**Universal guidance for archaeological watching brief**

**Clause definitions**

There are three colour coded clauses to be aware of that appear throughout the guidance, these mean different things when it comes to adherence to the Standard and applying the guidance. They are defined as follows

***Must*** – obligatory  
To ensure attainment of the Standard and adherence to the Code of conduct it will almost always be necessary to comply with a ‘must’ clause.

***Should*** - strongly advised (with deviations documented)  
Departures from ’should’ clauses require caution, and it is advisable to document the reasons.

***May***– suggested  
It is acknowledged that roles/processes/approaches may vary, so a ‘may’ clause is a suggestion for good practice.

1. **Compliance with the Standard for archaeological watching brief**
   1. When undertaking an archaeological watching brief, the *Standard for archaeological watching brief* ***must*** be complied with. Failure to meet the Standard may be judged to conflict with the regulations by the Institute’s professional conduct procedure.
   2. This guidance describes universally applicable good practice for archaeological watching brief, setting out how the profession currently anticipates that the *Standard for archaeological watching brief* may be met, and the *Code of conduct* complied with. If the work undertaken fails to meet the *Standard for archaeological watching brief* because of the way in which it was conducted, the Standard has not been met and the work undertaken is ‘sub-standard’.
   3. This guidance outlines how outcomes or products required by the Standard can be attained and against which performance can be monitored. The archaeologist is left free to make a considered selection of appropriate established techniques and to develop new methods. However, it is strongly recommended that the universal guidance outlined in this document for archaeological watching brief is followed to ensure compliance with the Standard.
   4. Due regard ***should*** also be given to detailed guidance on archaeological watching brief to ensure the work undertaken is in accordance with the legislation and policy of the country or jurisdiction of the place of work.
   5. Departures from the universally applicable or jurisdiction-specific guidance ***should*** be undertaken with caution. It is advisable to document the reasons for doing so and how the different approach will meet the Standard.
   6. Archaeological watching briefs take place for many reasons and in many circumstances: the Standard and this guidance apply to all of them.
   7. Professional practice is changing. New methods are being developed, and the circumstances in which archaeological work is commissioned and conducted are subject to changing legal, administrative, and ideological perspectives. Comments and recommendations on this document are welcome at any time.
2. **Project design**
   1. An archaeologist ***should*** only undertake an archaeological watching brief which is governed by a project design, as this is the tool against which performance, fitness for purpose, and achievement of the *Standard for archaeological watching brief* can be measured.
   2. The project design author and/or project manager ***should*** be a Member (MCIfA) of CIfA.
   3. A project design ***may*** be produced in response to a brief, a document that outlines the circumstances to be addressed, with some indication of the scope of works that will be required.
   4. The project design ***should*** set out the proposed scheme of investigation in enough detail that all *relevant parties* can understand what will be done, assess whether it is fit for purpose and check that it complies with any conditions or obligations. It ***should*** provide a benchmark against which the results of the work can be measured.
   5. The project design author ***should*** consider all available practicable methods of investigation and decide upon the most appropriate to meet the purpose of the work, seeking specialist advice where necessary.
   6. The project design ***should*** be suited to the project under consideration and any templates ***should*** therefore be used with care. The author***should*** examine all appropriate resources.
   7. The project design ***should*** outline the research aims and the methods of investigation that are most appropriate to meet the purpose of the work, seeking specialist advice where necessary.
   8. The project design ***should***set out where and how the answers to the project’s research questions will be disseminated to different audiences, during and after implementation. The approach to dissemination and the level of detail reported ***should*** be proportionate to the anticipated significance of the asset: dissemination proposals ***should*** include a process for review.
   9. A project design ***should*** normally contain or cover the following, subject to country/jurisdiction specific requirements
3. non-technical summary
4. site location (including map) and descriptions
5. context of the project
6. geological and topographical background
7. archaeological and historical background
8. a statement on the relevant technical, research and ethical competences of the organisation undertaking the work
9. research aims of the project, including where appropriate explicit reference to existing research frameworks and objectives
10. methods of investigation, including sampling
11. arrangements for immediate conservation of artefacts
12. post-fieldwork assessment and analysis of project data
13. archiving strategy including reference to data management plans - strategy ***must***meet the *Standard for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* and ***should*** conform to the universal guidance for archaeological archives
14. publication and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of relevant audiences will be met, including how the results may be usable for subsequent research
15. copyright
16. staffing, resources (excluding financial) and consideration of timescale
17. a statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards), legislation and appropriate guidance
18. a tailored statement on how public benefit will be delivered, including consideration of the potential for engagement and participation
19. health and safety considerations
20. reference to the environmental protection policy (including carbon reduction plan) applying to the project
21. monitoring procedures
22. contingency arrangements
    1. All those engaged in the project, including monitors and those commissioning work, ***should*** have read and understood the project design.
    2. The proposed project team ***should*** have access to suitable expertise to assess the significance of remains including in relation to relevant research frameworks.
    3. It is advisable for archaeological watching brief projects to be governed by a written contract or agreement to which the project design ***may*** be attached.
    4. It is advisable to include statements on ownership of the paper and digital archive and copyright in a written contract or agreement.
23. **Project execution**
    1. Work ***should*** be undertaken in accordance with the project design. Any variations***should*** be circulated and understood within the project team and agreed in writing by all relevant parties.
    2. It is the role of the archaeologist undertaking the work to define appropriate staff levels. Sufficient and appropriate resources (staff, equipment, accommodation etc) ***should*** be used to enable the successful completion of the project in accordance with the project design. Any contingency elements ***should*** be clearly identified and justified.
    3. Commissioning bodies and monitors ***should*** be advised that a reasonable degree of flexibility and professional judgement may be necessary to meet project objectives. It ***should***be clear that the nature and scale of post-investigation analyses, publications and the archive will be tailored to the significance and research potential of the assets.
    4. On arrival on site, the archaeologist ***should*** report to the site manager or other identified representative of the principal contractors or developers and conform to their arrangements for notification of entering and leaving site.
    5. Where the archaeologist has by instruction or agreement the power to suspend development work, they shall, in exercising such power, follow procedures previously agreed with all relevant parties and in accordance with the project design. Where possible, the archaeologist ***should*** not cause unreasonable disruption to the maintenance of the work schedules of other contractors.
    6. An archaeologist ***should*** keep a record of the date, time and duration of all visits, the number of staff concerned, and any actions taken.
    7. The potential of the data and material to answer the research questions identified in the project design ***should***be assessed by competent specialists. Artefacts and ecofacts ***should*** be assessed and reported on in accordance with *CIfA Standard for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* and the corresponding guidance. The level of recording and analysis***should*** be appropriate to the aims and purpose of the project and ***should*** take account of the potential of artefacts and ecofacts to contribute to the understanding of the nature, extent and significance of a site or asset.
    8. Data generated as a result of assessment and/or analysis ***should*** be included in the project archive in accordance with the selection and deposition strategy, where applicable.
    9. The archaeologist undertaking the work ***should***respect the requirements of the client or commissioning body concerning confidentiality, but the archaeologist ***must*** emphasise their professional obligation to make the results of archaeological work available to the wider archaeological community within a reasonable time.
    10. Subject to any reasonable contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the report ***should*** be submitted to an appropriate national or local record within a reasonable timeframe.
    11. Consideration ***should*** be given to the online availability of the digital report to ensure that the results of the project are readily available to support future research and/or decisions about the site or asset.
    12. The report ***should*** normally include
24. non-technical summary
25. the project design or appropriate reference to it
26. the aims, objectives and methods used, including any departure from the project design
27. results, referring to the research aims in the project design including research implications
28. illustrations, plans, essential technical and supporting detail with accurate location information
29. conclusions, which ***should*** include a confidence rating on techniques used, and any recommendations on further work that might improve that confidence
30. archive locations (pre and post deposition if known)
31. a list of all sources used
32. copyright
    1. The report need not normally include all the data generated during fieldwork and post-fieldwork assessment, but this data ***should*** be included in the archive, subject to the selection and deposition strategy, (see detailed guidance sections). The report and archive ***should*** contain enough detail to allow any further phases of work to be appropriately designed and planned
    2. A stable, ordered, accessible archive ***must***be prepared in accordance with the selection and deposition strategy, where applicable, and the *Standard for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* and the corresponding guidance.