

“Preserving the past, informing the future”

National Meteorological Archive Volunteering Policy

Mission Statement

"The National Meteorological Library and Archive (NMLA) seeks to preserve, in perpetuity, records relating to the national memory of the weather in both paper and also digital formats. It exists to collect, catalogue and preserve in accordance with national and international standards, and make publicly available documents, both physical and electronic, relating to the collection of meteorological data concerning the surface, marine and upper air environments of the British Isles and the wider world as created by the Meteorological Office and its antecedents. Our collections (both published and archival) enable the research community and the general public to learn about the UK's weather and climatology and to access information that helps them to understand the science and history of meteorology."

This policy:

- Formally acknowledges and supports the role of volunteers
- Sets out a policy to ensure good working practices
- Defines the rights and responsibilities of NMLA volunteers
- Encourages and enables the involvement of volunteers

Use of Volunteers

The National Meteorological Library and Archive welcomes applications from volunteers via the Met Office Volunteer Co-operation Programme (VCP). Volunteering in the Archives is not considered as a money-saving activity or a substitute for appropriate staffing levels; rather, it provides enrichment for volunteers and ultimately added value archive users. Volunteers gain useful work experience, develop new skills, and have an opportunity to work with qualified archivists and meteorologists.

Volunteer Programme

- Anyone interested in volunteering with the NMLA should, in the first instance, contact the Met Office VCP programme via the [Weather Desk](#)

This will then be followed by:

- Informal meeting and discussion
- Submission of documentation to obtain security clearance to work for a government organisation. (Please be aware this process can take some months and it is not possible to volunteer at the NMLA without having completed security clearance.)
- Completion of Volunteer Agreement
- Formal induction and training
- Assignment of a Volunteer Role Leader: named member of staff to manage each volunteer
- Assignment of additional support as required

Currently, some 75% of archive organisations have a volunteer policy. A formal programme ensures cohesion and consistency and helps volunteers clarify their role in relation to Library & Archive staff.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Every NMLA volunteer has the right:

- To have a description of their volunteering role and what is expected of them
- To be given appropriate training
- To be supported in their volunteering role
- To be safe in their volunteer placement
- To have any concerns or questions dealt with promptly
- To stop or adjust their volunteering placement at any time, if possible and agreeable to the NMLA
- To have their personal information kept in a secure and responsible manner
- To have open access to their personal information kept by the NMLA
- To be recognised as an individual, according to the Met Office Diversity and Equality policies

Every NMLA volunteer has the responsibility:

- To abide by the NMLA policies and procedures
- To act in accordance with the Met Office Diversity and Equality policies
- To keep in regular contact with the archive staff
- To inform the archivist if they have a problem or concern
- To attend training where appropriate
- To maintain their agreed level of commitment
- To respect confidentiality
- To be reliable
- To act appropriately and set a good example to others when volunteering
- To be open and honest with the NMLA

Eligibility

All volunteers must undergo successful civil service security clearance before they can work at the NMLA

Non-EEA citizens must adhere to visa restrictions regarding which activities they can participate in.

Recruitment, Induction and Training

The NMLA is committed to providing appropriate and effective induction and training for volunteers. Plans will be tailored to individual volunteers.

All new volunteers will be provided with basic information about the rights and responsibilities of volunteers, and the support provided by the NMLA (see above).

Training provision will be reviewed annually by the Library & Archives staff

Support and Contact

The NMLA is committed to supporting its volunteers. The archivist will usually be the first point of support and contact for a volunteer if they have any problems or issues they wish to raise.

Expenses

The NMLA will not normally reimburse volunteers for costs incurred as a consequence of their involvement as a volunteer.

Insurance

Volunteers taking part in authorised NMLA volunteer activities are covered by the Met Office Employer Liability Insurance.

It is the responsibility of NMLA staff to ensure that projects adhere to the required standards.

Diversity and Equality

The Met Office VCP volunteer programme complies with the Met Diversity and Equality Policy. Volunteers are expected to have an understanding of, and commitment to, this policy. A copy is available from the Library and Archive Manager.

Responsibility for upholding the policy, and for dealing with any complaints arising from it, will rest with the appropriate Met Office HR contact.

Data Protection

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, written information about volunteer personal details will be kept securely and will only be accessed by authorised members of staff, and, on request, the relevant volunteer.

Data information will be kept for the Statute of Limitations (7 years) from leaving a volunteer role.

Problem Solving

If a volunteer experiences any problems or issues related to their volunteering with the Archives, it is their responsibility to raise these at the earliest opportunity with the Archivist.

Any issues/problems discussed will be treated as confidential.

Review:

The policy will be reviewed every five years or sooner if required to ensure it remains appropriate for Archive Volunteers.

Date of last review: May 2017

Date of next review: May 2021

Reviewed by: Library and Archive Manager and Archivist