

**ARA International Group: Terms of Reference – DRAFT
November 2023**

Purpose of the Group:

- This ARA Group will provide a focal point and forum for UK or Irish recordkeeping professionals working overseas, and for overseas recordkeeping professionals working to UK or Irish standards.
- The Aims for the Group are to provide as follows:
 - ❖ To provide a focal point for professionals to connect and network with others working or based outside the UK and Ireland
 - ❖ To provide opportunities to share experiences, best practice and discuss shared knowledge of working internationally and often in professional/geographical remote areas
 - ❖ To provide opportunities to identify and discuss shared issues or challenges that are faced by working overseas including:
 - Availability of technology and internet connectivity issues
 - Lack of resources (financially, staffing, or otherwise)
 - Skills & Learning gaps
 - Ability to progress professional development how it aligns with national/geographical contexts
 - Unique situation of 'lone working' if applicable – legislation (data protection, freedom of information, public access act), environment, storage areas, advocacy and engagement, equipment challenges, 'jack of all trades'
 - ❖ To provide and share training and learning opportunities to support International members to develop professionals and target skills gaps (including basic conservation, managing mixed collections, digital preservation)
 - ❖ To develop and share case studies of achievements and challenges of international professionals to raise awareness and promote their unique situation
 - ❖ To communicate regular updates about the Archives and Records Association and the recordkeeping sector in UK and Ireland (including information about best practice, standards, sector news or updates)
 - ❖ To provide effective and timely communication within the Group membership, including regular updates and information sharing via social media and web resources
 - ❖ To reflect and support on what challenges might be faced by the membership so that they can access resources and participate in this ARA Group (provide hybrid/online option, take into account time differences and IT software availability)
 - ❖ To provide membership with support for engaging with ARA activities and its professional development scheme, to feel connected with the profession in the UK and Ireland
 - ❖ To collaborate with ARA Sections/Groups/Regions and external organisations to fulfil the aims of the Section

Proposed Activities/Training for the first year:

- Provide opportunity for Connections Chat – networking opportunity
- Formulate case studies for international professionals – share experience and promote their unique recordkeeping situations, contexts, challenges and achievements
- Undertake membership mapping to identify spread of membership and possible identify mentoring/connection opportunities

- Identify and provide training on some challenges listed above – depending on the topic we could do a joint training session with another ARA Group or Section (ARA SAM and managing mixed collections, ARA South West Region and their Conservation Training for Archivists etc)
- Produce guidance for ARA on how to support International members – including considerations on how to set up training events (check whether they can have videos on (if internet is poor) or the time difference for events)
- Provide and gather resources and support for overseas professionals - guidance for sole professionals, what professional development opportunities there are in their area, or links to financial or sponsorship opportunities/bursaries

Membership:

- To be a member of the ARA International Group you will need to be a member of ARA (as any category of member).
- There are no restrictions on numbers
- Non-ARA members are welcome to attend training events, as long as spaces are available and at an increased attendance fee

Accountability:

- The Chair of the Committee will keep in regular contact with and work closely with the ARA Board member for Sections and Groups in order to represent the interests of the Section's members
- The Training Officer(s) will report to ARA LED (Learning Group) and will attend LED meetings
- The Section will submit an annual report for the previous year's activities, as well as an annual budget request and an annual plan for the year ahead

Governance:

- The Group will be run by a Committee of officers (minimum Chair and Secretary) (see Elections below)
- The Chair will lead overall activity and planning in line with the Aims and Objectives / Annual plan
- The Chair will chair formal business meetings
- The Secretary, Chair and committee will generate topics for the agenda and training events, following regular consultation with the Section's membership
- The Group Secretary will circulate meeting papers in good time before meetings, take minutes, arrange business meetings and arrange nominations on an annual basis for Section officers
- The Group Chair takes responsibility for any allocated budget, and can delegate this to a Treasurer who will keep budgetary oversight, sign officers' expenses forms (along with the Chair) and send annual budget requests to the ARA Board member for Sections and Groups
- The Group Training Officer(s) will arrange and publicise training events, including those arranged with other ARA Sections, Groups, Nations or Regions and/or relevant non-ARA groups and associations
- Other committee roles may be filled as and when required e.g. Comms/Social Media Officer; Officer(s) Without Portfolio

- Sub groups may occasionally be convened, if any special projects emerge which would benefit from this approach. These may include invited non-ARA members with relevant experience.

Election of Officers:

- All individuals for the first year will be co-opted to the Committee until confirmed and voted in the AGM in the UK Spring (July/August).
- All Committee roles will be for a year's term, dated from election at the AGM.
- Officers may not serve more than three consecutive terms i.e. maximum of three years on the committee.
- Officer roles will be advertised when vacancies occur i.e. when a role is contested.
- The Committee will make appointments for new officer vacancies following advertising by and submission of Expressions of Interest to the Secretary (or Chair in the first year)
- Where an Officer is not in communication with the Committee and/or Sections and Groups' Board member for a period of three months, the Committee is permitted to advertise the vacancy. A replacement officer may be appointed for the remainder of the year leading up to the AGM, when the vacancy will be filled.

Meetings and Events:

- Business meetings will be organised by the Section's committee, including an annual AGM, and will usually take place alongside Section events (incl training)
- The format of meetings and events will vary, depending on the planned outcome e.g. formal business meeting, lecture-style training event, group discussions
- ARA members who are not members of the Section are welcome to attend meetings and events, and can also vote at officer elections
- Non-ARA members and guests may be invited to meetings by the Chair e.g. as paying delegates for advertised training events; as speakers for training events; as part of consulting other parts of heritage sector on best practice etc.
- Non-ARA members may not vote at formal business meetings

Sharing of information and resources:

- Section members will share information and resources via email, website, newsletter, social media and any other relevant means
- Personal data will be held in compliance with the ARA's GDPR policy and procedures

Review:

- The Group will review its Aims and Objectives on a yearly basis, in line with ARA best practice, in order to maintain relevance and value to members and accountability to the Board
- The Section's Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years, in line with the requirements of the ARA's Byelaws, November 2017

Chloe Anderson-Wheatley, Chair