

3. Definitions and Lists of Standard Terms

Definition of Finds

The term 'finds' is taken to include all artefacts, building materials, industrial residues, environmental material, biological remains (including human remains) and decay products (in line with [CifA Standards and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials, 2014](#)).

Definition of Specialist

An individual who is competent in, and specialises in, collecting, recording, analysing, interpreting and reporting on specific materials, objects or scientific data. A specialist will have developed expertise through the extensive study of their particular field, working to accepted standards of practice and ethics, and reporting in reputable peer reviewed sources. They should also be accredited in line with any recognition schemes in place for their field of expertise. Membership of a study group or special interest group is a valuable way of acquiring and sharing knowledge and is also recommended.

The definition of a specialist should be applied in conjunction with rule 1.4 of the CifA [Code of conduct](#), 2019:

'A member shall not undertake archaeological work for which they are not adequately qualified.'

Lists of Standard Terms

The following lists of standard terms should be used when recording and reporting on archaeological finds. These lists are maintained by the Forum on Information Standards in Heritage (FISH) <http://www.heritage-standards.org.uk/fish-vocabularies/>.

It is also important to check whether the museum or archive repository that will be taking the project archive has particular word lists for material and objects types. These should be followed where provided.

Archaeological Objects Thesaurus

Originally developed by the Archaeological Objects Working Party it provides guidance for the recording of archaeological objects in Britain and Ireland covering all historical periods.

Object Materials Thesaurus

A thesaurus originally developed to assist with the recording of materials for maritime wrecks but now used more generally for objects found in findspots.

Archaeological Sciences Thesaurus

Terminology used for recording the techniques, recovery methods and materials associated with archaeological sciences.

Building Materials Thesaurus

Terminology used for recording the main construction materials of monuments, buildings and structures relating to the built and buried heritage of the British Isles.