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## Professional Pathways Autumn 2021 Bulletin Move on to Member



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Welcome to the Autumn 2021 Professional Pathways bulletin for people who are working towards [Member \(MCIfA\) applications](#). As you are already an Associate and actively working towards becoming a Member you will already be gaining a wider working knowledge. Professional Pathways aims to support members through CIfA accreditation by signposting to useful advice, resources and training that will help you build on your existing knowledge and skills and reach the next stage in your professional career. The content of the bulletins should help towards demonstrating the four elements of the CIfA competence matrix for your Member application.

You can find out more about the difference between Associate and Member grades by clicking the 'Move on to Member' link [on the Professional Pathways webpage](#).

All applications for professional accreditation are assessed against [the main competence matrix](#) so you will need to match your skills and knowledge to that. In addition we have a series of [specialist competence matrices](#), which have been compiled by our Special Interest Groups and external groups and are tailored to specific areas. The specialist matrices assist applicants in understanding how their work fits into the main competence matrix and by identifying what information they could give to the Validation committee to demonstrate competence at the relevant accredited grade.

It will help the committee if you mention that you've used a specialist matrix to understand where your skills and competence can be mapped to the main matrix. Once you've identified the skills and

knowledge you need to demonstrate in your statement of competence, it will be more straightforward to decide what evidence might support your application.

In this bulletin:

- How increasing your project management skills can enhance your career and help you make a successful application.
- Professional profile – Sarah Howard, MCIfA
- Any questions?
- What are we doing at the moment?

## How increasing your project management skills can enhance your career and help you make a successful MCIfA application.

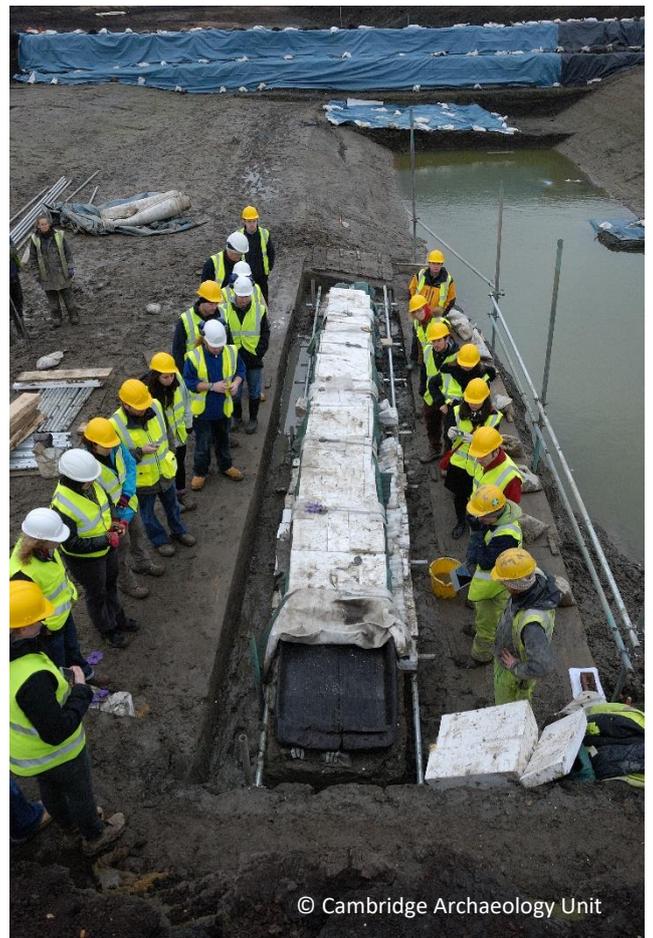
*“I’m not a Project Manager – can I apply for MCIfA?”*

It’s a common misconception that you need to have ‘Project Manager’ in your job title to be able to apply for MCIfA accreditation. This isn’t the case, but at MCIfA level you need to show that you take full responsibility for your own work and have a significant level of accountability for the work of others and/or the allocation of resources. For example you may manage a team on site, be responsible for managing HER resources or for managing your own time and resources as a self-employed specialist. You should be confident in making decisions based on your knowledge and have the depth of understanding to be able to see different approaches and solutions.

Learning project management skills might not seem relevant to the job you do or the direction in which you see your career developing but skills such as time, task and resources management are increasingly in demand across a broader range of job roles than you might expect. Here Kirsty Dingwall of Headland Archaeology describes [how she became a project manager](#) and what her job entails (courtesy Headland Archaeology).

Project management skills provide a range of tools and techniques that you can use in your current work role to help increase your efficiency, meet deadlines, help with day-to-day work planning and develop the skills you need to take overall responsibility.

Understanding how collaboration between different disciplines can improve efficiency can help you to appreciate the roles that different professionals play in complex projects. In “I got 99 problems



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but archaeology ain't one..." Naomi Trott, Senior Cultural heritage Consultant for Arcadis explores how integrated project planning helps to make things run smoothly [37:20mins [CifA2021 - An archaeologist, a town planner and an engineer walk onto a site... multidisciplinary environments and the archaeological profession](#) ]. Having an overview of a project, appreciating the part that everyone plays and the most appropriate approach will help you to demonstrate the skills set out in the competence matrix under 'coping with complexity' and 'perception of context'.

Project management gives you the skills to identify and lead projects and is a great way to develop your autonomy.. If you are able to organise and carry out projects you will be an asset to any employer and organisation, as well as more able to manage your own work. it is a good idea to speak with your line manager to help identify these opportunities as part of your performance development appraisals.

Other ways to develop your project management skills include the '[Introduction to project management](#)' lunch and learn session delivered by Martin Locock MCifA. It is designed for people working in the sector who have had little contact with project management and covers project management as a discipline, common terminology and acronyms, the role of a project manager in the heritage sector, and challenges faced by those new to the role. You can find more recordings of CifA events and past conferences (including those from this year) on our [Event recordings page](#).

Historic England offers free online training on [MoRPHE project management](#) that you can study at your own pace and will take around four hours. It is tailored to the Historic England approach to project design and is a good introduction to creating project proposals and tracking your progress.



If this has sparked your interest in project management you might be interested in joining the CifA [Project Management special interest group](#) and they are holding their [AGM on 15 October](#).

#### **Further reading**

<https://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/diving-into-project-management>

*Project Management for Archaeology* 2017, Vilanova, R; Kloppenborg, T & Wells, K. Pub: Business Expert Press ISBN: 9781631572999

## Professional profile – Sarah Howard, MCIfA

### Better late than never...

I have been affiliated with CfA since 2007 when I undertook a workplace learning bursary in archaeological heritage management at the Lake District National Park Authority. I am slightly ashamed to say that due to the way my career has progressed, lack of NVQ assessors 10 years ago, and pressure on my time from various commitments including a part-time PhD from 2011, I only formalised my CfA membership in July this year after working for just under 14 years.

Although I was probably operating at MCIfA level from 2014, I found it difficult to evidence this because of changing jobs, varied experience, and my career progression not always being on an obvious upward trajectory. The issue I also found later was that the examples of work to support the MCIfA membership application need to be current to the last 2 years. As I progressed onto new roles, if I wanted to progress far enough within that new role to demonstrate competency within it, I would then lose the ability to draw upon past examples of work.

Finally, I completed my PhD and took up a single full-time role with the Environment Agency in July 2019. Along with my prior experience working in various roles for Historic England, I felt ready to start my application for MCIfA. However, covid presented a challenge with my examples of planning work not being publicly available and my former employer not able to easily supply copies due to limited access to servers. In a way this might have been a blessing in disguise, as I was able to use the last 18 months to build up my experience within a single full-time senior archaeologist role to be able to clearly evidence how I met the competency criteria for MCIfA.

Looking back, I can see that it might have been easier to have moved through the membership levels, and there are now many more people qualified to assess the archaeology NVQ for fast-track PCIfA, as well as accredited degrees. I don't think I am alone in struggling to see how my varied experience could be knitted together to support a coherent ACIfA or MCIfA level membership, having had 6 different roles, some concurrently, over 9 years, across 4 different regions. Most of us haven't had a chance to think about what direction our career was going and have instead chased precarious jobs around the country. Finally having job security has made me stop and think about where I am in my career and where I want to be, and I see full CfA membership as playing a big part in that. I am looking forward to getting involved with selection committees to help other people like myself to submit successful applications for membership, and to draw upon my academic and professional experience to support the degree accreditation programme.

Sarah Howard PhD MSc MCIfA is Senior Archaeologist with the Environment Agency



## Any questions? Please ask

If you've got a question about CfA or careers please send it to [anna.welch@archaeologists.net](mailto:anna.welch@archaeologists.net) or for membership application enquiries contact [lianne.birney@archaeologists.net](mailto:lianne.birney@archaeologists.net) You'll get a confidential answer but if the information could help others it will be included in an anonymised FAQs section. Here's a couple of questions that have been asked recently:

### I've heard about degree apprenticeships in archaeology – what are they?

Three Trailblazer apprenticeships have been developed at L7 – Cultural Heritage Conservator, Archaeological Specialist, and Historic Environment Advisor. You can find out more about them on [Historic England's website](#) They are particularly useful to employers wishing to upskill staff so, if you are hoping to define your career path and evidence your attainment of specialist knowledge and skills, the first step might be to have a conversation with your manager about the possibility of a L7 apprenticeship.

### What sort of examples of work can I use for my application and how much should I write?

You will need at least five examples of work that you've done within the past two years because the committee base the application on your current role so examples should support this, but these can be wide-ranging from project designs and survey data to outlines of courses you have taught, as well as reports. You can find a list of suggestions on our [MCiFA pages](#) under 'examples of work'. The examples need to support what you say in your statement of competence and be your best, most complex work to help demonstrate the criteria s of the competence matrix. Length is not important as long as you have outlined your responsibilities and explained how these demonstrate the criteria.

## What are we doing at the moment?

We're continuing our Zoom digital tea and lunch breaks and have introduced an evening option too so we're hoping that everyone will get an opportunity to take part. Recent chat topics have included CSCS cards, neurodiversity and returning to work after taking time away. Join our next digital chat on 7 Oct from 12:30-13:15pm. We will be talking about: Menopause in the workplace with @Bajr44Respect & MWAH Menopause Group, and our developing neurodiversity & arch network to coincide with invisible #dyslexia week. We are repeating some of the more popular themes so please let us know if there's something you missed that you'd like to see again, or if you have an idea for a topic. [Book here](#), we'd love to see you.

Conferences are a platform for you to tell the rest of the profession how you have been making your mark on the sector. Giving, as well as listening to, presentations is CPD and can be used as examples to demonstrate your professional competence against the matrix. Look out for a call for session papers for [CfA's 2022 Conference](#).



If you have any questions or suggestions for the next bulletin please send them in.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two names: 'Anna' and 'Lianne'. The 'A' in Anna is large and loops around the 'n'. The 'L' in Lianne is also large and loops around the 'i'. The names are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anna Welch BA MA ACIfA, Professional Development & Practice Coordinator

Lianne Birney BA MCIfA, Membership Manager