

Specialist competence matrix – to support applicants who work in environmental roles

PLEASE NOTE: All applications will be assessed against the main competence matrix (P3 Applicant’s Guide) with the specialist matrix as an advisory document only.

	Knowledge	Autonomy	Coping with Complexity	Perception of Context
Practitioner (PCIFA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the principles of recovery and sample processing of at least one kind of environmental archaeological material. • Understanding of the principals of characterisation and recording of at least one environmental archaeological material type (vertebrate remains, invertebrate remains, macroscopic and microscopic plant remains, biomolecules and soil and sediments). • Basic knowledge of one or more environmental archaeological material type and ability to make preliminary identifications. • Understanding of how to handle and store samples and environmental materials appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some responsibility for achieving tasks using own judgement and autonomy, whilst working under supervision. • Collaboration with others is expected. • Takes responsibility for following health and safety advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the general principles and practice of environmental archaeology, including geoarchaeology. • Basic knowledge of deposit formation processes. • Basic knowledge of the principles of excavation and stratigraphic recording. • Understanding of the principle of a collection and dispersal policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the aims of specialist environmental analysis and reporting. • Developing an understanding of basic recording and data management procedures. • Awareness of appropriate learned societies or groups. • Awareness of national guidelines and relevant research frameworks. • Awareness of the relationship between a sample and its context • Understanding of relevant on-site collection policies.

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Associate (ACIFA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully proficient in the protocols and procedures in the field and processing and storing samples and environmental materials appropriately, relevant to specialism. Full knowledge of the procedures and resources relevant to the identification, quantification, analysis and reporting of at least one environmental archaeological material type (as defined above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerable responsibility for own work using own judgement and autonomy. Responsibility for recording and reporting on assemblages of at least one environmental material type under direction and with quality control provided by a senior specialist. Able to supervise unskilled personnel and students in basic processing, sorting and recognition of environmental material types. Accurate estimation of time needed to complete a report at appropriate level. Able to work within agreed budgets and to agreed deadlines. Makes appropriate recommendations for retention and dispersal of material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copes with complex situations through deliberate analysis and planning. Use of standard specialist terminology and techniques, understanding their strengths and limitations. Able to use reference resources and keys to inform analysis and interpretation. Understanding of different recording methods at assessment and analysis and possible requirements to subsample or increase sample size. Able to incorporate and apply appropriate specialist methods within an integrated recovery strategy. Broad knowledge of excavation methodologies and deposit formation processes. Understands the processes of post-excavation phasing and stratigraphic analysis and the relevance of these to interpretation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of appropriate digital and material archiving and discard procedures. Understanding of the requirements of other specialists and how to integrate different forms of data. Up to date knowledge of research frameworks and guidelines and the theory and method of the appropriate specialism. Ability to communicate appropriately to different audiences. Ensures correct collection, handling and storage of material based on specialist knowledge and project requirements. Aware of the importance of data clarity, accuracy and access/archiving. Engages with relevant groups and/or learned societies.

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Member (MCifa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough knowledge of an environmental or geoarchaeological specialism and able to convey that knowledge to the archaeological and environmental peer-review community. • Ability to convey technical data to a non-specialist audience. • Thorough knowledge of research ethics, and key legislation associated with the practice of environmental archaeological practice in the UK. • Authoritative knowledge of research design, data collection, interpretation, reporting and archiving. • Demonstrable record of publication within monographs, journals and/or other formats, including as lead author. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with complete autonomy and independence demonstrable by single or co-authored papers, single authored specialist reports, and/or involvement in designing environmental research frameworks or guidelines. • Liaises with other specialists • Ability to provide costed strategies at project planning stage. • May encourage or provide mentoring and training to others. • Contributes to project team discussions and project aims and outcomes. • May take responsibility for contributing to or overseeing health and safety policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with complex projects holistically, demonstrates confident decision-making in a broad range of complex or technical projects. • Thoroughly understands and appreciates strengths and limitations of techniques used, may adapt methodology to project. • Full understanding of archaeological and post excavation processes. • Understanding of the broader taphonomic processes and stratigraphic context. • Able to plan a fully costed program for assessment and analysis of complex assemblages. • Maintains up to date knowledge of reference resources and research frameworks. • May contribute to research agendas and frameworks within field of specialism. • Understands the future research potential of samples or assemblages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to provide authoritative advice to project teams, other specialists and clients based on relevant specialism(s) • Communicates with the wider research community and with the public. • Broad depth of knowledge providing a significant contribution to wider site reports, syntheses or research projects. • Ability to critically assess the value and use of comparative data sets and syntheses, considering specialist and excavation methodology. • Active member of specialist groups (eg the Association for Environmental Archaeology, International Council for Archaeozoology, Archaeobotanical Working Group) • Devises strategies for collection, handling and archive deposition considering research framework, and wider/future potential. • May identify and/or explore new areas of research.