

Contribution to the profession statement

Please provide a statement outlining your contribution to the profession

My contribution to the profession has involved active participation in professional groups, leadership and support of individuals at different career stages. There have been challenges which I have not always handled as well as I would have liked but there have also been significant achievements that have enabled others to build on my experience.

The main contribution I feel I have made to the profession is by mentoring and supporting individuals in their careers. Since 2006 I have mentored five registration candidates (one withdrawn, three successful, one current); one foundation candidate (current); two distance learning students; supported informally four other distance learning students; and peer-mentored two colleagues on the Fellowship pilot. I set up a work experience programme for people exploring the option of entering record-keeping professions and the measure of its success is not only in the number who went on to a record-keeping career (about 20 people) but also those who realised that it was not the right career for them (8 people).

I also contributed by participating in a number of professional groups. My long-term commitment to continuing professional development (CPD) led to my becoming a member of the ARA CPD Working Group from June 2011 until March 2013 and then a pilotee on the new scheme from 2013 onwards. I am a member of the Scottish Records Association and I represented the Business Archives Council Scotland in the development of the Scottish National Archives Policy in 1999. I also contributed to the development of Archives Accreditation, through the initial on-line discussion boards and the pilot, and locally I led the archives team in achieving archives accreditation

While I was a local authority archivist I was an active member of ASLAWG (Archivists in Scottish Local Authorities Working Group) and served as Secretary for three years. Through ASLAWG I helped colleagues with compliance issues, offering templates for data protection forms, alerting them to changes in Building Standards legislation affecting access to records, discussing Re-use of Public Sector Information compliance, and contributing to various small working groups on closure periods for common records, digital preservation and collecting agreements.

I was chair of the Society of Archivists Scotland for two years. This coincided with an early decision by a local authority to transfer its archives into a culture and sports trust, so I was involved in meeting the senior management and others in trying to ensure that the archivist was supported and that the specific needs of the archives collections were understood. This was a challenging situation for all concerned and our contributions did not have as effective an impact as we had hoped. When the same decision was taken in my own local authority four years later, I learned from this experience and wrote clauses in the Collections Agreement to protect the collections, which were then provided by the Keeper as an example of best practice to other local archives services in the same situation.

Outside the normal professional network and my salaried role, I was appointed a board member of a national body with charitable status. This role gave me opportunities to work with archaeologists and architects and to represent the archival sector to other professionals within the built heritage sector. It also allowed me to influence at a strategic level the development of a national collection and gave me opportunities to influence the Keeper and other colleagues in how they viewed that national body.

Overall I have been fortunate to have had many opportunities to participate in professional activities and contribute to developments. Going forward I am now a member of the ARA Legislation and Standards Working Group, I am continuing to mentor and I am contributing to training others by tutoring a post-graduate module.