



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: H29B 12

Superclass: DC

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Version: 01

Summary

This Unit introduces candidates to archaeology by looking at archaeological sites and finds, research methods, and sources of archaeological information. On completion of the Unit candidates will have a basic understanding of archaeology and the responsibilities under the law in relation to archaeological sites. It will provide useful underpinning knowledge and skills for progression to further study in this area.

This Unit is suitable for candidates with no previous archaeological experience but who have an interest in history and/or archaeology.

Outcomes

- 1 Identify and describe archaeological periods and artefacts.
- 2 Identify archaeological sites in the landscape and sources of information.
- 3 Explain key points of the law in relation to archaeological sites and finds.

Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if candidates had achieved Units in a social subject at SCQF level 5, or equivalent qualifications or experience.

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

General information (cont)

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Identify and describe archaeological periods and artefacts.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify archaeological periods in chronological sequence.
- (b) Describe the key features of archaeological periods.
- (c) Arrange a selection of artefacts in chronological sequence.
- (d) Describe the materials which artefacts are made of.
- (e) Identify a possible function for each selected artefact.

Outcome 2

Identify archaeological sites in the landscape and sources of information.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe typical features which may indicate the presence of an archaeological site.
- (b) Identify the location of a site in a landscape.
- (c) Describe the physical remains of the site.
- (d) Identify sources of archaeological information which may provide further information about archaeological sites.

Outcome 3

Explain key points of the law in relation to archaeological sites and finds.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Name the different types of legal protection applying to archaeological sites and buildings.
- (b) Describe how to report finding archaeological artefacts.
- (c) Identify sources of legal information relating to archaeological sites and finds.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Written and/or oral evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Evidence must include:

- ◆ identification of periods from the Mesolithic to the Post-Mediaeval periods, in chronological order, with a brief description of a minimum of two technological and/or social changes that characterise four of these periods.
- ◆ identification of five archaeological objects from a varied group of mixed geological and archaeological objects. The group of objects should include at least one of each of the following: stone tool, natural piece of stone, piece of glass, shard of local hand-made earthenware, shard of wheel-turned, glazed earthenware, piece of natural dry peat, piece of natural dry clay, rusted iron object, broken piece of worked copper alloy. The selected artefacts should be arranged in ascending or descending chronological order, and their materials described.
- ◆ identification of the possible function of each object.
- ◆ identification of obvious archaeological sites from a given group of images of landscapes, or in the field. Candidates should be given either the name of the landscape they are looking at, or a national grid reference for it. At least two different types of site should be identified from the following: a ruin, a settlement mound in sand, a settlement mound on a moor or upland landscape, a burial mound or cairn, a standing stone or stone circle, a field system, an eroding coastal site, a ploughed out site under a cultivated field, an earthwork site.
- ◆ description of above the ground and below the ground physical remains of each site.
- ◆ identification of at least two sources of archaeological information that may further inform them about the sites that they have identified.
- ◆ explanation of the two legal protections of 'listing' and 'scheduling' and as applied to archaeological sites and buildings.
- ◆ correct information on how to report finding an archaeological artefact and why it is legally necessary.

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is aligned to aspects of the following National Occupational Standards set by the Sector Skills Council, Creative and Cultural Skills:

CCSAPAC3 Contribute to non-intrusive investigations
CCSAPAE3 Identify and describe archaeological items

The Unit is intended to be a general introduction to archaeology for candidates with no previous knowledge or experience of the subject and could provide a basic background for further study of the environment, or heritage. These support notes are written in the context of Scottish Archaeology, but the Unit is applicable to a wide range of programmes, particularly including heritage, land-based and environmental studies. It could be adapted to support these through the use of case studies and visits looking at some of the many archaeological projects which have been carried out in relation to environmental or land management grant schemes, or have been developed as visitor attractions.

Archaeology has shaped the physical and cultural environment and is an important area of knowledge for anyone wishing to understand the development of the modern and historic cultures of Northern Europe. Candidates should understand the prehistoric and historical periods relevant to the geographical area being looked at, be able to recognise the physical remains of archaeological sites in the landscape, and identify objects as archaeological finds as opposed to natural (geological or biological) items. It is not expected that candidates will necessarily be able to specifically identify the function of each object, but they should be able to say, for example 'this is a stone tool. It has a strong, blunt edge, so it might be a scraper' or 'this is a piece of glazed pottery. It is part of a large vessel that could be a bowl'.

With respect to changes that characterise each period, technological changes should include the introduction of new materials, where relevant, particularly in prehistory. For example, this could include stone tools, the introduction of metal working or the introduction of ceramics. Social changes may include change in religious or ritual practice (eg types of burial, standing stones, conversion), different types of housing, changes in agriculture, and changes in craft/trade.

It is appropriate to encourage candidates to carry out their own research by introducing them to the basic sources of secondary information about archaeology that are available on line and in their geographic areas. Examples of different types of archaeological research and rescue projects can be used to demonstrate the use of various types of survey and excavation technique; it is not necessary for candidates to visit archaeological projects in the field, but this would be helpful for them when possible. This will enable them to develop an understanding of the role and function of archaeology in the country and community and some of the constraints on archaeological work.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

The sites that candidates are offered for identification should be sites about which information is held in either the local Historic Environment Record (or Sites and Monuments Record) or in the National Monuments Record for Scotland online record of Canmore. Consideration of the physical remains of archaeological sites should include those both above the ground (walls, upright stones, earthworks) and any visible evidence for remains below ground level (vegetation changes, soil colour changes).

Candidates should know where to go for further advice and information about archaeological sites, finds and legislation and understand their basic responsibilities under the law in relation to archaeology. They should be able to demonstrate understanding that listing applies to buildings, scheduling to monuments and that the legal provisions for the two are different. It is not necessary for candidates to explain in detail the differences between the two types of protection, but they must identify Historic Scotland and/or the local Planning Department as the sources of information about the law.

Candidates should know how to report finding an archaeological artefact. This could involve locating the Treasure Trove Scotland website and filling in a finds reporting form. Evidence should include the web address of the site and a hard copy of a completed form. In both cases, candidates must explain why it is necessary to report archaeological finds based on the legal position in Scotland.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

Although it is possible to deliver this Unit entirely online, or in a classroom setting if necessary, providing sufficient supporting visual material is available, it is nonetheless beneficial to arrange for site visits, and the entire Unit could very well be delivered in the context of extended site visits and group project preparation.

If delivered online, it will be essential to provide candidates with a structured approach to the material based on a wide range of images of finds and sites from the local region. Images of sites should include: sites of all known periods in the area, sites in different environments (moor, shore, mountain, tidal zone, agricultural land, forestry), widely varying types of site (houses, ritual monuments, field systems, coastal/marine, etc). Images of finds should include: finds of all relevant periods, finds of different types of material (ceramic, metals, wood, textile, stone, etc), finds from different environments (waterlogged, dry, from peat, burnt, etc). Images should also include natural materials and landscapes as a contrast to the archaeological ones.

Regardless of delivery method, candidates will need access to online resources, and must therefore be able to access the internet to link to Historic Environment Records, National Records and Archives, Ordnance Survey Maps and other sources of information.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Essential Skills

By adopting the above learning and teaching approaches and through the Outcomes and corresponding Evidence Requirements, the Unit should provide candidates with an opportunity to develop the following essential skill for life, learning and work:

Sustainability — through developing knowledge of conservation and preservation issues related to archaeological sites.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

The Unit may be assessed by one integrated piece of coursework or presentation which could incorporate research on an actual landscape, set into its geographical, legal cultural and historic context, with a discussion of the remains of sites in that landscape, and the finds from them. It could also be assessed by an interview or online exam during which candidates would arrange archaeological periods and finds in chronological order, and relate them to local archaeological landscapes, discussing the legal, geographical, cultural and historic context of the sites in the landscape.

The Unit may be assessed holistically by an assignment covering all Outcomes in which candidates would arrange archaeological periods and finds in chronological order, and relate them to local archaeological landscapes. This could incorporate research on an actual landscape, set into its geographical, legal cultural and historic context, with a discussion of the remains of sites in that landscape, and the finds from them. Candidates could present assessment evidence in a number of ways, eg by compiling a folio of written and visual evidence, by a presentation or by an interview or a series of structured questions.

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit, candidates will investigate archaeological sites and finds, research methods, and sources of archaeological information. On completion of the Unit they will have a basic understanding of archaeology, and the responsibilities under the law in relation to archaeological sites.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Investigating Archaeology (SCQF level 6)

Candidates will:

- ◆ identify archaeological periods and artefacts.
- ◆ make valid suggestions about the possible functions of archaeological artefacts.
- ◆ Investigate features of archaeological sites.
- ◆ research sources of archaeological information.
- ◆ identify and explain relevant legal protections.
- ◆ find out how to report archaeological finds.

This means that as they are doing this Unit, candidates may develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Problem Solving*.

In addition aspects of the following Core Skills could be developed where particular learning and teaching approaches are adopted:

- ◆ *Working with Others* — through group work, eg to collect data in relation to sites
- ◆ *ICT* — through accessing and using online research and reporting sources

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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