be interesting to explore whether you could look at something similar for Archivists and Records Managers’

‘I think there is a real need...for a course, which is specifically geared to management for archivists or management for heritage professionals perhaps more broadly. I am aware of the sort of leadership development course that UEA run for museums staff. That sounds like a very good opportunity and I would love to think that there could be something similar for archivists or something...of that kind to which archivists could go along with other heritage professionals.’

From this it can be seen that there is very mixed provision in terms of management and leadership training. For the professional courses to been in a position to drop management training employers would need to take more responsibility for this.

### 5.4.6 Constraints on training

Within the interviews respondents were asked a number of questions about constraints on the training provision within their organisation. Some organisations were able to justify most training even if it was not directly related to the job. Some had budgets, but could not find appropriate training courses, particularly in specialist media.

‘I would say to a certain extent we’re more constrained by the fact that suitable courses are not available as opposed to not having the money’. Major constraints were mostly financial and service driven as illustrated by the following quotes;

‘A major constraint is making sure that that basic work is done. …having to maintain our basic core service…funding is always a constraint and in some offices the resources in terms of things like technology will be a constraint.’
‘...we do have a dedicated training budget… the bigger constraint is… the time out of the office, and the time away from core activities...’

‘One of the things that’s noticeable is that you quite often hear of training events being cancelled because there has been insufficient take up…There are just not enough organisations …in a position to free up staff to go …they may well be the ones who need the skills most desperately, but are in the worst position to actually release anybody to attend.’

They were also asked about how they prioritised training. Some replied that ‘We focus most of that training on junior professional staff and staff in areas which are undergoing change and development’ while others admitted to adopting a more pragmatic approach ’…we look at what the course content is and who the person, who is proposing to go on it is and …bluntly, how likely they are to stay with the organisation - we are to get benefit from them, and we make decisions accordingly.”

In one case ‘There is a different set of problems which is people who don’t want to go... for some of them that is more than they are prepared to do’.

These financial and service driven constraints would obviously affect the ability of people to become involved in any enhanced, far less mandatory programme of CPD whether before or after registration

5.5 Key points emerging from the research

- Overall it can be seen that the Universities are quite successfully meeting the needs of the market. There is recognition that they are in a difficult position, with an ever increasing demand to add to the course content and only a limited scope to do so.

- A number of options were discussed for changing the way education is currently provided. These included moving to a two year qualification which combined education and training, and the possibility of the courses becoming more specialist than generalist. There was some enthusiasm for the two-year model, but recognition that funding would make this very
difficult. Extension of the provision of distance learning course was welcomed, but with some concern voiced at the costs. There was little enthusiasm for the idea of an undergraduate course.

- Within the combined archives and records management courses there has been some criticism that there needs to be an increase in the records management content. The majority of students on these courses wish to become archivists and it has been argued there is only limited exposure to records management. There is a need to investigate this apparent lack of enthusiasm for records management.

- There is not a great deal of difference between what employers and educators believe to be key skills. There is agreement that the core subjects are being covered within the archives courses. However, due to the increasing rate of change within the sector there is a need to keep the course content under review. There is also a need to improve the communication between educators, trainers and employers to ensure that the needs of the sector continue to be met effectively.

- The main difference of opinion occurs in relation to education/training in management skills. The educators include differing amounts of management skills within their courses, and see this as responding to the needs of the sector. Within the sector there are differences of opinion between managers as the following comments illustrate

  ‘...the courses...are trying to do too much now...I mean things like management skills…I would...expect an employer to offer training in those kind of areas…I feel that time would be better spent in learning core skills...courses are trying to be all things to all people...’

  ‘...the management skills side it's difficult...a lot of jobs...are looking for people who...have some management responsibility…I do feel that that could be addressed more because inevitably at professional level you're going to come into some kind of management responsibility.’
However the experience from other related professions suggests that management needs to be included in the course curricula.

- The use of appraisal and a strategic approach to training appears to be widely practiced within the archives sector.

- Training provision across the sector varies greatly, depending on the organisation, size of department, funding and location of office. Many respondents, cited problems such as funding and the location of courses. Key training issues were identified as, electronic records, ICT, legislation such as Freedom of Information and data protection.

- The main strengths of the sector relate to the ability of most archive professionals to draw on numerous sources of internal training. Many organisations also have a structured and strategic approach to training. The main problems faced by people wishing to go on courses is the limited availability of courses available for some specialist skills, the location of courses (and therefore the distance that people need to travel to obtain it, and problems arranging cover when staff go on courses.)

5.6 Recommendations

- There is one major recommendation arising from this section of the report:

It is vital to establish a group consisting of representatives of the relevant associations, the course directors, the employers and other interested bodies such as Resource. To address the following issues:

- If the current model of a full time Masters course is to continue to be the main route of entry into the profession, then decisions have to be made on what core competencies can be taught within the year and what should be left to CPD.
• How to ensure that these are regularly reviewed to take account of the changing needs and demands of the sector, and ensure that the employers and the courses are looking for the same set of skills and attributes. What should the parameters of pre-course experience be? Should the employers be encouraged to provide paid traineeships?

• How can records management best be promoted to students? Should students opt to specialise? Should archives and records management continue to be taught together?

• How to ensure that employers take more responsibility for post qualification training for their employees, in order to ensure that no-one is at a disadvantage.

• How to persuade the sector as a whole of the value of a career long approach to CPD. Should it be mandatory? Could this ever be enforced? How can recognition for achievements through CPD be acknowledged and rewarded? The model currently used by conservators might offer a useful starting point for discussion.

• How to best deliver training for specific skills (e.g. management), whether specifically to archives or cross sectorally

• How to ensure equitable access to training in terms of location. What should be the role of the regional agencies in delivery of training?

In addition, an up to date, easily available database of training providers needs to be established, and consideration given to ways of facilitating provision of parts of the Masters courses on a modular basis, which would provide a core of the training needs.
CHAPTER 6 RETENTION, CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The themes of retention, and career aspirations and opportunities will both be covered in this section. Literature on the subject of retention indicates that one of the major factors to influence retention is the opportunity that people have for promotion and development, and that there has to be a structured approach to development (Harrison, 2000) As the research progressed it became apparent that this was true of the archives sector, and it was felt that the two themes should be dealt with together.

6.1 Background
It is important for an organisation to understand why employees leave, if they want to reduce staff turnover. (Youngblood and Williams, 1998). Butler and Waldroop (1999) noted that numerous gifted professionals leave organisations because employers do not appreciate that the psychology of work satisfaction is important. It is assumed that there is a link between excelling in a job and being happy in a job, though this is not necessarily the case. Replacing staff can be very expensive, but there are also additional consequences. There can be an adverse impact on the effectiveness of an organisation as staff take irretrievable and critical knowledge with them. This may be particularly true of the archives sector, as over time professionals gain a substantial and often irreplaceable understanding of the collections within their office.

Although it is often assumed that staff turnover in fundamentally bad, certain forms of turnover have benefits for an organisation (Youngblood and Williams, 1998). Dalton, Krackhardt, and Porter (1981) have distinguished between dysfunctional turnover (when a valued employee leaves) and functional turnover (when someone who is not valued leaves). The turnover / retention literature and the influence of career opportunities within this brings up a number of issues of relevance to the archives sector. It may be possible to evaluate how successful the archive sector’s approach to retention is by assessing the extent to which it is in line with known methods for reducing staff turnover.
Recently Davies (2001) reviewed and summarised the key factors that aid staff retention. In this article he summarised nine factors that that can improve staff retention. These include:

- **Thinking about retention before the employee starts work** – make sure that the factors that can aid retention are organised before a person starts e.g. that meetings with key people are arranges before they arrive.
- **Make sure pay is competitive** – this needs to be in line with the going rate in the marketplace and in line with individuals belief about what they are worth.
- **Trying to create a feeling of belonging in the employee** – pay is only one factor that keeps people in a particular job, and friendships can be very important. New employees can be supported by a ‘buddy’ who can make them feel welcome. Welcome packs which include recent news letters, pre arranged meetings with colleagues, and informal lunches can also help people feel welcome.
- **Preventing ‘information overload’** – formal induction programmes should wait until the employee has had a few weeks to establish themselves in their new role. The whole induction process should be planned out for the employee.
- **Development planning** – after a time new employees development can level off. Development planning should be used to prevent this. Once enough evidence has been created about this employees commitment and potential, training and development opportunities can be established. This process must involve consultation between the employee and employer in order to balance what will be rewarding for the individual and meet the strategic needs of the organisation.
- **Mentoring** – after the initial induction period an experienced mentor (not one of the employees line managers) should be assigned to each employee. This provides the employee with someone to talk to and make sense of the organisation.
- **Further assignments / extended role** – once the new employee is confident in their new role they should be given the opportunity to take on
further assignments. By providing employees with ‘challenging and intrinsically interesting’ work motivation will be increased.

- **Flexible approach to employees** – it is argued that job satisfaction is linked to each employees individual lifestyle in addition to the nature of the job. Firms now offer numerous flexible working packages, and these practices are said to improve commitment, adaptability and resilience.

- **Values** – values are a major motivational influence, and unlike goals are relatively stable. It has been found that the majority of people will consider rejecting a job if they don’t believe its values are congruent with their own.

From this it may also be possible to make suggestions about how turnover could be minimised in the archive sector. From anecdotal evidence it has been ascertained that functional turnover may not be occurring, which is also leading to problems. This issue will need to be evaluated further.

The problem of stagnation (i.e. people saying in the same post for long periods of time) within the archive sector was raised by many respondents, and the reasons for this were investigated. The major problem is that there are no statistics for turnover within the sector, so much of the evidence is anecdotal.

### 6.2 Research findings

The research questions were designed to assess the extent to which the archives sector is attempting to address the factors which can limit / promote staff turnover and minimise ‘stagnation’.

#### 6.2.1 Is there a problem?

Retention is an interesting issue within the archive sector because there are wide ranging opinions about whether the number of people leaving the sector does constitute a problem or whether more problems are caused by negative retention and stagnation. As there are no statistics yet available in relation to this, this section is somewhat speculative. That said, if the issues highlighted in this section are not causing significant numbers of people to leave the sector they are at least a cause of great dissatisfaction and for that reason
need to be addressed. It is also apparent that there are numerous factors highlighted by the literature which are relevant to the archives sector, for example, the limited opportunities for career progression. (Butler and Waldroop, 1999)

Matters dealt with in the questionnaire included: the duration that people were likely to stay within their first professional post; reasons for vacancies to occur what factors could help reduce staff turnover, and whether, as with the public libraries, one of the problems is that of an ageing workforce. Within the interviews and focus groups these issues were explored further. Initially respondents were asked to give their opinions about retention in the archives sector. They were asked further about the causal factors of staff turnover and what factors reduced turnover. They were also asked to think about ways of improving career opportunities within the sector. Respondents were asked about induction, mentoring and career development schemes within their organisation.

6.2.2 Negative and positive retention
Two different perspectives were clearly identified in relation to retention in the archives sector. The first indicates that there is a retention problem and that an increasing number of people are leaving the archives profession.

‘...there seems to be some evidence...that more people are leaving the profession than was formally the case, largely...because they are dissatisfied. It is not delivering the career that they wanted and expected, when they entered the profession, in one way or another’.

The opposite view is that people are not leaving the profession, and that the problem is one of stagnation and negative retention

‘I personally think that it is actually stagnating in a job is...the problem’.
We have a difficulty with people actually wanting to move on and develop when they can’t develop any further in the organisation...a large organisation can be a comfortable home to stay in.’

’. I think what tends to happen more is that people tend to get stuck and lose interest in the sector and just do the jobs for longer than they really should do.’

Other respondents took the view that rapid staff turnover in itself could be negative, while there were advantages in having stable staff, allowing strong teams to be built.

‘...There seems to be a lot of hopping about which is very disruptive for the office itself because of the hiatus when someone moves and then someone new comes in and there’s a period of training while they come up to speed.’

‘The length of time people is here means that we build up very strong and a very supportive team.’

The ideal solution both for the individual and the service seems to be striking a balance between stability and stagnation.

‘ You don’t want rapid turnover to the point where the organisation can’t cope with it. But...I don’t think a member of staff should be in a particular grade for more than 5 years. If they are, then there’s something wrong.’

6.2.3 Age profile of the sector

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate how many of their staff were due to retire in the next five years. The results are shown in Table 6.1, from which it can be seen that organisations will loose an average of approximately 0.5 staff due to retirement over the next five years and of 96.23% of staff who retire will be replaced. Although in individual departments with a predominantly older workforce there may be problems caused by staff retirement it does not appear to be a major issue for the sector as a whole.
Table 6.1
Total number and mean number of people due to retire per organisation in the next 5 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of people due to retire each year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.4 Length of time in first professional post

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate how long they expected people to stay in their first professional post. The results can be seen in Table 6.2. The majority of practitioners expect people to stay in their first professional post for 2 (30.3%) or 3 years (30.3%). A small number of practitioners expected people to stay in their first post between a year and 18 months (5.6%), and no practitioners expected people to stay in their first post for less than a year. About a fifth (21.3%) of practitioners expected people to stay in their first professional post for more than 3 years. However, it should be noted that a person’s first professional post may be temporary and the time they stay will therefore be determined by the duration of the contract rather than other factors.

Table 6.2
Average length of time that an employee would be expected to stay in their first professional post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of time</th>
<th>f (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than a year</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A year to 18 months</td>
<td>5 (5.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 2 years</td>
<td>27 (30.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 3 years</td>
<td>27 (30.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 3 years</td>
<td>19 (21.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing data</td>
<td>11 (12.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5 Why and at what stage people leave

Respondents were first asked to rate the reasons why people left their organisation, scoring eight reasons from most frequent (score 1) to least frequent (score 8). The results are shown in Table 6.3. The lowest mean score indicates the most frequent reason for people leaving. It can be seen that by far the most frequent reason cited for someone leaving an organisation is ‘movement to another repository’, followed by ‘retirement’. Other reasons were less frequently cited.
### Table 6.3

**Main reasons why vacancies occur in the sector**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Most important</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Least important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement to other repository</td>
<td>34 (57.6)</td>
<td>9 (15.3)</td>
<td>6 (10.2)</td>
<td>1 (1.7)</td>
<td>6 (10.2)</td>
<td>1 (1.7)</td>
<td>1 (1.7)</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>11 (20.9)</td>
<td>12 (22.6)</td>
<td>4 (7.5)</td>
<td>7 (13.2)</td>
<td>4 (7.5)</td>
<td>2 (3.8)</td>
<td>5 (9.4)</td>
<td>8 (15.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of new post</td>
<td>8 (16.3)</td>
<td>13 (26.5)</td>
<td>9 (18.4)</td>
<td>5 (10.2)</td>
<td>4 (8.2)</td>
<td>4 (8.2)</td>
<td>3 (6.1)</td>
<td>3 (6.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal promotion</td>
<td>5 (10.4)</td>
<td>5 (10.4)</td>
<td>12 (25.0)</td>
<td>11 (22.9)</td>
<td>3 (6.3)</td>
<td>5 (10.4)</td>
<td>1 (2.1)</td>
<td>6 (12.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal reasons</td>
<td>5 (10.3)</td>
<td>11 (22.4)</td>
<td>10 (20.4)</td>
<td>6 (12.2)</td>
<td>4 (8.2)</td>
<td>7 (14.3)</td>
<td>3 (6.1)</td>
<td>3 (6.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructuring</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
<td>4 (10.3)</td>
<td>3 (7.7)</td>
<td>9 (23.1)</td>
<td>6 (15.4)</td>
<td>3 (7.7)</td>
<td>6 (15.4)</td>
<td>7 (17.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement outside archive / information work</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
<td>4 (10.0)</td>
<td>2 (5.0)</td>
<td>3 (7.5)</td>
<td>6 (15.0)</td>
<td>7 (17.5)</td>
<td>8 (20.0)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement to other information sector</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
<td>2 (5.0)</td>
<td>8 (20.0)</td>
<td>3 (7.5)</td>
<td>4 (10.0)</td>
<td>7 (17.5)</td>
<td>6 (15.0)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked at what stage of their careers staff usually left their organisation, many respondents answered this in a somewhat roundabout manner, highlighting both a number of reasons and the career stage at which employees tend to leave. Responses can be seen in Table 6.4

Table 6.4
*Reasons why people leave the organisation or professions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason / career stage that people leave the organisation / profession</th>
<th>f (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typical length of time that people stay in post</td>
<td>20 (22.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career progression</td>
<td>17 (19.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay a long time</td>
<td>16 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not possible to generalise</td>
<td>12 (13.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>10 (11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family / Relationship / Personal</td>
<td>9 (10.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>7 (7.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed term contracts</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two types of staff</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Rather than stipulating a specific reason for staff moving on, 20 (22.5%) respondents indicated the typical duration or time that people stay in their organisation which varied from ‘a year to 18 months’ to ‘33 years’, with the large majority of responses between 2 and 5 years.

- Career progression was the second most frequently cited reason for people leaving an organisation, with 17 (19.1%) of respondents indicating this as an important factor. More specifically, stated reasons were limited internal promotion, the desire to have more responsibility and the need to obtain a higher salary:

- A large number of respondents (18%) indicated that people generally stayed for a long time within their organisation, ‘Very low turnover. Senior archivists have been in both posts for 30+ years, and 2 out of the 3 archivists look set to stay indefinitely.’

- One respondent indicated that this could be a problem, indicating that the problem in the sector was indeed one of stagnation.
Many never do… which is a problem in itself! I think the (over) retention problem for us is due to the career progression scheme…”

- 12 (13.5%) respondents indicated that there was too much variation between employees to generalise or they did not feel in a position to generalise about when employees typically leave the organisation.

- Personal commitments were indicated as a reason for leaving by nine respondents. These included family/childcare commitments, relocation, and relocation to follow a better-paid partner.
  
  ‘…to care for children following maternity leave (we have more female than male archivists and the males tend to stay).’
  
  ‘…personal factors require them to move (they are rarely the principal breadwinner).’

- Seven (7.9%) respondents indicated that employees typically left their organisation due to retirement. On the whole most respondents simply indicated ‘Retirement’ although there was some indication that this might be changing.
  
  ‘Unusually, most people here stay on till retirement though this is beginning to change now. It is a reflection of our privilege to work … with such an outstanding collection.’

- Surprisingly, fixed term contracts were cited by only six (6.7%) respondents as a factor which determines employees’ length of stay within their organisation.

6.2.6 Factors which aid retention

In the questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate the top three factors which they thought reduced staff turnover within the archives sector. The responses to this question were more wide ranging than the factors cited as initially attracting people into the sector. See table 6.5 below
Table 6.5
Factors that reduce staff turnover within the archives professions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>f and (%) of citations</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First choice</td>
<td>Second choice</td>
<td>Third choice</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in work</td>
<td>32 (35.6)</td>
<td>9 (10.2)</td>
<td>3 (4.3)</td>
<td>44 (50.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative factors and inertia</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>16 (18.2)</td>
<td>17 (24.6)</td>
<td>34 (43.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career opportunities / training</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
<td>13 (14.8)</td>
<td>13 (18.8)</td>
<td>29 (36.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>23 (25.6)</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
<td>2 (2.9)</td>
<td>28 (31.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety / stimulating career</td>
<td>10 (11.1)</td>
<td>8 (9.1)</td>
<td>4 (5.8)</td>
<td>22 (26.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector work / public service</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>14 (15.9)</td>
<td>4 (5.8)</td>
<td>20 (24.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working environment – e.g. stress free /</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 (12.5)</td>
<td>7 (10.1)</td>
<td>18 (22.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleasant colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment / love of the profession</td>
<td>10 (11.1)</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>3 (4.3)</td>
<td>17 (19.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>4 (4.4)</td>
<td>2 (2.3)</td>
<td>3 (4.3)</td>
<td>9 (11.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in history</td>
<td>4 (4.4)</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>2 (2.9)</td>
<td>7 (8.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in the sector</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>7 (9.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (2.3)</td>
<td>3 (4.3)</td>
<td>5 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in problem solving</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive feedback</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>2 (2.9)</td>
<td>3 (4.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest in the work was the most frequently cited positive factor, followed by career opportunities and job satisfaction. That career opportunities is cited as a factor which helps to reduce staff turnover may seem to contradict the responses to the question addressing factors which cause staff turnover (see table 6.4 above). However, it is possible to speculate that the responses are addressing different aspects of career development. When talking about the reduction of staff turnover it could be that respondents are thinking about their individual experience or that of their department whereas responses to the question on increasing turnover and reasons for people leaving the archives profession, might indicate a belief that there is a general lack of opportunities within the whole sector.

Positive factors
The factors that help to retain people in the archive profession bear some similarity to the factors which initially attract people into the profession, but there are also some marked differences.
• ‘Interest in the work’ was cited by 44 (50.1%) respondents as a factor which helped reduce staff turnover. Most respondents indicated that it was a basic interest and enthusiasm for archives that helps to keep people in the profession. Some respondents also indicated that this was linked with maintaining curiosity, and continuous learning, through quotes such as ‘Very interesting work where there’s always learning’.

• Career development opportunities and training were cited by 29 (36.9%) of respondents and a number of themes emerged: the need for ongoing training where people have the opportunity to develop new skills, clear opportunities for advancement and the development of employees’ existing roles, and the opportunities to progress into related fields were all cited as positive factors in retention.

• Job satisfaction was emphasised by 28 (31.9) respondents as a factor, which could aid staff retention. The majority of respondents did not elaborate on this although it was linked to the variety of work experienced in the archives profession which was cited by 22 (26.0%) of respondents as a positive factor in staff retention. The opportunity to carry out a range of activities within the working day including dealing with a wide range of enquiries, the different types of archive material, and the different types of institutions that a person can work in were all seen as positives.

• The desire to provide a public service, to work with people and the satisfaction of doing a ‘worthwhile’ job were highlighted by 20 (24%) of respondents.

• The working environment with good working relationships with colleagues was cited by 18 (22.6%) of respondents who indicated that the profession was supportive.

• Love of and commitment to the profession was cited by 17 (19.9%) of respondents. This commitment / love is expressed towards the profession, job, and individual records.
• Nine respondents (11.0%) cited money / salary as encouraging retention. It should be noted that it cannot only be deduced that respondents are saying that current salary levels are a retention aid. They could also be indicating that improving salaries would improve retention.

• A number of additional other factors were cited by less than 10% of respondents as aiding retention. These include and interest in history, changes in the sector (e.g. ‘Plenty of new developments in the profession- less inward looking than it used to be’), job security, an interest in problem solving, and positive feedback.

Negative factors

In addition to the positive factors outlined above 29 (36.9%) respondents cited negative factors which limit employees’ ability and motivation to leave the sector. These include a lack or perceived lack of transferable skills, inertia, lack of ambition, convenience / difficulties associated with moving profession, fear and low self-esteem. The following quotes were typical:

’Specialist skills and knowledge – not always seen as transferable’.

‘Inertia/ comfortable rut if paid reasonably well.’

‘Low self-confidence /self-esteem.’

The interviews and focus groups explored these issues further. Here it emerged that, in addition to the more concrete factors which encourage retention such as opportunities for development, many respondents emphasised the more intangible aspects of the organisation, such as open communications and good management as being positive factors. The following quotes illustrate this view:

‘…obviously the pay package and the general terms and conditions are important…other intangibles come to the fore. Do they like the job? Are they challenged and are they satisfied in their professional development and so forth?’

‘People don’t mind working for an organisation…knowing that times are bad… if they feel that they are being kept informed and they are being taken with the organisation as part of a team rather than decisions are being made behind closed doors and then imposed on them.’
‘Having a management that supports the early addressing of personal difficulties…that’s quite important and being kind to the staff all the way through the organisation, so that people do feel valued and do feel that their concerns are being taken seriously.’

‘...trying to give people as wide a range of duties and responsibilities as possible… being as open as possible with people and explaining what the job entails before they ever start and making no promises that we can’t fulfil.’

‘It can be seen that the comments made by respondents correspond to the findings of the questionnaire, in that the creation of a working environment where employees feel valued, know what is going on, enjoy what they are doing, and facilitates development will reduce staff turnover.’

6.2.7 Factors which cause difficulties in retention

In the questionnaires respondents were asked to give the top three factors which cause staff turnover within the archives sector. The responses they gave are summarised in Table 6.6. Salary and career limiting factors are by far the most frequently cited factors.

Table 6.6
Factors that cause staff turnover within the archives professions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>FIRST CHOICE</th>
<th>SECOND CHOICE</th>
<th>THIRD CHOICE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay/Salary</td>
<td>45 (50.6)</td>
<td>18 (20.2)</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
<td>69 (77.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career structure/career limiting factors</td>
<td>20 (22.5)</td>
<td>30 (33.7)</td>
<td>14 (15.7)</td>
<td>64 (72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal reasons</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>7 (7.9)</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
<td>19 (21.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary contracts</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
<td>13 (14.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>1 (1.1)</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
<td>15 (16.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work conditions / environment</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>12 (13.5)</td>
<td>16 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under funding / local govt</td>
<td>2 (2.2)</td>
<td>4 (4.5)</td>
<td>6 (6.7)</td>
<td>12 (13.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grow out of the sector</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 (5.6)</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Salary levels
Salary was the most frequently cited reason why people leave the archive sector. The majority of respondents did not clarify their response further than ‘salary’, ‘pay’ or ‘remuneration’. A small number of the respondents did go on to elaborate indicating that ‘Poor salaries compared to other graduate/postgraduate professions’ was a major issue, with those in local authorities cited as being particularly poor. In addition, it was often necessary to relocate to get a higher salary. Salaries are said to plateau early in peoples’ careers and ‘moving into management often means a move away from handling archives; if you’re going to just push paper around and go to meetings you might as well get paid properly for it’.

• Lack of career opportunities
Career limiting factors were the second most frequently cited cause for people leaving the profession, with 64 (72%) respondents highlighting these issues. Respondents specified a number of factors, particularly the ‘lack of career structure in small offices, where ‘the top isn’t very high up’. Only a small number of job opportunities occur due to ‘career stagnation – “dead man’s shoes” and few opportunities at higher levels’ and resulting in the ‘difficulty of progressing from second job to third’. There are also said to be fewer opportunities for people who require a more flexible working pattern, limited opportunities for people to use the full range of their skills and fewer opportunities, in comparison to ‘other professions… offer more scope for personal advancement’.

• Personal reasons
Personal reasons were cited by 19 (21.3%) of respondents as a reason for employees leaving the sector. Although most respondents just cited ‘personal reasons’ some did specify further. The most common reasons indicated include health reasons and the difficulties of combining work and family commitments.

• Working environment
16 (18%) of respondents highlighted factors relating to the working environment / conditions which caused people to leave the archive
These included difficulties with other people; poor management; the changing nature of the archives profession, especially in local government with *the increasing number of distractions from core functions* bringing more pressurised working conditions, and the resulting *disenchantment about the pressures and priorities in busy offices*; isolation faced by people who are a sole archivist/records manager within an organisation and the fact that it was *Solitary work with little/no support*.

- **Lack of status.** Lack of status and recognition was emphasised by 15 (16.9%) respondents as a factor likely to cause people to leave the sector. This referred both to the lack of status of the archive professions generally and of a department within the employing organisation. This *lack of recognition of value to organisation* was thought to be *particularly true of conservators*. Linked to lack of status, a further twelve (13.5%) respondents indicated that a lack of funding for a service could lead to staff turnover, due to the resulting *frustration with under-funded services, reducing opportunities for interesting work.*

- **Location**
  Location of jobs was cited by 13 (14.6%) respondents as a problem because there is a *lack of jobs outside London and S.E England, particularly at intermediate/senior level.* There is also no guarantee of finding employment at an appropriate level for those who relocate to follow their spouse.

- **Short term contracts**
  Temporary contracts and lack of permanent posts were cited by 8 (9%) respondents as a reason why turnover can occur, because *Short term, project work can be very limited in focus – do people get the opportunity to develop a full range of skills?*

- **Movement into other roles**
  Eight (9%) respondents indicated that employees leave the archive profession because they grow out of the roles available to them, often due to moving into management roles and progressing up out of the profession or by moving horizontally into another area. One of the reasons given for this is that better opportunities and remuneration are available to people...
who transfer out of archives, because ‘skills are transferable and can be rewarded highly in other areas’.

These findings were echoed when they were explored more fully within the interviews and focus groups, which identified the following factors. The quotes after each are typical of the comments received.

- Lack of career development and lack of financial reward
  ‘People tend to go into archives for the love of the subject matter and through a desire of...helping people, providing a service, I think those are the sorts of motivations. Once those... become outweighed by frustration at lack of career developments or...stagnation and by frustration...that coupled with relatively low pay will lead people to look elsewhere.’
  ‘I think this issue about frustration is probably the thing that drives more people out. Money is an issue, but...I think most people probably get frustrated and money is a...subsidiary factor.’

- Location
  Location was raised as an issue due to the cost of living in London and the South East of England, where the bulk of the jobs still are located. Where there is relocation ‘to follow a spouse’ there can be difficulty in finding employment at an equivalent level. It becomes more of an issue as people wish to progress into senior posts, as they will probably need to relocate due to the limited number of opportunities in particular locations, and may be prohibited from doing this because of the cost of moving.

- Having children
  Although this was not identified as a major issue, there was some feeling that lack of suitable posts could cause some women to leave the profession.
  ‘...women especially do leave the sector after starting a family they come back after a break. I do get the feeling that that largely kills their careers in archives because it is adding one more hindrance to the problem that there isn’t much of a career advancement structure anyway.’
Public service

In the interviews and focus groups respondents were asked about changes in the public service to see if they thought that these were having an impact on employees. The majority of respondents believed that public service had changed: the move towards a more entrepreneurial culture has resulted in a decrease in job security without a corresponding increase in salary.

‘...there is this feeling that public service should be becoming more entrepreneurial and be more willing to accept the risks and the buffeting that you get in the private sector without the commensurate appreciation of that that’s why people in the private sector get paid more because it’s a risk allowance’

‘Increasing bureaucracy has led to increasing frustration and there has been a shift towards a more service / access driven, heritage approach to running the services’.

‘…there’s also people who feel very frustrated by their inability to deliver, … who do have the skills and aptitude to meet the sort of challenges that the profession faces. But who are getting mired in bureaucracy and not able to deliver the sort of things that we and they actually want… that’s not an issue which archives alone can address.’

‘…the government agenda is making it very much heritage driven, access driven, somewhat to the detriment of the actual preservation of the collections… you’re not providing access if the stuff isn’t catalogued and that also has a knock on effect for conservation…it seems that the money is there for cataloguing but not necessarily for conservation.’

6.3 Short-term contracts

Despite providing a large number of jobs in the sector over the last five years, short-term contracts are having an impact on a number of topic areas in this research, including retention. By its very nature a short-term contract is time limited, and whoever takes the post is likely to leave the organisation when or even before the time period is up. An obvious point made by numerous respondents in the questionnaires, interviews and focus groups is that short-term contracts cause staff turnover, because ‘as soon as they get to within about a year of the end of that contract they are… looking around for other things. So short
term contracts mitigate - inevitably against retention’. It should also be noted that students and recently qualified professionals had a more positive view of short term contracts, seeing them as a means of gaining a wide range of experience at an early stage of their careers.

6.4 Methods of supporting employees and improving retention.
The support that a new employee receives when they enter an organisation and the ongoing support which they receive are crucial as aids to staff retention. In light of this the research attempted to determine the level of support which organisations were providing their staff and assess the implications of this for retention. The approaches of organisations varied as did the levels of support offered to staff. Various schemes were in operation:

6.4.1 Buddy / mentoring schemes
Respondents were asked if their organisation had a buddy or a mentoring scheme. Most respondents indicated that these did not exist often going on to say this was mainly due to the size of their department. Some respondents said they did not have anything official but offer a supportive environment. ‘In practice there may well be some particular person with whom a new recruit is working more closely, who would naturally tend to fulfil that role, but doesn’t…no, there is no formal arrangement.’

It should be noted that SoA has active mentoring for all Registration candidates, as well as a supervisor (usually but not necessarily in the same workplace) for Diploma candidates.

6.4.2 Induction
The induction process varied widely. A small number of organisations did not carry out induction though the majority did offer some form of induction. This included both departmental and corporate inductions. Some induction processes were linked to a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme, with the following quote illustrating a good example:
'For all recruits whether they are volunteers, temporary or permanent staff there is an induction process… People come here on… 6 months probation… there is also …the normal round of 3 monthly or 4 monthly performance reviews…. there is in the first year… a probation review to see how the person is settling down within the organisation… We take probation and induction quite seriously as it is actually a formal part of coming to work at the organisation…and the performance development side is taken seriously.'

6.5 Creation of career opportunities
Respondents were asked for their views on how the sector could improve on the acknowledged limited career, as apposed to job opportunities. Many were pessimistic, indicating that they did not know if this could be rectified. This was looked at in greater depth in the interviews and focus groups, when respondents were asked to think about ways of improving career opportunities and asked more specifically about a number of different options including cross-sectoral working, specialisation, and consultancy. Some positive suggestions were put forward:

‘I think its worth archive repositories looking at how they arrange their work and. have a structured approach…Looking at restructuring it, so that they are engaged in number of different activities, but in such away that the centre is still achieving the same objectives, so sharing projects …share the workload out amongst a number of different people, and get them all contributing to it, and all contributing to the management and the strategy for that project as well.’

6.5.1 Cross-sectoral working
The possibility of more cross-sectoral working within museums, libraries and archives was discussed. There was a mixed response to this. This option was generally quite positively received, although some respondents gave anecdotal evidence about archives services being marginalised. Most respondents thought this could be more easily applied at a more senior level where generic management skills were required because ‘at the practical day to day level it is much more difficult, I think to, switch people between the professions’. This could also only be done bearing in mind that ‘we do have to be careful about …the core professional direction of services’ and that ‘you have to recognise
that each profession has got a different angle, and sometimes that would work and sometimes it wouldn’t’. The possibility of bringing in different expertise to help with specific aspects was also raised. The following quotes are typical of the responses:

‘Obviously there are clear differences between the professions, but that doesn’t stop them working side by side...at a certain level I don’t think it precludes people moving across. I mean once you get to the management level then the skills in terms of project management, staff management, finance budgeting are all going to be relevant.’

‘I think there is potential for people to move up from a career in archives to become broader managers…I do now report to a head of libraries information. At that level it doesn’t matter because he’s effectively a...generic manager. He is not trying to be a professional and I have practical professional independence. It’s just a sort of line management relationship to make sure I deliver what I say I’ll deliver.’

6.5.2 Specialisation

Specialisation was another option, although what form this would take is difficult to say. Again there were mixed reactions and a number of issues which would need to be addressed before such a system was implemented were raised, such as:

‘...the way that I would see it working would be to develop centres of expertise within particular repositories... for a particular subject, and then other repositories call on that, and that person when needed. In return for which of course, the repository in question would also be able to call on a number of specialist services from a number of other different repositories, so you encourage specialism within existing repositories’.

‘I think that could be addressed by opening up options too, for further career progression beyond what is currently the top of the tree. The opportunities that equip us perhaps to move into management positions in other cultural services would be stimulating...I guess in archives more generally, where you have got externally funding cataloguing projects, you tend to have that sort of specialist role.’
6.5.3 Consultancy

This option was not discussed as widely, although there were some interviewees thinking about this as a possible way of progressing their own career, and within the focus groups there were some people who were already working as consultants. It was clear that although many respondents had not considered the matter beforehand, when the suggestion was raised, it was regarded with interest, as the following quote shows.

‘...there are so many short-term and consultancy projects out there… either an individual becomes self employed and… a kind of peripatetic consultant or you have a centrally funded organisation that employs them as experts and contracts them out, as they’re needed. …you build a centre of expertise for other people to call on …In terms of doing it across the 3 professions, there are definite advantages to the 3 professions knowing more about each other. I feel we would gain, from being able to explain ourselves more fully.’

6.6 Key themes emerging from the research

• Retention is an ambiguous area within the archives sector. Some respondents indicated that people (usually the ‘best’ ones) are leaving the archives sector, while others indicated that there was more of a problem relating to stagnation and negative retention.

• Short-term contracts also having an impact on retention as obviously the length of time that someone on stays within an organisation is limited by the length of their contract. This may cause people to leave the sector altogether, though there is as yet no evidence of this.

• The major factors which affect retention are salary and career opportunities.

• No definite conclusions were arrived at regarding different options for improving career opportunities. The need to address career opportunities is of paramount importance for the sector. This is in terms of types of work available, the need for improved career progression and expansion in the number of senior posts, and more opportunities for professionals in all areas of the country.
6.7 Discussion of key themes

It is evident if the research findings and the literature are compared that the archives sector itself has a good understanding of the factors which are affecting retention or at least causing dissatisfaction and stagnation. When looking at the issues and problems that the archives sector is facing and assessing it in relation to the factors which are known to cause retention problem it is possible to speculate that there will be a retention problem. A clear understanding has been gained of the factors which impact on retention in both a positive and negative way. As mentioned above, the key factors are salary and lack of career opportunities.

The experience of new professionals is mixed and depends on the organisation they enter, the location at which they are based, and their ability to find a permanent job. However, the present research has highlighted that it is at the middle management level where more people appear to experience the most frustration and difficulties progressing their career.

The induction process is somewhat mixed and the process varies depending on the organisation. In many departments it is determined by the parent organisation. In addition to corporate inductions many people also go through a departmental induction. When it comes to mentoring and other processes which can aid retention there is a more mixed picture. Some organisations do have a mentoring system of sorts, but because many departments are small the scope to have someone who does not have a close working relationship with the new employee is limited. It may be of benefit to look at the possibility of an external mentoring system.

Some of the quotes from archives professionals about the frustration they face with their own career illustrate the inherent problems with the archives sector in terms of limited career opportunities. Related to this are the problems of stagnation and negative retention faced by some managers. To address this, a number of possibilities for increasing career opportunities were discussed. There are pros and cons for each option and it is important that they are evaluated further, to ascertain the best solution in this instance.
6.8 Conclusions and recommendations

There are numerous characteristics associated with the archives sector that have been highlighted within the retention literature as causing staff turnover. (Davies 2001). It is clear that the following factors are affecting the sector at present:

- There is relatively high employment and people are in a better position to change jobs.
- When people compare salaries in the profession with those of other professions and careers they could move into they it is apparent that they could earn more money elsewhere.
- There are limited career opportunities for career progression.
- When people leave to start a family, there may be limited flexibility in working practices, and the salary does not offset the cost of childcare.
- Although the majority of respondents interviewed seemed to demonstrate a supportive management style, limited support was provided in terms of a ‘buddy’ or ‘mentor’.
- Although most organisations indicated that their organisation provided some sort of development planning, the focus groups indicate that this does not always take place in practice.
- Due to the location of archive/records management services people are likely to face limited opportunities to change office in certain areas.
- The career structure within small offices means that many people are going to have difficulties progressing up the career ladder if they are unable to move.
- Archives professionals are highly educated, and as Butler and Waldroop (1999) have indicated are likely to be successful in any number of careers. Therefore the lack of career opportunities is likely to have a large impact on job satisfaction leading to a desire to leave the sector.
If the problems of people leaving the sector and professional stagnation are to be overcome it is imperative that the issue of a lack of career opportunities is addressed. This needs to be in terms of location, variety, and seniority. It may be possible to address these problems by options discussed in this report, i.e. specialisation, cross-sectoral working, and consultancy.

**Recommendations**

- Statistics need to be kept to determine the amount of people actually leaving the archives sector, and an assessment made of the long term impact of short-term contracts on this.
- Evaluation of the various options for improving career opportunities within the archives sector needs to take place.
- The Society of Archivists should assess the benefits of developing an external mentoring system for new professionals. This is likely to be of key importance to people who have a short-term contract.
CHAPTER 7 LEADERSHIP

‘Leadership is not equivalent to office-holding or high prestige or authority or decision-making. It is not helpful to identify leadership with whatever is done by people in high places.’ (Rost, 1991: 98)

‘In the present economy, many are promoted into leadership positions based on previous diligence and technical excellence. They never intended to have a leadership position and didn’t prepare for it...Now they have to figure out how to lead.’ (Peltier, 2001:xv)

7.1 Background

There is extensive literature on the subject of leadership, and numerous theories have attempted to address its different aspects. These cover type, style, contingency and attribution theories, and transactional and transformational leadership. It is beneficial at this point to make it clear that there is a difference between leadership and management. Bennis and Nanaus (1985) point out that leadership can be described as path finding and is about doing the right thing, whereas management is about path following and doing things right. Leadership is about having a vision of the future, whereas management is about carrying out other peoples’ plans. Kotter (1990) has indicated that management is about bringing consistency to order, whereas a leader is concerned with constructive or adaptive change. From this it can be deduced that management involves the running of part of the organisation, whereas leadership includes developing an opinion of what is essential for the future success of the organisation and how to bring about change.

There are many differing views about where the ability to be an effective leader comes from and a number of traits have been identified as being more prevalent in leaders, including having a higher intelligence level (Stodgill, 1974), sociability, a need for power and achievement (House and Baetz, 1979). Leaders are seen as more dominant, extrovert, intelligent, masculine, conservative, and better adjusted (Lord et al, 1986) and can also be identified
by the traits of honesty and integrity, drive and persistence, cognitive ability, leadership motivation, and knowledge of the business (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991).

The responses to the section on leadership within the questionnaire showed that there was a great deal of confusion about the subject within the archive sector, with many respondents equating it with management. One respondent offered a personal interpretation:

‘...I think there is a huge range of different types and style of leadership. I suppose the key thing for leadership to do is to be able to clearly identify and enunciate the common goals towards which everyone...should be aspiring...And then to...persuade people to move towards those goals, and motivate people to move towards those goals...to bring the best skills from different people...that works for me as model at all levels.’

7.2 Leadership in the Cultural Sector: Archives, Records Management and Conservation

Within the cultural sector there is an increasing interest in leadership. Strategic leadership or the lack of it has been an area highlighted by Resource as problematic: improving the quality of leadership is one of the ten key objectives listed in its Manifesto, and it aims to pilot a sector-wide leadership training course. The issue of leadership has been considered by the Archives sector, in Resource’s Archives Strategy, (Resource, 2002a) Museums (Resource, 2002b), and in Libraries (Usherwood, et al., 2001). In addition to these studies, there have been a number of initiatives reviewing leadership in the whole of the sector covered by Resource. These include:

- Following the National Museums Directors’ Conference (NMDC) in 2001, a Working Party to be set up with the task of exploring leadership representatives from Museums, Libraries and Archives. They have identified a two-strand programme for leadership development across the sector:
For current leaders they identified support mechanisms as being a way forward:

‘Leaders of today’s cultural organisations could benefit from mutually supportive mentoring mechanisms. A number of potential mentors have been identified across the UK and a programme of regional mentoring groups will be explored.’

For aspiring leaders, the way forward was seen as being a mixture of training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD):

‘Tomorrow’s leaders could be assisted to grow training and continuous professional development. Discussions have begun with training providers to build closer working partnerships and ensure the training courses meet the sector’s needs. Secondments, mentoring and coaching programmes are vital elements in ensuring the sector is equipping its people with the skills and behaviours required to lead.’

- At the National Museum Directors Conference in May 2002 a seminar took place that brought together the key leaders in UK museums, libraries, galleries and archives. The purpose of this seminar was ‘To focus on leadership in context, highlighting the need to develop skills at all levels’.

- Clore Duffield Foundation. The Clore Duffield Foundation has recently published a report aimed at establishing a process by which leaders can be developed within the cultural sector. (Clore Duffield foundation, 2003) They highlight the deficit in leadership skills within the cultural/heritage sector in general and outline a proposal for a leadership development programme. This proposes a two-year programme that encompasses a variety of activities, including research, sabbaticals, secondments, and mentoring. The course would take between 12 and 35 people per year from across the cultural/heritage sector.
• Archives Task Force

The Archives Task Force has been working to create a framework for education, training and development within the archives sector. Within this they address the issue of leadership and development of employees. Two levels of development within their framework are applicable to leadership. They propose a qualification, similar to an MBA in style, which will be aimed at people who wish to progress into management or have been given additional management responsibility within their organisation. This programme would seek to develop management skills and competencies. A similar programme is operated within the library domain and there may be scope for collaboration. In addition to this the Task Force is also proposing a ‘taught doctorate’ programme, which will address management and leadership issues.

The research on leadership, which has already taken place within the wider cultural heritage sector, has implications for leadership development within the archive sector. If there is to be an integrated approach to leadership across the heritage/information professions then it will be essential to develop a programme of recruitment, selection and development which is applicable to all professions. The core skills/competencies will need to be universally applicable and must be able to account for the different strategies, cultures and values of each sector.

7.3 Research findings

The research questions were aimed at gaining an understanding of the leadership situation in the archives sector at present, looking in more depth at the perceived lack of leadership potential, and gaining an understanding of what the sector needs in terms of leadership. A number of strategies for leadership development and the potential to implement them in the archives sector were discussed and examined.

The initial questionnaire also sought information on the types of leadership development programmes used by organisations and the respondents' views
on what was the best stage at which to assess leadership potential (see appendix 1). The interviews and focus groups went on to investigate these issues in more depth (see appendices 2 and 3). The interviews and focus groups were a dynamic evolving process which, where appropriate, explored issues of interest in addition to the standard questions. As new issues arose they were sometimes incorporated into future questions.

During interviews respondents were asked to characterise leadership within the archives sector. This broad question was designed to capture respondents’ own opinions and interpretations of leadership in the sector. It became apparent that respondents were interpreting this question on a number of levels, that of the individual, organisation and sector. As the interviewing progressed more searching questions were asked about each of these areas.

7.3.1 Sectoral leadership
The issue of sectoral leadership was raised extensively within the interviews and focus groups. It became clear that due to the large number of professional bodies and government organisations having some responsibility for archives, there is some confusion about the role, remit and agenda of these bodies. The following quotes are typical of the responses:

‘I think there’s a stronger sense of leadership than there was in the past. The only problem... is the...plethora of new bodies...can lead to a...confusing situation...certainly in terms of the policies and initiatives that have been put forward which purport to give a vision for where we are going... it doesn't give you a sense of vision, it gives you a sense of despondency in that there’s just too much being thrown at you from too many different places.’

‘It's...patchy simply because of the number of disparate organizations and bodies that there are...at the moment there’s loads of little voices rather than one big voice and I just wonder whether that might be a better way forward...’

A number of respondents highlighted the need for the sector to have a vocal advocate who is able to raise awareness of the key issues at any given time.
Views on who this could or should be, and just as often who it should not be, differed, with the following quotes being a representative cross section of opinion:

‘You’re always going to want a vision coming from the profession itself and from other interested bodies and archives users... So in terms of the profession itself, it’s going to have to be...the Society of Archivists.’

‘I think that Resource is pushing the profession rather than the profession leading itself...I am not sure that the profession has actually got a plan and a strategy of where it wants to be with it...being dictated to by the government policies...’

‘I think that...it really does have to be inclusive and... key leading representatives of national, local, university, business sectors...should be out there using as much visibility and influence as possible in advocating the needs of archives. But I think genuinely it takes umbrella groups and the professional bodies really should be seen as the lead spokespeople for the profession.’

‘…the PRO has done an excellent job, and so that’s where the leadership is coming from, it’s not coming from the Society of Archivists, which is a pity... the PRO has understood that the world has changed, and has set the agenda, provided the guidance for training and so forth, and the Society of Archivists sticks its head down and tries to pretend the world hasn’t changed. And that’s leadership to me.’

‘I feel Resource’s agenda is the government agenda which is far too access driven and doesn’t address all of the other issues such as conservation and records management and the other key areas.’

7.3.2 Individual leadership

There were different opinions about individual leadership in the sector, with the two following quotes summarising the opinions of many respondents:

‘... We have very few people who regard themselves as leaders I don’t think we have huge numbers of people in the archives profession who think like that… I don’t think it’s a great strength of the profession.’

‘There isn’t any. I don’t regard there as being leaders of the profession.’

Some respondents felt that those with leadership potential were not being attracted into the sector in the first place, while others, including directors of
archive courses, argued that there was leadership potential in the sector, that people were entering the sector with the attributes needed to be effective leaders but were not getting the necessary development opportunities.

Another important theme to emerge was the need to recognise that not everyone wanted to progress into a leadership role, but that such people were also needed within the sector.

‘I think there’s a danger of putting people in a box that maybe isn’t going to fit them.’

‘…We do need the people who are happy to stay and work, stay and be the background of the archives but we also need the people who can take us forward and not be afraid to make changes.’

7.3.3 Lack of leadership potential or leadership development opportunities?

Some respondents clearly felt that there were effective leaders, as the following quote illustrates:

‘There are some very good leaders within the profession as far as I know, the kinds of people who are willing to take a lead and are given a chance to do so.’

Those who felt there to be a lack of people in the archives sector with the attributes needed to be a leader, felt that the traditional image of the archivist/records manager played a large part in failing to attract such people:

‘I guess the sort of people that we recruit into the profession in the first place, are by and large, not going to be the charismatic leaders, because if they...knew that’s what they were when they were twenty two, they wouldn’t be going into archives in the first place. They would be going into something that gave them more scope and going for more fulfilment...at an earlier stage in their career, they would be going into business...or something like that, and I think that is an issue for us. That’s changing a bit...but it may take us sometime to actually find and develop those people.’
Some felt that leadership potential needed to be assessed at the initial recruitment onto professional training courses, and that this was not always being done.

‘I think it’s a combination of the fact that the courses are probably still not very good at identifying the right kind of people, and the image of the profession is such that careers tutors when they see somebody’s got poor social skills etc. they think archives, and recommend people.’

In contrast to this some respondents took a different view of the lack of effective leadership. Rather than emphasising shortcomings in individuals they thought that the potential was there, but not being developed. Factors cited as contributing to this include a lack of structure within the profession, the diverse nature of archives, records management, and conservation departments, and the lack of management / leadership training. The following quotes illustrate this lack of training:

‘...A lot of organisations, my company included, quite often put people in line management positions and don’t train them.’

‘I think a lot goes back to...that they’re not trained managers, they’re trained archivists, and then they get to the position where they’re the head of a repository, managing a lot of people. They’re involved with policy decisions with the authority...there are more and more pressures piling on them, and because they’re not trained managers, I think a lot of them are finding it very, very difficult.’

‘I do think it’s getting better, but personally I feel more archivists and maybe some senior conservators should have more money to re-train and more management qualifications.’

Interestingly the course directors indicated that people who they select and believe to have leadership potential do not always have the opportunity to develop this. They viewed the situation differently:

‘...Certainly one of the criteria we apply when we are looking at applicants is leadership potential.... but what happens when they have left the courses...they
are...out of our control and. very often these people are squashed in one way or another.’

‘...there is no problem with the calibre of the people we are recruiting for training, but something happens when they get into the profession, to close their opportunities. It may be something to do with short-term contracts...although that can be used as an opportunity, but the structure of the profession at the moment, is not allowing them to be spotted, fostered and to move up.’

The very different views of leadership potential held by practitioners and course directors as illustrated in the above quotes, is very marked, and worthy of further investigation.

### 7.4 Assessing leadership potential

The questionnaire asked respondents to rate at which stage of employment it is most effective to identify leadership potential. Their responses are summarised in Table 7.1, from which it can be seen that there is a perceived increase in effectiveness of assessment of leadership potential as an employee’s progress within their career.

**Table 7.1**

*Stage at which practitioners thought it most effective to identify potential leaders*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification point</th>
<th>Ineffective (1)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Most effective (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At selection to first professional post</td>
<td>25 (33.3)</td>
<td>27 (36.0)</td>
<td>21 (28.0)</td>
<td>1 (1.3)</td>
<td>1 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in first professional post</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (10.5)</td>
<td>25 (32.9)</td>
<td>26 (36.1)</td>
<td>17 (22.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At promotion into management role</td>
<td>1 (1.4)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>19 (26.8)</td>
<td>39 (54.9)</td>
<td>12 (16.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in management role</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>8 (10.7)</td>
<td>13 (17.3)</td>
<td>54 (72.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However in interviews and focus groups respondents indicated that there was a need to ensure that people possess the necessary competencies to lead before they are promoted to a management position. The interviews and focus groups addressed the issue of when it was possible and best to assess
leadership potential, looking specifically at the possibility of assessing people straight after qualification. Respondents did not see this as a popular option as it was felt that it could have a negative impact on people who develop at different rates. This has implications for a fast tracking policy, which identifies people at the beginning of their career for leadership development.

It is apparent that the sector has differing views on when and how to assess leadership potential. It is necessary to address this because the time at which latent leadership skills are identified is of key importance if the sector is to attract those with leadership potential.
Table 7.2
Importance and usage of various management processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management processes</th>
<th>Importance ratings – f and (%)</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>Frequency of use within the last 12 months (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>1 (1.2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>7 (8.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning</td>
<td>4 (5.1)</td>
<td>8 (10.1)</td>
<td>23 (29.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>1 (1.2)</td>
<td>1 (1.2)</td>
<td>17 (20.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.5 **Strategies for developing leaders**

Table 7.2 shows the usage of various management development techniques including succession planning, career development, and leadership development within the sector. The mean scores for the importance rating of these different processes demonstrate that these practises are all viewed as important. In reality, career development and leadership development are quite widely used, but succession planning only has minimal usage.

Succession planning and fast tracking as forms of leadership development strategies were put forward for evaluation in the interviews and focus groups.

### 7.5.1 Succession planning

There are different forms of succession planning and Guinn (2000) has outlined a way of using succession planning as a way of developing competencies within a non-hierarchical workforce rather than developing people specifically for a management role.

Succession planning as a means of developing leaders, received a mixed reaction in the interviews and focus groups, perhaps because people tended to think of it in the old hierarchical way of ‘waiting for dead men’s shoes’. The main reservations related to the difficulty of implementing succession planning within small services is how people would be selected for this, and whether it would affect equal opportunities policies. Despite these difficulties, there were some positive responses to succession planning in those organisations using it as a means of developing their workforce.

The following quotes give illustrations of both formal and informal systems, both good and bad, showing how succession planning can aid continuity within a service:

‘...this summer... someone retires...and there has been no succession planning...its going to cause a huge amount of disruption to the organisation in lack of continuity...there is no obvious deputy to fill the post for this person, there is going to
be a huge amount of hiatus in the projects which this person is running and he’s
doing his best to try and cover things before he leaves. But the organisation could
have handled this...better.’

‘...every member of the team...has to have a certain level of knowledge about all
aspects of the service that we provide and the professional competency that
underpins them. So although we don’t do succession planning as a conscious
thing...up until now we have always managed to ensure that the people left
behind...have enough skills, knowledge and expertise...’

‘...although it's not a formal requirement it is very heavily recommended that if you do
move on you do have somebody ...capable of filling the gap that an individual would
leave.’

Some respondents expressed reservations about the usability of succession
planning within their organisation.

‘I don’t...groom people to follow on from one another, but...they’ve all got such a wide
range of skills that they are perfectly capable of... doing one another’s jobs.’

‘I think if you’re a good manager, and you know your staff well, you recognise who’s
going to be good enough to deal with a situation and give them that responsibility. If
you’re fortunate enough to have a team of people you might change the leaders
within the team. It depends on what the job is.’

Overall it appears possible to use the method of succession planning
advocated by Guinn within small departments. It supplies a means of not only
developing general competencies but also leadership skills. Providing that it
is used to develop all members of staff and not as a way of grooming
individuals, it has the potential to be a way of developing future leaders in the
sector.

7.5.2 Fast tracking
Fast tracking in its various guises has not been widely used within the sector
although some respondents indicated that they suspected it happened
informally. This was also proposed as a means of developing leaders, but most interviewees and focus group members received it unfavourably.

A number of reasons why fast-tracking would be difficult to implement in the archives sector were given. These include:

- The difficulty of implementing a fast-tracking scheme across the sector because of the diverse nature of employers who all operate in different ways. ‘…there are so many different organisations involved at the moment... you wouldn’t get universities working in the same way as businesses working in the same way as the public sector.’

  ‘I think its better to ensure that you have the same consistent grounding. That everyone starts from the same common base line, that you then have general continuing professional development across all of the different sectors, and within that I think you will get natural fast tracking anyway.’

- As most departments are small it was thought that it would be difficult a fast-tracking system, and the point of ‘fast-tracking to where’ was often raised.

  ‘I think it’s too small a profession, to be honest. I think it would create a sort of a tier within it.’

  ‘The alternative route is continuous professional development effectively to try and ensure that everybody get supports to develop to their potential as far as the Institution can accommodate that.’

  ‘…you can’t fast track to something that isn’t there.’

- The issue of equal opportunities was also raised and some respondents thought that this type of system would not be allowed within their organisation.

- Some respondents indicated that they thought that it would not be fair to assess people’s long-term potential when they entered the profession, believing that people develop at different rates.
• It was thought that such a system would cause resentment amongst members of staff who did not get onto a fast tracking scheme.

A number of respondents indicated that people fast tracked themselves so there does not appear to be a need for a formal system. The following respondent summed up this view:

‘I think there are probably very few organisations within the archive profession that are big enough to do that within a single organisation...In theory, if you have someone who is particularly good who joins the profession, then you’d like to think they could get to a senior level very quickly by their own abilities.’

Some respondents thought that fast tracking could work, particularly if used cross sectorally, as shown by the following quotes:

‘I think there are a few people, who in every cohort as it were, who probably have that potential for progressing further, faster and who could be identified and given the opportunity... you get somebody, who is really good and they go to a large organisation to learn how things are done well. They can go to a small organisation and get the opportunity of helping to sort things out, getting practical skills in terms of doing it under difficult circumstances. Get on somewhere else, but be moved around...fairly quickly.’

‘We do have the beginnings of... a fast tracking process in place. There are always going to be questions about who is selected for it. It is potentially a divisive process because it immediately starts identifying people as management favourites...as long as it is carried out fairly and equitably, I can’t think of any other way which you can actually pick and nurture people early enough to become potential leaders... I think it is better to actually take some formal control and have some formal input to the process than wait for the effects of chance because I don’t think chance has served us too well so far.’

‘I would really hate to see a fast tracking scheme, just for archivists. I think we should be thinking of fast tracking people in the whole sector...Because that would provide valuable cross fertilisation, and I think that is important.’
7.6 Summary of key points arising from the research

- Leadership is a key issue as effective leadership has implications for the profile and development of the profession at a strategic sectoral level.

- It also has implications for archives professionals in terms of the progression of their own careers and the potential negative effect of poor quality management.

- There is much confusion surrounding sectoral leadership, with respondents feeling confused about the interaction between different groups, their remit and agenda.

- There are different opinions on whether the problem is a lack of leadership potential, or a lack of development opportunities within the sector.

- Most interview respondents indicated that their organisation provides management training, yet at the same time there are extensive citations of people not being trained adequately in management skills.

- In terms of leadership development, succession planning was seen as more useful than fast tracking although both warrant further investigation.

7.7 Discussion of key points

It can be seen that there is a skills gap in terms of leadership within the sector. Although it has been possible to establish consistent opinion that this skills gap exists it was not possible to establish the cause, as there were contradictory views held by practitioners and course directors. It is therefore of key importance for more research to be carried out on this issue. The findings within this study point to a need to establish at which stage the sector is failing, i.e. is it failing to attract and select people with leadership potential, or is the sector through its limited career opportunities, structure and development failing to 'grow' people into leaders. To some extent both opinions seem to have validity, as evidence was found of people who did not want to progress up the career ladder, but it is hard to believe even within a small sector that there are no people with leadership potential, and numerous respondents from different areas
commented on the lack of development opportunities. Although there was wide recognition that leadership skills could be developed, the profession needs to take responsibility for this.

The point at which the sector is failing needs to be identified in order to establish an appropriate strategy for it to adopt in order to overcome these problems. If the sector is failing to attract and select the people with the attributes which are required, the sector needs to adopt a strategy to raise the profile of the sector to people with these attributes and find a way of accurately assessing them before entry into the profession. Conversely, if people with the attributes to be effective leaders are not being developed, then a training and development programme needs to be developed to address this.

A number of strategies were discussed, and although no definite conclusions were reached some options were definitely better received and generally more acceptable than others.

Another area of key importance established within this research was sectoral leadership. Although this was not something initially under investigation, it became apparent during the project that it is a major issue. It is of paramount importance that the sector establishes and makes clear which organisations are taking responsibility for key issues, what their remit is and how they relate to other organisations. If the sector is to develop, and meet the challenges which it is facing, it is vital that organisations co-operate and take responsibility for coordinating movement in an agreed direction. The wide ranging opinions expressed by respondents in relation to the issue of sectoral leadership demonstrate the need to establish credible, clear and effective leadership for the sector.

### 7.8 Conclusions and recommendations

It can be concluded that there is a skills gap in relation to leadership within the archives sector, but it is not possible to indicate if this is due to a lack of potential or lack of development. A clear need has been established to
identify at which stage the sector is failing in terms of leadership. Succession planning provides a means of developing leadership skills within small departments and allows for more junior staff to start acquiring these skills before they enter a 'management' position. Sectoral leadership is a key issue that needs to be addressed. Without organised, focused, coordinated leadership the sector will continue to flounder.

This is not a simple issue as a number of factors impact on leadership skills within the sector, starting with career choice and the need to attract people with leadership skills and potential. Accurately assessing their potential when they apply for a place on a professional course is important, as is having a means of assessing their potential as they embark on their careers. It is vital that a means of developing leadership skills is created and maintained in addition to fostering working environments that are conducive to leadership development.

Recommendations:

- Research is undertaken to establish if people with leadership potential are being attracted and selected onto professional archives courses, or if people with potential are not being developed.

- Once the potential/development position has been clarified a strategy needs to be developed by the sectoral leaders (societies, course directors, Resource), to address this, either in the form of agreed, improved selection procedures or agreed, improved development programmes (training and succession planning).

- Sectoral leadership needs to be addressed in terms of communicating more clearly with the sector. There also needs to be a more focused and strategic approach to leading the sector.
CHAPTER 8 Final Discussion
This report provides an overview of the key workforce issues within the archive sector. Although many of these issues are brought up somewhat in isolation it is apparent that many overlap and influence each other. Indeed, at times it is difficult to separate them. These relationships are highly complex, but there are a few fundamental areas that must be tackled if the archive sector is to have an effective workforce in the future. It is imperative that these issues are dealt with simultaneously in order to find fast effective solutions to the problems within the sector. Although each area is looked at in more depth in terms of recommendations within the individual chapters there are some universal themes which it is beneficial to identify here.

8.1 The need for an improved career structure
This will make the sector more appealing for people considering a career in archives and make it better able to compete with similar professions. It will assist in improving staff retention by offering more scope for progression and development. It will facilitate leadership development by giving people more scope to develop these traits within their jobs, and possibly attract into the sector more people with a desire to progress their career in this way.

8.2 The need for an assessment of core competencies
This is essential to make sure that the ‘right’ people are selected into the profession in the first place. It will enable the education and training providers to target their efforts in developing these competencies within staff. The recruitment process would also benefit, as the competencies needed within the sector will be transparent to applicants and employers. These improvements will have a knock on effect for retention and career opportunities and aspirations as people will have a clearer picture of where they need to develop in order to progress their career. There will also be a knock on effect for leadership as it will be possible to establish the essential competencies in relation to this and select and develop appropriate personnel.
8.3 Development of a programme of structured CPD
Once the competencies have been determined for the sector it is important that the best way of developing these within the workforce is established. This will should take some of the pressure from the education providers and make clear what training employers need to take responsibility for. This will potentially improve retention of employees as they will be getting the development they require. It will also improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce.

8.4 Removal of barriers to entry
Much more effort need to be made in terms of making the archives professions accessible to people. This means that clear advice should be easily available about pre-course placements, funding, location of courses (and other options if location is an issue).

8.5 Assessment of the necessity for pre-course training
Pre-course training was a very problematic area for people, in terms of finding placements, cost et cetera. This whole process needs to be assessed in terms of the difficulties it causes for individuals, and what it adds in the long term. If it is found to be essential, it needs to be structured and co-ordinated so it does not to cause difficulties for people. This will remove a barrier to entry and make the archives professions more attractive.

8.6 Promotion of the profession
Promotion of the profession and raising peoples’ awareness of archives is important for a number of reasons. To attract people into the sector they need to be aware of it in the first place. Retention may also be improved as the status of the profession is raised and people begin to perceive its importance for a range of organisations.

8.7 Attraction of a variety of people into the sector
Related to profile raising is the need to attract people from different backgrounds into the sector, this is not only needed for archives but more importantly for records management. By attracting people from more diverse
backgrounds there is also more likely to be a wider range of competencies brought into the sector.

8.8 Leadership development
Leaving aside the debate about whether the potential is there, leadership development needs to be pushed within the sector. This will enable archives professionals to take on more senior roles and ‘influence from the top’. This will have knock on effects in terms of profile raising, career choice, and retention as people see that there is scope to progress to a higher level.

It can clearly be seen that the issues affecting the sector are closely inter-related, and all need to be dealt with. Although the archive sector has workforce issues it must overcome it should be noted that there are positive things on which to build. In opposition to the populist stereotypes there are people in the sector who, given the means and opportunity, are capable of meeting the challenges the profession undoubtedly faces if it is to be recognised as a high profile occupation performing an essential service.
References


http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/p!eLaXi [Accessed 17.12.03]


Appendix A

NCA Archives Workforce Study
Research funded by Resource
Conducted by the Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, S10 2TN
Joint Project heads: Prof. Bob Usherwood, Richard Proctor  Consultant: Margaret Turner

The aims of this study are to help the archives, records management and conservation sector recruit, retain, support and develop a workforce appropriate to the current and future needs of the profession. All replies will be treated as confidential and individual organisations will remain anonymous. We hope you will feel able to help in this important study.

Please return the completed questionnaire as an e-mail attachment to spp00mdt@sheffield.ac.uk . Alternatively, you can print off a copy of the questionnaire to complete then post it to: Margaret Turner, c/o Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield, Regent Court, 211, Portobello Street, Sheffield. S1 4DP
If your e-mail server is unable to reproduce the questionnaire in a readable form, we would be happy to send you a paper copy. Please e-mail me at spp00mdt@sheffield.ac.uk or phone 0114 2304772:

When you have completed the questionnaire please e-mail it back to us by Wednesday 11 September.

A. We would like to start by asking some questions about your organisation

1. Name of Organisation…………………………………………………………

2. Sector: Public: National [ ] Public: Local Government: [ ] University [ ]
Voluntary [ ] Private [ ] Please insert x in appropriate box

3. How many professional posts for the following do you have on your establishment?
   - Archivists [ ]
   - Records managers [ ]
   - Conservators [ ]

B We would now like to ask you some questions about recruitment:

4. Have you recruited to first professional or career grade posts during the 12 months ending July 31 2002?  YES [ ] NO [ ] If your answer is ‘NO’ please proceed to question 7

5. How many people did you appoint to first or career grade professional posts during the 12 months ending July 31 2002:
   - Archivists [ ]
   - Record Managers [ ]
   - Conservators [ ]

6. If this information is easily available, how many people did you appoint from these sources:
   - Straight from archive/record management course [ ]
   - From another archive repository [ ]
   - From outside the archive sector [ ]
   - From outside the profession [ ]
7. In what circumstances, if any, would you appoint to a ‘professional post’ candidates without a qualification in archives/record management/conservation?

Archivists...........................................................................................................................................

Record Managers.................................................................................................................................

Conservators........................................................................................................................................

8. **How difficult, in general, have you found it to recruit first professional/career grade staff:**

*Please highlight or circle the appropriate number.*

a) with the right experience

- Very easy
- 5 4 3 2 1
- Very difficult

b) with the right skills

- Very easy
- 5 4 3 2 1
- Very difficult

c) with the right personal qualities

- Very easy
- 5 4 3 2 1
- Very difficult

**PLEASE COMMENT**

9. **When recruiting to a first professional/career grade post, what weighting do you give to relevant experience?**

*Please highlight or circle the appropriate number.*

- Very important
- 5 4 3 2 1
- Unimportant

10. **Please give a brief indication of what you consider to be relevant experience**

...........................................................................................................................................................

...........................................................................................................................................................

11. **What is the grade to which you would usually appoint a newly qualified professional?**

(Please give APT&C scale or salary range if you use a local scale. Please say if this includes London weighting.)

Archivist ............................................................................................................................................... 

Record Manager .............................................................................................................................. 

Conservator .......................................................................................................................................... 

**PLEASE COMMENT**

12. **What do you think are the three main factors which help attract new entrants to the archives/record management/conservation profession?**

1. .......................................................................................................................................................... 

2. .......................................................................................................................................................... 

3. ..........................................................................................................................................................

**PLEASE COMMENT**
13. What do you think are the three main factors which could deter potential recruits to the archives/record management/conservation profession?

1. .......................................................... .......................................................... .......................................................... 

2. .......................................................... .......................................................... .......................................................... 

3. .......................................................... .......................................................... .......................................................... 

Please comment

C. We would now like to ask you some questions about your needs as an employer:

14. Keeping in mind the needs of your service please indicate in column 2 how important you think it is that the listed subjects/skills are included in professional qualification courses, and in column 3 whether you think the topic can be left to post professional training.  

*Please place X in appropriate box*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course Curriculum</td>
<td>Post-qualification training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCHIVISTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and practice of archive administration (appraisal, collections management, acquisition, accessioning etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listing skills: familiarity with international archive standards and their practical application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation skills: palaeography and diplomatic (to read and understand documents from all ages.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation skills: a background knowledge of history and administration (to enable interpretation of the documents)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archive repository management (design, security, disaster prevention)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of non-traditional media (AV, film, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT skills: familiarity and practical experience of specialist archive software packages/use of Encoded Archival Description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach skills (publications, dealing with different types of groups, giving talks etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Curriculum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post-qualification training</strong></td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECORDS MANAGERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles and standards relating to records management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records audit/survey and analysis techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records organisation and retrieval techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records storage options and processes, including media conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing electronic records</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records retention management, including legal/compliance issues (Freedom of Information, Data Protection etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic management/understanding organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records protection and disaster recovery planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONSERVATORS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrable skills in interventive conservation in a wide range of archive material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the composition, chemistry and factors in the deterioration of archive material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of assessment, analysis and conservation options prior to treatment, to include knowledge of packaging techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of relevant standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of issues relating to environmental conditions in strongrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL SKILLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff management and other personnel issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting and financial management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing/public relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising/Income Generation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of electronic formats and associated skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web page design and authoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Are there any other topics that you regard as very important? (Please list below)

16. When you are selecting new professional staff to work in your organisation what degree of importance do you attach to the following? Please place X in appropriate box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm and interest in the job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of wider issues affecting the profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational fit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to communicate verbally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to communicate in writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist subject knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Are there any other qualities you regard as very important? (Please list below)

18. Do you have any other comments on education for the archives profession?

D. About staff development and retention:

19. How long, on average, would you expect someone appointed to a first professional/career grade post to stay with your organisation? Please highlight or tick

- Less than a year
- A year to 18 months
- About 2 years
- About 3 years
- Over 3 years

20. In the experience of your organisation at what career stage do employees tend to leave?

21. What do you think are the three main factors which help keep staff in the archives/record management/conservation profession?

1. ......................................................................................................................................................
2. ......................................................................................................................................................
3. ......................................................................................................................................................

22. What do you think are the three main factors which cause staff to leave archives/record management/conservation profession?

1. ......................................................................................................................................................
2. ......................................................................................................................................................
3. ......................................................................................................................................................
23. In your estimation, what are the principal reasons why professional vacancies tend to occur in your organisation? 

Please rank the following in order of importance from 1 to 8, with 1 being the most frequent:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement to other information sectors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal promotion</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement outside archives/information work</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement to other repositories</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal reasons</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of new posts</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructuring</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other (please specify) .................................................................

E. About staff training:

24. In your view, how important to the profession in general are the following aspects of training and development? Please highlight or circle the appropriate number, with 5 being very important and 1 unimportant. Please also indicate if your authority has made use of them within the last 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Used within last 12 months?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In house courses</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self learning packages</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction training</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External courses eg:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society of Archivists</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records Management Society</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private training/consultancy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. TFPL</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. CILIP (Library Association)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing professional development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Vocational Qualifications</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investors in People scheme</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured CPD for registration</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured CPD after registration</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Appraisal</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
25. What do you think are likely to be the three most important areas of training for your service in the next 2 years? Please be as specific as you can.

1........................................................................................................................................................................

2........................................................................................................................................................................

3........................................................................................................................................................................

D About leadership:

26. How important do you think the following issues are for the profession? Please indicate if your organisation has ongoing policies in these areas by highlighting or circling the appropriate number/answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Ongoing in your authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. How many professional staff are due to retire from your service within the next 5 years?


28. What percentage of the professional staff who leave or retire are likely to be replaced?

........................% 

29. We want to find out at what point you think it is most effective to identify potential leaders in the profession. Please indicate by highlighting or ticking the appropriate number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point</th>
<th>Most effective</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At selection to first professional post</td>
<td></td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in first professional post</td>
<td></td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At promotion into management role</td>
<td></td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in management role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please use the space below for any other comments you might wish to make or if you think there are important issues we have not addressed. Continue on an additional sheet if necessary.

If you would be willing to take part in further research associated with this study please provide your contact details below

Name for contact: Phone/e-mail address:

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

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Appendix B

Interview Guide for Practitioners

- Introductions
- Introduce selves / roles
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study
- Time available
- Permission to tape interview
- Permission to quote in report

Thank you for responding to the postal survey. We would like to follow the same
general outline – Recruitment, Training and Development, Retention and Leadership
– through the interview, starting with recruitment.

Recruitment
We’re interested not only in what you say about your own organisation but also about
the profession generally.
What would you consider to be the major issues relating to recruitment in the archives
sector today?
Possible prompts:
1. What do you look for in a recruit (immediate effectiveness / potential)?
2. Have you experienced any problems in recruiting staff of the right calibre? Has
   the number of applicants you have received changed over recent years?
3. What do you think may be causing these problems?
4. What strategies would you suggest to help attract suitable recruits?
5. Can changing recruitment and development strategies in themselves bring about
   organisational change, if change is needed?
6. Are short-term contracts effecting recruitment?
7. How competitive do you think the salaries within the archives sector are when
   compared to other professions? Has the competitiveness of the archives
   profession changed over the last decade?
8. Have you experienced any differences in your organisations ability to recruit
   archivists, records managers, and conservators?
9. How well do you think the profession is promoted to potential candidates?
10. Who do you think should be responsible for promoting the archives professions?
11. Do you have work experience placements within your organisation? How do you
    think the placements influence people’s career choice about the archives
    professions?

Moving on now to

Employers’ Needs and course curriculum
Again, we would like to explore your views in relation to the wider profession as well
as your own service.
What in your opinion are the main issues in relation to employers’ needs and course
content?
Possible prompts:
1. What if any changes would you like to see?
2. Do you think there is a difference between the skills that employers and educators
   believe to be important?
3. What is your current contact with the archives schools? Can you think of any ways that your organisation could create links with archive schools?

4. What in your view would be the most fruitful areas of co-operation?

5. Do Archivists / Record Managers / conservators need to be educated to current levels?

6. What level of experience do you think is necessary for people to progress onto an archives / records management course?

Turning to

Training and Development

Again, from your own organisation’s perspective but also bearing in mind the needs of the sector as a whole.

What are the objectives of training and development in your organisation?

Possible prompts:

1. What if any constraints on the development of junior professionals would you identify within your service?

2. Have funding limitations prevented people from going on courses? How do you prioritise this?

3. What training and development initiatives would you like to see in place?

4. What training is there for staff at different levels for management skills?

5. What training is there for staff at different levels for leadership skills?

6. What difficulties if any do you think people face obtaining training / education to become a qualified Archivist / Records Manager / Conservator?

7. What do you think the impact of suspending the Society of Archivists course will be?

8. How does your organisation encourage Continuous Professional Development?

Now with regard to

Retention

What would you consider to be the major issues in relation to staff retention in your organisation? Again, we’re also interested in your views concerning the archives sector generally?

Possible prompts:

1. What strategies would you identify as being particularly effective in encouraging staff loyalty?

2. To what extent would you agree / disagree with the view that the public service has changed?

3. How do you seek to balance individual development and benefit to your organisation?

4. What do you think are the main factors that cause people to leave the profession?

5. What is you induction / CPD programme for new recruits?

6. Do you operate a ‘buddy’ or mentoring scheme?

7. How do you think career structures could be changed to encourage employees to stay in the profession? Prompt – succession planning, consultancy, cross-sectoral working.
Finally the issue of **Leadership**

*Not only in your own service but in the profession. Please tell me about leadership in archives today?*

**Possible prompts:**

1. *What do you understand by the term ‘leadership’?*
2. *How would you characterise leadership in the archives sector?*
3. *Do you have any leadership development initiatives in your authority?*
4. *How applicable are strategies used by other organisations in the public and private sector e.g. fast tracking, and paid traineeships a) to your organisation, and b) to the archives sector as a whole?*
5. *How do you think different management styles impact on staff?*

**Other issues**

- What is the connection if any between the Human Resources strategy and the aims of the parent organisation?
- How would you describe the relationship between archivists, conservators and records managers?

**IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WISH TO ADD?**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!!!
Appendix C

1. Focus group guide for middle managers

Introduction

- Thank you for coming
- Introduce selves/roles/group
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study – identify the main goals/objectives of the meeting
- Time available
- Permission to tape the focus group discussion
- Permission to quote / Confidentiality / respect for others, what is said in the this room stays in the room
- Access to the report

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this group interview. Agree on ground rules (try not to talk over each other, consideration of others – allow quieter people to speak, try to keep focussed).

We are interested in your perspectives on career choice, recruitment, training and development, employers’ needs, retention and leadership in relation to the archives professions.

- ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE START

Career choice

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What attracted you to a career in the archives sector?
   a. How do you think the archives sector compares to other professions that you could have gone into?
   b. Do you see a job in archives as a ‘job for life’?
   c. Will this sector be able to meet your long term career aims?
   d. Do you think you will stay in the archives sector for the rest of your career/

Q2: What are the good and bad points of working for the public/private sector?
   a. Would you prefer to work for a public or private sector organisation?

Q3: How well do you think the archives sector is promoted?
   a. What do you think the image of the archives sector is like?
   b. How do you think people who are outside the archives sector would describe it?
   c. How would you characterise the archives sector?
   d. How well do you think careers services promote the archives professions?
   e. Who do you think should have responsibility for promoting the archives sector?
f. How do you think your organisation could help to promote the archives sector?

Q4: Thinking back to before you entered the profession – Does your career so far meet your expectations?

Q5: For those of you who are archivists would you consider becoming a records manager?

Q6: How easy do you think it would be for you to change to a different profession? Do you think you have developed easily transferable skills?

Recruitment

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What factors are/were important to you when looking for a job?
   a. What would deter you from working for a particular organisation?

Q2: Do you think that the competitiveness of a career in archives has changed over the last 10 years in comparison to other professions?

Q3: What do you think are the positive and negative effects of short-term contracts?

Q4: There have been a number of strategic jobs advertised recently that have received very few applicants – would you consider applying for one of these jobs?

Q5: Do you think there has been an increase in demand for archives professionals?
   a. Do you think this will be consistent over time?

Retention

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: Anyone could leave their job tomorrow, what keeps you doing yours? I would like you to think about positive and negative aspects.

Q2: What factors do you think could cause people to leave the archives sector?
   a. What are the main reasons for leaving the professions amongst the people that you know?
   b. What factors could cause you to leave you to leave the profession?
   c. How do you think the salaries in the archives sector compare to other professions?
   d. The archives sector has been described as stagnant, to what extent would you agree with this description?
Employers Needs

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Your education and pre-course training

Q1: How long ago was it that you qualified?
Q2: Do you think your archives course adequately prepared you for the immediate requirements of your first professional post?
   a. Did it help prepare you for the long-term requirements of your post?
   b. How could the course content be changed to better meet your short and long term needs?
   c. Do you think the course should run be over two years? What barriers would there be to this?
   d. Do you think undergraduate courses should be developed?
   e. Are the newly qualified people applying for jobs in your organisation meeting your needs?
   f. How would you change the courses to make them better meet employers needs?

Q3. Do you think current education and post-qualification training provided the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet employers’ needs?
Possible prompts:
   a. Do you feel there was a good balance on courses between core and general skills?
   b. What do you think employers value more? Which do you think are more useful?
   c. Do you think pre-course experience helps people to meet employers’ needs?
   d. How high do you think the quality of work experience placements are?
   e. Does it prepare people for the realities of the workplace?

Q4: Do you help manage people who are doing pre-course experience with you?
   a. Do you have any difficulties with this?
   b. How is this work experience structured?

Training and Development

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What is the training and development programme like within your organisation?
   a. Does the training and development programme meet your needs
   b. Do you have a structured programme for CPD?
   c. What is the induction process like? How could this be improved?
   d. Do you have a buddy or a mentoring scheme in operation?
   e. What is your staff appraisal system like?
Q2: What do you think your most important training needs will be – short-term and long-term?

Q3: In an ideal world what would expect from an organisation to provide in terms of training and development?

Leadership

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What does leadership mean to you?
Q2: What do you think makes a good leader?
Q3: When do you think is the best time to identify leadership potential?
Q4: Do you think if your leadership potential was assessed when you applied for your first professional post this would have been accurate?
Q5: Do you think fast-tracking could work in the archives sector?
Q6: How do you think you could develop your leadership skills?
Q7: What training have you received in terms of leadership skills?
Q8: Do you think there is a lack of leadership potential in the sector?

Any additional areas for clarification.
Ask P if they have anything to add.

THANK YOU FOR COMING
2. **Focus group guide for Records Managers**

**Introduction**

- Thank you for coming
- Introduce selves/roles/group
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study – identify the main goals/objectives of the meeting
- Time available
- Permission to tape the focus group discussion
- Permission to quote / Confidentiality / respect for others, what is said in the this room stays in the room
- Access to the report

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this group interview. Agree on ground rules (try not to talk over each other, consideration of others – allow quieter people to speak, try to keep focussed).

We are interested in your perspectives on career choice, recruitment, training and development, employers’ needs, retention and leadership in relation to the archives professions.

**B. ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE START**

**Career choice**

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

**Q1:** What attracted you to a career in records management?
   a. How do you think records management compares to other professions you could have gone into?
   b. Do you see a career in records management as a ‘job for life’?
   c. Can you see yourself staying in records management for the rest of your career?
   d. Will think sector be able to meet your long-term career aims?

**Q2:** What are the good and bad points of working for the public/private sector?
   a. Would you prefer to work for a public or private sector organisation?

**Q3:** How well do you think the archives and records management sector is promoted?
   a. What do you think the image of the archives/record management sector is like?
   b. How do you think people outside the records management sector would describe it?
   c. How would you characterise the archives/records management sector?
d. How well do you think the careers services promote the archives/records management professions?
e. Who do you think should have responsibility for promoting the archives/record management sector?
e. How do you think your organisation could help to promote the archives/records management sector?

Q5: Thinking back to before you entered the profession – Does your career so far meet your expectations?

**Recruitment**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What factors are/were important to you when looking for a job?
   a. What would deter you from working for a particular organisation?

Q2: Do you think that the competitiveness of a career in archives has changed over the last 10 years in comparison to other professions?

Q3: What do you think are the positive and negative effects of short-term contracts?

Q4: A number of strategic jobs have been advertised recently – but they have only received a small number of applicants – would you consider applying for a strategic job?

**Retention**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: Anyone could leave their job tomorrow – what keeps you doing yours? What factors could cause you to leave you to leave the profession?
Q2: What factors would prevent you from leaving your job
Q3: What factors do you think could cause people to leave the profession?
   a. What are the main reasons for leaving the professions amongst the people that you know?
   b. How do you think the salaries in records management compare to other professions?
   c. The archives/record management profession has been described as stagnant, how far would you agree/disagree with this description?
Employers Needs

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Your education and pre-course training

Q1: Do you think your archives course adequately prepared you for the immediate requirements of your first professional post?
   a. Did it help prepare you for the long-term requirements of your post?
   b. How could the course content be changed to better meet your short and long term needs?
   c. Do you think the course should run be over two years? What barriers would there be to this?
   d. Do you think undergraduate courses should be developed?
   e. How would you change these courses to make them better meet employers needs?

Q2. Do you think your education and post-qualification training has provided you with the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet employers’ needs for the jobs you wish to apply for?
   Possible prompts:
   a. Do you believe your course prepared you adequately for the job market?
   b. Do you feel there was a good balance on your course between core and general skills?
   c. What do you think employers value more? Which do you value more?
   d. Do you think your pre-course experience helped you to meet employers’ needs?
   e. How high do you think the quality of work experience placements are?
   f. Did it prepare you for the realities of the workplace?

Q3: Do you help manage people who are doing pre-course experience with you?
   a. Do you have any difficulties with this?
   b. How is this work experience structured?

Q4: Do you think there has been an increase in demand for archives/records management professionals?
   a. Do you think this will be consistent over time?

Training and Development

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What is the training and development programme like within your organisation?
   a. Does the training provision meet your needs
   b. Do you have a structured programme for CPD?
   c. What was your induction process like? How could this be improved?
d. Did you have a buddy or a mentor?

e. What is your staff appraisal system like?

Q2: What do you think your most important training needs will be – short-term and long-term?

Q3: In an ideal world what would you expect from an organisation in terms of training and development?

Q4: Do you think the skills that you have obtained through education, employment, and training could be easily transferred to another profession?

Leadership

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What does the term leadership mean to you?

Q2: What do you think makes a good leader?

Q3: When do you think is the best time to identify leadership potential?

Q4: Do you think if your leadership potential was assessed when you applied for your first professional post this would have been accurate?

Q5: How do you think you could develop your leadership skills?

Q6: What training have you received in terms of leadership skills?

Q7: To what extent would you agree with the statement that there is a lack of leadership potential within the archives/records management sector?

Additional questions and areas for clarification

Ask P if they have anything to add?

THANK YOU FOR COMING
3. Focus group guide for newly qualified professionals

Introduction

- Thank you for coming
- Introduce selves/roles/group
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study – identify the main goals/objectives of the meeting
- Time available
- Permission to tape the focus group discussion
- Permission to quote / Confidentiality / respect for others, what is said in the this room stays in the room
- Access to the report

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this group interview. Agree on ground rules (try not to talk over each other, consideration of others – allow quieter people to speak, try to keep focussed).

We are interested in your perspectives on career choice, recruitment, training and development, employers’ needs, retention and leadership in relation to the archives professions.

- ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE START

Career choice

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What attracted you to a career in the archives sector?
   a. How do you think the archives sector compares to other professions that you could have gone into?
   b. Do you see a job in archives as a ‘job for life’?
   c. Will this sector be able to meet your long-term career aims?
   d. Do you think you will stay in the archives sector for the rest of your working life?

Q2: What are the good and bad points of working for the public/private sector?
   a. Would you prefer to work for a public or private sector organisation?

Q3: How well do you think the archives sector is promoted?
   a. What do you think the image of the archives sector is like?
   b. What do you think the stereotypical image of the archives sector is like?
   c. How would you characterise the archives sector?
   d. How well do you think the careers services promote the archives professions?
   e. Who do you think should have responsibility for promoting the archives sector?
   f. How do you think your organisation could help to promote the archives sector?
Q4: Thinking back to before you entered the profession – Does your career so far meet your expectations?

Employers Needs

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Your education and pre-course training

Q1: Do you think your archives course adequately prepared you for the immediate requirements of your first professional post?
   a. Did it help prepare you for the long-term requirements of your post?
   b. How could the course content be changed to better meet your short and long term needs?
   c. Do you think the course should run be over two years? What barriers would there be to this?
   d. Do you think undergraduate courses should be developed?
   e. How would you change these courses to make them better meet employer needs?

Q2. Do you think your education and post-qualification training has provided you with the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet employers’ needs for the jobs you wish to apply for?
   Possible prompts:
   a. Do you believe your course prepared you adequately for the job market?
   b. Do you feel there was a good balance on your course between core and general skills?
   c. What do you think employers value more?
   d. Do you think your pre-course experience helped you to meet employers’ needs?
   e. How high do you think the quality of work experience placements are?
   f. Did it prepare you for the realities of the workplace?

Q3: Do you help manage people who are doing pre-course experience with you?
   a. Do you have any difficulties with this?
   b. How is this work experience structured?

Q4: Do you think there has been an increase in demand for archives professionals?
   a. Do you think this will be consistent over time?

Training and Development

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What is the training and development programme like within your organisation?
   a. Do you have a structured programme for CPD?
b. What was your induction process like? How could this be improved?
c. Did you have a buddy or a mentor?
d. What is your staff appraisal system like?
Q2: What do you think your most important training needs will be – short-term and long-term?
Q3: In an ideal world what would expect from an organisation to provide in terms of training and development?
Q4: Do you think the skills that you have obtained through education, employment, and training could be easily transferred to another profession?

**Recruitment**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What factors are/were important to you when looking for a job?
   a. What would deter you from working for a particular organisation?
Q2: Do you think that the competitiveness of a career in archives has changed over the last 10 years in comparison to other professions?
Q3: What do you think are the positive and negative effects of short-term contracts?

**Retention**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: Do you think a job in archives is a job for life?
   a. What factors keep you in your job?
   b. What do you like about your job?
   c. What factors would prevent you from leaving your job?
Q2: What are the good points about your job when you compare it to other things you could be doing?
Q3: What factors do you think could cause people to leave the archives sector?
   a. What are the main reasons for leaving the professions amongst the people that you know?
   b. What factors could cause you to leave you to leave the profession?
   c. How do you think the salaries in the archives sector compare to other professions?
   d. The archives profession has been described as stagnant, do you agree with this description?

**Leadership**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What does leadership mean to you?
Q2: What do you think makes a good leader?
Q3: How do you think you could develop your leadership skills
Q4: When do you think is the best time to identify leadership potential?
Q5: Do you think if your leadership potential was assessed when you applied for your first professional post this would have been accurate?
Q6: What training have you received in terms of leadership skills?
Q7: To what extent would you agree with the statement that there is a lack of leadership potential within the archives sector?

Additional areas for clarification
Ask P if they have anything they wish to add

THANK YOU FOR COMING
4. Focus group guide for course directors

Introduction

- Thank you for coming
- Introduce selves/roles/group
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study – identify the main goals/objectives of the meeting
- Time available
- Permission to tape the focus group discussion
- Permission to quote / Confidentiality
- Access to the report

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this group interview. Agree on ground rules (try not to talk over each other, consideration of others – allow quieter people to speak, try to keep focussed).

We are interested in your perspectives on career choice, recruitment, training and development, employers’ needs, retention and leadership in relation to the archives professions.

- ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE START

Recruitment of students onto your courses

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What characteristics do you look for in potential students?
Possible prompts:
  a. Do you think the characteristics of people applying for places on your courses have changed over recent years? How?
  b. Have the numbers of people applying for your courses decreased?
  c. What is the educational background of your students? Do you think this is a good or bad thing?
  d. How do you think people from different demographics/backgrounds could be attracted onto your courses?
  e. How do you think people from different educational backgrounds could be attracted into the sector?
  f. What do you think are the positive and negative effects of short-term contracts?

The curriculum

Q1: Have you made any changes to your courses content or structure recently? What prompted you to do this?
a. What compromises have you made when deciding what your course content should be?
b. How do you prioritise what your course content should be?
c. Do you think the course should run be over two years? What barriers would there be to this?
d. Do you think undergraduate courses should be developed?

Q2: Do you think that your course adequately prepares your students for the immediate requirements of their first professional post?

Career choice

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What factors do you think attract people to the archives sector?
   a. How do you think the archives sector compares to other professions that you students could have gone into?
   b. Do you think that your students see a job in archives as a ‘job for life’?
   c. Do you think that the archives sector will be able to meet your students long-term career aspirations?

Q2: What factors do you think deter people from entering the archives sector?
   a. What difficulties do students face when trying to enter the archives sector?
   b. How do you think the salaries in the archives sector compare to other professions?

Q3: How well do you think the archives sector is promoted?
   a. What do you think the image of the archives sector is like?
   b. How well do you think the careers services promote the archives professions?
   c. Who do you think should have responsibility for promoting the archives sector?
   d. How do you think your organisation could help to promote the archives sector?

Q4: What factors do you think are important to students when they are looking for their first professional post?

Employers Needs

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1. Do you think your students will have the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet employers’ needs by the end of the course?
Possible prompts:
   a. Do you believe your course has prepared your students adequately for the job market?
   b. Do you feel there is a good balance on your course between core and general skills? Do you teach management skills?
   c. What do you think employers value more?
d. Do you think students’ pre-course experience will help them to meet employers’ needs?

e. How high do you think the quality of work experience placements are?

f. Do you think it prepares students for the realities of the workplace?

Q2: How do you assess employers’ needs?

a. Does this influence the course content?

Q3: How much contact do you have with different types of employer?

a. Do you think there is a need to increase contact with employers?

Q4: Do you think there has been an increase in demand for archives professionals?

b. Do you think this will be consistent over time?

Training and Development

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What is the best way to prepare students for the changing demands of the workplace?

a. Would you like to have any input to the training courses that are available?

Q2: Would you consider running top up modules for people post-qualification?

Q3: What do you think your students’ most important training needs will be once in the workplace – short-term and long-term?

Q4: In an ideal world what would expect from an organisation to provide in terms of training and development?

Q5: Is CPD important, should it lead to a professional qualification/standard?

Retention

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: Thinking about your students what would an employer need to do to keep them within an organisation?

Possible prompts:

a. What would make them leave and organisation?

Leadership

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What does leadership mean to you?

Q2: When do you think is the best time to identify leadership potential?

Q3: Do you look for leadership potential when you select people for your courses?

Q4: What training do you give in terms of leadership skills?

Q5: What training do you think students will need once they enter the workplace?
Q6: To what extent would you agree with the statement that there is a lack of leadership potential within the archives sector?
Q: Do you think it would be possible to operate a fast tracking scheme within the archives sector?
Q: Do you think assessing the leadership skills of students when they enter employment would provide an accurate assessment of their long-term potential?

Any areas for clarification
Do they have any questions?

THANK YOU FOR COMING
5. **Focus group guide for students**

**Introduction**

- Thank you for coming
- Introduce selves/roles/group
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study – identify the main goals/objectives of the meeting
- Time available
- Permission to tape the focus group discussion
- Permission to quote / Confidentiality
- Access to the report

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this group interview. Agree on ground rules (try not to talk over each other, consideration of others – allow quieter people to speak, try to keep focussed).

We are interested in your perspectives on career choice, recruitment, training and development, employers’ needs, retention and leadership in relation to the archives professions.

- ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE START

**Career choice**

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: If you asked your friends to describe an archives professional, what would they say?
   a. Do you think this is accurate?

Q2: What attracted you to a career in archives?
   Possible prompts:
   a. How does a career in archives compare to other professions that you looked at?
   b. How does the career you are choosing compare to those of your peers?

Positives and Negatives

Q3: What factors could have deterred you from entering the archives professions?
   Possible prompts:
   a. What difficulties did you face when trying to enter the profession?
   b. How do you think the salaries in the archives sector compare to other areas?

**Recruitment**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.
Q1: When you start looking for a job what characteristics would you look for in an organisation? e.g. size, salary scale, career development programs
Possible prompts:
   a. What would deter you from working for a particular organisation?
   b. Would you prefer to work for a public or private sector organisation?
   c. What do you think are the positive and negative effects of short-term contracts?

Employers Needs

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1. From the job advertisements you have seen, do you think you will have the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet employers’ needs by the end of the course?
Possible prompts:
   a. Do you believe your course has prepared you adequately for the job market?
   b. Do you feel there is a good balance on your course between core and general skills?
   c. What do you think employers value more?
   d. Do you think your pre-course experience will help you meet employers’ needs?
   e. Can you tell me about the good and bad points of your work experience?
   f. Do you think it has prepared you for the realities of the workplace?

Training and Development

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1. In an ideal world what would expect from an organisation in terms of training and development?
Possible prompts:
   a. What do you think your most important training needs will be in the workplace – short-term and long-term?

Retention

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1. In terms of your long-term career what would an employer need to do to keep you within their organisation?
Possible prompts:
   a. What would make you leave and organisation?
Leadership

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1. What does leadership mean to you?
Q2. When do you think is the best time to identify leadership potential?
Q3. What training do you hope to receive in terms of leadership skills?

THANK YOU FOR COMING
6. **Focus group guide for Conservators**

**Introduction**

- Thank you for coming
- Introduce selves/roles/group
- Brief reminder about the focus of the study – identify the main goals/objectives of the meeting
- Time available
- Permission to tape the focus group discussion
- Permission to quote / Confidentiality / respect for others, what is said in the this room stays in the room
- Access to the report

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this group interview. Agree on ground rules (try not to talk over each other, consideration of others – allow quieter people to speak, try to keep focussed).

We are interested in your perspectives on career choice, recruitment, training and development, employers’ needs, retention and leadership in relation to the archives professions.

C. ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE START

**Career choice**

We would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

**Q1:** What attracted you to becoming a conservator?
   a. How do you think conservation compares to other professions that you could have gone into?
   b. Do you see being a conservator as a ‘job for life’?
   c. Will this profession/sector meet your long term career aims?
   d. How do you see your careers progressing?

**Q2:** What are the good and bad points of working for the public/private sector?
   a. Would you prefer to work for a public or private sector organisation?

**Q3:** How well do you think the archives sector is promoted as a career?
   a. How do you think people outside the profession view archives?
   b. How would you characterise the archives sector?
   c. What do you think the image of the archives sector is like to people who don’t work within it?
   d. How well do you think careers services promote the archives professions?
   e. How did you find out about the conservation profession?
   f. Who do you think should have responsibility for promoting the archives sector?
g. How do you think your organisation could help to promote the archives sector?

**Recruitment**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What factors are/were important to you when looking for a job?
   a. What would deter you from working for a particular organisation?
Q2: Do you think that the competitiveness of a career in archives and conservation has changed over the last 10 years in comparison to other professions?
Q3: What do you think are the positive and negative effects of short-term contracts?

**Employers Needs**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

**Your education and pre-course training**

Q1: How did you become qualified to work as a conservator?
Q2: Do you think your conservation course adequately prepared you for the immediate and long-term requirements of your first professional post?
   a. Did it help prepare you for the long-term requirements of your post?
   b. How could the course content be changed to better meet your short and long term needs?
Q3: Do you think your education and post-qualification training has provided you with the skills, knowledge and abilities to meet employers’ needs for the jobs you wish to apply for?
   Possible prompts:
   a. Do you feel there was a good balance on your course between core and general skills?
   b. What do you think employers value more? Which do you think are more important?
   c. Do you think your pre-course experience helped you to meet employers’ needs?
   d. How high do you think the quality of work experience placements are?
   e. Did it prepare you for the realities of the workplace?
   f. How would you change these courses to make them better meet employers needs?

Q4: Do you help manage people who are doing pre-course experience with you?
   a. Do you have any difficulties with this?
   b. How is this work experience structured?
   c. How do you think these placements influence peoples career choice?

Q5: Do you think there has been an increase in demand for archives professionals, and more specifically conservators?
a. Do you think this will be consistent over time?

**Training and Development**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What is the training and development programme like within your organisation?
   a. Does the training and development programme meet your needs?
   b. Have you experienced any constraints on development/training?
   c. Do you have a structured programme for CPD?
   d. What was your induction process like? How could this be improved?
   e. Did you have a buddy or a mentor?
   f. What is your staff appraisal system like?
Q2: What do you think your most important training needs will be – short-term and long-term?
Q3: In an ideal world what would you expect from an organisation to provide in terms of training and development?

**Retention**

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What factors help to keep you within your current role?
Q2: What are the main factors that help to minimise staff turnover within conservation professionals?
Q3: What factors do you think could cause people to leave the conservation sector?
   c. What are the main reasons for leaving the profession amongst the people that you know?
   d. What factors could cause you to leave you to leave the profession?
   e. How do you think conservators' salaries compare to other professions?
Q4: Thinking back to before you entered the profession – Does your career so far meet your expectations?
Q5: How easy do you think it would be for you to change to a different profession? Do you think you have developed transferable skills?
Q6: The archives sector has been described as ‘stagnant’, to what extent do you agree with this description?
Leadership

Again, we would like to approach the questions in terms of your expectations, your actual experience and what you would like to see.

Q1: What does leadership mean to you?
Q2: How would you characterise leadership in the archives sector/conservation?
Q3: What do you think makes a good leader?
Q4: When do you think is the best time to identify leadership potential?
Q5: Do you think if your leadership potential was assessed when you applied for your first professional post this would have been accurate?
Q6: What training have you received in terms of leadership skills?
Q7: To what extent would you agree with the statement that there is a lack of leadership potential within the archives sector?
Q8: How do you think you could develop your leadership skills?

Other issues
Q1: How do you think archivists view conservators? Are you aware of any antagonism?

Do you have any questions or anything you would like to raise before we finish this session?

THANK YOU FOR COMING
Appendix D

The Archives Workforce Study: project workshop
British Library, London, Wednesday 9th July 2003

Dear Colleague

I am writing to thank you for agreeing to participate in the above event, and I enclose a booklet for use on the day. As it contains a large amount of detail it is being distributed in advance to all delegates, in order to give you the time to read the themes and consider the issues raised. Please bring the booklet and any notes you have made to the workshop.

On the day, you will be divided into three groups to discuss the following three major themes that have emerged from the research:

- Employers needs and the course curriculum, and Training and Development
- Career choice, recruitment and selection, and the retention of professional staff
- Career aspirations and opportunities, and leadership and succession planning

Each group will be asked to report back on one theme only, although you may have sufficient time to discuss each one.

Under each heading you will find a number of questions intended as a discussion guide, and a series of supporting quotations. These have been taken from the relevant literature, completed questionnaires, interviews and focus groups.

Thank you for your help, and I look forward to meeting you on the day.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Hartley and Margaret Turner

Encs.

Archives Workforce Study
Evaluation workshop
Wednesday 9th July 2003
British Library
London

Programme
N.B. Research staff will note the issues raised in discussion throughout the day, and the views expressed will be used to inform the final evaluation report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.30</td>
<td>Registration and coffee</td>
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| 11.00 – 11.15 | Welcome and introduction to the Archives Workforce Study  
|           | Bob Usherwood, University of Sheffield                                                    |
| 11.15 – 12.00 | Presentation of preliminary research findings  
|           | Ruth Hartley, University of Sheffield                                                     |
| 12.00 - 13.00 | Thematic group discussions¹  
|           | (tea and coffee available)                                                                |
| 13.00 - 13.45 | Lunch                                                                                     |
| 13.45 - 14.45 | Thematic group discussions continued  
|           | (tea and coffee available)                                                                |
| 14.45 - 15.45 | Plenary session: presentation of group discussions                                         |

¹ Delegates will be divided into groups to discuss major themes emerging from the research. Each group will be asked to report back on one theme only, although it is hoped that they will have time to discuss each one.
Archives Workforce Project

Workshop Booklet

July 9 2003

Ruth Hartley
Richard Proctor
Margaret Turner
Bob Usherwood
2 PROJECT OUTLINE

AIMS

This project will help the sector, recruit, retain, support and develop a workforce appropriate to its current and future needs. It will seek to create a coherent framework for future professional recruitment, education, training and development, and help to improve responsiveness to change. It will increase the amount and quality of information available to managers, educators, and selectors, leading to more effective decision-making. The study includes the following areas of investigation:

- **Employer’s Needs and the Curriculum.** To what extent do University curricula meet the needs of the market? What is the most appropriate way of combining theory and practice? How might educator/employer partnerships be developed? How does the curriculum influence attitudes to the service? How do the perceptions of educators and employers re skills differ? What are the core subjects for professional education in relation to pre-professional experience and post professional training?

- **Career Choice** What are the influences that determine students’ choice of career? How effectively is the profession promoted? How do careers advisors, graduates, undergraduates, and students on archives and record management courses, perceive the sector? How important are trainee schemes and work experience opportunities?

- **Recruitment and Selection** What is the extent of recruitment/selection difficulties? What are the employers’ perceptions of their causes? How do entry and subsequent salaries compare with those of alternative career opportunities? Has the relative competitiveness of a career in archives or records management changed over the past decade? Are there significant differences according to sector and or region? How are financial and other constraints on employers - e.g. the ‘Bidding culture’, short-term contracts, affecting the quality of the workforce? How might equal opportunities' requirements best be met?

- **The Retention of Professional Staff** What factors affect the retention and / or loss of staff in the archives and records management workforce? What is the experience of new professionals? How far are their expectations being met? What practical support is given for example with regard to induction?

- **Training and development.** How relevant to the archives and record management sector are strategies adopted by other organizations? What are the strengths and weaknesses of training and development initiatives currently adopted in the sector?

- **Career aspirations and opportunities** How might they be better-matched and professional stagnation be minimized?

- **Leadership and Succession Planning.** What are the leadership skills and personal attributes that are required if the sector is to respond positively to the challenges of the new century? How might such skills and attributes be best developed?

**Key elements of the study:**
- Review of the literature
- Questionnaires completed by senior practitioners
- Interview with senior practitioners
- Focus groups with students, newly qualified staff (less than 5 years into their career), middle managers, records managers, and conservators.
Workshop Discussion Group 1

Discussion topics:
Employer’s Needs and the Curriculum
Training and Development

Task: The Discussion Group is asked to consider the issues in the light of the progress report on the study presented at the workshop and, importantly, in the light of delegates’ own experience, and suggest possible strategies which might be implemented.

To start the discussion, a selection of quotations from the literature, completed questionnaires, from face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion is attached. A series of questions is posed below and the group is asked to formulate responses to these questions.

Research questions to be answered by this investigation

Training and Development
- How relevant to the archives and record management sector are strategies adopted by other organizations?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of training and development initiatives currently adopted in the sector?

Employers’ needs and the course curriculum
- To what extent do University curricula meet the needs of the market?
- What is the most appropriate way of combining theory and practice?
- How might educator/employer partnerships be developed?
- How does the curriculum influence attitudes to the service?
- How do the perceptions of educators and employers re skills differ?
- What are the core subjects for professional education in relation to pre-professional experience and post professional training?

Areas for discussion

Employers needs and the course curriculum

People:
- Do the people being recruited on the courses have the characteristics the sector needs?
- Is a history degree essential, or would we benefit from people from different backgrounds entering the archive professions?
- How can more people be attracted who are interested in a career in records management?
Organisations:
- Given that the courses cannot increase the content of their curriculum – should they continue to provide a general broad foundation or move towards more in depth specialist teaching?
- How could employers take more responsibility for providing/obtaining the specialist skills/knowledge they require?

Training and Development
- Management skills and leadership skills – should they be taught on the Masters courses or provided by employers post-qualification?
- Should a more rigorous CPD programme be introduced?
- Would it be beneficial to set up a mentoring scheme across the sector? How could it be implemented?
- How should ongoing professional training post-qualification be provided?
  - e.g. As specialist modules run by universities
  - e.g. Through training courses provided by the SoA
  - e.g. Sector skills councils
Workshop Discussion Group 2

Discussion Topics:
Career Choice
Recruitment and Selection
The Retention of professional staff

Task: The Discussion Group is asked to consider the issues in the light of the progress report on the study presented at the workshop and, importantly, in the light of delegates’ own experience, and suggest possible strategies which might be implemented.

To start the discussion, a selection of quotations from the literature, completed questionnaires, from face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion is attached. A series of questions is posed below and the group is asked to formulate responses to these questions.

Research questions to be answered by this investigation

Career choice
- What are the influences that determine students’ choice of career?
- How effectively is the profession promoted?
- How do careers advisors, graduates, undergraduates, and students on archives and record management courses, perceive the sector?
- How important are trainee schemes and work experience opportunities?

Recruitment and selection
- What is the extent of recruitment/selection difficulties?
- What are the employers’ perceptions of their causes?
- How do entry and subsequent salaries compare with those of alternative career opportunities?
- Has the relative competitiveness of a career in archives or records management changed over the past decade?
- Are there significant differences according to sector and or region?
- How are financial and other constraints on employers - e.g. the ‘Bidding culture’, short-term contracts, affecting the quality of the workforce?
- How might equal opportunities' requirements best be met?

The Retention of Professional Staff
- What factors affect the retention and / or loss of staff in the archives and records management workforce?
- What is the experience of new professionals?
- How far are their expectations being met?
- What practical support is given for example with regard to induction?
Areas for discussion

Career choice:
- How could people from different backgrounds (academic, demographic) be attracted to a career in archives?
- How can the attractiveness of a career in archives be improved?
- How can the promotion of archives as a career be improved?
- What could be done to eliminate barriers faced by people who want to enter the profession?
- Given the difficulties faced by students in terms of debt – should people be required to have pre-course experience?
- How can more people who want to become conservators and records managers be attracted into this sector?

Recruitment and Selection
- What factors make it difficult to recruit staff? How can these be remedied?
- Has the ‘quality’ of people entering the archive sector changed?
- Are there ‘quality issues’ in terms of the people applying for more senior posts or are people not receiving the development opportunities that they require?
- Given the discrepancy between the supply and demand of qualified archives professionals – what strategies can be used to cope with this situation?

The Retention of Professional Staff
- Is there a retention problem in the archives sector?
- How can factors that cause people to leave the archives sector be minimised? (e.g. relocation, lack of career progression)
- Is there a problem with negative retention in the archives sector? i.e. people who you want to leave, but don’t.
Workshop Discussion Group 3

Discussion topics:
- Career aspirations and opportunities
- Leadership
- Succession planning
- Fast-tracking

Task: The Discussion Group is asked to consider the issues in the light of the progress report on the study presented at the workshop and, importantly, in the light of delegates’ own experience, and suggest possible strategies which might be implemented.

To start the discussion, a selection of quotations from the literature, completed questionnaires, from face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion is attached. A series of questions is posed below and the group is asked to formulate responses to these questions.

Research questions to be answered by this investigation

Career aspirations and opportunities
How might they be better-matched and professional stagnation be minimized?

Leadership
- What are the leadership skills and personal attributes that are required if the sector is to respond positively to the challenges of the new century?
- How might such skills and attributes be best developed?

Areas for discussion

Career aspirations and opportunities
- How can factors that limit peoples career development be minimised?
- Do more ambitious people need to be attracted into the archives sector?
- What can be done to improve career opportunities in the archives sector? (specialisation, consultancy, integration with other professional areas e.g. museums, libraries)

Leadership
- Is there a lack of leadership potential or leadership development?
- Fast tracking to where – could fast-tracking work in the archives sector?
- Succession planning to where? How can there be succession planning when there is limited scope for career progression?
- How can leadership skills be developed in a small team – could succession planning or other strategies for staff development be used?
- How should the archives sector as a whole be led? – Which organisation(s) should be responsible for leading the archives sector? What should they provide in terms of leadership?

NB The original booklet also included quotes from interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires
Museums, libraries and archives connect people to knowledge and information, creativity and inspiration. MLA is leading the drive to unlock this wealth, for everyone.

Current news, developments and information on our activities are available to view or download from our website.

www.mla.gov.uk

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