

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Cultair agus Cùisean an Taobh a-muigh
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs

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19th July 2013

Dear Mr Saville

Thank you for your letter of 20 June 2013 regarding the Society of Antiquaries' representation on the Board of the National Museums of Scotland.

I am of course aware of the issue you address from previous correspondence and it is one which has of course raised its head intermittently in recent times.

You will no doubt appreciate that it is incumbent upon me as the appointing Minister to ensure that the best possible candidates are selected for appointment to the Board of the National Museum and that the Board has at least adequate representation of the key skills it needs. In the most recent appointment round, the skills required did not overlap particularly well with those which would represent the Society and therefore none of the 4 appointees were Fellows.

However, as you note, the thinking at NMS is that the next appointment round may look to acquire skills which might be a much closer match to those which represent the Society, particularly in relation to history and archaeology. Having said that, appointments are made on merit and therefore it would be important that any members of the Society which applied for Board membership demonstrated all of the essential skills on the person specification.

Your offer to work with me and the Chairman of the National Museums is most welcome. My officials will ensure you are made aware of the appointments round in good time and you will have a key role in helping ensure that the round is drawn to the attention of as many Fellows of the Society as possible.

For your information, the section of the Code of Practice you quoted ceased to be in effect in September 2011 when a revised version of the Code came into effect. There is however a new Code out for consultation and you may wish to consider commenting on that.

Kind regards

Fiona Hyslop

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