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Teaching Archival Science in Poland: Historical and Contemporary Contexts and Current Challenges

The teaching of archival science is notably susceptible to a variety of contexts and is therefore quite complicated to discuss in international dialogue, especially going beyond Anglophone countries. Among these influential factors are the practical nature of the discipline, and thus its close connection to the landscape of archival institutions (and heritage institutions more broadly) in a given country/region; the historical background and traditions of teaching archival science; the status of archival science as a scientific discipline; and the legal environment governing both the higher education system and the archival system in a given country. The purpose of this chapter is to present the contemporary context of teaching archival science in Poland, starting from its historical background but focusing mainly on recent challenges and changes in archival education.

The chapter is a qualitative analysis of texts, especially literature, study programs, and publicly available documents (e.g., reports). It is based primarily on the knowledge and experience of the authors who were engaged in designing the first independent curriculum in archival science in Poland (Marlena Jabłońska and Agnieszka Rosa) and the author who completed this curriculum at the bachelor's and master's levels (Magdalena Wiśniewska-Drewniak). Additionally, all three authors are active academics in the Department of Archival Science and Records Management at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland (hereafter: NCU). As a result, this university is the chapter's primary focus; however, it also presents the broader context of teaching archival science in Poland.

In order to outline the general landscape of university studies in Poland (the level of education that is the main focus here), it is essential to highlight some points that may be relevant to international readers:

1. Poland, along with many other European countries, signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999 and, since 2010, has participated in co-creating the European Higher Education Area. These activities aim to ensure the coherence of European higher education

systems. One manifestation of this is the three-level university studies: bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels (European Commission, 2023).

2. Higher education at public universities in Poland at all three levels is free. Students pay only a small enrollment fee.
3. The study programs described below are "ready-made". Students have limited ability to choose courses that comprise their study program. Yet, they can choose specialization within the field of study. As a result, particular courses offered by a particular university unit are usually (with small exceptions) taught for students of one study program (in this case, archival science and records management) and for a specific year of this program. When pursuing a degree program, a student must obtain a particular number of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits and a particular number of hours - both also determined by the program.
4. The archival profession in Poland is essentially unregulated; apart from the archivist technician (secondary vocational education), there are no specific guidelines governing the certification methods or requirements for those working in archives, including state archives.

Short History of Archival Education in Poland

The training of archivists in Poland has its origins in the interwar period. Earlier, in the 19th century, the profession was usually learned based on a master-apprentice relationship. Many archives in the Polish lands at that time were headed by professors or doctors of history working at universities, who employed their students in the archives. The profession was also learned as part of the acquisition of experience and practical skills by office personnel dealing with documentation in in-house archives, who, along with this documentation, were then transferred to state archives.

Poland, reborn after the partition period (after 1918), lacked qualified office and archival staff. There were some attempts to organize planned training of archivists in the interwar period: the courses in archival science, aimed at students of history and office staff; a series of nine textbooks on office and archival works, which provided an opportunity for self-education and further training of archival personnel at a distance; the program for apprentice-students learning the profession directly from prominent practitioners, which led to shaping many well-known Polish archivists of the post-war period (Tomczak, 1989, pp. 315-316, 341-346). Yet, it was impossible to establish a Polish archival school.

Changes in the training of archivists in Poland occurred after World War II. Polish archives and offices were particularly affected by the war. Archivists had to face the destruction of documentation, its looting and relocation, as well as the great need to collect, place, secure, and provide adequate storage conditions, and then arrange and properly describe abandoned or unsecured archival materials. Additionally, the new authorities of the communist-governed Polish People's Republic soon set before the archives the tasks of cultural and educational works, popularization and propaganda, and supervision over numerous records creators. There was also an influx of entirely new groups of users to the archives, so it was necessary to organize an efficient process of providing access to archival materials. The Polish archives also suffered staff shortages.

Immediately after the war, archivists were still trained in courses, which was insufficient. The archival authorities decided to establish at least one year of archival studies as part of university courses in the field of history. For this purpose, three universities were selected to establish Departments of Archival Studies and Auxiliary Sciences of History: the universities of Cracow, Warsaw, and the newly founded Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. In the end, only at NCU, thanks to its strong academic staff, good teaching facilities, and the development of scholarship in archival studies, was it possible to continuously maintain and develop archival studies (firstly, as part of history studies) since the year 1951/1952.

Initially, archival science was taught in the field of history, as part of a three-year archival specialization in full-time studies, later also in part-time studies, and since 1973 also in post-graduate studies. From the very beginning, the program included archival internships and trips to archives, practical exercises in the archives, the study and reading of source languages (Latin, German and Russian), the history of office forms, archival theory and methodology, archival technology, knowledge about archives, archival law, and archives management (Paprocki, 1957, p. 317). Post-graduate programs (one-year programs for students who already had master's degree) also included specialized courses based on cooperation with archival authorities for further training of archivists in some specific subject - such as computing in archives or archival information.

The program of archival specialization within the framework of the history program at NCU was modified several times, primarily depending on the needs of the labor market. There was a great demand for specialists in the scientific processing of archives, then in the shaping of holdings and supervision of records creators, later also specialists in information systems or computing in archives, archivists working in the in-house archives or in various non-governmental organizations. Since the 1960s, several centers for training archivists have been established at universities in Poland - in Poznań, Cracow, Warsaw, Lublin, Gdańsk, Wrocław, and later also at smaller universities.

However, it was in Toruń that a strong archival research center was established to train archival personnel for the whole country. The research and teaching staff conducted extensive studies on various archival institutions, types of archival materials, records management, computing, information studies, communication and outreach. As a result, it was possible to introduce new subjects into the curriculum covering the latest issues in the archival field. However, the program modifications had their limits, and the specialization did not manage to accommodate all the content the teaching staff could offer (Chorążyczewski & Kwiatkowska, 2001).

In 2007, the Archival Education Section was established within the Society of Polish Archivists. One of its first goals was developing a model of professional competencies for archivists and records managers, which could serve as the basis for new curricula for archival studies at universities in Poland in connection with the introduction of the Bologna higher education system. The first board of the Section included academics from Toruń. The "Model of Professional Competencies of an Archivist and Records Manager" developed in 2009 was widely discussed in the archival community (Chorążyczewski & Kwiatkowska, 2010), eventually supported by the academia, archival institutions and authorities, and the Society

of Polish Archivists. It became the basis for creating or modifying archival curricula in many education centers in Poland (Stowarzyszenie Archiwistów Polskich, 2010).

Simultaneously, in the academic year 2006/2007, the first independent Polish archival study program was launched at NCU in Toruń. The program's name was "Archival science and records management" (Polish: Archiwistyka i zarządzanie dokumentacją). First, bachelor's degree studies were opened, later also master's degree, also in part-time form. The program remained organizationally connected with the Faculty of Historical Sciences and had an extensive curriculum including two specializations: scientific-archival and records management, as well as blocks of courses: history, research skills, auxiliary sciences of history, archival studies, management, information and IT, law and administration (Kwiatkowska, 2020, pp. 103–108).

Contemporary Landscape of Archival Education in Poland

Currently, archivist training in Poland can be acquired by choosing one of three paths (Jabłońska, 2020, pp. 115–118).

The first path is secondary education (which, in the Polish system, also includes post-secondary schools). Archival secondary education in Poland dates back to the 1960s. and back then was conducted at two-year post-secondary public schools. Their purpose was preparing personnel for work in current and historical archives. The last of such schools, Post-Secondary School of Information, Archival and Book Studies, closed down in 2012. Today, archivist technician are trained by private vocational and continuing education schools. The curriculum is based on the ministerial core curriculum. The professional title of archivist technician requires passing a state exam on the skills of running an in-house archive and arrangement and description of archival materials (Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna, 2017).

The second path is supplementary education through post-graduate studies, courses in archival and office works, workshops and training courses, where no prior professional education and, in the last two cases, no university degree is required. These are organized by the Society of Polish Archivists, universities and commercial enterprises.

The third path of archival training, discussed in this chapter, is higher education university programs in the form of either bachelor's and master's studies in archival science and records management or archival specializations in history studies.

Currently, independent archival curricula (under different names) are offered by five universities: NCU in Toruń (archival science and records management); Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (archival science and modern management of information records); University of the National Education Commission in Cracow (archival science, records management, and information brokering, and archival science, office management, and digitization); Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (archival science and records management); and Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow (archival science, records management, and information brokering). In addition, archival specializations (as part of history studies) are offered at, among others, the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the University of Wrocław and the University of Gdańsk. Today, study programs are

regulated by the Polish Qualifications Framework, which defines levels of education, the profile of studies (general academic or practical) and learning outcomes. For those with a university degree, there is an opportunity for further academic development at third-degree, doctoral studies in the discipline of history.

Since they began in 2006, the curriculum for archival science and records management studies at NCU has been modified several times. Nowadays, the number of courses on history, law, and administration decreases, while there are more in records management, social communication and outreach, information systems, digital archives, social sciences or practical skills. The last program change occurred in the 2021/2022 academic year. It involved the introduction of courses related to Web archiving, community archives, archival outreach, preservation of e-documents, ICT systems, and electronic records management.

The study program comprises courses divided into various modules that apply to all students, as well as two elective specializations – the archival specialization (focused primarily on historical archives and conducting research) and the records management specialization (focused on current records management and running in-house archives and contemporary offices).

There are seven modules in the bachelor's degree program and five in the master's program. Five modules present at both levels are: archives, records management and archival information, history, knowledge of historical sources, and law. The bachelor's level additionally has two more modules, management and research workshop.

The programs at both levels are supplemented by general courses and foreign languages, which includes the study of languages of archival sources most common in Polish archives (German, Russian or Latin) and tutored seminars, aimed at preparing final thesis (required both at bachelor's and master's level). The program for the third year of the bachelor's degree also includes a mandatory archival tour - a several-day trip out of the city to a few archives of different types to familiarize students with the practice of working in an archival institution. Also included in the study program is a professional internship after the second year of the bachelor's degree and after the first year of the master's degree, both 160 hours (Instytut Historii i Archiwistyki UMK, 2023). Most of the classes are taught by academics who are research and teaching staff, and some of them also have professional experience working in archives. Selected courses are also taught by people from outside the department or the university, usually specialists in fields such as digitization or conservation.

A novelty in university education in Poland are micro-credentials, i.e. short forms of education addressed to students of various programs and ending with a certificate. Their implementation at NCU (starting from 2024) is based on the Council of the European Union's Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability, published in 2022 (Council of the European Union, 2022; Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, 2023). The Faculty of Historical Sciences has submitted two blocks of classes, one designed by the Department of Archival Science and Records Management and titled "Digital Office." It includes six courses (workshops and laboratories): Modern Office; ICT Systems in Administration and Business; EKD RP System (a national state-governed system for electronic

records management); E-administration; Modern Methods of E-document Preservation; and a lecture delivered by the Faculty of Physics, Astronomy, and Applied Informatics (titled *Is it safe? Security of electronic data and computer systems*). In total, there are 180 hours of classes and 20 ECTS credits. This micro-credentials module is interdisciplinary, as it includes content assigned to the humanities and science. The module is designed for students of all programs who are interested in electronic records management, especially for students of archival science and records management, as well as law, administration, homeland security, management, finance and accounting, information science and even computer science. Micro-credentials allow students to develop their interests, expand their professional knowledge, open them up to interdisciplinarity and consciously shape their career path.

Contemporary Challenges

NCU in Toruń is currently the most important center of archival education in Poland, offering bachelor's and master's degrees and one-year post-graduate program (Katedra Archiwistyki i Zarządzania Dokumentacją, 2023). Before 2006, when archival studies were taught as part of the history program, the number of students in the archival specialization oscillated between 20 and 30. By the time the independent program was launched (2006/2007), the number had risen to as many as 60 students. This was due to the uniqueness of the program in the country and the possibility of studying two programs simultaneously for free (in our case, history and administration were among the most popular). When fees for studying a second program were introduced, the number of students decreased, but it still remains between 24 and 48 for the bachelor's and between 19 and 40 for the master's degree (for 2015-2023, see Table 1).

Table 1: Recruitment for archival science and records management program at NCU, 2015-2023

Academic year	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree
2023/24	48	39
2022/23	35	29
2021/22	45	21
2020/21	36	29
2019/20	38	30
2018/19	24	19
2017/18	35	39
2016/17	26	40
2015/16	32	35

Source: Authors' compilation based on data available on the NCU's recruitment database (IRK UMK).

One of the challenges faced by the NCU's Faculty of History is the recruitment process itself, which requires a lot of promotional activities and the involvement of the authorities, the administrative staff, and the faculty members. Also important are two phenomena affecting the real effects of this recruitment process - so-called "ghost students" and the drop-out.

It is a common practice in Poland for a candidate to submit a declaration of enrollment, pay a small fee, take the student's oath, pick up a student ID, and then not start studying. Colloquially, such students are called "ghost students" because no one has actually seen them. (Not to be confused with the American variant of the enrollment scam, in which online bots pretend to be students to defraud the university and steal financial support; Asimov, 2023.) This generates problems with organizing study groups and arranging a schedule. This is a pathological phenomenon, but it is difficult to eliminate since the lists of students are updated annually, and only in September of the following year can such a person be removed from the list. During this time, they retain their student rights and hold student ID cards, entitling them to various discounts (including a 50% discount on public transportation). We assume that this phenomenon involves about 30% of candidates.

The second challenge of recent years is drop-out. It is defined as resignation from studying before obtaining a degree, whatever the reasons or circumstances. It affects universities across Europe regardless of the type of university and field of study. Drop-out causes are similar and only its scale differs (Wiktorko et al., 2020, p. 6). A 2008 OECD study found that 31% of students at European universities did not complete their studies. For Poland, the estimated drop-out rate at the time was 39%. The lowest drop-out rate is observed in the medical sciences and arts 29%, while the highest is in the sciences, 51%, and humanities, 47%. The factors that influence this decision can be divided into two groups: institutional and individual. Institutional factors include elements related to the quality of studies (the program, subjects, lecturers), the proportion of theoretical and practical knowledge, the inflexible schedule, student life, the level of fees, infrastructure, organization, and communication at the university. Individual factors are primarily a lack of interest in the subject of study, student's personal problems (related to the financial situation), other commitments such as work or studying a second program, as well as studying in a different city than the students originate from or live (e.g. the burden of commuting). The decision to drop out of university is rarely made as a result of the appearance of only one of these factors; mostly it is the result of many events and circumstances.

This phenomenon can also be observed in archival education. This is most noticeable in the first year of study, when students find that they are not interested in the program and the courses do not meet their expectations. There are also resignations at further stages of education, but here, the reasons are usually economic and personal (such as taking up employment or starting a family).

The referenced report calls for the following measures to prevent drop-out: simplifying the curriculum; allowing flexible scheduling of classes and planning the path of study; modernizing the study programs and content of courses, including increasing the size of practical classes; modernizing the teaching methods, including with the use of modern technologies; improving infrastructure.

Introducing far-reaching changes takes time and much commitment on the part of the staff and is a complex and highly bureaucratic process. However, it should be remembered that in university education in Poland, on the one hand, there is the educational framework described in the curriculum of the study program, which is changed relatively rarely; but on

the other hand, there is the content of individual classes, the teaching methods and tools used by the teachers and in our system they can be easily adjusted. Thus, on the teachers lies a great responsibility for the courses quality and design. On the side of the managers is the concern for the welfare of students, the development of optimal schedules, the creation of relaxation zones, free access to modern infrastructure, and the modification of study programs, which must meet the challenges of the future.

In the academic year 2023/2024, the NCU's Faculty of Historical Sciences, in addition to archival science and records management, offers the following programs: archaeology, history, Scandinavian-Baltic studies, and military studies. The study programs have been designed to develop knowledge, social competencies, and professional skills. Still, archival science and records management is considered the most practical program offered by the faculty, and this is due to the range of material discussed, the size of internships, and the number of practical exercises and laboratories. Courses also contain learning outcomes of the so-called competencies of the future. This term describes specific skills that allow graduates to make independent decisions and perform activities in the work environment (WSB-NLU, 2023). They relate to new technologies, innovation, efficient management, critical thinking, and independence in action. Their development is related to self-motivation and lifelong learning. The competencies of the future can be divided into three groups. The first is cognitive competence – in-depth reasoning, out-of-the-box thinking and creative adaptation of solutions, analytical skills related to the use of technology, design thinking, risk assessment and analysis, and responsible decision-making. The second group is technical competence and using and managing information and knowledge. Prominent among them are proficiency in handling new media, managing information overload, integrating robotic workstations, working in the human-machine environment, and programming skills. The third group comprises social competencies, most notably the ability to be a lifelong learner, social intelligence, working in a multicultural environment and virtual teams, and social entrepreneurship, i.e. the ability to recognize and solve social problems (Łapińska et al., 2022, pp. 11-17).

Every year NCU conducts graduates' trajectory surveys, which also include students of archival science and records management. The reports show that they evaluate the time spent at the studies well, appreciate the knowledge and teaching skills of the lecturers, and consider the study program to be coherent and well-designed. However, they point out that there are still too few internship hours and a small number of practical classes. They also feel insecure in the labor market (Wydział Nauk Historycznych UMK, 2021, 2022, 2023). In order to meet the needs and shortcomings declared by the respondents, the faculty authorities take care of the quality of student internships, organize meetings with a career counselor, prepare special events such as the Day with an Employer and the Day of Foreign Internships under the Erasmus+ program (which is a European Union funded program allowing students to go abroad for studies or internships).

The Covid-19 pandemic posed a particular challenge to the teaching of archival science. Like any field of study, archival science and records management faced successive phases of organizing remote teaching at universities. In her report, Marta Klimowicz (2020) describes

these phases as suspension and chaos; support (or lack thereof); the new normal; overload; coming to terms with the situation and learning lessons. Particularly problematic for archival teachers were classes that, in their on-site version, were based on students' contact with archival materials/documentation or with specialized software (e.g., for archival arrangement and description or managing in-house archives). The practical aspect of the classes, including contact with professional archivists, so important in building student involvement and the image of the program, was very difficult to replicate.

Understanding the gravity of the public health emergency and at the same time recognizing the specifics of teaching archival science, the Archival Education Section of the Society of Polish Archivists organized a virtual seminar in March 2021 on the topic of "Teaching archivists and records managers in the pandemic era." The purpose of the meeting was to exchange the experiences of academics from different universities and share their solutions for changing the way of teaching (changing the tools and means of communication), while leaving the teaching goals and outcomes the same. Although universities in Poland have now (end of 2023) already returned to in-person on-site classes, it seems that the pandemic has made remote teaching a viable option for teaching archival science. At NCU, it is still possible for teachers to declare part of their courses as taught in a complementary mode (partly on-site, partly virtual). Certainly, remote teaching will be one of the options considered in planning future educational programs, especially in the changing market of commercial services.

Archival Science and History

As mentioned above, which is valid for many European countries, in Poland archival science as a scientific discipline derives directly from history and is still strongly connected with it. For some time now, however, it has been breaking out into autonomy, at least in terms of teaching, which is indicated by the successive creation of independent degrees in archival science and records management (with different names). Still, university archivistics (also in terms of teaching) is very close to the discipline of history. In Poland it is taught primarily by teachers who hold degrees in history and conduct research on strictly historical subjects. History courses are an important component of the study programs in archival science. Still, the creation of independent archival study programs, going beyond the specialization within history, allows us to perceive graduates as more than historians. Although organizationally, archival science is still placed together with history, and thus in the humanities, it often moves towards social sciences, focusing on the present rather than the past. The curriculum at NCU (like others created in Poland after it) includes elements of management and marketing, information sciences, law and administration.

Here we would like to shortly discuss some challenges of being an archival scholar focusing on contemporary archives- and records-related issues in Poland. According to the 2018 Higher Education Act (Ustawa, 2023), all academics employed at universities are required to declare their affiliation with a specific discipline or disciplines from a list provided by the ministry of higher education (Rozporządzenie, 2022). Archival science is not on the list and scholars in this discipline are meant to affiliate themselves with history. Generally, archival university teachers are employed on mixed teaching and research positions (alternatives are

only teaching or only research positions – both very rare in the field) which means that they need to present some research achievements (like scholarly publications) apart from their teaching duties. Yet, the system for assessing these activities is quite complicated. On the one hand, they need to demonstrate scholarly achievements within the discipline of history, e.g., they must publish in journals formally assigned to history by the ministry of higher education. Many international archival journals like *Archives and Manuscripts*, *Journal of Archival Organization*, *Journal of Documentation*, *Comma*, *Information & Culture*, or *Records Management Journal* are not assigned on this list to the discipline of history. On the other hand, as a result of the requirements of the State Accreditation Commission, that oversees the quality of teaching in Poland, academic teachers need to demonstrate research outcomes in the subjects they teach, in our case also those related to the management of modern archives and records (which are a substantial part of the archival program), although these are not always in the field of history. As a result, they must present achievements that at the same time are and are not in the field of history.

The lack of formal recognition of archival science as a scientific discipline also has serious implications for doctoral training, since a doctorate can only be obtained in a discipline from the list of scientific disciplines mentioned above. This means that in Poland, it is impossible to create a doctoral program in archival science and become a doctor of archival science. So, formally, graduates who want to pursue academic career in archival science choose a doctoral program in history, with courses that have little to do with archives and records. The way out here is self-study, doctoral seminars, and relying on the tutor's knowledge and experience (Chorążyczewski, 2013).

It is worth noting one more challenge facing candidates for archival scholars (at the doctoral level). After all, a candidate wishing to conduct research in contemporary archival science and records management must apply for a doctoral program in history. The position of archival science in the faculty structure varies from one university to another, but we know from personal conversations of cases in which a candidate interested in researching contemporary archival practice was forced at the recruitment stage to change their topic to a more history-oriented one. As a result, this person is now preparing a doctoral project on the history of archives. Such practice on the part of discipline councils and doctoral schools (bending the needs of the discipline to the formal and organizational framework of science) is to great harm to our field.

Modern archival science should be active in the contemporary world and respond to the current problems of archival practice. The study of the present archival milieu also has excellent potential as part of engaged humanities, responding to the needs and problems of the modern world (Nycz, 2015). However, this is very difficult in a higher education system that has so tightly locked archival science within the framework of history.

Conclusion

Nowadays, academics in archival science and records management face many challenges. One of them is the multidisciplinary nature of archival science, which is immanently connected with other fields of knowledge. At the same time, the number of various ways of

recording information preserved in archives can only grow, and never diminish. Additionally, archives are changing their functions in a historical perspective, in Poland still oscillating precariously between public administration offices and cultural institutions focused on outreach and education (Rosa, 2019). As a result, the archival field is ever-changing, complex, and multifaceted and the requirements for graduates are very broad. Yet, the latest higher education reform from 2018 assigns academics to a particular scholarly discipline, which plays a significant role in individual assessment of scholars and institutions. And although archival science in Poland has always been combined with history, the formal and organizational effects of this increasingly tight connection may have negative impact on research and teaching in archival science, harming its interdisciplinary nature.

It is a significant (and geographically universal) challenge for archival science to keep up with the accelerating changes, such as modern technologies that affect not only new types of documentation and archives, but are also relevant in the context of contemporary records management (including electronic records), or technologies related to providing access to archives and conducting outreach activities. Changes in the law and the growing importance of copyright and data protection in the activities of archives, but also changes in the labor market and the changing group of people who study archival science and records management, are significant challenges. On the one hand, it's about the decreasing number of students and a definite shift in Poland from mass higher education in the humanities and social sciences to the education of true professionals and enthusiasts, ready for the demanding job market in various cultural institutions. On the other hand, it is also about the changing and growing expectations of students regarding the study process.

These issues are also related to building the image of archival science as a modern discipline, offering a wide range of employment opportunities, focused not only on the traditional activities popularly associated with the archival profession (such as reading old script), but also offering a huge range of future competencies, such as collecting and verifying information, navigating the complex world of electronic information systems, creating content for the Internet, working in an international environment, and self-development skills. An essential expectation of archival science students, expressed by them in alumni surveys and in daily interactions with teachers, is the practical, rather than purely theoretical and academic, dimension of their education.

The response to these challenges includes hiring practitioners and people from outside the department (including from other academic disciplines) to teach some of the courses, and the presence of professional internships and a mandatory archival tour in the curriculum - as ways to learn about ever-changing practical work in various archival institutions. An important tool are also periodic changes to the study program based on the consensus developed by the department's staff. This allows the curriculum to meet better the demands of the labor market and the requirements of candidates and to maintain the programs' attractiveness, which is vital in the current landscape of competing enterprises offering different types of education in the discipline of archival science and records management (not only in the form of higher education degrees). Simultaneously, we proudly lean on and often emphasize (also as an element of marketing) the longest traditions of NCU's archival

science in Poland, the continuity of archivist education since the 1950s, and the high quality of research conducted by the teaching staff. Continuing this tradition while permanently modernizing the program is in itself also a major challenge.

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