

DAP: Disability and the Archaeological Profession

## EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS



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## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

The implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995 & 2005) has significantly raised the profile of employment issues and inclusion in the last few years. This in turn has led to a plethora of projects producing guidelines covering a wide range of occupations and activities.

The purpose of this document is to provide specific advice on the issues surrounding disability and employment in the archaeological profession. It is a synthesis of information from four major sources

- ◆ what the anti-discrimination legislation says
- ◆ the perspective of archaeological employers
- ◆ the perspective of archaeologists with a disability
- ◆ other sources of general advice

These guidelines are not intended to provide prescriptive regulations to guide the profession: the intention is to inform the wider archaeological community of the good practice already being carried out by many employers, and to provide suggestions and guidance for improvement in practice for recruiters, managers and supervisors, and colleagues.

### Disability

Demographically, people with disabilities make up a significant proportion of the population of the UK, but their numbers are not reflected in employment. The Disability Rights Commission stated that in 2006

‘There are 6.8 million disabled people of working age in Britain, but only half are in work, compared with four fifths of the non-disabled population. Employment rates vary greatly according to the type of impairment a person has. Disabled people with mental health problems have the lowest employment rates of all impairment categories, at only 20 per cent.’ (DRC 2006, 7)

There are many myths about what disability actually is and who the ‘disabled’ are. To some, it is the wheelchair user or people on crutches. The reality is very different: these individuals make up only a very small proportion of people with disabilities. Disability covers a wide range of different conditions and impairments

- ◆ sensory impairments – sight and hearing
- ◆ fluctuating or recurring conditions like epilepsy or ME
- ◆ progressive conditions such as motor neurone disease, cancer and MS
- ◆ organ specific conditions, like heart, liver or kidney disease, and asthma
- ◆ developmental conditions such as dyslexia and Asperger’s Syndrome
- ◆ learning difficulties
- ◆ mental health difficulties
- ◆ restricted mobility

Looking through this list, the main point to emphasise is that it is not always apparent that someone has one of these conditions; they are ‘hidden’ disabilities. You would only know if they told you about it, or if an incident occurred. This is important: the vast majority of disabilities are not visible, but they can have a major effect on the quality of someone’s life and their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.



The traditional view of ‘disability’ (Photo: S Geary)

Another myth is that the legislation now requires employers to go to exorbitant lengths to include everybody in archaeology such as installing wheelchair ramps. This is also wrong. The legislation only obliges employers to make ‘reasonable’ adjustments in the light of practical and financial constraints. For example, access ramps to County Council offices, libraries or a theatre can be argued to be ‘reasonable’ as these are public buildings. However, could an access ramp into a temporary three-week excavation trench, varying in depth from day to day and requiring constant modification, be argued as ‘reasonable’? Possibly not, but it is up to the employer to justify that decision.

These are probably extreme examples, but they make the point. To take a real example: an experienced excavator developed problems with his legs and was no longer able to kneel, but he was perfectly capable of doing the job lying on his side. He was deemed to be the best person for a particular job based on his skills, qualifications and experience. Had the employer he applied to refused to take him on because of his inability to kneel, they might have been liable to prosecution because a reasonable adjustment was available by allowing the excavator to work lying down rather than kneeling.

It is important to understand that not everyone will be able to do everything; providing an environment and adapting tasks where all things can be done by all people is unrealistic. For some people, restrictions in their ability may preclude them from certain tasks. However, the criteria used to establish whether a person can do a specific task should be based on their individual ability, what they can actually do. The legislation requires us to examine the nature of a task and then determine if, ‘reasonably’, it can be done in another way. The fact that it has always been done in a particular way is not a valid response. People have to be dealt with on an individual basis to discover the possible adjustments that may have to be made for them as a person with unique capabilities and limitations.

The legislation and these guidelines are not about ‘charity’ or having to employ people just because they have a disability. They relate to skilled and qualified people who are capable of doing a job in archaeology, but for whom adjustments may have to be made in the way that job is done, because they have an impairment which may limit their ability to carry out some normal day-to-day activities. The people that this refers to are

- ◆ experienced archaeologists with, or who have developed, a particular impairment or a work-related disability
- ◆ archaeological students looking to enter the profession
- ◆ people considering archaeology as a career

It is important to appreciate that there are already many people with a range of differing disabilities already working successfully within archaeology (see Chapter 7).

Making reasonable adjustments need not be onerous or financially crippling as long as it is approached in the right way through

- ◆ communication
- ◆ flexibility
- ◆ common sense

Sometimes additional advice and financial help can be made available to assist this process, details of which can be found later in this document.

Wheelchair user surveying: the ‘reasonable’ adjustment in this case simply involved lowering the legs on the tripod (Photo: Silchester Town Life Project)



What disability usually looks like: blind volunteer excavating and identifying finds by touch (Photo: Tim Phillips)



## Disability theory

There are several ‘models’ of disability which have attempted to define the experience of being disabled and the problems that an individual with a disability can face in society. These are important as the tension between them has provided the context for the drafting of the recent legislation. The three major models are outlined below.

### The medical model

This considers a person with a disability as ‘ill’, a subject for treatment and cure. This is how many people still see disability.

### The charitable model

This sees a person with a disability as a tragic individual. They are an object of pity who need to be cared for and protected from the rigours of everyday life.

### The social model

This shifts the emphasis away from considering that there is something ‘wrong’ with a person with a disability to the view that disabled people are often excluded from participating in everyday activities because of the physical, social, economic and attitudinal ‘barriers’ created by society. This model focuses on the need for society to change.

The social model of disability has been the ‘spirit’ behind the disability discrimination legislation. It has helped to provide a definition for disability and to identify the areas of discrimination. It has also provided the rationale for making reasonable adjustments.

## Disability and the Archaeological Profession (DAP)

The brief of the DAP project was to produce guidelines for employing people with disabilities in archaeology. The major focus is in providing examples of good practice in making reasonable adjustments in professional archaeology. If employers are able to do this successfully they will be able to carry out fully their legal obligations without just paying ‘lip-service’ to the regulations; making certain modifications can ensure that an individual employee is more effective at work. The data were collected through interviews with disabled and non-disabled archaeologists. Further details of these can be found in Part 3 of this report – ‘Personal stories’.

Disability and the Archaeological Profession (DAP) is a continuation of an earlier project carried out by the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading examining the inclusion of students with disabilities on archaeological fieldwork training. Inclusive Accessible Archaeology (IAA) was funded by the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) through their Fund for Developments in Teaching and Learning (FDTL5). The IAA project was carried out in association with Archaeology at Bournemouth University and the Research Group for Inclusive Environments (RGIE) at Reading. The DAP project was funded by a small grant from English Heritage through their Historic Environment Enabling Programme. It was carried out with the assistance of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and Oxford Archaeology.

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This report is aimed at a variety of audiences. We have tried to divide it into a series of clear sections so that it can easily be dipped into.

Employers will want to understand their obligations under law and receive guidance in good practice and making ‘reasonable adjustments’ (Part 1).

Archaeological managers and supervisors will benefit from both an understanding of the legal requirements and the concept of making ‘reasonable adjustments’ (Part 1), as well as appreciating the personal experiences of archaeologists with disabilities (Part 3).

Employees with disabilities will want to understand their rights (Part 1) and be reassured that many archaeologists with disabilities are working successfully within the profession (Part 2). They may also benefit from reading personal stories of how people with similar disabilities have coped, and the adjustments made to assist with this (Part 3).

Colleagues wanting to understand the perspective of team-members with disabilities may also benefit from reading the ‘Personal stories’ (Part 3).

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This section of the report provides the background to the DAP project, and to disability and the relevant anti-discrimination legislation generally, as well as a short explanation of the theory that underlies the legislation.

## PART 1 – GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

### 1. Disability – the legal perspective

This chapter gives a more detailed overview of the disability discrimination legislation. It explains the legal definition of ‘disability’ and the obligations of employers, including the making of ‘reasonable’ adjustments.

### 2. General guidance

In this chapter general guidance for good practice is given for the following aspects of employing disabled people

- ◆ disability awareness
- ◆ declaration of disability
- ◆ ability to do the job
- ◆ making reasonable adjustments
- ◆ health and safety
- ◆ work-related disability

### 3. Specific disabilities

Guidance is provided in good practice for employing professional archaeologists with specific disabilities, including

- ◆ dyslexia and similar conditions
- ◆ hidden disabilities
- ◆ visual impairments
- ◆ hearing impairments
- ◆ restricted mobility
- ◆ mental health difficulties
- ◆ Asperger’s Syndrome

### 4. Disability and the national archaeology/heritage bodies

In this section recommendations are made for the role of the national archaeology/ heritage bodies in promoting good practice and supporting employers and employees on disability issues.

### 5. Useful contacts

This section gives a list of useful contacts for further information with regard to the various issues raised in this report.

## PART 2 – PROFILING DISABILITY IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION

### 6. The Disability and the Archaeological Profession project (DAP)

This gives a description of the methodology used by the project and the overall results.

### 7. Employed archaeologists with a disability

Using data collected by an earlier questionnaire survey of archaeological employers, which asked specific questions about the number and nature of employees with a disability (see Appendix 1), this chapter demonstrates that a substantial number of archaeologists with a disability are working successfully within the profession. It also provides an overview of the types of disabilities amongst employees.

### 8. Disability – the employers' perspective

Drawing on the results of the questionnaire survey of archaeological employers, the major concerns of employers in relation to disability are identified. These are

- ◆ the ability of employees to do the job
- ◆ risk factors and health and safety
- ◆ disclosure of a disability when being recruited

## PART 3 – PERSONAL STORIES

Based on the interviews with archaeologists with a disability, this section highlights the positive and negative experiences of employees. The major themes covered are

- ◆ why people do archaeology
- ◆ positive experiences in employment
- ◆ disability awareness
- ◆ discrimination in employment
- ◆ ability to do the job
- ◆ health and safety
- ◆ declaration of disability
- ◆ work-related disability
- ◆ reasonable adjustments
- ◆ suggested improvements

## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS

A copy of the questionnaire circulated amongst archaeological employers.

## APPENDIX 2: ASSET AND CPD

The Archaeological Skills Self-Evaluation Tool kit (ASSET) was a resource developed by a previous project. It is for use by disabled and non-disabled archaeology students participating in fieldwork training. It is an aid to them in evaluating, and tracking the development of, their abilities and professional and transferable skills. The DAP project was asked to investigate the potential for adapting ASSET to Continuing Professional Development (CPD). It is concluded that this would not be necessary with regard to professional skills, and the capabilities and limitations of individual employees, as these areas are already adequately covered by other resources such as the 'Qualification in Archaeological Practice' NVQ and assessment by Access to Work and Occupational Health. However, it is suggested that the transferable skills that are gained through participating in fieldwork, and that were identified in the development of ASSET, can help inform the process of CPD.

## PART 1 – GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

### 1. DISABILITY – THE LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

#### 1.1 The legislation

The major piece of legislation that covers disability and employment is the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. This has been supplemented by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005. Part 2 of DDA 1995 deals with employment issues which also includes contract workers.

#### 1.2 Definition of disability

In a strict legal sense a person with a disability is defined as someone who has

'A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities' (DDA 1995)

The specific terms in this definition require further explanation.

#### Impairment

The underlying cause of an impairment is not important, what is are the effects the impairment has on a person. Recognised impairments include

- ◆ sensory – sight and hearing
- ◆ fluctuating or recurring effects – eg ME, epilepsy
- ◆ progressive – eg motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, cancer, HIV, MS
- ◆ organ specific – asthma, cardiovascular disease, liver and kidney disease
- ◆ developmental – autistic spectrum disorders, dyslexia, dyspraxia
- ◆ learning difficulties – difficulties with processing the information used for learning
- ◆ mental health conditions/diseases, and personality and behavioural disorders
- ◆ injuries to the body or the brain

Individuals will have differing degrees of these disorders, so for some they may have only a small range of some of the accompanying traits or impairments, whilst others will have considerably more.

#### Exceptions

- ◆ substance addiction (the addiction itself is not seen as an impairment, but its effects can constitute an impairment eg liver disease or depression resulting from alcohol abuse)
- ◆ hay fever
- ◆ arson
- ◆ kleptomania
- ◆ a pre-disposition physically or sexually to abuse others
- ◆ exhibitionism
- ◆ voyeurism
- ◆ tattoos and non-medical body piercing

#### Substantial and adverse effects

This is defined as a limitation going beyond the normal differences in ability which exist among people. In assessing this, several factors need to be taken into account including

- ◆ the time usually taken to carry out an activity
- ◆ the way in which an activity is usually carried out
- ◆ environmental conditions eg temperature, humidity, lighting

Note that progressive impairments such as cancer, HIV and MS are classified as 'substantial' from the moment of diagnosis.

## Long-term effects

The definition of whether an impairment has a long-term effect is

‘It has lasted at least 12 months and is either likely to last 12 months or likely to last the rest of a person’s life. These limits do not apply to people with HIV, MS or cancer, who are defined as disabled from diagnosis.’

This includes fluctuating or recurring impairments, if these are likely to recur.

## Normal day-to-day activities

An impairment is considered to have an effect on an individual’s ability in one or more of the following cases

- ◆ mobility
- ◆ manual dexterity
- ◆ physical co-ordination
- ◆ continence
- ◆ ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- ◆ speech, hearing or eyesight
- ◆ memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- ◆ perception of the risk of physical danger

These should be interpreted and applied in the broadest sense, as it is impossible to compile a complete list of normal day-to-day activities. They do not refer to the detailed or specialised aspects of work; however, many aspects of work still involve normal day-to-day activities.

An impairment may not directly affect someone in carrying out normal day-to-day activities, but it may affect the way in which they carry out those activities e.g. because of pain, fatigue or medical advice.

## 1.3 Employment

### Discrimination

The DDA makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against people with disabilities for a reason related to their disability. This covers all aspects of employment including

- ◆ application forms
- ◆ interview arrangements
- ◆ proficiency tests
- ◆ job offers
- ◆ terms of employment
- ◆ promotion, transfer or training opportunities
- ◆ work-related benefits
- ◆ dismissal or redundancy

Discrimination against a person with a disability is defined as

- ◆ treating them less favourably than they would other employees because of their disability
- ◆ failure to make any required ‘reasonable’ adjustments in the employment of a person with a disability
- ◆ victimisation or harassment

The DDA 2005 also introduced a number of new duties in relation to Public Authorities. These are important as a substantial number of archaeologists are employed in this sector

- ◆ The need to eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- ◆ The need to eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- ◆ The need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- ◆ The need to take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons
- ◆ The need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- ◆ The need to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life

### Reasonable Adjustments

In respect of all aspects of employment, and the physical features of premises occupied by an employer, there is a duty to

make reasonable adjustments so as not to place a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled. This applies to permanent employment and short-term contracts, and to both full-time and part-time positions. In fulfilling this duty an employer is not required to anticipate reasonable adjustments, as is the case with aspects such as access to public buildings and education, but they are expected to ‘react’ reasonably to any disability issues on a case-by-case basis. In deciding what is ‘reasonable’, the following factors can be taken into account

- ◆ effectiveness
- ◆ practicality
- ◆ financial and other costs
- ◆ the extent of an employer’s financial and other resources
- ◆ the availability of financial or other assistance
- ◆ the extent to which it would disrupt an employer’s other activities

In fulfilling their duty to make reasonable adjustments, both financial and practical assistance is available through a number of sources, including: Access to Work, Jobcentre Plus, Workstep and AbilityNet. Details of these schemes can be found in the section on ‘Useful contacts’.

## 1.4 Discussion

The legislation, in the form of the DDA 1995 and DDA 2005, provides a particular legal definition of disability. It also sets out what constitutes ‘discrimination’ and what are the obligations of employers. In the latter case, it establishes the principle of ‘reasonable’ adjustments to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against.

Although there has been a lot of effort put into defining the terminology used in the legislation, much of the language still remains vague; this is especially the case for what actually constitutes a ‘reasonable’ adjustment. This vagueness should be viewed as something positive as it allows for greater flexibility. Not every employment situation is exactly the same and a set of exhaustive and detailed ‘rules’ would not be able to cover every single event. Individuals with the same disability can also be very different from one another, as can be seen from many of the interviews in this project. Nonetheless, as time goes on, case-law will start to develop and frame what is determined to be ‘reasonable’ and ‘unreasonable’. Another factor is that the legislation only provides us with a ‘legal’ definition of disability; how do people with disabilities view themselves? Indeed, do they actually see themselves as ‘disabled’ at all? An example can be drawn from the Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology (IAA) project. One archaeology student with diabetes who returned a questionnaire was quite emphatic

‘I object to [my diabetes] being classed as a disability. I have been diabetic since my twenties and it has never ‘disabled’ or ‘impaired’ me.’

In contrast, another archaeology student who was interviewed talked about her friend who was diabetic. She said that he DID consider himself to be disabled, as he was ineligible to join either the police force or the armed services because of his condition. Another respondent commented

‘I am a diabetic who considers themselves disabled by diabetes. At one point, I thought marine archaeology looked really interesting, but realised as I was not allowed to dive, I could not follow this career path.’

If an impairment is just something that stops you from doing a particular thing for either physical or cognitive reasons, then perhaps we have all experienced impairment at some point in our lives? An interviewee who has multiple sclerosis provided another view of the experience of being disabled

‘I think with sensitivity, and being aware that we all have disadvantages of one sort or another, that archaeology could be a lot more inclusive than it is. Before I started, I had the view of a young, fit and healthy image. Not so much an image problem, more of an image factor. I am sure that if the idea that we cannot all do everything could be got across, it would be a lot better. That is being a human being, not a disabled person. If that idea could be developed, I do not see why archaeology cannot be inclusive.’

Disability is not just about theoretical frameworks, nor legislative definitions, it is fundamentally about people and a set of ‘attitudes’: how people with disabilities see themselves, and how others see them. This goes way beyond any Act of Parliament or abstract theory, and yet it is crucial to successfully implementing the legislation.

### Key sources of information (see section on ‘Useful contacts’)

- ◆ Government website – [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

## 2. DISABILITY AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION – GENERAL GUIDANCE

Disability is a very individual thing. One person's condition, and the way that it affects their abilities, will be very different from another's, even if they are 'labelled' with the same disability. Each person must be dealt with on an individual basis. This means that detailed advice and provisions will not be applicable to every single case and only general recommendations can be made, supplemented by examples of good practice and case studies. This is why the legislation is seemingly vague, but it does allow for greater flexibility.

The one factor that is of greatest importance is the approach taken and the attitude towards disability. The major difficulties are often presumed to be the practicalities and the financial implications. However, 'attitude' is the greater.

Employing, and making provisions for, people with a disability need not be difficult or costly if it is approached in the right way. Many of the recommendations that are included here employers will already be doing, or they can be incorporated into existing policies, procedures and working practices.

### 2.1 Key action points

#### Disability awareness

- ◆ providing disability awareness training for all managers, supervisors and employees

#### Declaration of disability

- ◆ creating a culture of mutual trust
- ◆ clear policies and procedures for selecting personnel (eg Jobcentre Plus)
- ◆ conducting regular appraisals for all staff

#### Reasonable adjustments

- ◆ being willing and prepared to make reasonable adjustments
- ◆ enhancing awareness of, and communication with, individual employees
- ◆ being flexible
- ◆ a common sense approach

#### Health and Safety

- ◆ a full understanding of responsibilities by both employer and employee
- ◆ individual risk assessments where appropriate and incorporation into any adjustments

#### Work-related disability

- ◆ recognition
- ◆ preventative methods
- ◆ care of employees

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ DLF disability awareness factsheet
- ◆ Employers Forum on Disability
- ◆ Royal Association Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR)
- ◆ Looking for work – [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)
- ◆ Jobcentre Plus
- ◆ Access to Work
- ◆ Workstep
- ◆ AbilityNet
- ◆ Health & Safety – SCAUM 2002

### 2.2 Disability awareness

'Awareness' in this context simply means understanding another person. The most common difficulty cited by employees with a disability was a lack of awareness about disability in general, and of their own impairment in particular. It is through 'awareness' that attitudes and false assumptions are changed.

Understanding something and knowing what to do about it before it happens will save time and resources in the long run. This has been the experience within public bodies and educational institutions whose legal obligations under the disability legislation are actually much greater than those of private-sector employers. The usual method is to attend a disability awareness training course. This can provide information on, and an understanding of

- ◆ the legal obligations of employers and their employees
- ◆ the nature of disability, especially hidden disabilities
- ◆ making adjustments and what is 'reasonable'
- ◆ where to get practical and financial help
- ◆ the benefits of taking on employees with a disability
- ◆ the special abilities that employees with a disability may possess

Appropriate training can be provided by a number of disability organisations and also registered access consultants. It should not be seen as something that is only necessary for bosses and managers, but for all staff, especially project officers and field supervisors. Doing archaeology is a team effort and relies very much on personal interaction and understanding between people.

Employees with a disability also need to have a self-awareness of their actual abilities and limitations

'It's no good pretending that you can do everything. You have to look at your capabilities and practical abilities and work with what you've got.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

It is important to ignore the clichéd image of 'awareness', it underpins just about everything contained in these guidelines.

Ways of increasing awareness could include

- ◆ ensuring that all staff, especially those in supervisory posts, are trained and briefed on the issues related to disabilities
- ◆ including further information about disabilities in staff handbooks
- ◆ displaying relevant information posters on notice boards
- ◆ talks about the various conditions that can affect people, including guest speakers

### 2.3 Declaration of disability

Many of the archaeological employers who responded to a questionnaire survey on disability (Phillips & Gilchrist 2005) do not like it if they are not told about a disability or medical condition, and many employees with a disability are wary of declaring their disability for fear of being stigmatised, issues of confidentiality or because of job insecurity. It comes down to creating a culture of mutual trust.

The simplest solution is for employers to have a stated policy with regard to disability. This can involve joining a scheme such as 'Jobcentre Plus' which allows an organisation to display a disability symbol, the 'Two Ticks' symbol. This shows that an employer is positive about employing people with disabilities and has made certain commitments

- ◆ to interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities
- ◆ to ensure there is a mechanism in place for a regular appraisal of a disabled employee's employment to discuss any problems, areas for improvement and personal development
- ◆ to make every effort so that, if an employee becomes disabled, to ensure they stay in employment
- ◆ to take action to ensure that all employees have the appropriate level of disability awareness
- ◆ to carry out an annual review of these commitments and accountability to Jobcentre Plus in this area

To be effective, this would be incorporated into an employer's employment policies and procedures which can also be used to keep a record of their practices in relation to employees with a disability. These would also need to be flexible enough to cover the needs of short-term contract workers. Such a policy has some major benefits

- ◆ employees, or potential employees, will be more confident of declaring a disability or medical condition because the employer has placed themselves under certain obligations
- ◆ employment policies and procedures that involve appraisals are of benefit to all staff, not just those with a disability. By providing appraisals for everyone an employee with a disability is not being singled out
- ◆ Jobcentre Plus can provide advice to employers on disability matters such as making reasonable adjustments
- ◆ in cases of conflict, an employer will have a record of their employment practices

'In employing people we follow a 'two-tick' system. If somebody with a declared disability applies for a job, we automatically interview. However, some of our jobs get such a large volume of applicants that if we interviewed

everybody who was disabled and able to meet a minimum specification we would be interviewing for weeks. We can get over 200 applicants for a job. We tend to use a higher bar than the minimum requirement for all applicants and then interview all the people with a declared disability who get beyond this.' (*Manager, Local Authority*)

'In my role I monitor the recruitment aspects: how many people with a declared disability are applying to us, do they make it to the short list and if not, why not, and do they get appointed and if not, why not. We've been monitoring those aspects for about six years and we keep records on that.' (*HR Manager*)

Examples of good practice of having an open discussion at the interview stage and during appraisals came from the interviews conducted by the DAP Project team

'As far as something like epilepsy goes, we only have one person that I know of. In that case, he had not declared it to us until very recently when his epilepsy became out of control and he needed significant time off work. He told us about it and we talked to him about any adjustments or accommodations that we needed to make. In his job he's sitting and looking at the computer all day long, so we talked to him about different ways of working that might assist him to keep his epilepsy under control. We have left the door open and said if there are ever any particular aspects of the condition, or he wants adjustments made, to come and talk to us about it.' (*HR Manager*)

'I'm of the opinion that when the company does take on a disabled policy they should have an open discussion with people and assure them that they're not going to get fired or anything because of it. What I'm doing now should have been done at the start. I should be able to sit down with an employer in a relatively comfortable situation and be able to talk about what might be needed. Then I could work with the company and progress. That should be reviewed after the first three months and then reviewed regularly to see how it's working. It can then be reformatted as it goes.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

'You've got to get both sides to think very seriously about how you do it, it's just a case of being open-minded. It is about finding out about what people can do and helping them to work and discussing this at the point of being offered a job. It's not insurmountable.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'They were very, very good at that stage in that they followed the appropriate channels. They didn't say they weren't giving me the job; they said yes and sent me to see the company doctor. From that, the doctor provided the relevant information to my employers explaining what my condition was and what not to do, and how to manage it. One manager said that Access to Work would be brought in to look at my work station and make suggestions.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

'I had a bit of a heart-to-heart with my Head of Department and told him about some of the unpleasant aspects of my condition. I think we actually got somewhere because we had a lot of back and forth. I tried to bring the conversation around to how we could move forward and work together. I suggested that, with my Annual Review coming up, we widen the remit a bit to help me adapt within the company; an action plan to help me and to help my colleagues. It's not just about helping me and improving my efficiency, but in understanding how to work with me will help everybody. The idea is to review it three months after to see how it's worked; I don't expect it to work perfectly the first time. I think it's a good step forward; it would have been nice if it had come earlier in my career. I think I'm finally starting to get somewhere.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

It is about fostering a culture of openness and frank communication. An employee's appraisal is crucial to this; it is not just a 'box-ticking' exercise. It allows a two-sided discussion of the areas of potential difficulty and how these can be resolved through making adjustments, thereby satisfying an employer's legal obligations, as well as ensuring efficient working practices. This is of benefit to all employees, not just those with a disability. However, issues of confidentiality remain paramount and are covered by the Data Protection Act (1998). Any wider declaration of disability would have to be agreed between the employer and the employee.

Specific procedures could include

- ◆ reviewing job application forms to ensure that people with a disability are comfortable in disclosing their condition where appropriate
- ◆ reviewing all Performance Assessment Forms and Appraisal Forms to allow for issues of disability to be discussed and dealt with appropriately
- ◆ implementing a tracking process to ensure that, with any disability issues identified in the appraisal process, appropriate adjustments and support are being offered and that these are working effectively

## 2.4 Ability to do the job

This is a major factor cited by both employers and employees. It is about having the skills and qualifications to carry out a specific role. What the legislation calls for is that if a person with a disability possesses the qualifications and skills for a job can, where necessary, reasonable adjustments be made so that they can successfully fulfil that role? To take some actual examples, the issues involved and potential adjustments (Table 1).

Table 1 Examples, the issues involved and potential adjustments

Case study	Issues involved	Potential adjustment
Field archaeologist with dyslexia who is capable at excavating and recording	Difficulties with completing a context sheet	Support or training successfully to carry out this task
Experienced geophysicist	Develops epilepsy	Health and safety when working
Employee with diabetes	Needs to eat at regular intervals and take medication	Possibilities of flexible working
Field archaeologist with restricted mobility	Cannot work kneeling down	Possibilities of flexible working practices
Experienced field worker	Develops arthritis and RSI as a work-related disability	Possibilities of a change in job
Support worker	Impaired vision	Provision of specialist equipment
Employee with mental health difficulties	Periodic bouts of depression and panic attacks	Time off for treatment, part-time working
Graduate with excavation experience seeking commercial field experience to further their career	Restricted mobility	Investigation of the adjustments required for them in the field
Competent illustrator who has dyslexia	Difficulties with spelling	Provision of specialist equipment and individual support
Experienced archaeologist	Develops a progressive condition such as MS or cancer	Flexible working and time off for treatment
Osteologist with restricted mobility	Difficulties with physically accessing material	Making premises accessible
Buildings archaeologist with RSI	Difficulties using a computer keyboard	Provision of specialist equipment

All these people possess, and feel that they possess, the skills and qualifications for the job. However, there may be areas of carrying out the work where they could experience difficulties.

## 2.5 Making reasonable adjustments

The first thing to emphasise is that, in reality, not everyone can do everything. This applies to both disabled and non-disabled people. It is certainly the case with some of the work involved in archaeology. However, the question that has to be asked is: can the job be done in another way so that a specific individual can undertake it? Saying that a job has always been carried out in a particular way is not good enough. Making adjustments is about treating each case individually and finding out if there is a 'reasonable' way to include a person with a particular disability in employment.

Making adjustments does not have to be difficult; it will involve five main things

- ◆ an attitude of acceptance and understanding
- ◆ communication – discussing the situation with an employee with a disability, or a potential employee; they will know what they are capable of doing
- ◆ flexibility – finding other ways to do a job
- ◆ common sense – finding what is practical and will work, and not over-compensating for someone
- ◆ regular reviews/appraisals of the situation and of any adjustments

The adjustments that might have to be made can include

- ◆ making adjustments to premises and aspects of the physical environment such as furniture
- ◆ reassignment of duties where appropriate, or transferring them to fill an existing vacancy
- ◆ altering their working hours
- ◆ assigning them to a different place of work
- ◆ allowing them to be absent during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- ◆ giving them, or arranging for them to be given, training
- ◆ special accommodation for staff working away
- ◆ acquiring or modifying equipment
- ◆ modifying instructions or reference manuals



- ◆ modifying procedures for testing or assessment
- ◆ providing a reader or interpreter
- ◆ providing extra or targeted supervision, or special mentoring

These will include not just the employment of a person with a disability, but also the issues surrounding job advertisements, applications, interviews and redundancy

- ◆ providing advertisements and application forms in accessible formats
- ◆ ensuring the accessibility of an interview venue, including travelling to the venue
- ◆ evaluating an applicant on the basis of their skills and qualifications, not their disability
- ◆ when considering redundancy, an employee's disability, and any factor relating to their disability (such as disability-related sickness leave), must be discounted from the selection criteria

'I think things are fairer now, since the DDA, where they ask you if you consider yourself disabled then they will put adjustments in place prior to your interview, and the information is stripped out of the selection process. This seems to me to be non-judgemental.' (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/ dyspraxia)

Examples of successful reasonable adjustments in archaeology can be seen in the data collected by the DAP Project.

Making adjustments to premises, an access audit can be carried out if necessary

'Everything was upstairs in the office, but that certainly wasn't very accessible; so we just moved the appropriate things downstairs.' (Project Director)

Transferring them to fill an existing vacancy

'We sat down and they said that there was no way that they could make reasonable adjustments for an Investigator job if I have trouble writing text quickly, which I do. I could understand that. They suggested that I take the Office Manager/ Administration job in the team. They said they would skew it a bit so I would continue the bits of the Investigator job that I was good at. They recognised that I am quite a good fieldworker.' (Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia)

Altering their working hours

'I've managed to get into a position where I can do home working occasionally.' (Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/ dyslexia)

'Some employers I have told say to take it easy and don't go mad and have a break if I need it.' (Field Archaeologist: severe eczema)

Assigning them to a different place of work

'I've known people who've got hurt on site being sent in to do finds or environmental processing. That means they're not doing hard manual labour anymore.' (Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI)

Allowing them to be absent during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment

'With all this, my employers gave me about two weeks paid off work, I think they called it 'stress-leave' at the time.' (Archaeological Researcher: MS)

'The commercial unit were absolutely excellent; they did bother about me and if I needed to go to hospital, a day off if I was too tired or I needed to sit down for a bit, they said it was okay.' (Field Archaeologist: leukaemia)

Giving them, or arranging for them to be given, training

'The County Council gave me a lot of support with my dyslexia. They put me on courses to help me do the context sheets and things like that. I've moved around quite a few units over the years and now I'm back with a County Council Unit and



Mentoring: disabled volunteers working with a support worker on the IAA project (Photo: Tim Phillips)

they give me all the support that I need; they've sent me on computer courses.' (Field Archaeologist: head injury/dyslexia)

Acquiring or modifying equipment

'They were very good in providing the Access to Work scheme. I've now got an excellent chair.' (Unit Manager: MS)

'The idea was that everything would be adjustable: the desk would go up and down and the chair would be adjustable.' (Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia)

'I finished the commission by dictating into a dictaphone.' (Field Archaeologist: RSI/OCD/eating disorder)

'All the adjustments to disability can easily be made these days with so much equipment that is available.' (Manager, Local Authority)

Providing further supervision

'Somebody was actually appointed to be a 'tutor' to me in a sort of informal way.' (Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome)

'If I was writing a report, someone would usually check it before it was sent off.' (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia)

Flexibility in the management of working practices

'He struggled a bit with movement over steep slopes. We were excavating a big ditch which we had stepped and you had to jump down from different levels. I tended not to put him on that; he may have found it a bit of a problem with his mobility. I put him on level areas where he could get on with things once I realised he was having a problem with the slippery clay – it was winter and pretty horrible.' (Field Supervisor, describing supervising an archaeologist with restricted mobility)

'We had one incident here where we had a member of staff with dwarfism. We made allowances for him in terms of getting on and off site and so on and to do certain tasks.' (Unit Manager)

'I used common sense and either helped or didn't ask him to do things that required two hands. We just got someone to push his barrow when necessary. As far as digging went, he was fine.' (Archaeological Consultant)

'I'd be out digging a hole for a week, the next week I'd be doing a bit of survey, then a week in the office and then a week going out doing a bit of light survey.' (Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia)

'It's the sort of way you work people anyway: you pick the most appropriate person for a particular job whether it's drawing, excavation or whatever. It's all part of the job of running a site, getting the right people to do particular jobs. In this case, it was just another factor in that really. The parameters were such that there were still lots of things that he could do.' (Field Supervisor)

Making reasonable adjustments does not have to be difficult if it is approached in a flexible, practical and common sense way. Any adjustments would relate directly to an individual person; although there will be occasions where a 'reasonable' adjustment is not possible for financial or practical reasons

'You would have to make some allowances within the constraints of what has to be done on site.' (Project Director)

'Attention Deficit Disorder, what can be done about that in terms of disability provision, I don't know. Perhaps you could be given extra time by your employer for staring out the window, I would hesitate to argue that one!' (Archaeological Consultant)

'In some ways I can understand it, if you're working on a week long assessment you can't really afford to have someone take three days off with illness.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: vertigo/restricted mobility)

In considering making adjustments for an individual employee, the danger of doing too much for them and the 'personal' costs of any adjustment must also be borne in mind

'I am involved with UNISON's Disability Group. What came up time and again was that disabled people did not want to be treated more favourably to other colleagues, they wanted to be treated as if they did not have the disability in the first place. Usually this was solved by a simple adjustment with little personnel or financial cost.' (Volunteer Archaeologist: muscular dystrophy)

The consequences of a change in work role with regard to career prospects and remuneration is a consideration to be taken into account

'When saying that an effort should be made to ensure that the disabled employee continues in employment, it should be at

an appropriate level. It is disheartening to be shuffled sideways and downwards, but at the same time if there is a need for time off or a lifestyle adaptation to a new condition a lighter set of duties may be more appropriate and may even be temporarily welcomed. It would be one to be discussed case-by-case between the employer and employee.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: visual impairment*)

However, in arguing that it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments in a specific case, the onus is on the employer to justify that and show that it is either not reasonable nor is it possible to provide effective support

'We have our own set of problems relating to geophysics and disability that need addressing and in some cases these would prevent an individual being employed. This wouldn't be through choice but for technical reasons that geophysical survey cannot avoid. One simple example would be an individual with stainless steel implants – there are some forms of survey, principally electromagnetic, that they would be unable to become involved with due to chronic interference with the instrumentation. Tough, but a reality, and with the best will in the world there is no way round this.' (*Small employer*)

Reasonable adjustments will also have to be made for employees with a disability attending training courses and in the way that any training is assessed.

Advice on providing reasonable adjustments can be found through Jobcentre Plus. Access to Work will also assess individual cases and can provide financial assistance in making provisions, and Occupational Health can provide assessments and advice.

## 2.6 Health and Safety

Health and Safety and issues of risk are seen to be of the utmost importance by both employers and employees alike. Organisations will have their own Health and Safety procedures and information is available through the profession (SCAUM 2002). In the case of individual employees with a disability, specific risks may apply. This comes back to having an openness in the declaration, and dealing with the implications of a disability. The major points to be considered are

- ◆ consideration of Health and Safety at the interview stage and in appraisals, ensuring that both sides are aware of and understand their responsibilities
- ◆ the incorporation of Health and Safety into any modifications that are made for an individual
- ◆ if deemed necessary, specific individual Risk Assessments can be written. If these are produced as a supplement to the main Risk Assessment for a project, they should not involve too much work
- ◆ regular reviews of Risk Assessments and Health and Safety provisions to ensure flexibility in procedures and that they are actually working

## 2.7 Work-related disability

'Making it better is accepting that, in the end, we all end up having a problem; archaeology is a wear and tear job.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

Work-related disability was an issue raised by many of the employees, especially those engaged in fieldwork

'Most of the archaeologists I know have got something wrong with them now because it is such a physical job.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

'We get people complaining of certain conditions, I don't know if you'd call them disabilities, but conditions from a background of working in archaeology; things like signs of arthritis, RSI from trowelling and also from using computers, as well as everyday things like diabetes. It's a concern as people become older.' (*Unit Manager*)

'We need to look at these injuries and what the underlying problems are. It goes down as far as on-site accommodation, and off-site they're putting people in places without hot water or heating. It ends up seriously affecting them for years. It's about putting covers over scaffold roofs and polytunnels over excavations. They don't do things like that because it costs money. The people running the units are selling the workers short.' (*Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI*)

A questionnaire survey of archaeological employers (Phillips & Gilchrist 2005) identified a number of potentially work-related disabilities and late onset conditions. Work-related disability is an issue in archaeology, especially amongst a number of people who have been in the profession for some time. This cannot be over-emphasised: it is having a serious effect on the health, well being and ability of a significant number of employees. It is also an area that is surrounded by potential litigation

'We have to look at what they do in other industries, how they've approached people becoming injured or disabled because of the nature of the job. Do we jump on the compensation bandwagon? That can easily happen. Perhaps we need

some properly organised compensation scheme. Prevention, that's another issue. There's the back and knee problems, and then the wrists and hands. I know a lot of people coming up into their forties beginning to suffer from things.' (*Project Officer: dyslexia/carpel tunnel syndrome*)

Work-related disability in the archaeological profession is an important factor. Generally, it tends to affect the people who have been working in archaeology for some time: the people with the most experience and highly developed skills. If this issue is not addressed, then the profession will be losing the people with the most valuable experience and skill sets. It is not the purpose of these guidelines to regulate the profession, but there are a number of areas to which consideration should be given

- ◆ a recognition by both employers and employees of the existence of, and potential for, work-related disabilities in the profession
- ◆ the development of work-related disabilities could be recognised as a potential 'hazard' in Health and Safety considerations, and provisions made for employees in light of this
- ◆ the identification of both employers' and employees' responsibilities in this area
- ◆ the identification of practical preventative measure.
- ◆ a consideration of how other industries have approached this issue with regards to prevention and how individual cases are dealt with, eg the construction industry and agriculture; this is especially the case for employees on short-term contracts

## 3. DISABILITY AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION – SPECIFIC DISABILITIES

This section of the report looks at the issues surrounding the main disabilities that are represented amongst the archaeological workforce and the factors that may be involved. It suggests specific areas that may have to be considered, especially with regards to providing reasonable adjustments and health and safety. These suggestions are based on the results of both the DAP and IAA projects, as well as general guidance from additional sources such as the Inclusive Curriculum Project.

It is important to stress that with each employee or job applicant, they should not be stereotyped; the need is to understand how an individual's impairment may impact on a specific role. Each employee should be considered on an individual basis regardless of the 'type' of their impairment.

### 3.2 Dyslexia and similar conditions

Dyslexia, dyspraxia and similar conditions can be understood simply as a different spatial awareness. The effect it actually has will vary greatly from individual to individual and may, but not always, include

- ◆ difficulties with reading and writing, especially spelling, and with detailed information
- ◆ poor organisational skills
- ◆ with dyspraxia there may be difficulties with balance and hand-to-eye coordination

#### Key action points

- ◆ the provision of written materials in different formats and different colours; this will also include such things as job application forms
- ◆ the provision of coloured overlays and screen readers
- ◆ specialist IT equipment, although most computers already possess the necessary facilities such as spell checkers
- ◆ the careful checking of records, plans and written work; this should be part of normal working procedures
- ◆ special training courses
- ◆ dyspraxia – individual Risk Assessments

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ British Dyslexia Association
- ◆ Dyslexia Action

A number of archaeologists with dyslexia report that, despite difficulties with some details, they are able to perceive the overall picture making it easier for them to comprehend a large amount of data without getting bogged down by the detail.

It is important to recognise that, with the enhanced identification of dyslexia and dyspraxia in schools and universities, there will be an increase in the number of recruits coming into the profession diagnosed with these conditions.

Context Record

SITE CODE		SITE SUB-DIVISION		LAYER/OUT/GROUP		CONTEXT No. 305	
STRATIGRAPHICALLY BELOW				304		303	
STRATIGRAPHICALLY ABOVE				306			
CUT BY							
FILL OF				305			
SUB-DIVIDED INTO							
FILLED WITH							
FURN							
COMPONENT OF							
COMPOSED OF							
IDENTICAL TO							
SLAKE				E COORD			
SLAKE SHEET				Y COORD			
SLAKE BASE				Z COORD			
LEN (M)	WIDTH (M)	DIAM (M)	DEPTH (M)				
0.5m	0.35m		0.1m				
SOIL COLOUR							
TEXTURE CLASS							
CLASH COMPONENTS							
ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPONENTS							
ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION						SAMPLES	
Rubble Fill of Foundation wall cut 306, cut							
and side of bench.							
Fill & Road cut Foundation wall with the							
Laying Block.							
ELEVATION METHOD, LIGHTING CONDITIONS						RECORDED BY	
Hand, Sunning, 10 AM						DATE	
PLAN	SECTION	FILM FRAME	C-TRIMS	C-REF			
1		MEMO					
INTERPRETATIVE CATEGORY							
INTERPRETATION							
Fill & Road cut wall. In Laying Block.							
EQUIVALENT TO				STRATIGRAPHIC REFERENCE			
MATRIX		COMPLETED AND CHECKED BY		CONTINUATION SHEET			

Context sheet completed by an experienced field archaeologist with dyslexia: note that the writing is legible, but it does contain spelling mistakes

### 3.3 Hidden disabilities

This covers a range of disabilities including diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, chronic fatigue syndrome (ME), heart conditions, cancer and similar conditions

- ◆ the effects on an individual may be primarily physical, especially fatigue
- ◆ there may also be cognitive effects
- ◆ medication
- ◆ some conditions may be fluctuating or recurring, eg epilepsy and ME

#### Key action points

- ◆ a full understanding of the capabilities and limitations of an individual – assessment by Occupational Health and/or Access to Work
- ◆ medication and dietary needs, and the facilities to deal with these
- ◆ flexible working practices and time off allowed for treatment when necessary

- ◆ allocation of some duties to other workers
- ◆ movement to a different working role
- ◆ travel arrangements, some individuals may be barred from holding a driving licence
- ◆ accommodation arrangements when working away
- ◆ specialist office equipment
- ◆ individual Risk Assessments

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ Disability Rights Commission
- ◆ Diabetes UK

### 3.4 Visual impairments

These can range from people who are partially sighted to those who are totally blind. It does not include people who wear glasses to rectify their vision; it is people whose vision causes them 'substantial' difficulties with conditions such as tunnel vision or peripheral vision. The criteria for 'partial vision' can be obtained through the RNIB.

#### Key action points

- ◆ Health and Safety will be an overriding concern with aspects such as safe access to, and through, buildings and sites
- ◆ the provision of written materials in different formats and different colours; this will also include such things as job application forms
- ◆ the provision of coloured overlays and screen readers
- ◆ specialist IT equipment
- ◆ allocation of some duties to other workers
- ◆ movement to a different working role
- ◆ travel arrangements, some individuals may be barred from holding a driving licence
- ◆ individual Risk Assessments

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ Royal National Institute of the Blind

### 3.5 Hearing impairments

The two main issues with impaired hearing are

- ◆ communication
- ◆ Health and Safety

#### Key action points

- ◆ the preferred method of communication, note that hearing aids may have limited effectiveness under certain conditions such as high winds and in crowded rooms
- ◆ the provision of information in a written format if necessary
- ◆ when attracting their attention, do not approach them from behind, especially if they are working with tools or machinery
- ◆ individual Risk Assessments

#### Key Sources of information (see section on 'Useful Contacts')

- ◆ Royal National Institute for Deaf People
- ◆ Deafworks

### 3.6 Restricted mobility

This will include wheelchair users, but also a range of other conditions including RSI and arthritis.

#### Key action points

- ◆ people with restricted mobility will have very individual abilities and limitations
- ◆ access to buildings and facilities
- ◆ flexible working practices

- ◆ allocation of some duties to other workers
- ◆ movement to a different working role
- ◆ special equipment
- ◆ travel arrangements, some individuals may be barred from holding a driving licence
- ◆ accommodation when working away
- ◆ individual Risk Assessments – Health and Safety will be paramount, not just for the individual concerned, but also for other workers

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ Arthritis Care
- ◆ Access Association
- ◆ Centre for Accessible Environments

People with restricted mobility know what they are capable of doing better than anyone else. Discussions on possible limitations and reasonable adjustments are essential

### 3.7 Mental health difficulties

There is a great amount of stigma surrounding mental health difficulties and people with it may be very reluctant to declare their condition. It is also very much a 'hidden' disability.

#### Key action points

- ◆ establishing boundaries for disclosure and confidentiality
- ◆ flexible working practices – they may have 'good' days and 'bad' days – and time off allowed for treatment when necessary
- ◆ medication and the facilities to administer this
- ◆ accommodation arrangements when working away
- ◆ provision of a 'support' worker

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ MENCAP
- ◆ Mind
- ◆ Mentoring

### 3.8 Asperger's Syndrome

Asperger's Syndrome is part of the Autistic Spectrum and the issues surrounding it may include communication and comprehension, as well as personal interaction.

#### Key action points

- ◆ effective communication
- ◆ accommodation arrangements when working away
- ◆ special training
- ◆ provision of a 'support' worker

#### Key sources of information (see section on 'Useful contacts')

- ◆ Asperger's Syndrome Association
- ◆ Mentoring



Volunteer on the IAA project: despite using a wheelchair, this individual possesses extremely powerful upper body strength (Photo: Darren Booy)

## 4. DISABILITY AND THE ROLE OF NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY/ HERITAGE BODIES

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 many of the national archaeology and heritage bodies already have an obligation to take a positive approach towards disability and people with disabilities. Amongst the recommendations listed here, many of these bodies will already have the procedures in place. However, given the very nature and activities of these organisations, they are in a unique position to support the profession and to influence attitudes towards disability and to set the standards nationally. Therefore it is worth the while to provide a full list of recommendations.

### Policy on disability

- ◆ having a clear stated policy with regards to disability that is directly related to a national body's mission statement
- ◆ highlight this policy on websites and other materials produced by the national body
- ◆ stress ability over disability

### Employees

- ◆ have a positive policy with regards to recruitment and employment of people with disabilities by the national body, eg joining a scheme such as 'Jobcentre Plus'
- ◆ regular appraisals for all employees and audits of employment procedures

### Partnerships

- ◆ establish close working links with relevant organisations in the disability sector (see section on 'Useful contacts')
- ◆ provide positive and practical assistance with any work or research being carried out by organisations in the disability sector

### Disability awareness

- ◆ provide information on Disability Training Awareness courses run by registered access consultants or make available relevant courses and on-going training themselves
- ◆ provide general information on disability and examples of good practice through a national body's own literature and website

### Membership

- ◆ require outside organisations to provide a disability policy when registering to join a relevant national body

### Funding grants

- ◆ require grant applicants to provide a statement on how they will include disability and accessibility issues when applying for funding for relevant projects

### Health and Safety

- ◆ provide relevant advice and information to the profession on Health and Safety related issues such as Risk Assessments

### Short-term contracts

- ◆ set national standards, which include disability issues, for employing people on short-term contracts
- ◆ research into how other industries manage and regulate short-term contracts eg the film, theatre, music and construction industries

### Work-related disability

- ◆ highlight the issue of the potential for work-related disabilities within the profession
- ◆ further research into practical preventative measures and how other industries have dealt with this issue

## 5. USEFUL CONTACTS

Downloadable resources and guidelines can be found on many of the websites listed in this section.

### Legislation

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. London: HMSO

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005. London: HMSO

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2005. London: HMSO

#### Government website

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DisabilityRights](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DisabilityRights) – accessed: 29/06/09

### Disability awareness

#### National Register of Access Consultants

[www.nrac.org.uk/index.html](http://www.nrac.org.uk/index.html) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### DLF Disability Awareness Factsheet, available at

[www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

### Help and advice for employers

#### Employers Forum on Disability

[www.employers-forum.co.uk](http://www.employers-forum.co.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Jobcentre Plus

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Access to Work

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG\\_4000347](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_4000347) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Workstep

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG\\_4001973](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_4001973) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### AbilityNet

[www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Health and Safety

SCAUM (Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers) 2002. *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology*.

Sudbury: HSE Books

#### Mentoring

Stephenson, P. *Training the trainers: coach-mentoring for archaeologists* (available on the IfA website)

### Help and advice for employees

#### Government website

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/LookingForWork](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/LookingForWork) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR)

[www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Mentoring

Stephenson, P. *Training the trainers: coach-mentoring for archaeologists: a guide for mentees* (available on the IfA website)

#### Continuing Professional Development

IfA. *Scheme for Continuing Professional Development* (available on the IfA website)

### Guidelines

#### Accessible Buildings

BSI. 2009. *The design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – code of practice*. BSI 8300. 'Approved Document M: Access to and the use of buildings' (available at [www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/4000000000988.html](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/4000000000988.html) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Accessible Websites

BSI. 2006. Guide to good practice in commissioning accessible websites. PAS 78

#### 'Physical accessibility standards'

[www.fieldfare.org.uk](http://www.fieldfare.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### 'See it right'

[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### 'Good practice guidelines for including disabled students in archaeological fieldwork training'

[www.heacademy.ac.uk/hca/archaeology/features\\_resources/guides](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/hca/archaeology/features_resources/guides) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### 'Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology' (includes ASSET)

[www.britarch.ac.uk/accessible](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/accessible) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### 'Inclusive curriculum project'

[www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/icp](http://www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/icp) – accessed: 01/09/09

### Support organisations

#### Access Association

[www.access-association.org.uk](http://www.access-association.org.uk) - accessed: 01/09/09

#### Action on Access

[www.actiononaccess.org](http://www.actiononaccess.org) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Arthritis Care

[www.arthritiscare.org.uk](http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Asperger's Syndrome Foundation

[www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk](http://www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE)

[www.cae.org.uk](http://www.cae.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Deafworks

[www.deafworks.co.uk](http://www.deafworks.co.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Diabetes UK

[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Disability Rights Commission (archived page)

<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive.drc-gb/default.aspx.html> – Accessed: 01/09/09

#### British Dyslexia Association

[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Dyslexia Action

[www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Equality and Human Rights Commission

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### MENCAP

[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

#### Mind

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) – accessed: 01/09/09

Royal National Institute for Deaf People  
www.rind.org.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Royal National Institute of the Blind  
www.rnib.org.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Sensory Trust  
www.sensorytrust.org.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Web Accessibility Initiative  
www.w3.org/WAI/Policy – accessed: 01/09/09

## Heritage organisations

Archaeological Training Forum  
www.britarch.ac.uk/training/atf.html – accessed: 01/09/09

Cadw  
www.cadw.wales.gov.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Council for British Archaeology  
www.britarch.ac.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Countryside Agency  
www.countryside.gov.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

English Heritage  
www.english-heritage.org.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers  
www.famearchaeology.co.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Heritage Lottery Fund  
www.hlf.org.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Historic Scotland  
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Institute for Archaeologists  
www.archaeologists.net – accessed: 01/09/09

Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers  
www.algao.org.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

National Trust  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main – accessed: 01/09/09

National Trust for Scotland  
www.nts.org.uk/Home – accessed: 01/09/09

Northern Ireland Environment Agency  
www.ni-environment.gov.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

RCAHMS  
www.rcahms.gov.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

RCAHMW  
www.rcahmw.gov.uk – accessed: 01/09/09

Young Archaeologists' Club  
www.britarch.ac.uk/yac – accessed: 01/09/09

## PART 2 – PROFILING DISABILITY IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION

### 6. DISABILITY AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION PROJECT (DAP)

#### 6.1 Data collection

The main source of data was telephone interviews with a range of individuals. These were working archaeologists with and without a disability from across the profession including: field archaeologists, field supervisors, managers, academic archaeologists, researchers and archivists. The terms of the ethical clearance for research obtained from the Ethics Research Committee at the University of Reading prohibited the project team from approaching potential participants directly. In these circumstances, participants were recruited using the following methods

- ◆ a full page article in *The Archaeologist* (No 70, Winter 2008)
- ◆ an item publicising the project on the IfA's website
- ◆ an item publicising the project in the IfA's Jobs Information Service Bulletin (JISB)
- ◆ an item publicising the project in the News section of the British Archaeological Jobs Resource (BAJR) web page. BAJR also sent an email to everyone on their contact list
- ◆ the project was publicised within English Heritage by the Head of Social Inclusion and Diversity
- ◆ a letter advertising the project was sent to contracting archaeological units
- ◆ a letter advertising the project was sent to all university departments teaching archaeology
- ◆ the Association for Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) were contacted and they sent an email advertising the project to all their members
- ◆ an email about the project was sent to the Learning Advisor at the National Trust

The majority of participants were recruited through the IfA and BAJR job information services.

#### 6.2 Interviews

'Open' interviews were carried out with the participants encouraged to tell their story in their own way about their experiences in archaeology. After this, the participants were asked to expand on any issues raised in the interview that were deemed of interest. Coverage was specifically sought of the following themes

- ◆ how did their disability affect them day to day?
- ◆ how did their disability affect them at work?
- ◆ had they always been upfront about their disability when applying for a job?
- ◆ what had their relationship with employers been like?
- ◆ what had their relationship with colleagues been like?
- ◆ had they ever had any specific reasonable adjustments/modifications/accommodations made for them at work?
- ◆ had there ever been any issues of Health and Safety?
- ◆ had they developed any coping strategies?
- ◆ did they consider their disability provided them any advantages in following a career/working in archaeology?
- ◆ how did they think things could be made better in the profession?

Variations of these questions were asked of the non-disabled participants.

The interviews were recorded and written up in such a way that no individuals or organisations could be identified. After transcription, the recordings were destroyed. Nearly all the interviews were conducted by telephone after a mutually convenient time had been agreed; only one interview was carried out face-to face as the interviewee lived locally. In one case, where the respondent was profoundly deaf, a list of questions was sent by email and the responses to these returned as written text. The transcriptions of the interviews were then sent as email attachments to the individual participants to ensure that they were happy with the content.

#### 6.3 Results

A total of 47 interviews were carried out (Table 2). It needs to be stressed that this is not quantitative data and, as such, does not constitute a *representative* sample of the people with disabilities in archaeology. However, as qualitative data, this does represent a *valid* sample.

Table 2 Details of interviews

No.	Disability	Role
01	Non-disabled	Field Supervisor
02	Non-disabled	Field Supervisor
03	Muscular Dystrophy	Volunteer Archaeologist
04	Multiple Sclerosis	Unit Manager
05	Dyspraxia	Manager, National Agency
06	Dyslexia/Head Injury	Field Archaeologist
07	Restricted Mobility	Archaeological Researcher
08	Asperger's Syndrome	Field Archaeologist
09	Dyslexia	Field Archaeologist/Researcher
10	Dyslexia	Field Archaeologist
11	Dyslexia/Dyspraxia/Asthma	Graduate – Job Hunting
12	Dyslexia/Asthma	Field Archaeologist/Archivist
13	Epilepsy	Field Archaeologist
14	Dyslexia	Field Archaeologist/Researcher
15	Arthritis/RSI	Field Archaeologist
16	Multiple Sclerosis	Archaeological Researcher
17	Epilepsy	Academic Archaeologist
18	Dyslexia	Unit Manager
19	Non-disabled	Academic Archaeologist
20	Vertigo/Restricted Mobility	Field Archaeologist/Researcher
21	Non-disabled	Academic Archaeologist
22	Restricted Mobility	Field Archaeologist/Researcher
23	Diabetes	Project Director
24	Cerebral Palsy	Archaeological Researcher
25	Severe Eczema	Field Archaeologist
26	Amputee	Field Archaeologist/Local Government
27	Dyslexia	Archaeological Illustrator
28	Dyslexia	Field Archaeologist
29	Hearing Impairment/Mental Health/RSI	Field Archaeologist
30	Dyspraxia/Restricted Mobility/RSI/ADD	Archaeological Consultant/Employer
31	Restricted Mobility/Dyslexia	Field Archaeologist
32	Non-disabled	Human Resources Manager
33	Restricted Mobility	Field Archaeologist
34	Dyslexia/Dyspraxia	Field Archaeologist/Researcher
35	Restricted Mobility	Student
36	Dyslexia	Project Officer
37	Hearing Impairment	Archaeological Researcher
38	Restricted Mobility	Archaeological Researcher
39	Leukaemia	Field Archaeologist
40	Dyslexia/Carpel Tunnel Syndrome	Project Officer
41	Hearing Impairment	Student
42	Visual Impairment	Field Archaeologist/Researcher
43	Arthritis/Heart Condition	Volunteer Archaeologist
44	Chronic Fatigue Syndrome	Field Archaeologist
45	Non-disabled	Employer, Local Government
46	Restricted Mobility	Graduate
47	Non-disabled	Charity Worker/Archaeologist

ADD – Attention Deficit Disorder  
RSI – Repetitive Strain Injury

Forty of the respondents had an impairment that can be defined as a 'disability' under the legislation, but not all of them had told employers about an impairment or condition that affects their daily life. Only seven of the interviewees were non-disabled people which imposes a limit on this perspective; however, the non-disabled viewpoint is supplemented by the results of the questionnaire survey of archaeological employers carried out by the IAA project.

It should be stressed that this data only provides a 'snapshot' of the nature of disability in archaeology. The methodology used in this project means that the participants are a self-selecting sample: individuals who chose to talk to the project team, most of whom are continuing to work in archaeology. It is uncertain how many people have left the profession for reasons of their disability and either did not know about the survey or chose not to participate.

## 6.4 Other data

These interviews are complemented by other data collected by the IAA project in 2005/6. This included 21 further interviews with professional archaeologists and students with disabilities (Table 3), making a collective total of 68 interviews. It also included a questionnaire survey of 53 contracting archaeological units. The IAA questionnaire (see Appendix 1) included questions on the numbers and details of any employees with disabilities and in what capacity they were employed; the effect that the disability legislation was likely to have; and any other comments that the employers wanted to make.

Table 3 Details of IAA Interviews

No.	Disability	Role
48	RSI/OCD/Eating Disorder	Field Archaeologist
49	Restricted Mobility	Field Archaeologist
50	Diabetes/RSI	Field Supervisor
51	Dyslexia	Field Supervisor
52	Dyslexia	Field Supervisor/Researcher
53	Impaired Vision/Diabetes/Dyslexia	Museums Officer/Researcher
54	Restricted Mobility	Senior Archaeologist, National Agency
55	Mobility/Hearing Impairment	Academic Archaeologist
56	Dyslexia	Student
57	Hearing Impairment	Student
58	Multiple Disabilities	Student
59	Visual Impairment/Ataxia	Student
60	Dyslexia	Student
61	Non-disabled/'Buddy'	Student
62	Restricted Mobility	Student
63	Dyslexia	Student
64	Mental Health Difficulties	Student
65	Dyslexia/Asthma/Restricted Mobility	Student
66	Dyslexia	Student
67	Multiple Sclerosis	Student
68	Dyslexia	Student

OCD – Obsessive Compulsive Disorder  
RSI – Repetitive Strain Injury

## 6.5 Data analysis

The data was analysed using 'Atlas.ti', a qualitative data analysis software package.

## 7. EMPLOYED ARCHAEOLOGISTS WITH A DISABILITY

This section of the guidelines is based on the questionnaire survey carried out by the Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project (Phillips & Gilchrist 2005, and see Appendix 1). The data comprise the responses of 53 archaeological employers. It is not possible to give exact figures for the number of archaeologists with a disability working in the profession because it is uncertain how many have actually declared a disability. It should also be stressed that the figures presented below are based on a sample of employers who 'chose' to reply to the questionnaire survey, so the numbers derived from this data can only be seen as giving a general impression of disability in archaeological employment.

### 7.1 Employees in archaeology with a disability

Nearly 60% of the employers in the sample had experience of employees with a disability and a total of 119 workers with a disability were recorded as being employed in the five years leading up to the survey. The different types of disability reported are listed in Table 3. The majority of conditions are hidden disabilities, followed by restricted mobility and dyslexia. This can be compared with a survey of archaeological students with a disability carried out by the IAA project where it was reported that over 60% had dyslexia, 15% a hidden disability and 8% restricted mobility (*ibid*, 21).

Table 4 Archaeologists with a disability

Disability	Disabled employees		Archaeology students (ie potential employees)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Hidden disability	50	38.8	43	15.2
Restricted mobility	30	23.2	24	8.5
Dyslexia	20	15.5	178	63.1
Mental health difficulties	11	8.5	16	5.7
Visual impairment	9	7.0	3	1.1
Hearing impairment	5	3.9	15	5.3
Asperger's Syndrome	4	3.1	3	1.1
Total	129*	100.0	282	100.0

Table 5 Hidden disability

Disability	No.	%
Diabetes	18	36.0
Asthma	10	20.0
Epilepsy	6	12.0
Heart condition	4	8.0
ME	3	6.0
Others	9	18.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 4 gives the details of the hidden disabilities reported. Many of these can be seen as late-onset conditions.

Table 5 gives details of the cases of restricted mobility that were reported. The majority of these are potentially work-related conditions, including arthritis, chronic back complaints and Repetitive Stress Injuries (RSI).

## 7.2 Roles

Table 6 gives the details of the roles being carried out by employees with a disability. This includes 'Support Staff': employees whose role may not be directly archaeological, such as administrators and finance staff. The vast majority of employees with a disability are involved in field investigation, whatever their impairment. Indeed, the numbers working in 'Field Investigation' (59%) correlates well with the IfA's figures indicating that of all archaeologists, 57% are involved in field investigations (Aitchison & Edwards 2008, Table 60).

## 7.3 Summary

- ◆ Disability is an important issue in the archaeological profession, the results of the IAA survey demonstrate that a substantial number of employees have a recognised disability
- ◆ The major conditions represented in the sample are hidden disabilities, restricted mobility and dyslexia. Some of these are 'congenital' disabilities (present from birth), but many others are 'acquired' (have either developed or occurred during a person's life)
- ◆ Amongst the hidden disabilities several are late-onset conditions, there are also many restricted mobility impairments that are potentially work-related
- ◆ The IAA questionnaire survey suggests that employees with a disability are working in a variety of roles, especially field investigation
- ◆ A high proportion of current and future archaeology graduates, and therefore potential employees, report dyslexia, partly as a consequence of better identification and diagnosis at schools and in higher education, and to changes in the stigma surrounding this condition. This is a potential bombshell for the profession and emphasises the need for archaeology to engage with the issues surrounding disability

Table 6 Restricted mobility

Disability	Field investigation	Historic environment advice	Education	Support staff
Hidden disability	34	8	11	16
Restricted mobility	22	1	8	4
Dyslexia	20	2	1	2
Mental health difficulties	9	0	2	4
Visual impairment	7	2	4	0
Hearing impairment	5	0	2	2
Asperger's Syndrome	4	0	1	0
Total*	101	13	29	28

\* some employees have more than one disability and may carry out multiple roles

Table 7 Roles being carried out by employees with a disability

Disability	No.	%
Arthritis	12	40.0
Chronic back complaint	6	20.0
RSI	4	13.3
Amputee	2	6.7
MS	2	6.7
Others	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

## 8. DISABILITY – THE EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVE

### 8.1 Effect of legislation

Over 85% of the respondents to the IAA survey of employers (Phillips & Gilchrist 2005) indicated that the disability discrimination legislation would not affect their current recruitment and working practices. The employers interviewed by the DAP project also felt that their procedures were in order

'[The legislation will not affect us] because our recruitment and working practices have changed to meet them.' (*Large employer*)

'It all comes under Employment Law and we've been very keyed into that, it can be a very litigious area.' (*Unit manager*)

'Our employment policies will not change as they already ensure that applicants with disabilities are not discriminated against.' (*Small employer*)

### 8.2 Positive views of disability

Several employers reported having very positive experiences in taking on employees with a disability

'I employed a chap who was quite substantially disabled as the result of a car accident; he had no use of his right arm. It was a pretty positive experience. It was quite amazing what he could do, it was pretty well everything.' (*Small employer*)

'Very positive experience with work experience placement who made a very good contribution in his two weeks with us.' (*Large employer*)

'I have no problem employing disabled people and have had disabled colleagues in previous archaeological employment.' (*Small employer*)

A few employers are also proactive in their attitude towards disability and even see the hiring of workers with a disability as part of the consideration of employees' situations and needs within a wider social context

'We are owned by a charity that actively seeks to make archaeology more accessible and have an exhibition explaining ways to do this. We have worked with SCOPE [a charity focussing on people with cerebral palsy] and used MS sufferers.' (*Small employer*)

'I think that this is a very positive place for people with disabilities to work. The teams are all very aware of people's disabilities and what their limitations are. It's not just a disability thing, it's about being aware that people have got sick mothers and children and so on, and they are working in a way that is supportive of everybody and their individual circumstances. That is where we are going, a large organisation with a programme that is not specifically a heritage or archaeology thing, but the institution as a whole recognising an imbalance in society and doing something about it.' (*Manager, Local Authority*)

### 8.3 Concerns of employers

The main concern that employers have is over the ability of people they take on to do the job

'As an employer my prime concern when engaging staff is, can they undertake the tasks detailed in the description of the post for which they are applying? In this respect I have to consider their skill level, and whether they are physically and mentally capable of doing the work.' (*Small employer*)

'The concept of anyone who is physically or mentally impaired being involved with field archaeology, particularly excavation, is absurd.' (*Small employer*)

'We consider able-bodied and disabled people on their merits.' (*Small employer*)

'As we are contracting field archaeologists, almost by definition we do not employ disabled people on a regular basis. However, if there was an area where they could be employed, they would not be turned away.' (*Small employer*)

Some respondents referred to specific disabilities

'Physical impairment, visual impairment – difficult to employ in archaeological fieldwork.' (*Small employer*)

'I often think that people with severe dyslexia in archaeology are in the wrong game because it challenges them incredibly because of the level of detail involved.' (*HR Manager*)



'Someone who is actually in a wheelchair or who has severe mobility problems, I'm not sure how I would cope with that.' (Project Director)

'We provided support for an employee with dyslexia in the form of an assessment, but at the end of the day he was incapable of writing reports or organising anything, just a brilliant ideas person.' (Large employer)

'Whilst not officially disabled, one of our archaeologists has a visual impairment which may get worse over time. This could have an impact on the work that the individual can undertake.' (Large employer)

A second major concern expressed by employers was over issues of risk and Health and Safety, references were made to the similarity of archaeological field work to the construction industry

'We have employed people with various levels of disability, mainly mental, within what was feasible within a local authority. One person had to be terminated on the instructions of Human Resources because of the possible dangers to other staff. Others I have refused on Health and Safety grounds – registered blind are not appropriate members of staff on what may be compared with construction sites, and good eyesight is important when doing fieldwork. Staff on crutches have been banned from site until physically able to cope with site conditions.' (Manager, Local Authority)

'Surely archaeology is no different from other construction-related professions and trades with regards to DDA.' (Small employer)

'Serious physical disability not allowed on building sites.' (Small employer)

A third important consideration for employers was the declaration of any disability when being recruited

'I trust that applicants will respect their limitations when applying for work.' (Small employer)

'Identification of disability at the time of appointment and transparency in dealing with the implications.' (Large employer)

'The diabetic person did not tell me they were diabetic at the time (although I do ask if there are any medical conditions at the time of employment) and I was cross to find this out later, if they had had an incident I would not have known why/what was going on. They told me later they did not tell employers in case they would not get the job. My response was that I was more likely not to give them the job for withholding vital medical information! In my opinion a stupid thing to do and by not being honest when asked about any medical conditions that might affect their work I would not employ them again as they were not trustworthy, not because they were diabetic.' (Small employer)

However, one manager took an opposing view and emphasised individual confidentiality

'Many people choose not to declare their disability, and quite rightly so if that is the way they want it. The less obvious disabilities, the hidden ones, aspects such as diabetes, epilepsy and dyslexia, those types of things, many people won't declare them because they may not feel that it is a disability. Indeed, it may not be a disability if it doesn't disable them. It is obviously up to the individual whether it's a disability and if to declare it.' (HR Manager)

One respondent expressed their concern that some employers would take the attitude of being seen to do the right thing with regards to disability, and another was concerned about the 'physical' image of archaeology

'Some organisations are great on talk, poor on action. I would be concerned that lip service would be paid to the legislation and little would change. I expect that they will draft all the appropriate policies, whilst simultaneously flagging up problems with implementation.' (Sole Trader)

'I suspect that there are still many, many people who have disabilities who think of archaeology as primarily a physical profession. Therefore, for people who use a wheelchair or have a sight impairment it is way back in their schooling at Careers' talks that archaeology would have been a bit of a turn off for them because they would assume that to be an archaeologist you automatically have to start by digging in the field and their impairment would restrict them. Of course, that is the usual way that a career develops.' (Manager, Local Authority)

Although not directly referred to, underlying these concerns are the financial implications. That is the reality of all archaeological activity, not only in the commercial sector, but also in local government, academia, and amongst voluntary organisations.

## 8.4 Summary

- ◆ The majority of employers who responded to the IAA and DAP projects felt that they are aware of the implications of the disability discrimination legislation and consider that they have the appropriate procedures in place; however, given some of the quotations cited above, this is certainly not always the case
- ◆ Some employers reported very positive experiences with employees with disabilities, and a few said that they actively promoted disability within the profession
- ◆ The major concerns of employers are
  - the ability of employees to do the job
  - risk factors and Health and Safety
  - honesty when being recruited
- ◆ Underlying these concerns are the financial implications
- ◆ One employer highlighted their concern about the 'physical' image of archaeology, and another that only 'lip-service' would be paid to the disability discrimination legislation resulting in no positive change

## PART 3 – PERSONAL STORIES

### SECTIONS:

1. Why people do archaeology
2. Positive experiences
3. Disability awareness
4. Discrimination
5. Ability to do the job
6. Health and Safety
7. Declaration of disability
8. Work-related disability
9. Adjustments
10. Suggested improvements
11. Summary

### 1. Why people do archaeology

The archaeological workforce is one of the most highly educated of any profession with 90% of archaeologists having a Bachelors degree or higher and, effectively, 100% of archaeologists aged under 30 are graduates (Aitchison & Edwards 2008, 13). Asked why people do archaeology, there is one simple answer which is repeated again and again by professional archaeologists and students alike; they are driven by their enthusiasm and passion for the subject

‘I’ve had an interest in archaeology since I was about seven years old.’ (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/head injury)

‘I’ve always wanted to do archaeology from ever since I can remember. I went to Newgrange and Orkney when I was quite young and that got me interested in it.’ (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia)

‘I went into archaeology out of personal interest. I had studied Classics since the age of 13 and wanted to find out the background to their arguments, see where they got their information from.’ (Field Supervisor: diabetes/RSI)

‘I love it: the thought that you might find something really exciting that no one will have seen in nearly 2,000 years. I just find it really interesting and every time I go back I find I learn new stuff.’ (Student: visual impairment/ataxia)

This is despite the generally poor pay in archaeology

‘I really do love archaeology and have a passion for it. When I started out, I started from a very poor position. I thought I should end up in a well-paid position; I had no idea that you did archaeology for the love of it, not the money. By then I was too far down the line to change what I wanted to do.’ (Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI)

‘Every now and then I think I should do something else for more money but, on the whole, I love archaeology and cannot imagine doing anything else. You would not do it to make money.’ (Field Supervisor: dyslexia)

For one respondent this enthusiasm is seen as central to the discipline

‘Archaeology is driven by people’s enthusiasm, if we didn’t have that nothing would get done. We have a core of people and without them things would just fall apart.’ (Voluntary Archaeologist: arthritis/heart condition)

For some people studying archaeology, it has even become a form of therapy

‘I decided to do archaeology at university, to study something of interest. Get myself out of an armchair and do something positive.’ (Student: multiple disabilities)

‘Archaeology provides me with a lot of stimulus, pleasure and fun and I have met a lot of pleasant people. It prevents me from nagging away at the same old thing in my head. It manages my depression to a large extent.’ (Student: mental health difficulties)

This passionate interest in the subject is a major driving force in the profession, something that comes from the bottom up.

### 2. Positive experiences

Many of the archaeologists with a disability that the project team spoke to reported having very positive experiences in employment. In some cases there had been no problems at all

‘It has never been a problem for me at work; I don’t think I’ve ever not got a job because of it.’ (Project Director: diabetes)

‘I’ve seen other people with disabilities succeed in archaeology. You do grasp at that a bit and think this has got to be possible.’ (Archaeological Researcher: MS)

‘In ten years of being disabled I have never been held up by an inability to get hold of the data on which to undertake archaeological analyses.’ (Senior Archaeologist, National Agency: restricted mobility)

The attitude of, and relationship with, employers was seen as being crucial, especially in making arrangements or ‘reasonable’ adjustments

‘My employer at the time was very understanding: gave me light duties, time off when I needed it and paired me up with capable assistants who weren’t too freaked out by a man crashing on the ground and chewing his tongue off.’ (Field Archaeologist: epilepsy)

‘My experience has been that people are prepared to be patient with you, help you out and teach you. I’ve never had any negative feedback, especially with the people I’ve worked for over the years. Everywhere I’ve worked they’ve been supportive and given me the extra time I need.’ (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/head injury)

‘I think I’ve been very fortunate, especially with my employers, in that I was given the chance.’ (Field Archaeologist: leukaemia)

‘I’ve never had any cause for concern over the terms of employment and disability has never been an issue. I’m quite content in the way in which my employers have handled it; I think they do a very good job of making everybody feel on the same level.’ (Project Officer: dyslexia)

‘My employers have been superb. One of the benefits of working for a government agency is that they have certain rules and structures embedded which are put into action when something terrible happens. As a result, I think I have been extremely well treated.’ (Senior Archaeologist, National Agency: restricted mobility)

A good working relationship with colleagues was also seen as an important factor

‘I wouldn’t have been able to survive in the job without the support of my colleagues in the service.’ (Unit Manager: MS)

‘There was the issue of report writing. I kept on top of the work and did very well, but it wasn’t easy. One of the guys actually read through my reports, but behind the scenes, because otherwise it wouldn’t have looked if I was doing a very good job.’ (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia)

‘The people who were physically in the trench with me didn’t seem to mind.’ (Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility)

‘The people I work with are fine about it, people in archaeology understand; they’re supportive.’ (Field Archaeologist: severe eczema)

‘No one pays much attention if someone’s not too good one day. We always get on very well but, to be honest, with a lot of old creaky people in archaeology there’s all sorts of problems and aches and pains. It’s a funny bunch of people to work with; you just tend to get on with it.’ (Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI)

‘The people who worked with me went out of their way to help me. I reciprocated by giving them lifts in my car.’ (Field Archaeologist: RSI/OCD/eating disorder)

Some respondents felt that it was the larger employers who were more helpful because they had the necessary procedures in place. However, working for a smaller employer was less impersonal

‘If I’m working for a bigger Unit, they do all the things they’re meant to do to help you, not so much with the smaller ones.’ (Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI)

‘If you work for a small company everybody knows each other, everybody’s in the pub every night.’ (Field Archaeologist: severe eczema)

‘In general, in smaller companies where everybody knows everybody, it’s fine.’ (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia)

### 3. Disability awareness

The biggest single difficulty that was cited as being experienced by the archaeologists with a disability was a lack of understanding and awareness of the nature of their condition. This was at both a general and at an individual level

'Some people just don't get it at all. That is basically the problem that I've come up against, people who just don't understand.' (*Project Officer: dyslexia/carpel tunnel syndrome*)

'Don't think anybody really knew what a disability was. These were the days when somebody with a disability didn't have any legs and went around in a wheelchair; there wasn't any understanding of what it really was.' (*Academic Archaeologist: epilepsy*)

'A lot of people don't understand it.' (*Field Archaeologist: severe eczema*)

'It doesn't automatically mean that you're bad at writing. My spelling isn't actually that bad, as long as I can double-check everything. As well as awareness, if people didn't get so angry and were a bit more tolerant if you get things wrong. It doesn't mean that you're thick at everything.' (*Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia*)

'You don't hear a word they say, but you feel such a twit asking them to say it again; particularly difficult if you've got background noise like machinery. I think it's a lack of people just not understanding really.' (*Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI*)

'People have got to be made aware that just because you've got a bit of a health hiccup that you're not written off. A lot of people see somebody with a disability or an illness and think they're not going to be able to do it.' (*Field Archaeologist: leukaemia*)

Incidents of other people apparently not wanting to understand, or just seeing employees with a disability as a nuisance, were reported by some respondents

'I felt this Line Manager was not willing to engage with what the problem is, not willing to understand it and not willing to allow ways round it to be found.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

'The general perception of other people to dyslexia is that they're pretty indifferent to it; they don't seem to be at all aware of it. Sometimes they see it as a nuisance when I make mistakes, or just deny that I'm dyslexic at all.' (*Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia*)

'People see that you're dyslexic, or you're disabled in some way, and they instantly see it as a negative thing. They think that you'll be slower at the work, you'll have to be watched more, or they'll have to do X, Y and Z for you. I think that perception is quite damaging.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'On coming across dyslexia, people think they can't write and they're going to have to do extra for them. It's very difficult to know how things could be made better because archaeology is a very small world. It is very difficult to explain to people that they ought to change their ways.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

Some difficulties with working colleagues were reported

'I knew that quite a lot of people were aware of me being different. The information being passed around did put my back up at first because I thought that people would make judgements without knowing what this all means or without me being able to put across my side of the story. These things happen; you can't blame the company for conversations and Chinese Whispers.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

'I think there was only one bit of trouble with a guy who was a bit idle. There was some resentment because I was never late, I was keen and wanted to be doing something. They used me as an example to others – oh, he can do it, why can't you? That can build up and has the potential to create resentment on site.' (*Field Archaeologist: leukaemia*)

There could also be jealousy over someone getting 'special' treatment

'With a lot of people it brings them down because other people start thinking they're doing the same job and only getting the same money and it's not on.' (*Field Archaeologist: leukaemia*)

The short-term contracts which are a feature of archaeological employment were also seen as a problem

'You don't stay around long enough, so nobody really takes the time to take on board whatever disability you've got. Just to take the time, even with short term contracts, to realise that a person may need a little extra help or to make an allowance for them.' (*Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI*)

The invisibility of hidden disabilities was also seen as creating problems because people were not 'seen' as being obviously disabled

'This is something that is very difficult to deal with, especially with a hidden disability; you can never be sure, or can be completely ignorant, of what the actual problems are. There was a lot of suspicion, a lot of mistrust and a lot of isolation.' (*Academic Archaeologist: epilepsy*)

'Sometimes I feel I'd get more help if I hacked off a foot or something.' (*Archaeological Researcher: MS*)

'I was suffering from anxiety attacks and things. On the surface, nobody would know a thing.' (*Field Archaeologist: mental health difficulties/RSI*)

A couple of the respondents had been proactive in trying to give their employers and working colleagues a greater understanding of their condition

'I got some information about Asperger's from various societies and I slowly started to get a more open dialogue about what I can do to get better; get them to be more open about if it's not quite right, then talk me through it. That seemed to work quite well. Then last year I pulled myself out of the rut and decided that if nobody else was going to do anything about it, I would. I made a 'tool box' talk, about 10 or 15 minutes about myself. People seemed to take it on board, and I've done it a few times since. I've changed it a few times and it probably needs re-drafting again. I think I've been getting somewhere.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

'I'd actually written a briefing sheet based on the information on my condition from the NHS website, other specialist sites and the doctor they sent me to. It explained what my condition is, how it affects me and that it doesn't stop me doing anything; but have a chat with me before assigning me to a job. It explained that you have to talk to this member of staff about the work you want them to do and potentially find alternatives, or work round it.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

A lack of awareness was contrasted with the situation in Higher Education, an important consideration given the high number of archaeologists who have studied to degree level (Aitchison & Edwards 2008, 13)

'I've found there is less knowledge and understanding in the commercial sector, mainly because the universities are all geared up for education so they have lots of support and training available. I do think there needs to be a greater awareness in the commercial sector.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia/dyspraxia*)

Many of the respondents also emphasised the need for self-awareness by people with disabilities

'Disabled people also need to be honest with themselves and their limitations otherwise they could find themselves in trouble. I believe this to be the most important rule.' (*Volunteer Archaeologist: muscular dystrophy*)

'It's being aware of, and knowledgeable about, things that help you cope with it.' (*Unit Manager: dyslexia*)

'It helped a lot for me to find out what I was very good at and what I was very bad at. Most people are either clever or they're not, I'm a very weird mixture of both.' (*Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia*)

'It's no good pretending that you can do everything. You have to look at your capabilities and practical abilities and work with what you've got. I didn't have a problem on sites, but I did ask myself the question – how capable am I of doing this? There is a lot of admitting you've got a problem and see if that is going to stop you doing what you want to do. What you have to do is work your way round your capabilities and admit to yourself that there are potential problems and know when you have to stop, it can be very hard to do that.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'I think as far as actually working on an archaeological site you would have to listen to your body and be truthful about what you can do and can't do and see if people are willing to make things accessible for you.' (*Volunteer Archaeologist: arthritis/heart condition*)

Self-awareness with regard to aspects of health and safety was also highlighted

'If accidents do happen you have to realise that your own thoughtlessness or forgetfulness could be part of the cause, you have to be so self-aware. You have to look at where you're going to work, how you're going to get there and whether you're actually capable of fulfilling the conditions of the job. You have to realise at the start that you may have a problem.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'We had a guy with epilepsy on one site and people were very concerned about him; they thought he'd fall in a trench, which he never did. He knew when he was about to get an attack, so he'd go and sit in the cabin.' (*Field Archaeologist/Local Government: amputee*)

'I think it would be dangerous for me ever to take part in another excavation.' (*Field Supervisor: restricted mobility*)

## 4. Discrimination

Some of the respondents felt that they had been subjected to actual discrimination because of their disability. This could be because employers did not believe anything was wrong with them

'What made it worse was the Site Director did not believe anything was wrong with me.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

'I worked for several years for a large Unit; I was in constant pain for ten years. The HR Manager said they didn't believe me, and that there was nothing seriously wrong with me, as I hadn't taken enough time off sick.' (*Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI*)

'The general perception of other people to dyslexia is that they're pretty indifferent to it; they don't seem to be at all aware of it. Sometimes they see it as a nuisance when I make mistakes, or just deny that I'm dyslexic at all.' (*Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia*)

'All I could think was that people had misunderstood me. They seemed to think I could turn the condition on and off and play to it as an excuse for my behaviour.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

The view that some disabled people were not capable of doing the job, unless they could prove otherwise, or that they were a 'risk', was also commented on

'I was told that I would never be any good at archaeology, the only thing that I could do was press buttons in a factory. So when I left school that was the sort of work I did.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/head injury*)

'I've seen a lot of young people, admittedly with more profound impairments than me, treated as if they can't do something until proven otherwise and it has been very difficult for them.' (*Academic Archaeologist: restricted mobility/hearing impairment*)

'I remember working on one site and there was a young girl who had only one arm. She came for one of the jobs, but she said she didn't expect to get it. You only need one arm to use a trowel, so I couldn't see what the problem was. They did take her on with no pay for a month. It was good for her, but not sure if it was the right way to go about things. I said to my boss at the time that they'd taken me on, but he replied that I've got 'everything there'. I found that rather despicable.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'I've worked at other places where people think: oh, he's got leukaemia, where's his bell? Some people think when you get it, that's that, you've had it.' (*Field Archaeologist: leukaemia*)

'I had feedback to say that someone else would write the publication. I was told by the management that I didn't have the experience to take it on further for a monograph. Next thing I knew was that one of the supervisors who had been working for me was doing it. I felt at the time that it was discrimination.' (*Project Officer: dyslexia/carpel tunnel syndrome*)

'I had low blood sugar on site one time. The site supervisor said that, as a diabetic, I should not be working in the field, I should be office-based; an unknowing sort of comment.' (*Field Supervisor: diabetes/RSI*)

There can also be a 'stigma' associated with disability and the fear of being made to look foolish

'At a very general level with disability, it can be a bit awkward because of the stigma.' (*Archaeological Consultant: multiple disabilities*)

'People have made me feel really silly for putting the wrong scale bar on something.' (*Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia*)

'I have to be very careful about reading and writing. I know that if I put in ridiculous spelling mistakes, people will just envisage me as being stupid. Editors would write un-gentlemanly comments on the side of some of my texts, things like is 'wether' some sort of castrated sheep. The spelling distracted them, what I wanted them to comment on was the content, not the presentation.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia*)

'The dyslexia side of things, there's been quite a lot of piss-taking.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

The 'macho' image of archaeology was also seen as a problem

'With certain people on site it can be difficult because there's the standard machismo problem in archaeology anyway. If there's the certain kind of person on site they can take the piss a bit. It's one of those things that's always kind of been there.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'In archaeology most people would probably say, 'Oh my gosh, that's no place for disabled people.' (*Academic Archaeologist: non-disabled*)

The competitive nature of commercial archaeology and the insecurity of employment were seen as a source of stress and, for some respondents, was a reason why they were disinclined to complain

'Applying for jobs is difficult; it's very competitive out there. Perhaps if I do get myself officially diagnosed as dyslexic that might give me an edge.' (*Field Archaeologist/ Researcher: dyslexia*)

'If I've got pressure on me then it's a hundred times worse because I'm so worried about making a mistake, writing or spelling the wrong thing.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'I had got to the point where I thought I'm losing my job here because the pressure to perform was quite intense.' (*Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia*)

'I told them that I was not happy with this and that it would help if they would tell me if there was something wrong. That's quite a risky thing to do in commercial archaeology. I had always felt that if you said that sort of thing to these people, they would show you the door. That's why I hadn't had that conversation earlier.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

'You just have to get on with it, mainly because of the lack of security in the job.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

'I chose not to pursue it, there's always the worry about redundancy in archaeology and it may have given them an excuse.' (*Project Officer: dyslexia/carpel tunnel syndrome*)

Some respondents felt that there were employers that, at most, 'went through the motions' with regards to the disability legislation, the purpose being to do the minimum that was necessary to remain legal

'Taking this into account, we did a deal, but it was made very clear to me that this was it; I couldn't hope for any preferment in my career. I would stay at this lower grade. If I wanted promotion, I would have to go and find another job. Under the DDA this was a reasonable adjustment. They could offer me a job with less duties. It was absolutely to the letter of the letter of the law.' (*Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia*)

'They said not to worry; they'd work out a way of me doing things. That's where the idea of splitting the time came from. I didn't have any appraisals, so I couldn't bring it up then. Whenever I did bring it up, nothing happened. They did a Work Place Assessment, said that's all done and everything's alright, so they're covered.' (*Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI*)

'You can be cynical and think it's useful for an employer to have so many disabled people on their books.' (*Field Archaeologist/Local Government: amputee*)

Some respondents found the way that job advertisements were worded to be confusing or even intimidating

'One thing I find difficult in applying for jobs is that a lot of employers talk about, 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability covered by the Disability Act?' They tend to indicate physical disabilities rather than the unseen ones. I'm never really sure where I fit in or whether I'll have problems. Sometimes it can be very intimidating to have that disclaimer. We have equal opportunities, but they still ask if you are somebody with a disability.' (*Graduate, Job Hunting: dyslexia/dyspraxia/asthma*)

## 5. Ability to do the job

This was an aspect that employers deemed of crucial importance. Some of the archaeologists with a disability who the project team spoke to felt that they had only been accepted because they had overcome the hurdle of proving they had ability, despite their disability

'I think they've now understood that I have competence.' (*Academic Archaeologist: epilepsy*)

'It was all on my CV, once you've got something under your belt it's easier to do.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'It was recognised that my ability as an archaeologist outweighed it being a problem. Because I've been able to demonstrate an ability in archaeology over the years, then it's simply been a case of helping a good archaeologist get through one aspect of the job. It's a much more positive situation for me than it would be had I, for example, proven to be a complete klutz with a shovel.' (*Project Officer: dyslexia*)

'I did a bit of site work last year for another employer. I told them that I was a bit knackered, but would still do it. I did a better job than some on site, so I didn't have a problem with that firm.' (*Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI*)

'One of the digging jobs I got through contacts, someone I'd worked with on site before and he knew I was quite capable

of doing the job. When I applied to work with the local council there were people around that I knew and had worked with before. It was all based on my CV, work record and people knowing that I could do the job.' (Field Archaeologist/Local Government: amputee)

There were significant problems where an individual's ability to do the job was questioned, this was often related to how they were perceived as a 'disabled' person

'I have had a problem recently with museum work because there's a lot cleaning to do now. I showed that I could do it. Then we had a restructuring and had to apply for our own jobs. It was very obvious that they were concerned whether I could do this, even though I'd already shown that I'd done it.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: restricted mobility)

'It was as if my physical ability must somehow affect my skill, my talent, and my mental abilities to cope with the job.' (Graduate: restricted mobility)

'It's difficult to explain that your intelligence, experience and skills are there, but they might not always be as apparent as other people's.' (Field Archaeologist: chronic fatigue syndrome)

'About a year ago they got someone new in post-ex management. They actually questioned one of the staff asking if they knew that I was dyslexic and questioned my ability. It made it very uncomfortable for me to work there. I was accused of taking longer than I should, but I'd been working there two years and never had a problem or been a problem. I don't think my dyslexia is a problem for that because of spell check. It has no effect on my ability to do archaeology.' (Field Archaeologist/Archivist: dyslexia/asthma)

Some respondents found that they were accepted on undergraduate courses despite their poor academic grades because they had experience and had shown their ability in archaeology

'I eventually applied to do archaeology at university and was accepted mainly on my experience rather than my qualifications.' (Field Archaeologist/Local Government: amputee)

'I applied for university to do a degree in archaeology and only two places accepted me. They said it was my experience that interested them because I'd already worked on a few commercial digs. They said the offers were not based on my grades, but based on my ability and experience.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia)

However, for higher degrees an individual's ability could be called into question

'At the interview they told me that I didn't have the skills for writing and the other skills that are required for academic ability for a PhD. The first two years were very hard, not because I couldn't do the work; to them it was they didn't think that I was academically credible.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia)

Despite all this, a number of respondents felt that they were quite capable of doing the job and some felt that this was because of the nature of their specific role

'I'm very good at doing high speed survey; I can take in a lot of information quite quickly. For a survey we did last year, we did about 40 buildings in a week; I could take that all in because I have quite good visual memory.' (Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia)

'I think I was very fortunate to land with a job that suits me quite well; dyslexia isn't too much of a problem in this line of work.' (Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia)

Some respondents felt that the nature of their disability was actually an advantage in their job, especially in the case of dyslexia

'What I'm good at is understanding structures and engineering, there are parts of my brain that work perfectly well, probably better than some other people. I'm very good at 3D visualisation and mental mathematical modelling. I have great oral presentation skills, I can stand up in front of anyone and talk, and I have no fear whatsoever.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia)

'I would say that, with Asperger's Syndrome, the fact that their attention to detail is extreme can be advantage to an archaeologist in that they will go into an incredible level of detail. That can make them a slower worker, which can be a bit of an issue for a commercial company. However, the level of detail that they will go into and the aspect that they are such perfectionists in doing anything, can be an advantage because they will write absolutely brilliant context sheets, albeit it might take them a bit too long.' (HR Manager)

'Dyslexics are lateral thinkers, three-dimensional, see the wider picture and understand complex processes. It brings

positive things to the business, all that huge lateral stuff, but you need to work on their writing or their numbers. After five minutes of walking round a building I can draw it roughly to scale on a piece of paper. That is a strength and we need to grab hold of all those strengths.' (Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia)

'Part of being dyspraxic is it means that I'm also ambidextrous so I can dig with either hand. That can be a help, especially if one arm's aching or getting into features at different angles.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia/dyspraxia)

'Over the course of ten years I wouldn't say that disability has held me back. I would say that it's through that disability and, in learning how to cope with it, that has actually made me a stronger performer than some of my 'abled' colleagues.' (Unit Manager: dyslexia)

'I think a lot of people who have an illness actually put more in. It goes on the individual case.' (Field Archaeologist: leukaemia)

'One of the advantages of the dyslexia is that I do have a very good memory on site; I'm able to recognise the bigger picture. That helps with putting it all together quickly, which is one of the things you need in commercial archaeology. That's part of my dyslexia.' (Project Officer: dyslexia/carpel tunnel syndrome)

'I do think that disability can give you a different perspective and it is an area where being disabled can make a difference to interpretations and outreach. This is beginning to bed down in the field in general, but it is something to which disabled people can make quite a difference.' (Archaeological Researcher: profoundly deaf)

'It has probably helped with field archaeology when you strip off the topsoil of an open area and you're confronted by a literal chaos of different colours and shapes. You've got to make some very quick decisions on how to organise that. I think I applied the same kind of strategies to digging that I would do if I was given a large text to wade my way through. It has been one thing that's helped me. I think it's one of those things that can be a benefit to archaeology if you know the strategies. Archaeology is about managing information of different types and that's what dyslexics learn how to do. Also seeing things in a slightly different way, it's the kind of overall thinking that I'm better at rather than the detail.' (Unit Manager: dyslexia)

## 6. Health and Safety

The respondents showed a sense of responsibility and self-awareness when it came to issues of Health and Safety at work; and also recognised that it could be a limiting factor

'I have to be aware of when something is going to happen, I get an aura when a seizure may start, so if I'm on a site I want to be away from the trench. If I'm doing a geophysical survey, you're carrying nine grand's worth of equipment, so you have to stop and put that down and step away. A lot of what I've had to do is related to Health and Safety.' (Field Archaeologist: epilepsy)

'I just have to make sure when I go on to watching briefs that the contractors let me know when they are going to stop for lunch. The problem is when they say they will stop for lunch, they keep going. I sometimes ignore the rules about not eating on site.' (Site Supervisor: Diabetes/RSI)

'My employer required me to take more serious account of Health and Safety procedures whilst working. The first question I have to ask myself, if there is an excavation or site nearby, is whether this is an official visit. That would mean that my employers will be responsible if I do damage to myself or someone else and I have to take that into account.' (Senior Archaeologist, National Agency: restricted mobility)

'It is going to come to a point, maybe soon, where I have to take someone with me on site visits because of Health and Safety, or employ a second person to do it.' (Archaeological Consultant: multiple disabilities)

'On Health and Safety, for me the key thing is medication. The pills I take at night help me sleep, but they may cause drowsiness in the morning. I'm not happy driving my car if I feel like that, but I do get into my car and drive carefully. I would not be very happy getting into a transit van with 15 people and driving them.' (Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia)

'If I'm digging I'm normally okay, although I do seem to injure myself more than other people because I misjudge where my trowel is compared to my arm and things like that. I've never injured myself seriously like mattocking myself through my foot or anything like that. If the weather's bad and it's slippery and I can't recover my balance, I am going to fall. I've not known of any Health and Safety issues. I've often wondered about this, especially with my dyspraxia because that does have implications.' (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/dyspraxia)

There were examples of criticisms of some employers' attitudes to Health and Safety

'They say you can't have yellow tapes around the trenches; you just have to watch where you're walking.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

'There isn't any Health and Safety assessment. There's not a lot of workplaces that work as archaeology does, it seems to be almost like in the 1970s somehow. The things that go on and happen, you think if this was a big organisation it would be very different. That's not really a complaint, it's got its own way of doing things; but you're going to end up injured if you're going to be a digger for long.' (*Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI*)

'Health and Safety has been an issue on occasions. My first watching brief was an enormous site on a great big peat bog and I was alone. On a couple of occasions I had to go out into the peat bog to look at potential sites. That could be very difficult; I had a couple of problems which I had to literally dig myself out of. When I spoke to the contractors, they were quite astonished that I was on my own and that I had a physical disability. Their rules said two people minimum.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

The financial implications of Health and Safety were also recognised and the potential tensions that this raises

'As far as Health and Safety are concerned, I suppose it's a fear of me getting damaged on site and them getting sued. I'm sure that was the case with one job. I was clear, it was a pre-existing condition, I had insurance and I wouldn't be hassling them.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'The real power is with the insurers. I'm sure they would provide cover if large numbers requested for a containable, repeated risk. I think there is quite a tension between inclusiveness as such and what Health and Safety and the insurers will allow.' (*Senior Archaeologist, National Agency: restricted mobility*)

## 7. Declaration of disability

Declaring a disability is seen as something that can be difficult because of issues of confidentiality and the fear of discrimination. Certainly the employers feel that it is essential information that they need to know. The respondents had had mixed experiences. Some had found declaring their disability a very positive thing to do; some cited Health and Safety as a major reason, and one the disability legislation

'I've always been very up front about my disabilities, there's no point in lying or beating about the bush as you'll only get caught out.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/head injury*)

'What has really dawned on me is that I only started to get somewhere when I actually began to become more upfront about my disability.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

'You've got to let people know that there is something wrong just in case something does happen to you at work; it's obviously safer for them to know. You have to give them contact numbers, who to ring. My employers have been very good like that.' (*Field Archaeologist: leukaemia*)

'I haven't always been upfront with employers about things, but I have been a lot more recently, mainly because of the Disability Discrimination Act. I tend to bash that around people's heads.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia/dyspraxia*)

Some people did not declare their disability on their CV, but did so at the interview stage or on being offered a job

'I wasn't upfront about my disability when I first graduated because I perceived that it would count against me, and in fact I tended to get more interviews if I didn't mention it, but then I had to mention it just prior to the actual interview, eg to make sure that I could lip read the interviewers.' (*Archaeological Researcher: profoundly deaf*)

'It's something that I have to make sure that people know about, obviously the people I'm working with, in case something happens and I need medical attention. I've never declared it on a CV, but I have always mentioned it when I've been appointed to a job.' (*Project Director: diabetes*)

Others had had bad experiences after making a declaration

'I think I made a mistake in telling my boss at the time, in fact I regret telling anybody else about it. He seemed to turn against me straight away and said I had a learning disability. Very soon afterwards somebody got promoted over me. My own feeling is that if you've got mild dyslexia like me, it's best just to keep quiet about it.' (*Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia*)

'I decided that if another job came up then I may forget to mention about having to be careful about how much weight I can lift. If they ask me directly if I can lift 50 pounds, I'd have to say no.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'People won't hire me; I have to not mention that I have this disability. I had one guy who rang me, talked to me on the phone and loved my CV. But when I followed up that phone call with a more truthful email saying I had a spinal fusion but was quite nimble, after a week he said sorry because the position was filled and that they would keep my CV on file. It was a bit cowardly.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

The reasons for not declaring a disability included it not being seen as necessary, the fear of discrimination and job insecurity

'I haven't always declared my dyslexia when I've applied for jobs. Sometimes it has come up, but my dyslexia is quite mild. If there is a problem, I'll just go and discuss it with them.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'In the past I used to tick the 'Disability' box, but in recent years not so much because I felt that there were some things that I was capable of doing so I don't need to tell them I'm disabled, it doesn't fit in with what they're asking me to do.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

'I only did a couple of short term contracts before I came to work for my current employer. I never told them anything about the dyslexia. I didn't include it in my job application and I never let anyone know about it until it was noted that my writing was a bit jumbled about. Then I admitted that there was an issue there. By that time it was recognised that my ability as an archaeologist outweighed it being a problem.' (*Project Officer: dyslexia*)

'I know of some dyslexic people who will keep quiet about it because they don't want to be tarnished with the 'disabled' brush.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'One employer said that if I'd declared my disabilities, he wouldn't have employed me and they said it was unlikely that they would consider employing me again.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: vertigo/restricted mobility*)

'I was always a little wary of declaring my dyslexia in case it's a disadvantage, I don't know if there is consciously, but I've always been a little bit wary of that. Not just in archaeology, but also other jobs I've gone for.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/dyspraxia*)

'Throughout this time I basically managed, I suffered. I didn't officially notify work about my condition as I was concerned that it might hinder my progress.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

However, some felt that honesty and openness was the best way to approach things

'I always put it on my application form, but no one had ever taken the time to do something about it. It was only later when I felt more comfortable about it and explained what it is and asked if we could work together on it. I found that wasn't always easy. It was always a case of me approaching them, rather than the other way round. But when they started to understand, it worked better.' (*Field Archaeologist: Asperger's Syndrome*)

## 8. Work-related disability

A concern of many field archaeologists was the extent to which the nature of the job was contributing to physical disabilities such as arthritis and RSI, and what became of injured workers. To many respondents this appeared to be a widespread issue in archaeology

'Like a lot of people, I went for a long time with no problems and then I deteriorated fairly rapidly. Started off with just pain in the shoulder and it's progressed over the last ten years. Can be chronic pain, inability to move my fingers in the morning and can take a while for my hands to warm up; increased symptoms after any period of time doing a lot of work on the computer. The guys I was working with were knackered as well: bad backs, bad knees and the rest of it.' (*Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI*)

'With a lot of old creaky people in archaeology there's all sorts of problems and aches and pains. It's a funny bunch of people to work with; you just tend to get on with it. Most of them are slightly mad or have something wrong with them: knees, wrists, shoulders and backs. Knees are terrible.' (*Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/ mental health difficulties/RSI*)

'Most of the archaeologists I know have got something wrong with them now because it is such a physical job.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

'I worked all through the winter for one Unit and that is when my problems started; digging hard ground did not help. The other problem I have now is a form of RSI in my wrists which I think has built up through excavation work.' (Field Supervisor: diabetes/RSI)

One respondent noted that archaeology is a 'young' discipline and that it is only now that we are seeing work-related disabilities developing on any scale

'We get people complaining of certain conditions, I don't know if you'd call them disabilities, but conditions from a background of working in archaeology; things like signs of arthritis, RSI from trowelling and also from using computers, as well as everyday things like diabetes. It's a concern as people become older. We are such a young profession it's only now that we're beginning to see these things amongst the older people. I'm at the age now where I've seen people I started with have to take early retirement for one reason or another. We are really the first generation of archaeologists to go through this.' (Unit Manager: MS)

A feeling that some employers were unconcerned about employees becoming disabled because of the nature of the job was also highlighted

'The problem is you work on site, you get knackered, your knees go, your back goes, and your wrists go. You work in archaeology for ten years, and then you're knackered and then you just get binned. The workers are just seen as disposable, an endless supply of them. If you carry on working, you just end up as an arthritic lump. People don't think about what you do if you are injured. They don't care. Don't think mine's an uncommon story.' (Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI)

## 9. Adjustments

The most successful 'adjustment' cited by the respondents was achieved simply by employers being flexible

'I couldn't have asked more from my employers. They sent me home on occasion and have been really understanding. We've come to an arrangement where I try and work from home at least one day a week.' (Unit Manager: MS)

'I had an agreement, brokered by my Union with my employer, whereby I work half time on site and half time in the office; a month in each to stop things building up. They did offer to give me a quarter of a day off each month, non-sick time off, to go and visit the NHS.' (Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI)

'Some employers I have told say to take it easy and don't go mad and have a break if I need it.' (Field Archaeologist: severe eczema)

'At first, they put me on more gentle duties. For one Unit it was the good old-fashioned system where one person does drawing and another person does digging, so that helped.' (Field Supervisor: diabetes/RSI)

'The Director would come to me and say, 'What are you doing it that way for? I'm intrigued.' So, I would explain why. He would say as long as I was doing it right, it was fine.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: restricted mobility)

Interestingly, the only examples of using special equipment related to office work and recording, rather than anything specifically for the physical side of archaeology

'I've been given a coloured overlay which helps; it has completely changed my life, it now means that I can scan read for the first time ever. It sounds stupid that this plastic overlay thing can have so much of an impact, but I think it's the best thing I've ever had!' (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/dyspraxia)

'I was contracted to work on a large buildings survey. The Unit was very good to me. We had to record each building *in situ* and were supposed to handwrite eyeball descriptions on site. I was given permission not to do that and to put it straight on the computer. They even provided me with a special keyboard. They also paid for the farming out of typing up parts of the descriptions.' (Field Archaeologist: RSI/OCD/eating disorder)

'I've now got an excellent chair. It has opened my eyes to the importance of just having a comfortable office chair. Whether you've got MS or recognised back problems or not, a decent office chair makes all the difference. I'm sure if everyone had one it would reduce the number of back problems.' (Unit Manager: MS)

The facilities available with just a normal computer were seen as making it possible for people with dyslexia to write easily

'Computers are wonderful; they've made an enormous difference, especially with writing. You can double-check things, rearrange things, rearrange paragraphs and check spellings. With a computer I can actually write quite well.' (Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia)

Sending individual employees for specialist training was also considered a good investment

'My employers put me on courses to help me do the context sheets and things like that; they've also sent me on computer courses. All in all, it's been pretty good. With the support I've had I'm now writing up field reports and I'm going on in leaps and bounds.' (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/head injury)

Simply checking work as a normal procedure was seen as a great support, especially for people with dyslexia

'The way I've managed to do that is quite simply through a quality control system. Every single report that is written has a series of proof reads, both for spelling, grammatical content and structure, but also for archaeological content and professional research quality. Every report gets a minimum of three reads from three different people, and sometimes as many as five or six, as well as the publishing editors. Everything gets quite a thorough examination and there's an awful lot of communication between myself and my colleagues with regard to any single written piece of work before it goes out. That process in itself has ensured that my background of problems with reading and writing is not an issue.' (Project Officer: dyslexia)

'Although I had to do grant applications, my department was really supportive. My boss never criticised, he just got a pen and made the necessary changes.' (Field Archaeologist/Researcher: dyslexia)

'The only thing that has been different is that I've had to check their recording more carefully than other people, not so much the spelling because you can usually work out what the words are. With numerical dyslexia you do have to be careful with things like context numbers and cross-referencing. You have to cross-check all this information anyway because nobody does perfect recording whether they have dyslexia or not. Once you realise that someone's dyslexic you just keep an eye on things.' (Project Director: diabetes)

Many of the employees with a disability were making their own adjustments or employing coping strategies that they had developed

'I've made a lot of my own adjustments in doing the job. I tend to write a lot of notes as I go along, then I go and put them on the computer or context sheets. I will work at home as well; I've always had to work twice as hard as everyone else. That's all part and parcel of it.' (Field Archaeologist: dyslexia/head injury)

'Amazingly I'm a reasonable surveyor, the only trouble is I tend to do it at my own pace and I found my own way of doing it, my own personal adjustments. It was fine if I was left to myself, then I would find a way of doing it.' (Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia)

'I have my own coping strategies. I make sure that I'm bracing myself when I pick up any weight. It's easier if I lay on my stomach when I'm excavating, if that's at all feasible, and I try not to lean over too much at the waist.' (Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility)

'I set up my own special file of templates all in order. That seems to have got round the problem. It's mainly me finding answers to the specific problems that I have.' (Archaeological Illustrator: dyslexia)

'I just adapted ways of doing things on site; I did mattocking, barrowing, shovelling and everything else. You can use a mattock one-handed quite easily; you don't need two hands to trowel. I worked out ways of wheel barrowing.' (Field Archaeologist/Local Government: amputee)

However, one respondent was concerned that some coping strategies could have a negative effect

'I like the idea of coping strategies; some of them are absolutely brilliant, and I'm quite sure of that. They're transferable and other people could use them if only they knew about them. I'm also convinced that there are coping strategies that are not good ideas and have a quite negative and catastrophic effect. How do you sort that out? Some work brilliantly well; equally some are quite disastrous.' (Academic Archaeologist: epilepsy)

With acquired or late-diagnosed disabilities, changing an employee's role was one adjustment that was made

'We sat down and they said that there was no way that they could make reasonable adjustments for my current role if I have trouble writing text quickly, which I do. I could understand that. They suggested that I take the Office Manager/Administration job in the team, which in those days was to deal with all the paperwork.' (Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia)

'I tried to go back to work for the Unit. They were aware that I had this difficulty and I said that there are a lot of people sitting around or going out into the field doing jobs they don't want to do, paperwork and watching briefs. I suggested they let me do that and free the others up for the fieldwork that they actually want to do. They agreed and gave me the watching briefs, they were willing to negotiate. They were willing to look at any problems that I had, but only up to a point.' (Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility)

'They were slightly awkward to start with and said to take it easy on site. Trouble was, it was difficult to take it easy on the site I was on. Eventually they realised it was a serious problem, so they took me into the office and tried to give me desk-based work. It got to the stage where typing was a problem, so they got me some voice-activated software. I felt a bit self-conscious using that. But they did do everything to try and make it possible for me to work.' (*Field Supervisor: diabetes/RSI*)

Some respondents said that, to remain in the profession, they had specialised in things that they were able to do and were interested in

'This is all something that I've had since childhood, and I suppose I've adapted my career and working life to fit around it. I think professionally I've gone in certain directions based on what I do well and what I do badly.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'I think I've probably found a niche where I belong, as it makes use of what I can do in a supportive research role where I have no need to speak to the public (which can be unpredictable and tests my lip reading skills) but where I can make full use of my written language skills.' (*Archaeological Researcher: profoundly deaf*)

'I know one girl who's doing osteology because she can't go out in the field, but she does want to do archaeology. You need to be flexible about things; there are lots of ways that you can do it. If you can't use a pick axe, then become a site photographer. Do all archaeologists actually have to be out on a site, can they become educators or other things like that? The main problem is that specialist jobs are few and far between.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'It's not about disability, which means you can't do something; it's more about a 'different' ability and using people's skills and abilities as you can. If you can't dig away, you can't dig away. There are other people out there who are excellent at digging. You put people in the right place for the skills they have got and understand that not everyone can do everything. You can be a good 'book' archaeologist, a researcher, without actually going out there to dig the hole yourself. The way it is seen is that you have to go out and dig the holes or you can't become an academic. There are no 'armchair archaeologists' professionally. You actually have to be a field archaeologist and if you can't do that, then you've got no job and no future in the subject.' (*Graduate: restricted mobility*)

'I think there is a way round my problems, so I am looking at various teaching options or publishing. At the moment I am trying to get some lecturing work so I that do not have to use my wrists too much.' (*Field Supervisor: diabetes/RSI*)

'Career-wise, I used to be a curator working with collections, very much hands-on work. I really had to decide that it was no longer a career option because I could not do the quick visual checking of collections which is an essential part of the job. When I decided to make the move from curator to career development work, my eyes were very unstable and I did not know how long it would be before I had very limited sight. I changed to a job that I can do with very little vision.' (*Museums Officer/Researcher: impaired vision/diabetes/dyslexia*)

'I think if someone feels that they have limitations then they should be encouraged to specialise. I think we all end up loving something; ceramics, architecture or bones. We all end up gravitating towards one particular thing that we have a fondness for. I think if we could be encouraged to develop our personal interests and, especially if we have difficulties in lifting weights and shifting dirt which can be a big problem, I think we would develop enough skills to be an archaeologist. We could go out to the field and see the stuff *in situ* and not have to work ourselves to absolute exhaustion just to try and be one of the guys. That should be encouraged I think. Get people early on to realise to concentrate on the things they might be good at, not to focus on what they're bad at.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

One respondent found that he did not need the adaptations that were offered him

'People kept trying to persuade me to use a prosthetic arm, but I rejected it. I haven't worn one, apart from driving. I'm doing a desk based job at the moment, but I don't need any thing extra to help, it wouldn't speed me up any quicker even if I had two hands. When I was digging there was a tendency to get me to go and record the finds rather than do the excavating, I rejected that most of the time. It was almost like a thing to protect me from heavy work. With computers they tried to get me to use a special keyboard, but I couldn't get the hang of it and rejected it.' (*Field Archaeologist/Local Government: amputee*)

Some respondents reported that they had received no special support nor had any adjustments made for them, or there had been problems in getting something put in place

'I was beginning to think I could be an archaeologist, but no one was accommodating that. There haven't been any accommodations; they just don't employ me in the field. It means I've had very limited experience.' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

'It has taken a lot of time and effort to actually get any help. They'd say, 'Don't worry; we'll work out a way of you doing this and you doing that.' I didn't have any appraisals, so I couldn't bring it up then. Whenever I did bring it up, nothing happened. They did a Work Place Assessment, said that's all done and everything's alright, so they're covered.' (*Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI*)

'I've rarely had an employer provide special support or make modifications. When I was doing illustration they said they would provide me with a better work station. They did let me work off site when I was pregnant.' (*Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI*)

Access to buildings was rarely mentioned, but one telling comment was made

'A lot of museums don't actually have disabled access to where a lot of the work is done, whilst all the public areas do.' (*Field Archaeologist/Researcher: vertigo/restricted mobility*)

Some adjustments that had been made previously were also seen as having gone out of date:

'It's a long time since I've had a talk with my manager about why the situation isn't satisfactory or how they could make more of me or make some other adjustment. The kind of work we were doing when I agreed to the adjustments ten years ago is very different to what we do now.' (*Manager, National Agency: dyspraxia*)

## 10. Suggested improvements

'How can you actually facilitate or take on somebody who's already admitted to a disability? Could it be made more flexible or the job be made part time? What facilities would they have to buy? It might be something as simple as the right sort of chair. It might not be expensive, but you've got to get people thinking how easy would it be to take a particular person on?' (*Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility*)

In response to the question about how the situation could be improved, the employees again emphasised a need for awareness and understanding and that, despite being labelled as 'disabled', they have a contribution to make

'It's one thing to handle the low pay and the short contracts, but if anything's going to change for the good it should be taken on board and understood what disabilities are.' (*Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI*)

'To make things better it is a case of training and awareness. Archaeology needs to recognise disability, especially dyslexia.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/ dyslexia*)

'If this is going to happen, then we have to be accepted for what we are. There are positions in fieldwork, contract archaeology or academic archaeology that we can do. We might do it a little bit slower and we might need a few bits and pieces to help us.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

'Making it better is accepting that, in the end, we all end up having a problem; archaeology is a wear and tear job.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility*)

It was felt that where this awareness was most needed was at management level and with other departments in larger organisations that are connected with archaeology

'I think that attitude, which I would say is at higher levels, really needs to change. Perhaps it's 'Old School' types of people who are running companies and have been running them since forever. I would hope for more understanding at that level really, and a more professional attitude towards it.' (*Field Archaeologist: dyslexia*)

'I've seen too many archaeologists who want to be digging mud up in a field being managers, human resources, personnel officers and equipment managers; that kind of thing. They didn't want to do that, they didn't start wanting to do that, but that's where they found themselves. Personally, and this is my own opinion, I see that as one of the fundamental failings is that you've often got human resources being managed by people who aren't specialists in human resources. They aren't up to speed with the relevant policies that are out there. It's a lack of human resource management and, if we're talking about disability, that's where it sits: managing people. You've got human resource managers who are just archaeologists with crippled backs, we've all got bugged backs in this job. That's where things need to improve. Amongst archaeologists you get good managers and bad ones. Maybe some of the ones who are too interested in getting to the top aren't the ones you want there.' (*Field Archaeologist: restricted mobility/dyslexia*)

'The main problem we have, with Occupational Health in particular, is them not understanding the nature of an archaeologist's job. They believe, and we cannot disabuse them of the idea, that the part of an archaeologist's job which is



sitting in front of a computer is somehow divorceable from the digging part of the job, excavating and site management work.' (Manager, Local Authority)

Feeling that it is 'safe' to declare a disability was seen as crucial

'I think in general people need to feel safe in disclosing a disability and realising that, like being black, Jewish, or female, it is not a matter of shame or mental discomfort.' (Archaeological Researcher: hearing impairment)

'You should be able to tell people about it without scaring them off. Even to take the time, even with short term contracts, to realise that a person may need a little extra help or make an allowance for them.' (Field Archaeologist: hearing impairment/mental health difficulties/RSI)

A flexibility in working conditions that relates directly to an individual's specific needs was also cited

'It is about finding out about what people can do and helping them to work. This should be discussed at the point of being offered a job. It's not insurmountable.' (Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility)

'The important thing is to recognise that there are a lot of other ways in which people need support apart from physical adaptations. Making the work flexible, that's the biggest thing, and also an understanding that you have a great deal to offer in the part-time role.' (Field Archaeologist: chronic fatigue syndrome)

It was noted that the actual process of doing archaeology is flexible and lends itself to including people with disabilities

'There are so many archaeological tasks – in the field, in the lab, in surveying – that there is flexibility and if someone wants to work, there is usually a place open. The thing about an archaeological dig is that there is so much to do in such a wide variety of settings that you can accommodate almost anyone. The tough conditions of archaeology actually foster a work environment that is more flexible than most. If we think in terms of the fact that we all work with disabilities, and that we adjust to some disabilities in other people without thinking, then it is easier to adjust to all disabilities because such adjustment is part of life. You can capitalise on people's abilities because there are so many different things that they can do.' (Academic Archaeologist: non-disabled)

'I worked with one girl who had mobility problems, but she wasn't confined to a wheelchair or anything. She had a problem with one of her legs and it limited what she could do on site. It was just a case of finding out what she could do, there were plenty things. It wasn't really a problem.' (Project Director: diabetes)

The working conditions of archaeologists were also emphasised in relation to work-related disabilities

'We need to look at these injuries and what the underlying problems are. It goes down as far as on-site accommodation, and off-site they're putting people in places without hot water or heating. It ends up seriously affecting them for years. It's about putting covers over scaffold roofs and polytunnels over excavations.' (Field Archaeologist: arthritis/RSI)

'We have to look at what they do in other industries, how they've approached people becoming injured or disabled because of the nature of the job. Do we jump on the compensation bandwagon? That can easily happen. Perhaps we need some properly organised compensation scheme. Prevention, that's another issue. There's the back and knee problems, and then the wrists and hands. I know a lot of people coming up into their forties beginning to suffer from things.' (Project Officer: dyslexia/carpel tunnel syndrome)

The way that people come into archaeology and having an awareness of the nature of the job, as well as a self-awareness of their own abilities, was seen as an important factor

'I suspect that there are still many, many people who have disabilities who think of archaeology as primarily a physical profession. Therefore, for people who use a wheelchair or have a sight impairment it is way back in their schooling at Careers talks that archaeology would have been a bit of a turn off for them because they would assume that to be an archaeologist you automatically have to start by digging in the field and their impairment would restrict them. Of course, that is the usual way that a career develops, but it's not the only way that it could develop. Someone could go to university and study history or archaeology and, although they haven't had a lot of field experience, they could still be an exceptionally good person who works in the office. All the adjustments to disability can easily be made these days with so much equipment that is available. I think way back in schooling, and it might come from the Young Archaeologist's Clubs, people could be more proactive in broadening out what a career in archaeology can involve.' (HR Manager)

'Perhaps we have to change the structure of how people come into these positions. Do they start as a digger and work their way up, or do a postgraduate in a specialist subject and get employment that way and get themselves into a position that suits them? It is about finding out about what people can do and helping them to work. This should be discussed at the point of being offered a job. It's not insurmountable. If you're going to be in archaeology you've got to know what it really involves; it's not all sunshine, sometimes it'll be out in the pouring rain. If you went on site on crutches or in a wheelchair it would be a question of asking yourself what you can actually do.' (Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility)

'I think that my tutor back in university should have been a bit more honest. Anyone can do fieldwork as part of a Field School, but not everyone will get a job doing fieldwork.' (Archaeological Researcher: restricted mobility)

## 11. Summary

- ◆ People choose to do archaeology because of their interest and passion for it, despite the pay and conditions
- ◆ Employees with a disability reported having positive experiences where they had a good relationship with their employer and working colleagues
- ◆ A lack of awareness and understanding was cited as a major problem, especially with hidden disabilities. A self-awareness of their own capabilities and limitations was also seen as important by the respondents
- ◆ Difficulties were identified in a number of other areas
  - employers not believing that anything is wrong
  - not being seen as capable of doing the job
  - the 'stigma' of being categorized as disabled
  - the macho image and competitive culture of archaeology
  - employers 'going through the motions' in complying with the legislation
- ◆ An ability to do the job was seen as crucial, but there was a feeling that there was a greater pressure to demonstrate their ability. Some respondents, especially those with dyslexia, considered the nature of their disability could be an advantage in their job
- ◆ Health and Safety issues were regarded as especially important
  - employees expressed an attitude of responsibility and self-awareness in this regard
  - they were critical of the practices of some employers
  - they recognized the financial implications and potential tensions involved
- ◆ Full declaration of a disability was seen as problematic
  - issues of confidentiality
  - fear of discrimination
  - job insecurity
- ◆ Work-related disabilities were thought to be common and that not much was being done about them
- ◆ Successful adjustments
  - a flexibility in attitude and working practices
  - the provision of special equipment
  - specialist training
  - employees making their own adjustments and using coping strategies
  - changes in work role or specialisation
- ◆ The areas where improvements could be made were seen as
  - an increased awareness and understanding of disability, especially at management level
  - feeling 'safe' to declare a disability
  - flexible working conditions and, in some cases, improved working conditions
  - an awareness of what archaeology involves and a self-awareness of their own ability when taking it up as a career

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## APPENDIX 1: IAA QUESTIONNAIRE: SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE, ARCHAEOLOGY QUESTIONNAIRE

### To: Archaeological Employers

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your approximate number of employees in a year, including voluntary workers and trainees

Please indicate the approximate number of disabled employees working for you over the last 5 years, including voluntary workers and trainees. This includes registered disabled and physical or mental disabilities that could impair working (see cover letter for list of examples)

If you have never employed disabled people, please go to Question 5.

If you have employed disabled workers over the last 5 years, how would you best describe their disability/impairment? (see cover letter for list of examples)

If you have employed disabled workers over the last 5 years, in which roles have they been involved? (please provide approximate numbers)

Disability (see cover letter for list of examples)	Field investigation	HE advice	Education/research	Support staff

Will the new Disability legislation affect your recruitment and working practices? (please tick)

Yes  No  Don't know

If 'yes', please give brief details; if 'don't know', do you know how to find out?

Would you be willing to talk to us in more detail on the telephone? (please tick)

Yes  No

Are there any other issues in relation to the employment of disabled people in archaeology that you have experience of, or are a concern to you and your colleagues? We are very interested in both your positive and negative experiences (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

## APPENDIX 2: ASSET AND CPD

One of the objectives of the DAP project was to consider whether the self-evaluation tool kit (ASSET) developed by the IAA project could be adapted for use in professional CPD.

### The Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology Project (IAA)

#### Project goals

- ◆ to increase the awareness of disability issues in archaeology
- ◆ to improve the integration of disability in fieldwork teaching
- ◆ to improve all students' awareness of their development of transferable skills for the transition to employability through participating in archaeological fieldwork

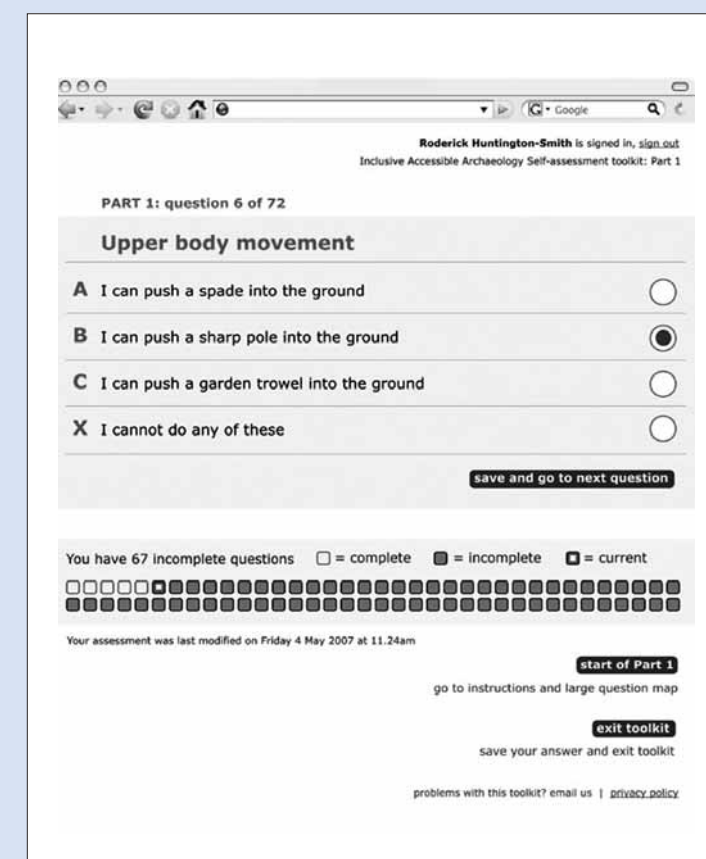
#### Project outcomes

- ◆ the integration of disabled students into archaeological fieldwork and related activities according to, and consistent with, the mandatory legal requirements of disability legislation
- ◆ a change of emphasis from 'disability' to 'ability': rather than excluding or categorising individuals, all students would be engaged in evaluating their own skills
- ◆ a self-evaluation tool kit (ASSET) was developed to encourage students to reflect on their own ability
- ◆ by embedding the tool kit into archaeological fieldwork training and professional skills teaching, students will be actively engaged in evaluating both the archaeological skills and the transferable skills that they are developing
- ◆ the compilation of 'Good Practice Guidelines for Including Disabled Students and Self-Evaluation in Archaeological Fieldwork Training'

### Archaeological Skills Self-Evaluation Tool kit (ASSET)

The rationale behind ASSET was to produce a tool with which all archaeology students could identify and track the development of both the archaeological and the transferable abilities and skills gained through fieldwork training. The process of 'evaluation' was emphasised over 'assessment'. This was because assessment has connotations of a final mark, whereas evaluation more clearly reflects the process of abilities and skills changing and developing with time and experience. In this, ASSET was designed so that it could be used on subsequent occasions to track the development of disabilities and skills.

ASSET was designed for use by students, or people with an interest in archaeology, who have little or no experience in fieldwork. In this, it includes the archaeological tasks and skills that the archaeology departments in universities are teaching and the transferable skills gained through participation in fieldwork training. The method is for a student to answer a question about an everyday activity that replicates a particular archaeological task or transferable skill. Each question can be answered at different levels of capability. This allows a student to identify their potential strengths and weaknesses. This information must then be tested by actually working in the field and then an individual can re-evaluate their abilities and skills in the light of actual experience. This re-evaluation can be carried out on subsequent occasions thereby effectively tracking any changes or developments in abilities and skills. It is available as an on-line web resource.



Sample question from Part 1 of ASSET

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in archaeology

The process of CPD in archaeology is seen as a means of securing good practice and high standards within the profession and consists of the following ([www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/ifa\\_cpd.pdf](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/ifa_cpd.pdf))

- ◆ identifying areas of strength and areas of weakness and which particular skills need to be gained or developed
- ◆ setting personal and professional learning targets to achieve these goals
- ◆ these targets will be related to what an individual sees as their potential career path and the needs of their current employer

It is recommended that this process of CPD be carried out over at least a two year period.

## ASSET and CPD

### Professional skills

The purpose of ASSET is to allow people with none or very little experience of archaeological fieldwork to evaluate their potential to do it successfully and then track their development of abilities and skills in the early stages of training, either at university or as a volunteer. This level of evaluation is below that required by a professional archaeologist who will have experience of fieldwork. It is possible that ASSET could be adapted to function at a higher level. However, training schemes such as the NVQ in Archaeological Practice cover this quite adequately.

### Capabilities and limitations

ASSET can identify the areas where a person may potentially experience difficulties with certain tasks in archaeological fieldwork and highlight where reasonable adjustments may need to be made if they have a disability. However, this is a system of self-evaluation, not a proper medical assessment for professional purposes. In these circumstances, an assessment by Access to Work or Occupational Health would probably be more applicable.

### Transferable skills

Although the IfA advisory document on CPD (*ibid*) mentions transferable skills, they are not enumerated. Transferable skills are extremely important to CPD

- ◆ They are another 'layer' of skills possessed by employees along with their professional skills
- ◆ In a world of uncertain employment and a 'flexible' workforce, they are essential to employees' professional development and widening their career options
- ◆ For employees with a disability where reasonable adjustments have to be made, the transferable skills that a person is known to possess can be of great help in this process

The IAA project identified and listed the transferable skills gained by students undertaking fieldwork training and these were incorporated into ASSET. This catalogue can be used to inform a more in-depth identification of the transferable skills acquired by a professional archaeologist. They can then be incorporated into schemes of CPD.

## INSTITUTE *for* ARCHAEOLOGISTS

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