

HLF/IfA Workplace Learning Bursary Training Plan: Artefact Specialist at Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA)

1 Introduction

Title: Artefact specialist (Roman small finds), placement hosted by Museum of London Archaeology

Duration: 10 months: 20 September 2010 (earliest start date) to 22 July 2011

Grade: PlfA

Salary: £17, 000 p.a. pro rata

The IfA has identified a potential general skills shortage in artefact research both among new entrants to the profession and among existing staff. A relatively small number of highly experienced finds researchers have an average age which is rapidly increasing and it is essential that new entrants are attracted to the profession.

This document sets out the proposed training programme, with a detailed schedule of the skills offered, measured against the National Occupational Standards in Archaeological Practice.

2 Aims and scope of the placement

The placement in artefact studies will provide the bursary holder with training in key skills relevant to artefact research. These range from basic artefact recognition and methods of research and the assessment of an assemblage for further study to the writing of reports. The work will involve the use of relevant information technology which is seen a training priority and will take place primarily within the context of London archaeology.

3 The host institution

MoLA (and its predecessors) has provided archaeological advice and services to the property sector since 1975. The organisation is in a unique position to offer a trainee the opportunity of learning about the entire post-excavation process, and the progress of artefacts from discovery, through the registration process, to publication and archiving. Experienced finds specialists of national standing at MOLA can guide the trainee in both basic and more advanced methods of artefact research, drawing upon the resources of a vibrant and innovative organisation and the great wealth of the London archaeological collections, principally those of the Museum of London.

The placement will be based at MoLA's offices at Mortimer Wheeler House, London, which also houses the vast resource of the London Archaeological Archive.

4 Supporting staff

Line Manager: the placement will be line managed by **Fiona Seeley**, (Finds and Conservation Manager). The point of contact with the IFA will be Dawn Jackson, Operations manager.

Supervisor: The lead supervisor, responsible for day to day supervision and training in Roman artefact studies, will be **Dr Angela Wardle**, (Roman finds specialist). Where appropriate, supervisory support will also be provided by **Fiona Seeley**, **Beth Richardson** (Roman pottery and post-Roman finds specialist, **Liz Barham** and **Liz Goodman** (conservators), the finds processing manager and the **MoLA Drawing Office** (illustrator).

Mentor: **Sue Hirst** (managing editor) will act as a dedicated mentor, available to provide support, guidance and advice.

5 Training programme

The bursary holder will be provided with a programme of hands-on training in the principles and practices of artefact research. The programme will deliver training in the following areas:

- the recognition and classification of a wide variety of Roman artefacts
- the recording methods in use at MoLA
- methods of finds research and introduction to the relevant bibliographies
- the resources available for artefact research in London
- the manipulation of data for analysis
- the writing of finds assessments to MoLA standards, with an introduction to report writing
- the importance and practice of liaison with other team members
- strategies for working to tight schedules within a commercial environment

Training will also be provided in health and safety in an office and museum environment, the handling and storage of archaeological materials and the importance of the archiving of such materials.

6 Outcomes

As a result of the training programme the bursary holder will have gained:

- experience of working with artefacts in both commercial and museum environments, including the handling and storage of archaeological
- a good working knowledge of the principal classes of Roman small finds, their bibliography and documentation
- familiarity with recording methods in use at MoLA, the London Archaeological Archive and the Museum of London and the physical and digital archives
- skills and experience in data manipulation as an analytical tool
- skills in assessing the importance of an assemblage and its potential for future work within a research framework
- an understanding of the processes involved in the writing of a publication report

Upon completion of the placement the bursary holder should be able to undertake artefact research for a commercial archaeological unit or further training for museum work.

7 Detailed schedule of learning outcomes

Learning activities and tasks	Learning outcomes – skills attained	National Occupational Standards (NOSs) to be met
The bursary holder will receive training in organisation's Health and Safety procedures, attending relevant H&S courses, including an initial induction session. He/she will operate safely during the course of the placement	Experience of the application of general health and safety procedures in a place of work. Specific familiarity with the risks involved in handling archaeological materials and how to address these.	<i>AJ10 Contribute to health and safety in the workplace</i> <i>AJ10.1 Operate safely in the workplace</i> <i>AJ10.2 Respond to emergencies</i> <i>AJ10.3 Assist in the security of the workplace</i>
Undertake training and project work to agreed timetables and meet personal targets. Develop new skills through in-house training and identify potential fields of	Time management planning and experience – the ability to manage time and resources to meet personal and team objectives in the future	<i>AK3 Develop your own resources and protect the interests of others</i> <i>AK3.1 Develop yourself to improve your performance</i> <i>AK3.2 Manage your own time and resources to meet</i>

<p>specific expertise for future work</p> <p>Attendance at appropriate internal or external courses</p> <p>Attendance at conferences</p>	<p>Development of additional skills and identification of specific fields of interest</p>	<p>your objectives</p>
<p>Work with the Finds team in the processing and initial storage of accessioned finds from archaeological excavations.</p>	<p>The ability to distinguish what constitutes an 'accessioned' object; basic recognition of materials and objects and the understanding of suitable methods of packaging</p>	<p><i>AC6 Store items</i></p> <p>AC6.1 Identify the appropriate environment in which to maintain and protect items</p>
<p>Work with the finds manager and conservators, learning about the handling and storage of different materials.</p>	<p>Ability to handle and advise on the long term storage of a range of archaeological materials</p>	<p><i>AG2 Prepare the accommodation of archaeological items</i></p> <p>AG2.1 Identify the accommodation of items</p>
<p>Practical training and practice in the methods of recording at MoLA, using the standard methods of accessioning finds maintaining both paper and digital records; data inputting</p>	<p>Ability to classify and maintain data on the material remains of past communities, using established methods in use at MoLA.</p> <p>Ability to use the MoLA Oracle database.</p>	<p><i>AF3 Classify, compile and maintain data on the material remains</i></p> <p>AF3.2 Maintain data and records on the material remains of past communities</p>
<p>Practical sessions in the identification and classification of artefacts (principally Roman), with AW and other supervisors, using the Archive and Museum collections, and finds from current excavations.</p> <p>Write catalogue descriptions for assessment and archive, under supervision of AW.</p> <p>Introduction to basic and more specialised finds bibliographies through</p>	<p>The ability to recognise and classify a wide variety of Roman artefacts (small finds)</p> <p>The ability to describe and item effectively</p> <p>Familiarity with the bibliography and documentation for a wide variety of Roman small</p>	<p><i>AE3 Identify and describe an archaeological item</i></p> <p>AE3.1 Provide a description of an item</p> <p>AE3.2 Identify and classify an item</p>

<p>sessions with AW; induction session at MoL library</p> <p>Work on post-excavation assessments of Roman finds from current excavations with AW</p>	<p>finds,</p> <p>Understanding of the development of finds research and currently methodology</p> <p>Ability to assess the potential significance of an item as an archaeological resource</p>	<p>AE3.3 Describe the potential significance of an item as an archaeological resource</p>
<p>Write catalogue descriptions and assessment reports, receiving constructive criticism/feedback from supervisors</p>	<p>The possession of appropriate skills in report writing</p>	<p><i>AD1 Undertake analysis and interpretation</i></p> <p>AD1.3 Prepare and submit reports</p>
<p>Work with the finds and stratigraphic teams on the production of post-excavation assessment reports</p> <p>Receive an introduction to methods of research and the writing of publication reports</p>	<p>Ability to undertake assessment reports (of complete assemblages), using the MoLA template</p> <p>Familiarity of the post-excavation process to assessment and an understanding of the processes of further research and publication</p>	<p><i>AC1 Research and analyse information to achieve objectives</i></p> <p>AC1.3 Analyse research information</p> <p>AC1.4 Report results</p>
<p>Input, retrieve and analyse digital data, using Oracle, Excel and MsQuery through in house-training or external courses in the use appropriate software</p>	<p>Skills in data manipulation and its use as an analytical tool – the ability to use the databases and systems in use at MoLA, many of which will be appropriate for future use</p>	<p><i>AF4 Provide information on the material remains of past communities to others</i></p> <p>AF4.2 Access data sources and compile data on the material remains of past communities</p>
<p>Shadowing of other specialists, conservators and illustrators, attendance at finds reviews and introduction to written protocols</p> <p>Practical sessions in finds</p>	<p>Understanding of the importance of successful liaison with illustrators and photographers and of the basic principals of archaeological illustration</p>	<p><i>AH4 Plan and deliver interpretative activities and materials</i></p> <p>AH4.3 Develop information materials to support an interpretative activity.</p>

illustration		
Liaison with conservators other specialists and observation of their respective roles	An understanding of appropriate methods of investigation to gain maximum information and the general care of artefacts; an ability to ask the right questions of conservators and other specialists	<i>AE4 Develop conservation plans for archaeological items</i> AE 4 .1 Understand the role of conservation and the conservator in the process of artefact research
Placement with the Department of Archaeology and Archives, MoL	Experience of working within a museum environment Familiarity with the Museum of London permanent collections A broader understanding of the place of London in Roman archaeology	<i>AC1 Research and analyse information to achieve objectives</i> AC1.1 Identify sources and availability of information.

8 Timetable

The post will be ten months in length over a period of 186 days, after allowing for annual leave, bank holidays and sickness.

The time spent on each broad set of tasks within the course of the placement will be as follows:

Training in finds recognition and research:	70 days
Training in MoLA recording methods and use of the Oracle database:	15 days
Data manipulation and analysis:	10 days
Finds assessment:	30 days
Liaison with illustrators and photographers;	
training in basic archaeological illustration:	6 days
Liaison with conservators; training in object handling and storage:	5 days
Report writing:	30 days
Placement with Dept of Archaeology and Archives MoL:	10 days
Conferences, other training courses as appropriate:	8 days
Health and safety training:	2 days
Total	186 days