

The University of Edinburgh
Archaeology
School of History, Classics and Archaeology



**Archaeological Fieldwork –
the Practice of Archaeology:
ARCA10013**

Course Handbook

Honours Option Course for Single and Joint Honours Curricula in
Archaeology

Course Conveners:

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Dr Ulf-Dietrich Schoop (Semester 2)

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If you require this document or any of the internal University of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format, please contact archaeology@ed.ac.uk

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This course handbook must be used in conjunction with the Honours Handbook 2020-21.

Student Intranet

The School of History, Classics and Archaeology has developed an undergraduate student intranet to provide you with information which is essential to your studies. It covers your current studies, guidance on submitting coursework, assessment regulations, essential forms, plagiarism, important news and events and more.

There are also sections for the School's Student Support Office and academic guidance, library and computing services and the School's student/staff liaison. And we provide links to your subject areas and student societies. Over the year, we will add information on choosing honours courses and degree results.

You are strongly advised to keep checking the Intranet for information and guidance throughout the year. See: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/history-classicsarchaeology/information-current-undergraduates>

Class schedule semester 1

Semester	Week	Day/Date/Time	Venue	Activity/Title
Semester 1 (autumn)	1	Wednesday 23 rd Sept, 11:10-12.00	Online live meeting on Collaborate	Introductory Meeting (please watch pre-recorded lecture with PowerPoint presentation in advance of the online live meeting)
	5	Fri 23rd Oct, 12:00 (noon)		Deadline for Submission of AF Portfolio/Log
	6	Appointments will be arranged by email	Online live meetings on Teams	Meet individually with Course Organiser to select essay and seminar topic
	7	Wednesday 4 Nov, 11.10-13.00	Online live meeting on Collaborate	Seminars Q & A
	8	Friday 13 th Nov		Circulation of seminar schedule

Introduction to Archaeological Fieldwork: the practice of archaeology

Background and Rationale for the Course

The course "Archaeological Fieldwork" is designed to integrate field and practical work into the Archaeology Honours curriculum. This course offers recognition of the initiative and dedication of students who continue to participate in practical archaeological work beyond the mandatory fieldwork requirement. "Practical experience" is widely defined and can be gained through excavation, surveying, laboratory work including find processing and analysis, museum or archive work, curatorial experience or public archaeology, etc.

Students will develop aspects of the experiences they have acquired during their diverse fieldwork/practical work projects through the creation of three different pieces of assessment: a portfolio which reports on the projects undertaken and asks for reflection on, and discussion of, your practical experience; a seminar presentation and the Archaeological Fieldwork essay ask for elaboration on topics that have been inspired by the student's first-hand experience.

Apart from encouraging students to participate in the practice of archaeology from an early stage, the course aims to motivate more intensive, critical reflection on primary data gathering, archaeological practices and ethics, and the varied challenges encountered while working in the field as well as during engagement with the general public. The course also wishes to enhance students' presentation and reporting skills. As a result, the distinctiveness of a substantial and successfully-completed contribution to field-based research or applied archaeological experience will be recognised in the students' degree transcript.

Archaeological Fieldwork is assessed solely on the basis of coursework. This consists of two written accounts (described further in the assessment section below) and a seminar presentation. The portfolio, the seminar presentation and the essay each account for one third of the assessment mark. There is no formal examination.

Aims and Objectives

- To provide an opportunity to review and critically to reflect on aspects of a wide range of practical and applied archaeology.
- To provide an opportunity to critically to relate field, practical or other applied work to the ethical and theoretical concerns of the discipline.
- To enable students to place their applied archaeological work in wider archaeological contexts and to allow students critically to assess the importance of their applied experiences.
- In some instances, to provide experience of writing components of archaeological reports based on observations, measurements and related primary data gathering.
- To provide opportunities to reflect on experience of working in a team and, latterly and where appropriate, supervising or managing the work of others, and critically to reflect on such practices.
- To provide experience of presenting information verbally, in a formal context.

- To gain and rehearse generic skills in public speaking and in the construction and use of audio-visual aids (Powerpoint presentations, computer graphics, etc.).
- To assess and provide feedback on students' field, practical or other applied vacation work, and thereby adequately to acknowledge this key component of the student's experience.
- To recognise the distinctiveness of a substantial and successfully-completed contribution to field-based research or applied archaeological experience in the student's degree transcript.

Structure

Archaeological Fieldwork is considered to be a Fourth Year (Final Honours) Course option although uniquely it requires the student to collect material throughout your practical archaeological experience from the end of the May examination diet of your Second Year onwards. The assessment regime seeks to encourage the widest possible reading and research by the candidate, developing from the practical work they have undertaken. The integration of this experience into the wider context of archaeological research and archaeological practice, including, as appropriate, its theoretical, ethical or presentational aspects, should also be critically reviewed. There is also an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned.

Its format dictates that there are few formal classes associated with this course.

This course has four key elements:

- The collection of practical work records to form the raw material for the Practical Work Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay.
- Participation in briefing lectures, discussions and individual tutorial sessions with reference to: (a) analysis, contextualisation and presentation in the Practical Work Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay; and (b) the research skills and presentational techniques required to undertake the Seminar Presentation.

- Self-directed research in support of the submission of the assessed Practical Work Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay (see below for further details).
- Self-directed research and reading towards presentation of an assessed Seminar (see below for further details).

Recognised Types of Archaeological Practical Work

Archaeological practical work for the purposes of this course is defined as participatory experience in applied work relating to the practice of archaeology. The range of work which you undertake will depend on your interests, your long-term career goals, the availability of academic staff to help formulate and assess the particular programme you wish to undertake, and real-world considerations such as availability and price. Most appropriate experience will consist of one or more of the following elements: (1) Fieldwork, (2) Laboratory work, (3) Museum or Archive work (4) Curatorial experience, including forms of desk-based assessment or (5) Public archaeology. Recognised activities comprised within these categories include:

Field Work

archaeological field survey
 standing monument / building survey
 environmental survey
 environmental sampling (on or off-site)
 non-invasive investigations (e.g. magnetometry)
 trial excavation ("test pitting") excavation
 trench or site supervision (management experience)

Laboratory Work

post excavation processing
 artefact analysis
 environmental analysis other
 analytical procedures

laboratory supervision (management experience)

Museum or Archive Work

curation/cataloguing/analysis of archaeological records (e.g. in a Sites and Monuments Record)

curation/cataloguing/analysis of archaeological materials (artefacts or ecofacts)

archival research directly linked to nominated projects preparation of displays

Publication

preparation of publication materials

Curatorial experience, including forms of desk-based assessment

planning and heritage management issues (e.g. with Historic Scotland, NTS, Local Authorities, etc.)

Public Archaeology

design of interpretative displays or materials contributions to the public

understanding of archaeology (e.g. work as an interpretation officer)

preparing educational materials for non-specialist audiences (e.g.

primary school children)

Other types of practical work (which do not fit into the above categories) **may** be acceptable; however, their suitability needs to be agreed with the course organiser **before** the beginning of such work.

Time Management

Note that this course constitutes one-sixth of your final year and thus demands a minimum of 200 study hours. Allowing not more than 20 hours for attendance at the briefing lectures and for preparation for, and participation in, the seminar presentations given by your classmates, this means approximately 180 hours of self-directed work in term-time is required to support your practical work. Note that attendance at the seminar presentations given by your classmates is a compulsory element of this course. You may also bear in mind that reading in support of *Theoretical Archaeology* and *Archaeology in Practice* should be relevant to aspects of this course.

Feedback and Course Evaluation

This course has a unique form of assessment, which is kept under review. It is essential that you advise the course convener on which aspects of the course are successful, and any which are less so. He will provide means by which you can make your views known.

Problems or difficulties which arise during the course should be referred firstly to the course convener, initially preferably by e-mail. If the issue continues to be of concern, you may take it up with the Honours Years Representatives on Staff Student Liaison Committee.

The Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay

You are required to produce two pieces of written work – the Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay – relating to the practical archaeological work undertaken by you.

Please note the following restriction: Students who also take the course entitled

“Mediterranean Archaeology in the Field” are not allowed to use any of the practical portfolio items of that course as a basis for presentation of assessed work in “Archaeological Fieldwork”.

Purposes of the Practical Work Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay

A key purpose of these two items is to provide a means to assess and validate your practical archaeological experience. They may assist you after graduation in demonstrating to potential employers the breadth and diversity of your applied archaeological experience and the range of portable or transferable skills (such as the integration of written and visual information) that you have gained.

Presentational requirements

As well as documenting the experience you have gained, the portfolio and the essay should demonstrate that you are aware of the archaeological and intellectual context of the work you have undertaken, whether individually or, more usually, in concert with others. Together, the Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay should:

- Provide a record of your practical archaeological experience
- Demonstrate your understanding of practical applied archaeology
- Allow you to integrate written and visual information (graphics, tables etc)
- Provide an opportunity for you to reflect on the wider archaeological, ethical and other contexts of the applied archaeological work in which you have participated
- Enable you to integrate your practical expertise with the theoretical and methodological frameworks of the discipline

From your perspective, the extended period for preparation and assessment requires you to plan ahead; it will also provide a new and different challenge from standard one-semester taught honours options.

In order to present a high-quality account of your work experience, two elements are involved. First, the keeping of good clear records of your activities is essential. Second, background reading is required to enable you to place this work in appropriate archaeological and intellectual contexts.

The object of the Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay together is to furnish a critical account of the work you have undertaken placed in its wider archaeological context.

Collecting the raw material for your portfolio and essay: keeping a practical record

The basis of the **Portfolio** should be an accurate record of your practical work. It is suggested that you keep at least an informal diary during the period when you are undertaking practical assignments. This should record your day-to-day experience and any observations (practical, ethical, managerial ...) you may have on practices as you encounter them. Typical information which should be collected includes:

- Type of work undertaken
- Title and Director(s) of project
- Location where practical work undertaken
- Purpose, Aims and Objectives of the work undertaken (why was this work undertaken and why does it matter?)
- Structure and form of the project
- Your role in, and contribution to, the project
- How your perspective on the project developed while you were working on it
- Your initial observations on the academic aims of the project (how does it compare with similar projects?). These initial thoughts should be refined in the light of your wider reading and discussion. **Note that we expect you to become familiar with the literature of the period and area of the projects included within your portfolios**, i.e. if you chose to work on a Moroccan

Bronze Age project, you will need to read around the topic and be able to relate your practical experience to wider issues within the relevant subject area.

- Your observations on the strengths and weaknesses of the practical aspects of the project, its research design, etc. (these may be seen by Project Directors so they can be critical, but keep them polite and reasonable!).

You should gather appropriate graphic material to illustrate your portfolios. For an excavation or field project, for example, these might include:

- (a) a general location map (where in Europe, Middle East, etc., were you?)
- (b) a site location map
- (c) a site plan
- (d) trench plans/section drawings (to illustrate activities undertaken)

You might also for example use the general location map to show the location of other projects with which you are making comparisons.

Where appropriate, you might also collect (with the Director's permission) examples of field and site record forms, archive forms, finds processing forms, etc. You might also make field sketches showing site layout, plans of specific trenches you worked upon, key stratigraphic sequences, etc.

In our assessment of graphic presentation, the key element is neither artistic flair, nor clinical accuracy (although both are appreciated), but rather the conveying of information in a clear fashion. Illustrations have to be 'fit for purpose'.

In order to produce a good portfolio, at each stage in the project, you need to understand what you are doing and why – so ask questions – both of yourself and, tactfully, of others.

Where possible photographs or digital images (again, with the Director's permission) should be taken – even the cheapest camera will illustrate the setting and layout of the work. Note that photographs should be used only where relevant to issues being discussed in the text.

On some projects you may encounter a certain resistance to making copies of site records: this may best be allayed by carefully explaining the nature of the Archaeological Fieldwork course (why not take this document with you?). You are seeking to provide a record of your participation in practical applied archaeology **as a learning experience**. Where possible, tactfully involve project staff in these aims: it is a rare director or supervisor who does not appreciate a committed staff member, unless the commitment to this course appears to be taking a disproportionate amount of time relative to the work you are supposed to be engaged on. Bear this in mind.

The Reflective Log, which forms part of the first assessment, and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay, are considered further below.

Placing the Work in Context

In order to write up both your Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay, you need to be able to place the work you have undertaken in appropriate archaeological and intellectual contexts. To a considerable extent, the form that this may take depends on the nature of these applied projects. In nearly all cases, however, providing an adequate context for your applied work will involve extensive independent background reading. Some of this may be carried out during the project itself (if facilities allow: note that Directors may not be prepared to second you to undertake such tasks in normal hours) and, realistically, most such research will need to be carried out in your free time during the project or very probably on your return to Edinburgh, once you have constructed the primary record in your portfolio itself. In proportional terms, more reading will be required in support of the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay than the Portfolio, and so bear this in mind while preparing the work.

What you will need to read depends on the nature of the applied projects in which you have taken part. For example, an excavation project might be supported by reading on the general period or area of the site itself, and/or by reading on the excavation methods employed at other comparable sites and/or by examining

specific issues which the site raised. Contrastingly, a project based in a museum or visitor centre may require reading on issues relating to the public presentation of archaeology and/or cultural resource management.

Many colleagues directing applied archaeological projects will be prepared to suggest relevant literature. However, you should note that **the onus is on you to search out relevant information** using the many sources available including *British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography*, *Geo-abstracts*, *BIDS*, Google Scholar, other resources accessible through the EUL system, and other online catalogues. Other sources will be found in the reading lists of your Honours option courses. Please note, however, that web sites are not universally reliable sources – relatively few are subject to peer review and in consequence the quality of information they contain can be very variable. By all means use them, but it is suggested only as one element of a wider bibliographic search; rely on them as a primary source only if you are sure they are reputable e.g. you access them from a University, or similar institutional, front page.

The key is to use a considerable proportion of the c.180 hours reading time (NB this has to be divided between your portfolios and your seminar) allocated during term-time to expand your knowledge of the discipline with particular regard to the broad themes of the project(s) in which you were a participant.

Contents of the Written Assignments

The two written assignments consist of:

- **The Archaeological Fieldwork Portfolio:** A straightforward factual record of all your practical experience, totalling c. 2,000 words, coupled with a Reflective Log (not to exceed 1,000 words) outlining what you have learnt and your consideration of that. While at least five weeks of practical experience need to be account for in the Portfolio, for the purposes of considering your experiences, you may concentrate on your principal experience. See 'Dealing with multiple projects' below.

- **The Archaeological Fieldwork Essay:** This is an essay of 3,000 words with appropriate illustrations and full bibliography. The topic has to stem from or be inspired by one of the fieldwork projects you attended, and you should make the connection clear in a short statement in the introduction. It should be agreed upon in discussion with the Course Convenor. Often, students find it helpful to develop a suitable topic through these conversations. Examples could be an in-depth analysis of an aspect of one of your field projects, for example, in relation to other similar projects, or major theoretical or ethical issues which surround them.

The Portfolio must be supported by an Appendix containing your field notes or diary of your practical experiences and/or a transcript of them. This appendix will not be assessed directly, but is essential to assist your examiners with the context of the practical work you have undertaken.

Both items are designed to demonstrate your grasp of the nature of the work undertaken (and thus at one remove the skills you have acquired) presented in appropriate regional or period archaeological settings. The Portfolio should be a balanced account of the projects in their context, based on the records which you have gathered. The Archaeological Fieldwork Essay provides you with the opportunity to integrate your experience with a broader understanding of the significance of a particular element of the work you undertook (in other words, even for the Portfolio, we are **not** simply seeking a “dig diary” or a blow by blow account of what you did!)

Obviously, any account of a project will contain essential information such as the type of project, the location and name of the project and its director(s), the work undertaken, your role, etc. However, this is essentially background to a more detailed presentation of key issues which should include at least some of the following:

- A summary of the purpose, aims and objectives of the project as you understand them (Why was this work undertaken and why does it matter?)

- A summary of the methods and techniques used to realise these goals (How do these methods compare with those used on other comparable projects? Why do you think they were chosen?)
- Your observations on the academic aims of the project (How does it compare with similar projects in either the same region or same time period?)
- Your observations on the results gained to date.
- Your observations on the practical strengths and weaknesses of the project.

The key is to set the work undertaken in an appropriate context. This requires you to read around and to become familiar with the literature of the period and/or area of the project concerned.

For example, if you were involved in the excavation of a major hillfort you might wish to consider the question of excavation strategy with respect to large and potentially complex rural sites in general. To do this you might compare your experience with previous work and thus arrive at insights about the limitations which excavation strategy might place upon the interpretation of the nature and function of these sites. The Appendix would contain a summary of the evidence from the project at the site which you worked on, and would outline your role in that project. You need to present the key factual data but the intention is to allow you to interweave your reading on theory, methods and related issues and to integrate these aspects with your critical reflections on the practical experience you have gained, the latter more particularly in the Reflective log (see appendix A for further information).

Dealing with Multiple Projects

Candidates will almost certainly have attended more than one project. It is recommended that you maintain personal records on all of them; and that you present outline information on all of them in the Portfolio but then select one or at most two project elements (logically, normally the most substantial one(s) you had to deal with) for detailed discussion.

Projects not discussed in detail should be briefly reported, but only in the Portfolio. You should make plain in your Portfolio report which project or projects you are discussing in detail, and which you are simply reporting as minor contributions to

your five week tally. Minor projects, included correctly as a matter of record, may be simply reported in the Portfolio in the following terms:

- Type of work undertaken.
- Title and Director(s) of project.
- Location where practical work undertaken.
- Aims and objectives of the work undertaken.
- Your role in, and contribution to, the project.

For example, if your five weeks consisted of a two-month block on a site in Turkey and a fortnight in the Hebrides, your detailed account should be on the Turkish work. The Hebridean project should simply be outlined in sufficient detail to make it plain that you have fulfilled the five-week requirement.

The end result should be a full record of your field and other practical work experience in the Portfolio, with its accompanying Appendix and Reflective Log, and a discussion of an aspect arising from that work (placed in an appropriate academic or applied context) in the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay.

Length and Presentation Requirements

Both assignments will normally consist of a main text with supporting illustrations. If this is not practicable due to the exceptional nature of the practical work undertaken, arrangements should be agreed in advance with the Course Convener to submit an alternative form of assessment (e.g. video, web-site, etc.). In such exceptional cases, the submission of a non-standard account should be agreed well before the relevant submission date is reached.

The main text of the Portfolio should not exceed 2,000 words (excluding figures, captions, tables and appendices and any records pertaining to minor project contributions as detailed above), with a Reflective Log not exceeding 1,000 words in total, whereas the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay should not exceed 3,000 words of main text.

The Reflective Log is most likely to take the form of a number of paragraphs on discrete issues. Its total length should not exceed 1,000 words.

The Portfolio and the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay should contain relevant illustrative material. Where possible all illustrations should be your own work and should be annotated/captioned to draw attention to the point(s) you are using them to reinforce. If using the work of others, proper acknowledgement should be made; and, where necessary, you should modify the illustration to suit your purposes.

Photographs should, if possible, be your own work and should be used sparingly and with direct relevance to topics discussed in the text.

Appendices should be used to provide examples of field records or similar supporting data. Appendices must be relevant to the topic under consideration.

Each assignment must have a reference list appended. All pages to be assessed must be numbered sequentially.

The key to the successful completion of these elements of the programme is to use the information collected during your practical experience as the raw material which must be reworked for the portfolios. Your aim is to compose a coherent, rounded account which accords with the criteria of the respective exercises. When you write an essay you would not expect simply to copy your research notes verbatim – the same applies with regard to your field or applied observations here!

Bibliographical Format

The use of a correct bibliographical system is essential in daily academic practice. There are different systems in use by individual journals or archaeological traditions, all of which, however, demand authors to adhere very strictly to the convention in question. For the purpose of this course, you have to follow the bibliographical rules set by the journal “Antiquity”, one of the most prominent British archaeology journals. Failure to do so will lead to the deduction of essay marks. The “Antiquity” guidelines are available [online](#) (at the bottom of the page in the section “Submission Instructions” – “References”).

The University has now a good online resource called "[Cite Them Right](#)" which deals comprehensively with matters of correct citation, proper referencing and related issues. It would be a good idea if you could have a look at these pages, even if you do not yet have specific questions.

The Seminar Presentation

The key requirement is to prepare an oral presentation of 20 minutes duration upon an agreed aspect of the practice of archaeology.

Purpose

The seminar presentation is intended to enable you to explore a particular topic related to your experience of the practice of field or applied archaeology. It should, but does not have to, stem directly from your own field or other applied experiences. This exercise provides a different test of your capacity to research a topic independently. It can also offer a context in which you can integrate your practical experience with theoretical concerns with which you became familiar in the Third Year Courses *Theoretical Archaeology* and *Archaeology in Practice*, and in subsequent reading.

This assessed element provides experience related to the key transferable skills of public speaking, the creation of supporting illustrative materials and their integration with the spoken word to produce an effective presentation.

Content

The seminar presentation should deal with an issue or issues based upon, or arising from, your practical work experience, and should endeavour, as appropriate, to relate these to theoretical, methodological or ethical concerns within the discipline (i.e. it should be integrative). It should NOT directly and wholly repeat the substance of the material that has been the subject of your Portfolio or the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay (i.e. it should not simply present an oral account of the content of the either of these but should take a different approach to a matter or matters of interest to you, raised by your applied experience).

Choice of Topic and Allocation to Seminar Group

The Seminar Topic must be agreed with the Course Convener during the early part of the first semester of Fourth Year.

Students will make their presentations in a series of sessions during the second semester of Fourth Year.

Early in the Autumn Semester of Fourth Year (see course timetable) the course convener will meet individually with students to discuss their assignments. You should have begun to define these topics for yourself before this meeting takes place. It would be helpful to send the course convener (M.Fernandez-Gotz@ed.ac.uk) an e-mail with your suggestions for both the essay and the seminar before the meeting takes place. Once all the seminar topics have been agreed, a list will be posted on LEARN and circulated electronically with the dates in the spring semester when seminars will be given.

The course convener will attempt to group topics covering related issues or themes, and/or similar periods and areas together. This is desirable to create groups of seminars which can be assessed by a pair of staff in so far as possible on the “expert/non-expert” basis outlined below in the section on Assessment. You will therefore know the date of your seminar by the middle of the autumn semester. This will allow a minimum of six weeks of preparation time in term-time, and the Christmas Vacation before the first seminars are presented in the second semester.

Duration and Format

The seminar presentation will be of no more than 20 minutes duration (excluding any questions at the end). Marks will be deducted for both unduly short and overly long presentations.

Assessment

Methods and Structure

There is no degree examination. Assessment is based on three elements:

Portfolio and Reflective log	1/3
Essay	1/3
Seminar Presentation	1/3

Assessment of Written Assignments: Criteria

The written assignments will be assessed using a wide range of criteria based around four key headings in the case of the Portfolio, and three in the case of the Archaeological Fieldwork Essay:

- Basic Content: Structure, logical development, quality of argument, conclusions, etc.
- Integrative Aspects: Use of comparative sites, application of knowledge from wider reading, articulation with theory.
- Mechanical Aspects: Presentation, grammar, spelling, quality of drawings, etc.
- Reflective Log

Assessment of Seminar Presentations: Mechanisms

By agreement with the Course Convener, the titles of Seminar presentations may be modified up to seven days before the presentation is to be given, but not thereafter.

Assessment will be made by two members of staff (one normally a specialist in the area of the presentation), working independently. The assessors use a pro forma record sheet to record their views of the qualities of the presentation. The criteria used to judge the presentation are set out below.

After each session the examiners confer and produce a single jointly-signed assessment transcript. This agreed transcript, bound together with both assessors' initial working records/notes, are subsequently made available to the Chair of the

Board of Examiners. The Chair records the mark, using only the candidate's examination number. The original notes and agreed transcripts are retained and made available to the appropriate external examiner.

Previous cohorts taking this course have suggested that the individual assessed presentations were less daunting when class members had an informal debate or discussion as a group before embarking on their individual topics. Such a discussion is not assessed, but is intended to give students a 'dry run' at speaking in the context that would subsequently be used for the Seminar Presentations. The provision of such a session will be explored with class members early in the incoming session and a topic for discussion will be posted, with a meeting date late in the first semester.

Assessment of Seminar Presentations: Criteria

Assessment of the oral presentations is based on criteria which include:

- Coherence of the presentation (Did the presentation form a seamless whole?)
- Clarity of structure (Did it have clear beginning/aims, middle/results, conclusions?)
- Development of logical argument (Was the structure logically developed?, see above)
- Relevance to agreed topic (Did it stick to the agreed topic? If it did not, did it justify the diversion?)
- Accuracy of information presented (Was the factual basis appropriate and correct?)
- Demonstration of context of knowledge (Are you aware of related issues, sites, topics?)
- Clarity of speech (Could the assessors hear and understand what you were saying or was it garbled?)

- Position, Posture and Body Language (Did you connect with and thus engage the audience or did you hide from them?)
- Clarity/readability of audio-visual materials (Could the assessors see/read/comprehend the illustrations presented?)
- Originality and quality of audio-visual materials (Were the illustrations appropriate to the task and, where fitting, your own work?)
- Relevance of audio-visual materials (Did the illustrations actually make or support a point or were they just eye padding?)

Study Support

This is a demanding course requiring imagination, initiative and the integration of information from many different sources. It enables the use of a variety of skills in presentation and delivery. If you have any doubts about approaches to this, or indeed any other course, the following general study guides are recommended. The Sciences guide has a really useful “how to do” statistics section and probably has more information of use to archaeologists.

Northedge, A. 2005 *The Good Study Guide*. The Open University: Milton Keynes. 2 rev edn ISBN 0 7492 0044 8

Northedge, A. Thomas, J., Lane, A., & Peasgood, A. 1997 *The Sciences Good Study Guide*. The Open University: Milton Keynes. ISBN 0 7492 3411 3

Cottrell, S. 2008 *The Study Skills Guide*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 3 rev edn. ISBN 0230573053.

There are also a number of helpful resources available [online](#) which are provided by/through the University of Edinburgh – see, particularly, the collection of study skill resources.

A checklist of what you should have done before you start your Third Year of Study

As you will by now all be aware this course is unique in requiring considerable preparation of source materials before you begin the formally calendared period of term time study. As you begin your Third Year it is important that you take careful stock of your position and ensure that everything you need to undertake the course is actually to hand!

By the start of Third Year you should have:

- gathered into a coherent form your practical work experience notes from the summer recess just finished and have started to consider how they might be presented in the Portfolio.
- have started the background and contextualisation reading in support of the Portfolio and your Reflective Log.

A checklist of what you should have done by the formal commencement of your Final Year of Study

As you will by now all be aware this course is unique in requiring considerable preparation of source materials before you start on the formally calendared periods of term time study. As you begin your Final Year it is important that you take careful stock of your position and ensure that everything you will need to undertake the course is actually to hand!

By the start of Fourth Year you should have:

- Have gathered into a coherent form your practical work experience notes from your different projects and have started to tackle your Portfolio and the Reflective Log.
- Have thought a bit about your essay topic and started on background reading.
- Remember the submission date for the Portfolio in Week 5 of Semester 1.

- Be giving serious thought to the topic and nature of the seminar presentation you wish to make.

Appendix: The Reflective Element in Archaeological Fieldwork

Background Notes on the Reflective Log

As a fundamental part of this course is to help you develop the range of skills that you will need as a practicing archaeologist, this element of assessment has been added to provide you with a first opportunity to consider both the practical work you have been doing for this course and its wider impacts within society. Archaeology reacts with society at many levels; it has the potential to expose complex and conflicting interests including value judgements with social, moral, and ethical components. These complex problems rarely fit neatly into existing theory and techniques. Solutions that take account of each unique situation and wider contexts may have to be sought. It is the role of the professional archaeologist to arrive at such solutions, which to be effective must be both satisfying and credible. The Reflective Log is meant to offer you a first step to think about such matters.

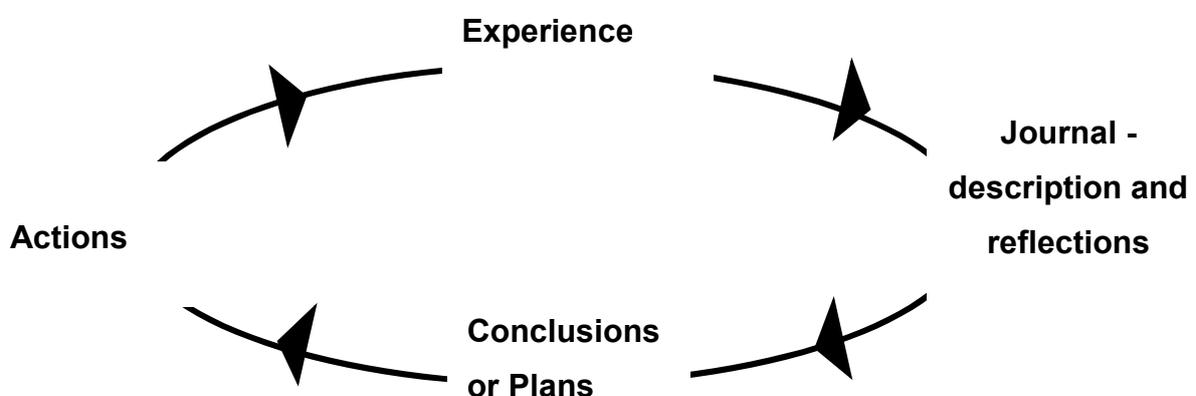
Critical reflection is a way of developing your skills. Reflection will help you construct a wider view of your practical experience, and the possible wider impacts of the projects in which you have taken part. This may involve recognising and assessing different points of view and the values or motives that underpin them. The aim in asking you to think about such issues is to help you to begin to construct a framework of understanding and values of your own practices as an archaeologist.

The main tool for structured reflection is a personal Reflective Journal, which you should keep throughout your practical experience. This is a document where you can explore, in writing, a wide range of issues and ideas creating links across your evolving experience or analysing conflicts that arise. Such a journal will provide you with a diary of your own development as an archaeologist; and material for tutorials and assessments.

Many people find such an exercise strange or artificial at first, but it is arguably no different from separating 'Theory' as an element for particular attention. Here is the forum to begin to think about such topics as: "Objective recording – does it exist?" and to consider, for example, what impact the politics of the particular country/nation in which you are working may have on what you, and the other members of the team of which you are a part, are doing. Such thoughts ought to be central to considerations, for example, of aspects of cultural resource management in which you are involved. You may have other, more mundane, concerns: how on-site safety concerns are considered by the project hierarchy, for example.

Critical reflection has a cyclical structure, such as:

- a description of the experience to enable reflection (e.g. incident, quotation, theoretical idea, practical problem, etc);
- going back over the experience, thinking about it on paper, bringing to bear relevant extra information (theory, things said, advice, previous experience, similar problems, etc.).
- drawing out of some sort of conclusion - this may indicate new areas for reflection, new areas or approaches to try, or something learned;
- using the outcome of the reflective process in the planning or operation of further activities.



POSSIBLE Topics for Reflection

Examples of the type of relationships you may consider include:

- the purpose of practical archaeology
- archaeological theory and its relation to practice
- the relation between your practical experience and the contents of the courses you have previously undertaken
- your and your colleagues' working environment – could it be made safer / more productive / more accessible to the public?
- how information from different components of the project is integrated: are appropriate and constructive ways available, or is the process opaque?
- discussion of different approaches to managing a situation and likely outcomes
- personal and social values applied to archaeology and their sources
- value judgements and decision making
- preservation, reconstruction, display and uses of archaeological sites/artefacts
- ethical issues relating to the above
- effectiveness and improvement of your own actions
- development of your own values and attitudes as an archaeologist

You are not for a moment supposed to cover a list like this exhaustively (be selective!), but what is sought is that you consider in a reflective way the wider impact of the practical archaeology in which you are engaged. Equally for example, you might consider the impact taking visitors round a site in different ways will have on their understanding.

Reflective Log

The Reflective Log provides an account of the student's reasoning, the areas and ideas they explored during their practical experience, or issues that they may have confronted etc; and shows how they arrived at their judgements and conclusions.

The Reflective Log is assessed as part of Portfolio 1 as it provides supporting evidence related to the learning experience gained in your practical work and during the research that supported this.

The Log should demonstrate the development of a student's awareness of a range of archaeological issues of their choice that were encountered during their practical experience.