

Involved in Archaeology from School to Retired

Guide 24



BAJR Practical Guide Series
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2009

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This short guide is designed to help answer some of the basic questions that are asked about getting started in archaeology, whether as an interested amateur a determined schoolchild or a student getting ready to leave university or college. It can't be completely comprehensive, without being hundreds of pages long, but hopefully adds enough detail, and links to other resources to satisfy most questions.

Whatever your reason for reading this, please remember that archaeology is supposed to be enjoyable, it's why you should do it. It won't make you rich, and probably won't make you famous, but it might just give you something different in your life.

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"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life."
Confucius (551-479BC).

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Introduction

Over the years,BAJR has been a point of contact for many groups and individuals ranging through schoolchildren to students, interested amateurs, to people who are wanting to retrain as archaeologists, and those who are already archaeologists wanting to broaden their range of skills. Providing the answers to the questions produced a list of options for everyone to follow to find a suitable solution. This is not meant to be a definitive guide, as archaeology has limitless possibilities, however, it can be used as a starting point, depending on who you are, and what you want to do. There are other resources, which are listed at the end of the guide, but the final outcome depends on you, and the effort you want to put into it. One thing to remember is that whatever you do, and however you do it, archaeology should be fun.

The guide is divided into sections, and provides information, ideas, and suggestions on what you can do, and how to do it.

WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

It is best to start with what archaeology actually is (and it does not have anything to do with dinosaurs or fossils – interesting though they are). Archaeology is the study of the material remains and environmental effects of human behavior. It is based on the study of evidence which can range from study of entire civilizations to DNA strands that tell us about genetic makeup. The period of time it covers is from the origins of hominins some 10million years ago to the remains of the 20th century, such as pillboxes, trenches, and early factories and cinemas.

Often archaeology provides the only source of information for about aspects of our development that can only be understood through the examination of physical evidence, such as agriculture, the origin of civilisation, or the discovery of metals. Where written records do not survive archaeological evidence is the only evidence for entire cultures and periods of the past.

Archaeology links with subjects such as geography, social sciences, maths, physics, biology, chemistry, art, technology, and of course history. This is an art and a science, it is one that stretches the mind, and is also pure fun. Often archaeology is seen as a hobby, a career for adventurous individuals, or as a broad based degree that will help with whatever you want to do in another career. It is whatever you want it to be. No matter who you are, how old you are, and what your interests or job is, archaeology is open to you, here is how.



GETTING STARTED

Between the ages of 8 and 16 there are often difficulties in finding a way to get involved. Watching Time Team or Indiana Jones can start up a real interest in the past, but when it comes to actually doing it, just where do you look, what can you do, and what subjects will be useful to study?

YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS CLUB

The first stop should always be your local Young Archaeologists Club (YAC) branch. They are found throughout the country, and are supported by the **Council for British Archaeology** and **Archaeology Scotland**.

A full list with contact details can be found here:

http://www.britarch.ac.uk/yac/yac_branches_list.html 

Currently there are 70+ branches, though this can change from year to year, so check the YAC website.

1.	Aberdeen	38.	Lincolnshire
2.	Aberystwyth	39.	London Central
3.	Aylesbury	40.	London Rotherhithe
4.	Bangor	41.	London: Camden
5.	Gwynedd	42.	Manchester
6.	Bath and Bristol	43.	Mersey and Dee
7.	Belfast	44.	Midlothian
8.	Biggar	45.	Newark and District
9.	Birmingham	46.	Newcastle
10.	Bridgend	47.	North Downs
11.	Bury St Edmunds	48.	North Hampshire
12.	Caithness	49.	North Hertfordshire
13.	Cambridge	50.	North Wiltshire
14.	Canterbury	51.	Norwich
15.	Central Borders	52.	Orkney
16.	Central South England	53.	Oxfordshire
17.	Chiltern	54.	Peak District
18.	Colchester	55.	Perth
19.	Cornwall	56.	Pontefract
20.	Cotswolds	57.	Ross & Cromarty
21.	Denbighshire	58.	Runnymede
22.	Devon: Exeter	59.	Sheffield
23.	Devon: Torbay	60.	Skipton
24.	Doncaster	61.	South East Wales
25.	Downpatrick	62.	South Wiltshire
26.	East Lothian	63.	Southampton
27.	Edinburgh	64.	Spelthorne
28.	Falkirk	65.	St Albans
29.	Harrow	66.	Stirling
30.	Hatfield	67.	Sussex Weald
31.	Inverness	68.	Wayland
32.	Isle of Wight	69.	Whitehaven
33.	Kendal	70.	Worcester
34.	Kilmartin	71.	Wrexham
35.	Kirklees	72.	Ynys Mon
36.	Lancaster	73.	York
37.	Leicestershire	74.	Yorkshire Dales

* YAC UK membership costs £12 per year (2009 prices) for 8- to 16-year-olds will get you:

- Four copies a year of the fantastic Young Archaeologist magazine packed with quizzes, competitions and the latest archaeological news and stories.
- YAC badge
- Letter and certificate signed by Time Team's Tony Robinson!
- YAC membership card
- A YAC Pass giving free or discounted entry to some of the top historic attractions throughout the UK!

YAC also provides special residential holidays organised exclusively for YAC UK members aged 9 to 16 years. In 2008 they included;

- The Yorkshire Dales from Friday 9th May - Sunday 11th May 2008
- o Spend the weekend living in a medieval castle!
- Norfolk from Monday 28th July - Thursday 31st July 2008
- o Take part in a real archaeological excavation with the experts at the Sedgeford Anglo-Saxon site!
- York from Friday 17th October - Sunday 19th October 2008
- o Archaeological skills and experimental archaeology!

For more information about any of the holidays please contact Wendi Terry (the YAC Network and Events Officer) on 01904 671417 or by email at wenditerry@britarch.ac.uk

Most YAC Branches meet about once a month, on a Saturday or Sunday, and they are a great way to learn more about archaeology in your area. Often the clubs don't meet during the summer holidays, and because each club is run by volunteers from the local archaeology community, spaces are limited, and the type of activities depends on who is in charge and where you are. It's best to contact the club directly and find out where they meet, when and what they do.

YAC Branches cover a huge range of different activities. One month you might be looking at how archaeologists excavate, the next you might be trying your hand at spinning and weaving, then you could move on to visiting an archaeological or heritage site or you might even end up trying out food from different periods of time! You can make your own website, create a film project, get involved in a survey or record buildings in your local area. The possibilities are endless.

All YAC Branch leaders and Assistant Leaders are vetted to meet the strict criteria for working with children, there is also a trained First Aider, so parents can feel safe in letting children join.

The YAC website can be found here, with loads more information:
<http://www.yac-uk.org> 

* Please note that membership of YAC UK does not guarantee a place in a YAC Branch as these local groups have a limit on the numbers of people they can accept, and also membership of a YAC Branch does not mean you are a member of YAC UK.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME

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A number of people asked about archaeology as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

There are many subjects that make excellent topics for study and presentation, and some suggestions in the past have been: Matching field boundaries from the earliest maps to the present; visiting sites and reporting on the condition, age, ease of access etc, with photographs and notes; Creating a Heritage GPS trail in your local area, for others to follow and discover; Making a short film about the archaeology and history of the area. You will need help to get started, but again, if you find out where the local society meets, you will get lots of help and suggestions. Not only will you have great fun doing it, but will also produce something that others can use, after all, archaeology is all about sharing the past.



LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETIES

There are many local History and Archaeology Societies across the UK, and once again, you need to know where to go to find them. The best place to go is your Local History Centre, often found in the main Library, where they should have details of the groups in the area.

A full list of these can be found here:

<http://www.bajr.org/whosewho/localhistory.asp>

Examples of active groups are

Kent Archaeological Society

<http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk>

Essex Amateur Archaeology Association

<http://www.ages-aaa.co.uk/projects.htm>

Avon Valley Archaeological Society

<http://www.avas.org.uk>

Biggar Archaeology Group

<http://www.biggararchaeology.org.uk>

Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society

<http://www.eafs.org.uk>

Huddersfield & District Archaeological Society

<http://www.huddarch.org.uk/index.htm>



A group walk around a historic town



Society carrying out Geophysical survey

There are many many more of course, so you should be able to find one in your area.

BAJR has collected an extensive list of active societies here:

<http://www.bajr.org/WhoseWho/ArchSoc.asp>

and **Current Archaeology** has an excellent list here:

<http://www.archaeology.co.uk/local-societies/>

also here at the **CBA Archonline** <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/archonline>

Many of the local societies have excavations and fieldtrips during the summer while the rest of the time they put together lectures and talks, though be aware, that a large proportion of local groups no longer actively engage in fieldwork or research.

The age of members can often be high, but not always, with many groups having active membership in their 20s and 30s and they are always more than welcoming of young members, though if you are under 16, you will have to be accompanied by a parent or guardian. This however, does allow you to have fun as a group or family, and the adult will be having as much fun as you. If you join a society, you will be able to be one step ahead should you go to university, as you will have experience, and that is one of the most important elements in archaeology. Even if you don't want to pursue archaeology as a career, the fun to be had as an amateur is just as rewarding, and indeed, there is more chance of carrying out fascinating unhurried research on real sites with a society. It is important to check you are joining an active archaeology society though, so ensure this is not 'just' a lecture society.

There is even a special project run by Carenza Lewis (of Time Team fame), the HIGHER EDUCATION FIELD ACADEMY (HEFA) that brings together young people and groups, such as local history societies, to carry out archaeological and documentary investigations into the historical development of villages and hamlets across the country, as part of a widening participation programme for higher education.

<http://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/aca/fa>

Of course you don't have to join a society to pursue archaeology as a hobby, though it does offer company, advice and the chance to talk things through. One project you could pursue, either as an individual or a group is a Parish Survey. It is worth looking at the Project outline of the Peebleshire Archaeological Society to see how they went about it. http://www.peeblesarchsoc.org.uk/html/epp_outline.htm

STARTING YOUR OWN ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETIES

In some cases, you may feel that your village, town or area could benefit from a new society, and with people wanting to get involved, you are wondering what your next move should be. The following concept does not have to be held to strictly, however, there are some basic steps and principals that are generally always required.

Start by contacting your local archaeology curator or officer at the council, where they may even have an outreach or community development officer to help directly. You can find a list of these people here: <http://www.bajr.org/WhoseWho/Curator.asp>

Other useful contacts are the CBA - who have a Community Officer - 01904 671417 or if you are in Scotland then talk to Archaeology Scotland on 0845 872 3333. Both of these sister organisations have a wealth of resources and knowledge to aid your new society.

The next most important thing to do is to work out a clear aim to your new group.. This might mean deciding on a specific element of your local area you will start by working on. There is no point in overpowering yourself with a dozen ideas, when working on one or two to start with will be more than enough. Keep the other ideas for later, and remember, it should be the community and society that drives it forward, so do what your group are interested in, rather than what others may want you to do.

Archaeology covers a broad horizon of opportunities for everyone to get involved, from young to old and from those who want to get their hands dirty to those that prefer the careful research in a local records office, remember that everyone has a place. You are already starting with a passion and local knowledge of a place, so already you are well on your way.

Let people find what they are good at, and exploit it, whether it is survey, databases, photography, accounts, digging, drawing or writing. We all have skills that will be useful, so try to work out what you can do, before trying to start something you can't. It is often true that people come forward when you need them, so don't constrain yourself too much.

Building recording, field-walking and landscape surveys are excellent ways to get going in an area, as they don't generate lots of post excavation work, but are something everyone can get involved in. Check with your local Sites and Monuments Records (or Historic Environment Records) office to see what is already known in your area first.

There will usually be an archaeologist somewhere near, and more than often, they are more than happy to join as well, as it not often they get to do archaeology for fun. This is important to remember, that at the end of the day, you should be having fun, as well as adding to our shared knowledge of the past.

It can always be a good idea to set up a website to help publicize your organization to the outside world – and to keep people up-to-date with events, meeting, lectures etc. See the BAJR Guide on this subject here: [Guide 22: Building a Website for your Project](#) by Matthew Law, Guy Hunt and David Connolly (2009)

You can think about HLF funding for projects, to pay for tools, equipment and other costs, including WRITING UP WHAT YOU DO!

You may need to set up a committee to administer this, but again, the contacts given above will help you get this off the ground, and even help with a simple Constitution like this one from the [North Bucks Archaeological Society](#) or the [Lancashire Archaeological Society](#) Its not too hard to get going, so have fun!



VISIT SITES, MONUMENTS AND MUSEUMS

Around the country, there are literally thousands of sites, museums, activity centres, and events to visit if you are interested in archaeology. You could make a holiday of it, visiting dozens of sites in an area, for example along Hadrians Wall, where you could visit; Housesteads Fort with magnificent ruins, a museum and spectacular views. Then on to Vindolanda with fabulous reconstructions of the wall, houses and temples and a first class museum, where you can see the Vindolanda tablets. After visiting Corbridge Roman Town take a walk around the village of Corbridge only half a mile away then to Dilston Castle and Chapel and Aydon Castle which are all easily accessible from here. Other highlights would be Birdoswald Fort, the Mithras temple on the windswept moors, Segedunum Roman Fort and reconstructed bath-house, Arbeia and the Great North Museum Project as well as Denton Hall Turret and Wall, Benwell Roman Temple and Newcastle Castle. You could easily spend a week enjoying the archaeology and the great outdoors. This site will help you plan an itinerary: <http://www.hadrians-wall.org>

Of course you could do this in any part of Britain, from Shetland and Orkney to Cornwall and Devon. Over a week or a weekend, or even a daytrip.

Some daytrip sites that offer a complete experience could be :

Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort where archaeological excavation and experimental archaeology meet, at the beautiful Iron Age site in Pembrokeshire.
<http://www.castellhenllys.com>

Archaeolink, which is an award winning living history park and visitor attraction near Aberdeen
<http://www.archaeolink.co.uk>

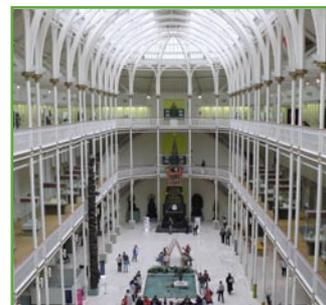
Kilmartin Glen (with the Kilmartin House Museum) surrounded by over 350 ancient monuments within a six-mile radius and with events and activities taking place regularly.
<http://www.kilmartin.org>

Crannog Centre, on Lock Tay, where a visit includes an exhibition, a guided tour and a chance to try out crafts and ancient technology.
<http://www.crannog.co.uk>

Butser Archaeological Centre, in Hampshire, where the famous open air experimental archaeology centre is open to all to visit and experience
http://www.butser.org.uk/index_sub.html

DIG, Barley Hall and **Jorvik Viking Centre** in York combine to provide a real treat to budding archaeologists, with the added bonus of being in a fascinating city too, surrounded by medieval walls and with an ancient castle at its centre.
<http://www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk>

Again, there is too much to list here, but it is worth exploring the past in Britain. You could even start by looking around the sites in your area, as there is bound to be something to interest you. You could even write about it for your school website.



An Education in Archaeology

SCHOOL

What subjects to take?

One of the hardest questions to answer is what subjects you should study, and what you will need to get into University (if that is what you want to do). You should realise that archaeology is not just about digging in the ground, and so, just about any subject will be of use. In the first section, you saw the vast range of subjects that archaeology covers, so it all depends on what you feel you are good at, however, two essentials would be English and Information & Communication Technology (ICT) as both these skills will be essential in most aspects of archaeology. However, archaeology is such a broad subject that any combination can work, so the advice is to play to your strengths and follow that path, whether it science or art, digging or writing.

To get into university you will need 5 GCSE's or equivalent at grade C or above at least, though A-Levels are also useful. To study at degree level, applicants usually have SCE Higher, A, AS or GCSE levels in a range of subjects. English, mathematics, ICT, geography and a foreign language are normally recommended for an MA Honours in Archaeology.

For BSc courses, Higher, A or AS level and GCSE in physics or chemistry can be required. Many universities however, look for a mixture of subjects in humanities and sciences across SCE Higher and Standard Grades, A and AS, and GCSE level. While background experience or interest in archaeology is always helpful, it is not a requirement for admission to these courses, though it is always useful to have a try first, to see if you actually like archaeology, and find out what direction you want to take.

Think about where you want to go with archaeology

Archaeology is a big subject which can take in a vast range of skills, so don't just think that you need history to be an archaeologist.

English is always essential, as you will have to communicate what you find, whether you are writing a field record, producing a report or creating a specialist document. **Mathematics** is useful, but don't worry if you are no good at numbers, as although many tasks such as taking height levels or writing out coordinates, as well as taking careful measurements involve numbers, it is often **geometry** and **arithmetic**, and once you have done it a few times for real, you will realise its simple.

Geography is another good core skill, as it helps you to look at the landscape, understand economies and how man affects it, which is really what archaeology is all about. A site is just one piece of the puzzle, as each farm, each house, each town all fit into a landscape.

Art will help you if you want to be an illustrator, but also, having some idea of how to draw will help in a number of areas, as will topics such as **History**, that lets you examine the past and research, analyse and come to conclusions based on evidence.

Physics and **Chemistry** open up the areas of archaeology such as geophysics, geosciences, geology, and the whole range of dating and scientific examination of materials. **Biology** would help in Dendrochronology and the study of animal and human bones (Osteology).

Today, archaeologists also use a larger and larger range of **IT** tools, so learning about databases, GIS systems, and spreadsheet will be useful in many ways.

We have to communicate our results as widely as possible, so webdesign is a good skill to get, but think about other ways of expressing archaeology, and being able to involve people – Poetry – Drama – **Design and Technology** – **Religious Education** and even **Music** (*a new look at how music played a part in human evolution has recently been put forward*) Archaeology is the study of all human activity in the past so there are few subjects which cannot be linked to archaeology if that is what interests you.

So you see, you have to both think about what you want to do, Field Archaeology? Ceramics Specialist? Osteologist? Land Surveyor? Researcher? And then play to your skills. Choose subjects that will help you the most in the direction that interests you most.

UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE AND DISTANCE LEARNING

The [Prospects Website](#)  suggests the following advice: (more is available by clicking the link)

“ Over the course of your degree you develop a good mix of subject specific and technical skills as well as transferable skills. The range and depth of the skills acquired will vary according to whether your degree is more humanities or science based. Archaeology courses teach a mix of subject-specific and technical skills which include:

- * applying theoretical and scientific principles and concepts to archaeological problems;
- * field-work techniques of identification, surveying, recording, excavation and sampling;
- * post excavation techniques such as stratigraphic analysis of field records, phasing and data archiving;
- * laboratory techniques of recording, measurement, analysis and interpretation of archaeological material;
- * applying statistical and numerical techniques to process archaeological data;
- * interpretation of spatial data.

Whether you wish to pursue a career in archaeology or investigate other graduate career options, you will be able to demonstrate to employers a range of valuable transferable skills. Archaeology degree courses equip you with valuable and widely applicable skills, including the ability to:

- * work as a team member or leader as a result of working in a group, for example, through field work or project work;
- * use of a range of IT packages;
- * prepare and present oral presentations for different kinds of audiences;
- * use information retrieval skills using paper-based and electronic resources to produce written reports;
- * work methodically and accurately and demonstrate attention to detail.

Consider the skills developed on your course as well as through your other activities, such as paid work, volunteering, family responsibilities, sport, membership of societies, leadership roles, etc. Think about how these can be used as evidence of your skills and personal attributes. Then you can start to market and sell who you really are, identify what you may be lacking and consider how to improve your profile ”

The Prospects website is a reasonable summary of what you can do, however, there is much more to consider when planning on a university degree. Think about the type of course you want to do and then look at the courses that are available. See which universities do the sort of course subject you want to follow, and ask for advice. For example; for Industrial Archaeology - where there are several universities offering courses. Each one is slightly different though, so consider what it is you are aiming for at the end. The Newcastle course is a general study, while at Ironbridge (Birmingham) this truly is a dedicated course in this one particular subject while at the Workers Educational Association (Maidenhead) you can take a short 5 week course to see if you really like the subject.

You can find an up to date list of all the available courses here:

<http://www.bajr.org/BAJREducation/coursefinder.asp> 

However, on the subject of finding out if you enjoy what you want to do, then think about how dedicated you are. During the Summer months there is nothing to stop you from volunteering or working on more projects than the bare minimum you are required by your department. After all, if you really do want to pursue archaeology as a career after you get your qualification, then you will have more of a chance if you have more project skills behind you.

Look carefully at the Department website and read what they do, see what project opportunities are available, and read up on the PhDs that are taking place there, which may give you an idea of the specialisms and skills that department has. Also look at the staff list and look at what they do as well and if it is a large department or a small one (both have merits depending on what you want) This is an important decision, that should not be rushed, after all, this will affect the rest of your life, so take a deep breath and look at the options. Weigh them up - then go for it - once you are in, remember you are there to learn, have fun, and have taken the next step in becoming an archaeologist.

PHD, RESEARCH AND BEYOND

In 2008, six months after graduation, almost a quarter of archaeology graduates had gone on to further study, with a further 8% combining work and study. The range of courses entered includes Masters courses in specialist areas of archaeology such as human osteology and palaeopathology, as well as related subject areas such as geophysics. A PhD is often necessary for a career in archaeological research or an academic career.

Archaeology graduates have also pursued courses of professional training in law, teaching, nursing and environmental health as the course itself teaches you several disciplines that are valuable in a variety of other career paths.

There is a whole world of academic archaeology that is available to you, and the range of subjects to study and research can be as varied as the places you can study them (as well as the places you may have to travel to study them!) Consider looking for projects on Past Horizons <http://www.pasthorizons.com>  where you can often find a project that needs your particular interest OR would be enhanced by your research. The consideration must be one where it is mutually beneficial, and you should always remember that if you use undergraduate students, they deserve respect and recognition, as they are the ones helping you achieve your own goals.

Publishing and disseminating your research is important too, which is why this level of higher education requires many different life-skills that will be of use once you have completed your studies.

Well organised research aims and strategies.

Careful consideration of evidence types.

Study, research and communication with others in your field.

Inter-personal and public communication.

Well written publications and articles, ranging from academic to popular.

Dedication to achievement.

Acknowledgement of others input, and self awareness.

Confidence.

Remember that Research and PhDs are not the end result, but the final step you will take before beginning a real-world career., even if this is continuation of study as a lecturer or academic.

GAINING NEW SKILLS

Never stop learning, and remember that only by keeping up with the latest ideas, news and techniques, will you be able to move forward in archaeology.

There are many places for short courses. Such as;

Buildings Archaeology (<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/gsp/publicity/builddet.htm>) 

Industrial Archaeology (<http://www.ironbridge.bham.ac.uk/>) 

Practical Archaeology (<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/cce/1-2-16-4.html>) 

and if you feel you need to increase your skills in a particular area, then consider the options and benefits and do it. Remember you may also want to join courses in GIS, Spreadsheet/database use, management, Editing, DTP Layout, and a myriad of other areas, that although not pure archaeology, are of great use to you both in and out of archaeology as a profession.

There is also the new NVQ qualification in archaeology, which offers those who have perhaps a more practical side and may have not, for whatever reason (and I count myself in this group) completed or started a university course. Because it is a modular, and therefore flexible, qualification, the NVQ is ideal for accrediting on-the-job learning and can be adapted to accredit professional training within archaeological organisations. The details can be found on the Insitute for Archaeologists website:

<http://www.archaeologists.net/modules/icontent/index.php?page=199> 

Applying for work in Archaeology

APPLYING FOR WORK

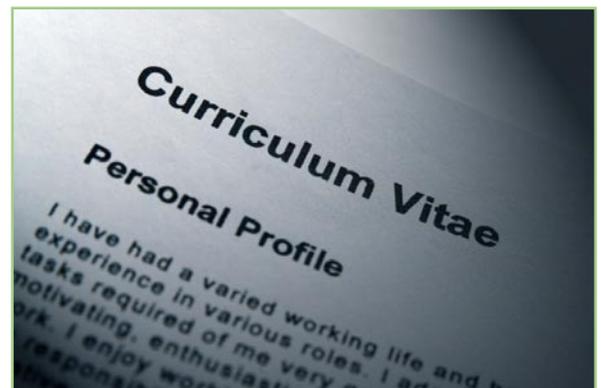
A curriculum vitae (CV) is one of the essential tools in your job search, though never forget the importance of networking. Networking and interviewing are also important for finding employment and your CV is just the first step in this search. When applying for a post you generally first have to send your CV to the prospective employer.

With your CV you will be able to promote yourself so look at it from your employers point of view. Would you stand out against the competition and would the manager want to interview you based on the contents of your CV?

A CV will be your first contact with potential employers and will open the door, once you meet them, you would then be in a position to explain and expand on what is in your CV. But without a good CV and covering letter, you will be meeting nobody.

Never underestimate the importance of the covering letter, which will try to summarize your CV in a few paragraphs (make sure it does not extend beyond one page), as this may be used as an initial screening method to decide which CVs to read in more depth. Remember to remain tight on the post you are applying for, and summarize elements that are relevant to the post on offer, ensuring that the person who reads the letter is left with the impression that you want the job, are qualified to carry out the work, and are interested in the work. Therefore if you were applying for the post of a community archaeology officer, you would highlight previous related experience, your eagerness for the opportunity and the clearly defined elements of your CV that are relevant to the post. The covering letter is where you sell yourself, while your CV is of a list of what you've done.

Always ensure you get the correct spelling of the person you are directing you CV to, as well as the correct address of the place it is going to. Make sure the layout is good, the spelling is correct, and even consider using good quality paper for mailed applications. First impressions on paper can be a factor – and even if you e-mail, remember that you should treat this like a paper copy, as it will be printed out, so it had better look good, and please have a sensible email address that does not raise eyebrows - sexylovegod@hotmail.com may be good fun, but will not help in the real employment world.



Your CV should also be tailored to the job you are applying for and although there is no hard rule for CV layout the following elements should be included. Remember you can keep a copy of your 'Full' CV, and edit it down for each application, if you are serious about getting work, then take the time to make a good CV.

YOU WILL NEED

Name, contact information, education, skills and experience.

In addition to these basics, include fieldwork, research and teaching experience, publications, grants and fellowships, professional associations, awards and other information relevant to the position you are applying for. See the next page for a template CV.

Curriculum Vitae - Mr John Smith

12/07/2009

Your Contact Information

Name
Address
Telephone
Mobile Phone
Email

Personal Information

Date of Birth
Place of Birth

Education

Include dates and details of degrees, training and certification
University/College
PhD etc

Professional Qualifications

Certifications and Accreditations
Any relevant Computer Skills

Employment History

List in chronological order, include position, work details and dates
Work History
Academic Positions
Research and Training

Awards

Include any grants or awards that you have received and what you did for them.

Publications

Author."Title of Article."Title of Magazine or Newspaper. Date: Pages.

Books

Author's Last name, First name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Professional Memberships

ie Institute for Archaeologists, Association of Archaeological Illustrators and Surveyors. etc. note that the name is written in full, not just the Acronym.

Interests

These interests should have either an insight into your personality AND/OR be relevant to the post. So photography is good, while rabbit breeding may give a different impression.

Try and keep this to 2-3 pages and relevant to the post you are applying for.

What jobs can I do in Archaeology

There are many careers paths you can choose - Field Archaeology, Academic, Professional Consultant, National and Local Government Agency, Museums, Scientific and Public archaeology.

Field Archaeologist / Contracting Company (c. 3000)

Since the 1990s, this has been the largest growth in employment within archaeology. Effectively you are employed by developers to carry out evaluations prior to developments (from single houses to roads projects) in order for them to get planning permission. In most of the jobs you will find yourself hoping to find archaeology, after your 8th project without finding anything other than 3 sherds of 19th century blue and white pottery, then will come the site that produces a potentially amazing archaeological discovery, where the two options are to either try and preserve 'in situ' (ie don't dig it) OR try and get it dug as quickly as you can, within budget constraints, and sample as much as you can. The field archaeologist has been hit hardest in the Credit Crunch, with no development meaning no work. The other side of the contracting unit is the office staff (often one and the same) which deals with the post excavation, report writing and publication. Running all of this will be a project manager, who very rarely actually gets to work in archaeology, but rather chases the jobs, writes the tenders, ensures staff are in the right place, and tries to get them paid on time. Over 3000 people are employed in this form of archaeology, but be aware, it is high stress and the opportunity to carry out long term excavation and research can be limited, though not impossible.



BAJR Federation of Archaeologists <http://www.bajrfed.co.uk>

Institute for Archaeologists <http://www.archaeologists.net>

Academic (c. 1000)



The academic archaeologist, tutor, lecturer or professor is probably more familiar to people. This person teaches classes on various archaeology topics at a university or college through the year, and conducts archaeological expeditions during the summer terms. You'll need a PhD to get this job and a good publication list as well as a particular skill that will fit in with the particular institution; these positions are relatively rare although academia is becoming increasingly bureaucratic and frustrating. However, it is better paid than field archaeology, and allows for long term research and excavation.

Professional Consultant (c. 150)

Another form of archaeologist who is connected with the development world is the consultant, who works often within a large environmental company (such as Atkins Global or Giffords) - providing specialist advice to large capital projects and managing the contracting units brought in. This job does require a high skill level, and you will have often spent years in various jobs gathering all the knowledge needed to provide your company and the client with the best advice. You can also act as an independent, though again, broad but in-depth knowledge will be required.

National Organisations and Local Government (c. 2000)

There is a substantial government and NGO involvement in archaeology, working for Historic Scotland, English Heritage, CADW etc or in County Planning Offices, there is also work in the Forestry Commission, the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland or Natural England. The variety of jobs ranges from field work to management, and of course understanding legislation is important. Within Local Government you could be a County Archaeologist, a Planning Archaeologist or with good IT skills, dealing with the Historic Environment Records on Databases and GIS systems. There is always a strong need to be able to interact with the public, and to both protect archaeology but also promote it.

Association of County Archaeological Officers: <http://www.algao.org.uk/>

Museum / Archives (c.500)

Often forgotten in mainstream archaeology, museums are “guardians of the nation’s heritage and are the location for the storage and interpretation of all archaeological material.” The conservation and interpretive elements are strong in this branch, and knowledge of artefacts is often essential. The jobs range from collections and archive management to educational outreach and exhibition production.



Society of Museum Archaeologists: <http://www.socmusarch.org.uk/index.htm> 

Scientific/Specialists (c. 500)

The most disparate and hard to describe group, given the variety of possible opportunities, which range from full scientific specialisms, such as environmental archaeology, osteoarchaeology, dating, chemical analysis etc, to illustration, photography, and geophysics. In many cases you will be working as a specialist within a larger company or university, however, the freelancer is also another route that many people choose to follow, offering services to those groups that do not have in-house capabilities, or only need your particular specialism occasionally. It is true that no matter what you do, there will usually be a need for it, the question is of course, how many others are offering these services and also how often are there services needed. In my case I offer a range of services from land survey, through digital modelling to illustration and publication. My other specialism is in architectural survey and analysis, and all of these potential earning streams create options for me.

Community and Public Outreach (c. 100)

This is a side of archaeology that is often ignored, that is presenting monuments to the public, often for bodies like the local government councils, and national organisations, etc. However, with a rising awareness that the point of archaeology is to inform the public, and the large number of community archaeology projects that are taking place around the UK, this is becoming something of a potential growth industry. You might consider taking a course in tourism management, media studies or even a teaching diploma. The range of interaction could well be from primary school children to adults, or vulnerable groups who are utilising the unique teaching aspects of archaeology for personal benefit. Whole communities can rediscover a sense of cooperation and also pride in their area.

“The goals and methods in community archaeology projects vary greatly, but there are two general aspects found in all projects. First, that it involves communities in planning and carrying out the projects that are of direct interest to them and second, that community archaeologists themselves believe they are making a difference.”

Public Archaeology Journal: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_Archaeology_\(journal\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_Archaeology_(journal)) 

Read More

It is difficult to explain everything or cover every topic in this short Guide, so please look at these other guides, that can also help.

Archaeology Scotland: <http://tinyurl.com/n7wfpj> 

Current Archaeology : <http://www.archaeology.co.uk/advice/> 

Independant Guide to archaeology 2007: <http://tinyurl.com/mx267k> 

About.com Archaeology: <http://tinyurl.com/ks6zxh> 

CBA Guide to Archaeology: <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/education> 

Graduate Prospects website: <http://tinyurl.com/24q7d7> 

About:archaeology career advice: http://archaeology.about.com/lr/archaeology_careers/186755/2/ 

DirectGov Career Advice: <http://tinyurl.com/nmgd8j> 

Remember that the **BAJR Federation** will also be there to help offering direct advice and help from people who know. <http://www.bajrfed.co.uk> 

Credits

This guide would not have been possible without use of the excellent information that is out there, including the excellent CBA guides <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/getinvolved>  The Archaeology Scotland Guides which can be found at <http://www.archaeologyscotland.org.uk/?q=node/3>  There was also useful information to be gleaned from the Prospects website relating to archaeology and both studying and working as an archaeologist: http://www.prospects.ac.uk/p/types_of_job/archaeologist_job_description.jsp 

Jon Welsh was a great help in editing the document.

Finally, the inspiration for this in the first place was Andrew Selkirk's now legendary **A Career in Archaeology** <http://www.archaeology.co.uk/advice/a-career-in-archaeology.htm>  which ends with the line

“*Archaeology is still I hope 'open'; we still need and welcome people with ideas and enthusiasm - people who are in love with the venture of discovering the past, and who wish to share and communicate their enthusiasm. If you are one of these - I wish you the very best of luck!*”

I can but echo these sentiments and offer my thanks to all those mentioned above, and more, who try to make sure we are open to all.

David Connolly
BAJR
July 2009