

## IfA and salary recommendations: full report on decisions of IfA Council



### Background

IfA has been setting recommended minimum salaries for three responsibility levels linked to its three voting membership grades since the 1990s. In 2005 Council agreed to implement a requirement for Registered Organisations to pay at or above these minima, effective from 1 April 2007. A jobs evaluation benchmarking exercise in 2007/8 showed that pay at the lowest grade lagged 13% behind its nearest comparator in other professions. In 2009 Council agreed to move the minima away from local authority payscales, and set out an 'aspiration' to increase the minima by 13% above inflation over five years in order to close the gap with other professions. In the event the economic downturn meant that since that date Council has either made inflationary increases or no increases. In 2012 IfA amended its *Code of conduct* to require its members who are employers (including self-employed) to endeavour to meet or exceed the recommended minima.

IfA also has 'recommended starting salaries' set aspirationally higher than the minima. These are commended to the members – rule 5.5 of the *Code of conduct* requires members to give them 'reasonable consideration'.

Council established a pay working party in 2012 to advise on the detail of salary recommendations and on a strategic approach by IfA and others to the wider issue of remuneration and career progression in archaeology. This work is being undertaken in two stages. At its meeting on 30 January 2013 Council considered the working party's report on the first stage, and advice from the Institute's legal team. It also took account of submissions by members and others over recent days following a third-party intervention, and responses to previous consultations on the issue.

### Stage 1 decisions

Council first reaffirmed that IfA has a vital role to play in improving and maintaining standards of archaeological work, and in enhancing the status of archaeologists. Council believes that inadequate pay and conditions undermine its work on both these objectives, and **while the enhancement of remuneration packages is the core responsibility of trade unions, staff associations and employer bodies, IfA must continue to play its legitimate role, seeking wherever possible to encourage active engagement with the issues by other bodies.**

Council maintains that the salary minima have played and could continue to play a role in preventing cuts to pay. **It has therefore unanimously reaffirmed its commitment to minimum salary recommendations** as guidance and as a benchmark that members and Registered Organisations must endeavour to meet or exceed.

In the light of legal advice Council resolved that **it should not continue to make compliance with minimum salary recommendations an absolute requirement of Registered Organisation status.** This requirement, introduced in 2007, is now removed. However, the Registered Organisations committee has been instructed to use non-compliance with the recommended starting salaries as a trigger for a more detailed audit of the way an applicant or existing organisation ensures that it has appropriately competent staff at its disposal, with immediate effect. The committee has been instructed to look very closely indeed at applications from organisations that do not comply with

the recommended minimum salaries: **it will be up to applicants for Registration to make a persuasive case that they can recruit, retain, motivate and develop staff with the skills necessary to comply with IfA's *Code of conduct* and standards.**

**The recommended minimum salaries for 2013-14 are increased to**

- **PIfA-level competence/responsibility: £16,327**
- **AlfA-level competence/responsibility: £19,017**
- **MIfA-level competence/responsibility: £24,583**

**The recommended starting salaries for 2013-14 are increased to**

- **PIfA-level competence/responsibility: £19,853 - £20,926**
- **AlfA-level competence/responsibility: £29,123 – 31,561**
- **MIfA-level competence/responsibility: £36,552 - £40,276**

The package of employment entitlements that IfA member employers are encouraged to adhere to remains unchanged and can be found at <http://www.archaeologists.net/practices/salary>.

Council additionally resolved that IfA's **Jobs Information Service will not accept paid advertisements for archaeological posts that do not comply with the recommended minima.**

But additional approaches must be developed. Council has recognised that the balance of evidence is that salary minima have not proved to be an effective mechanism for improving pay and conditions, particularly given the economic circumstances which have prevailed since 2008. This is disappointing, but Council believes that other, **more effective mechanisms can be found.**

## **Stage 2 research**

Council has also instructed its working party, taking advice from Prospect and FAME, to develop a policy statement that sets out IfA's belief that the problem of low pay has the potential critically to impact on professional standards and is one which the industry must take collective ownership of and accept collective responsibility for solving. This must be the first step in any future strategy. The policy should explain IfA's legitimate interest in ensuring that archaeological employers are able to recruit, retain, motivate and develop appropriately competent archaeological staff, and its belief that remuneration is one of the factors that will assist employers to do so. Importantly the statement should make clear that other archaeological bodies have equally legitimate interests in improving pay and conditions, and should be encouraged to work with IfA; and that some other bodies have more levers at their disposal to effect improvements in pay than IfA does and should be encouraged and assisted by IfA to fulfil their responsibilities.

The working party has been charged with developing a strategy, for Council's future consideration, for facilitating an industry-wide approach to improving pay and conditions, centred on increasing the value of archaeologists as perceived by others and as they perceive themselves, and by providing more tools to assist them in their individual aspirations for progression and advancement. In drafting the strategy the working party should

- Advise how recommended minima could best be secured and employed, and by whom
- review whether there is any formula that can be used for determining the level of future recommended minima pro tem

- review what other aspects of employment practice should be examined during the Registration process
- review again the wording of the rules under Principle 5 of the *Code of conduct*
- engage with Prospect, and with other Trade Unions if possible, to see what information from us would assist it in determining how to coordinate its negotiating position with the various employers where it is recognised
- engage with FAME to see what information from us would encourage or enable it to take a more proactive role in pay determination
- advise on promoting use of the employers' training toolkit
- advise on providing more guidance on routes or career progress ('pathway to PifA' etc)
- advise on using IfA media to foster an appetite for progression through learning (training and self-directed CPD) and professionalism
- advise on the development of criteria for 'good employer' status that IfA could offer to Registered Organisations
- advise on the development of an app to enable potential employees to calculate the value of benefits in an employment package, and to empower them in making choices and in negotiating improvements to the package
- advise on using IfA media and other instruments to promote a culture of increased support for an individual's chosen programme of professional self-development
- consider the results of a current PARN survey to see what lessons can be learned from other professional associations

### **IfA conference and opportunities to guide the working party**

IfA Council members have also agreed to attend the IfA conference (17-19 April) and invite IfA members to share their views with Council on this topic there.

A discussion event will be announced shortly to allow for public debate.

It is Council's hope that this occasion will

- allow for a more informed debate than the last few days have provided
- encourage members not to take polarised views based on self interest on a problem affecting everyone in the profession
- persuade other organisations to address their responsibilities for seeking solutions to it

Beverley Ballin Smith, Vice Chair of Council and chair of the Council meeting on 30 January 2013