

Professional archaeologists

What do we mean when we talk about being a professional archaeologist?

The meaning of the word 'professional' is often interpreted as someone who is paid to do their work. This is not what we mean when we talk about professional archaeologists. Yes, there are professional archaeologists in paid roles, but a CIfA professional can be any archaeologist or heritage professional in any capacity who

- have demonstrated their archaeological skills and competence by achieving CIfA accreditation at Practitioner (PCIfA), Associate (ACIfA) or Member (MCIfA) level
- is maintaining their skills and competence by having a personal development plan and carrying out relevant continuing professional development
- is complying with and being accountable to an ethical code of conduct by being accredited
- is working in the public interest and not for private, personal, parochial or partisan interests

Accredited professional archaeologists should exercise judgment and should bring that good judgment to all aspects of their lives in relation to the study and care of the physical evidence of the human past.

Why your accreditation is important?

Gaining CIfA accreditation at Practitioner, Associate or Member level demonstrates that you are a professional archaeologist working in the public interest.

In order to achieve accreditation, you will need to demonstrate that you have the relevant skills, competence and understanding and be able to provide evidence and references to support this.

Being awarded professional accreditation by CIfA is a significant achievement for any individual. It is a recognisable indication to other professional archaeologists of your skills and your commitment to maintain and enhance these skills through continuing professional development. It also distinguishes you as someone who has agreed to comply with an ethical code of conduct and the standards which professional archaeologists have collectively agreed to impose upon themselves.

Professionalism and regulation within archaeology

Archaeology in most cases is not regulated by government so CIfA provides the profession with the mechanisms to regulate itself through professional accreditation.

Professionally accredited archaeologists are skilled, competent and work in the public interest.

Through their accreditation they have made a personal commitment to comply with an ethical code of conduct which obligates them to maintaining their skills and competence, and to reflect on their understanding and application of professional standards. It also commits them to encouraging other archaeologists to adopt the code and professional standards, and to ensure that others benefit from their experience and knowledge.

Where other accredited archaeologists do not appear to be maintaining their professional commitments, the Institute provides a professional conduct process which can investigate any allegation, and ultimately can remove someone's professional accreditation.

What are the benefits of having professional archaeologists?

By being able to demonstrate that professional archaeologists are **skilled, competent** and **comply** with professional standards, the Institute and the archaeological profession can assure clients that the work we carry out will meet their needs and the needs of the public. This inspires confidence in professional archaeology and in turn improves careers and attracts new people into the profession.