

Salary benchmarking survey 2024 project plan

1. Objective

To provide anonymised, aggregated salary data for a range of archaeological job roles across the sector for information and for comparison with cognate roles in other professions. This will provide a basis for championing better paid roles to improve the way archaeologists' skills are valued and rewarded. The aim is for this to become a regular survey.

2. Methodology

For 2024-25, the benchmarking will be carried out using existing data sets from job advertisements in the public domain (eg JIST, Jobs in British Archaeology survey, and Prospect and BAJR data sets). Depending on the availability and quality of the data, this may be supplemented by commissioned surveys to capture data on actual earnings from 2025-6, although data on member salaries is already collected as part of the biennial member survey. There is also potential to combine with or import data from Profiling the Profession (next edition due in 2025) and the annual State of the Archaeological Market surveys undertaken by FAME and ClfA.

Benchmarking against comparator roles in other sectors will be carried out based on competence comparisons between roles using professional accreditation grades. Comparators will be agreed by the Project Advisory Group but may include the Museums Association, CIEEM, IEMA and CIOB – all carry out salary surveys but some are published behind a paywall or only available to members. Comparison with construction roles will be carried out using competence comparison via qualification levels (NVQ3, Archaeological Technician Level 3 etc) and published national pay agreements.

2.1 2024 data sets

There are two main data sets we can use for the first benchmarking survey

- i. Job adverts in JIST and from BAJR, to be analysed using the Jobs in British Archaeology (JIBA) methodology
- ii. Salary data from the 2023 ClfA member survey

For data set i, the Project Advisory Group will agree a selection of job titles/job roles to be analysed covering a wide range of archaeological activity. For information, the job roles considered by the 2008 and 2010 benchmarking work are listed below

- Archaeological technician
- Supervisor
- Project officer
- Finds processor
- Finds officer
- Pottery specialist
- Senior Geoarchaeologist
- CAD technician
- Archives officer
- Head of photography
- Senior Illustrator
- Assistant historic environment officer
- Planning archaeologist
- Project manager

For data set ii, respondents were asked to indicate how much they were paid by selecting from a list of salary ranges in £10k increments from £0 to over £70k.

Responses will be analysed as follows

- Salary data against accreditation grade for PCIfA, ACIfA and MCIfA (F/T and P/T)
- Salary data by age range (F/T and P/T)
- Salary data by gender (F/T and P/T)
- Salary data by type of work (Q42 – F/T and P/T)
- Salary data by seniority (Q44 – F/T and P/T)
- Salary data for RO and non-RO respondents

The Project Advisory Group will be invited to suggest other useful ways the data may be analysed. It should be noted that 578 respondents answered the salary question, less than 20% of accredited members.

Both data sets can be compared with external comparators (again, to be agreed by the Project Advisory Group) by mapping competence requirements for different roles against those required for CfA accreditation at PCIfA, ACIfA and MCIfA and then mapping CfA grades of accreditation against the requirements of comparator professional bodies.

3. Project team

The work will be managed by Kate Geary on behalf of CfA. A communications plan will be developed with Carl Smith, Communications and Marketing Manager. Project support is yet to be confirmed.

The work will be undertaken in partnership with Prospect trade union Archaeologists' Branch, with input from the British Archaeological Jobs Resource. Other partners, for example professional bodies in related sectors (Icon, SMA, Museums Association) could be added as the project develops.

A Project Advisory Group including representatives from CfA's Advisory Council, Prospect Archaeologists' Branch, BAJR and the Early Careers Special Interest Group will advise on the work. At

an early stage, consideration will be given to the risks and benefits of including employer representation on the group.

Wider stakeholders include archaeological employers, FAME as the trade association for the sector, ClfA's EDI committee, other trade unions representing archaeologists, archaeological employees and prospective employees in general.

4. Post EGM comms

A communication plan will be developed at the beginning of the project and agreed with the project team. The plan will set out key messages and target audiences for the project and how progress will be communicated throughout, as well as how the results will be disseminated at the end of the project.

The communications plan for the work will need to reinforce

- how and why we are undertaking salary benchmarking
- that it constitutes a different approach – benchmarking is not a substitute for minimum salary recommendations
- that it is a tool for others to use, stressing the point in our policy on pay that the key organisations involved in directly improving wages in the sector are employers and trade unions
- that ClfA will support this indirectly through its internal and external comms and advocacy work, focussing at a strategic level on the impact low pay has on the sustainability of the profession and its ability to deliver public benefit, rather than specifically on the plight of low paid archaeologists

There is clearly a need to build consensus around the outcome of the EGM and capitalise on the shared commitment to ensuring a sustainable future for the profession that underpinned the debate. The challenge is to move forward in a way that doesn't undermine previous policy decisions, is compatible with our legal advice and acknowledges the views and concerns of members as expressed in the EGM and elsewhere.

5. Timescale

Preliminaries March-April	Task
	1 Data sharing agreements sought with Prospect and BAJR
	2 Confirm presence/absence of Jobs in British Archaeology review for 2023
	3 Set up project team and confirm budget
	4 Project start-up meeting
	5 Comms plan and announcement of the beginning of the project
Data review May	
	6 Review data sets to establish parameters of benchmarking and potential gaps

- 7 Agree job roles/titles to be included
- 8 Map job roles/titles to ClfA accreditation grades (best fit approach)
- 9 Design data collection mechanism and fields
- 10 Sense check with project partners
- 11 Decide whether to proceed with available data or collect data to fill gaps
- 12 Agree comparator surveys and check availability

Data entry and analysis June - July

- 13 Comms on project progress and expected release date of report
- 14 Enter/import data
- 15 Produce draft report
- 16 Undertake initial comparison with surveys identified in 11

Reporting August

- 17 Consult with project partners and agree final format of report
- 18 Draft final report
- 19 Agree comms programme for publishing report
- 20 Agree individual and joint recommendations if required
- 21 Publish report and enact comms programme