

Guides for teaching and learning in Archaeology

Number 5



Tim Phillips, Roberta Gilchrist, Iain Hewitt,
Stephanie Le Scouller, Darren Booy and Geoff Cook

Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology

Good practice guidelines for including
disabled students and self-evaluation in
archaeological fieldwork training

Tim Phillips and Roberta Gilchrist
University of Reading, Department of Archaeology
Iain Hewitt
Bournemouth University, School of Conservation Sciences
Stephanie Le Scouiller, Darren Booy and Geoff Cook
University of Reading, Research Group for Inclusive Environments
copyright © June 2007, The IAA Project Team
Designed and typeset by Text Matters (www.textmatters.com)

Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology: good practice guidelines for including disabled students and self-evaluation in archaeological fieldwork training

The IAA Project was funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning, Phase 5 (FDTL5).

It was a collaborative project led by Professor Roberta Gilchrist of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading, with the School of Conservation Sciences at Bournemouth University and the Research Group for Inclusive Environments (RGIE) at Reading.

The project received the active support of a number of stakeholders including the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), the Council for British Archaeology (CBA), English Heritage and Oxford Archaeology, as well as the Higher Education Academy's Subject Centre for History, Classics and Archaeology.

This project would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support and involvement of the fieldwork teams at the Universities of Reading and Bournemouth, and the disabled students and volunteers who tested the tool kit.

Contents

4	Introduction
5	Legislation
5	Models of disability
6	Self-evaluation
7	The Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project
7	Project goals
7	Project outcomes
8	Phase 1: Assessment
9	Phases of the Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project
10	Phase 2: Characterisation
11	Phase 3: Controlled testing
11	Phase 4: Field trials
12	The Archaeological Skills Self-Evaluation Tool kit (ASSET®)
12	Introduction
13	Format of the tool kit
14	Embedding ASSET® in the curriculum
16	Making archaeological fieldwork training inclusive
16	Introduction
17	Reasonable adjustments
18	Knowledge and understanding
19	General guidelines
22	Including students with dyslexia and similar conditions
24	Including students with hidden disabilities
25	Including students with visual impairments
27	Including students with hearing impairments
28	Including students with mobility impairments
29	Including students with mental health issues
30	Including students with Asperger's Syndrome
31	Using a 'buddy' system on archaeological fieldwork training
32	Making archaeological field trips inclusive
33	Checklist for inclusive archaeological fieldwork training
34	Examples of minor adjustments
34	Examples of major adjustments
35	Making archaeological excavations accessible
36	Guidelines 'check-list'
37	Conclusion
38	Useful information

Introduction

Disability is not a barrier to success. As a consequence of recent legislation, the issue of disability is very much in the public eye. This requires employers and educational institutions to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that 'disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to persons who are not disabled'. In response to this legislation, much work has been done to make on-campus teaching accessible to all students in Higher Education. However, there has been less effort directed at making fieldwork inclusive, especially in subjects like Archaeology, where fieldwork training remains a key component of undergraduate study. The IAA project was set up to redress this imbalance.

This guide is primarily aimed at Archaeology subject providers and people working in disability support, but it will also be of interest to all students and staff in Archaeology and other HE subjects that have a fieldwork element as a component of their undergraduate courses. It provides a summary of the results of the IAA project and the development of an Archaeological Skills Self-Evaluation Tool kit (ASSET®) which can be used by all Archaeology students to identify and track the development of their archaeological and transferable skills. This document also provides guidelines of good practice for inclusion in three fieldwork-related areas:

- ➔ Archaeological field work training
- ➔ Archaeological field trips
- ➔ Making archaeological excavations accessible to the general public.

The guidelines are based on examples of current good practice already being carried out in Archaeology departments and the experiences reported by other disciplines such as Geography and Earth Sciences. The work of the IAA project is central to these guidelines. This has involved the collection of case studies through interviews with disabled archaeology students which detail the actual experiences of individuals, as well as applied research in developing the tool kit that can be used by all students undertaking archaeological fieldwork training.

Copyright © 2007, the IAA Project Team

Legislation

The Special Needs and Disability Act (2001) makes discrimination against students and potential students on the grounds of their disability unlawful. Universities have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled students have full access to all the services provided by universities. This includes:

- Admissions procedures
- Information for teaching and learning
- Practical sessions
- Physical access to buildings, rooms and other facilities
- Support services
- Assessment of coursework and examinations
- Social and leisure facilities.

Discrimination is: 'Treating a disabled person less favourably for a reason related to their disability without justification.'

Universities are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to include all students. Adjustments must not be 'responsive', that is responding to the needs of individuals as they arrive; they must be 'anticipatory'. Universities must have procedures in place to provide for the needs of any disabled student.

Further details of the legislation can be obtained from the Disability Rights Commission:
<http://www.drc-gb.org>

Models of disability

Disability has been described and understood through two major models which attempt to define the experience of being disabled.

The medical model

This considers a disabled person as 'ill', a subject for treatment and cure. It does not address the social, economic and environmental experience of a disabled person.

The social model

This shifts the emphasis from considering that there is something 'wrong' with the disabled person to the view that disabled people are often excluded from participating in everyday activities because of the physical, social, economic and attitudinal 'barriers' created by society. This model is behind the spirit of the recent disability and access legislation and the ethos of inclusiveness.

In reality, it is unlikely that it will be feasible to provide environments or develop activities where everyone can do everything, and this will certainly be the case with some tasks

undertaken in archaeology. People, both disabled and non-disabled, will have different levels of ability to undertake tasks. For some, restrictions in their ability may preclude them from full participation. However, the criteria used to establish whether a person can take part in an activity should always be based on their individual abilities, not simply whether they are a 'disabled' or 'non-disabled' person.

Adopting the social model also requires us to examine the nature of the activity and determine if it is how the activity takes place that precludes involvement. Could the process be altered to facilitate greater inclusion? That it has always been done in a particular way is not the answer, especially if the procedure could be altered so that the number of people that can be included in the activity would be increased. To determine the extent to which disabled and non-disabled people can effectively participate in the activities associated with archaeology, it is necessary to determine their individual abilities to undertake the typical tasks of archaeological fieldwork. Therefore, the self-evaluation tool kit is for use by all disabled and non-disabled students. In using it, all students will be able to evaluate their own developing archaeological and transferable skills. Such self-evaluation by all students will ensure that the opportunity of full participation and inclusion is based on an 'ability to do' which is the driving force behind most disability and access legislation.

Self-evaluation

Disabled students have successfully participated in archaeological fieldwork training when there has been an understanding and knowledge of their potential abilities and possible limitations. There have been difficulties when this understanding and knowledge have been lacking. No one can discover their own potential ability and limitations better than the individual concerned. In a totally new environment, like an archaeological excavation, this self-awareness can be enhanced by methods of self-evaluation.

An individual's abilities are not static, they change and develop with experience; this is true for both disabled and non-disabled individuals. Any method of self-evaluation must reflect this dynamic aspect and provide a means by which changes and developments can be tracked. Moreover, although many aspects of a student's performance on fieldwork are assessed, cognitive abilities and transferable skills can only be properly understood through self-evaluation and a process of 'self-discovery' by participating in fieldwork.

The reflective process of self-evaluation has benefits for all students, not just those with a disability. It aids individuals in developing a self-awareness of their potential and changing abilities, understanding and absorbing a new range of experiences, and identifying areas of strength and weakness. With this knowledge, an individual can approach fieldwork training with a rounded overview of themselves. If potential difficulties have been identified by self-evaluation, strategies to overcome these can be devised beforehand, allowing an anticipatory policy that provides reasonable adjustments to work at a basic practical level. This provides the context for an interactive process with students providing detailed information about themselves so that provision can be made to ensure their full participation.

The Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project

Project goals

The aim of the Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project was to address the dual issues of disability and transferable skills in the teaching of archaeological fieldwork. Its goals were to:

- ➔ Increase the awareness of disability issues in archaeology
- ➔ Improve the integration of disability in fieldwork teaching
- ➔ Improve all students' awareness of their development of transferable skills for the transition to employability through participating in archaeological fieldwork.

Project outcomes

- ➔ The integration of disabled students into archaeological fieldwork and related activities according to, and consistent with, the mandatory legal requirements of disability legislation.
- ➔ A change of emphasis from 'disability' to 'ability': rather than excluding or categorising individuals, all students would be engaged in evaluating their own skills. A self-evaluation tool kit was developed to encourage students to reflect on their own ability.
- ➔ By embedding the tool kit into archaeological fieldwork training and professional skills teaching, students will be engaged actively in evaluating both the archaeological and the transferable skills that they are developing.

Phase 1: Assessment

University departments and Disability Support services, results of questionnaire survey:

- ➔ Archaeological fieldwork training remains a key component of undergraduate courses
- ➔ The range of archaeological field techniques being taught and assessed were identified
- ➔ Approximately 14% of archaeology students have declared a disability
- ➔ Compared to the national figures, a higher number of students with restricted mobility are choosing archaeology as an undergraduate degree, and a lower than average number of students with a visual impairment
- ➔ The archaeology departments work closely with the Disability Support Services within the respective institutions
- ➔ Few disabled students, if any, change their degree programme because of problems associated with archaeological fieldwork
- ➔ Very rarely is an archaeological fieldwork training requirement waived for a disabled student; it is more likely to be modified.

Disabled archaeology students, results of questionnaire survey and case studies:

- ➔ The practical help and support provided by staff and the University Support Services were seen as important by the students
- ➔ Understanding and flexibility in relation to student needs on an individual basis were considered essential by the students
- ➔ Peer support from other students had been of great help
- ➔ The respondents who had experienced few problems with fieldwork tended to be students with dyslexia; their main concerns were about written work
- ➔ Specific difficulties often related to the nature of an individual disability; this was not just the physical demands of fieldwork, but also other aspects such as environmental factors and written records
- ➔ There was felt to be a lack of understanding of some students' needs, especially where the disability was not particularly 'visible'
- ➔ What was expected of a student on fieldwork training was often not fully understood because this had not been explained properly
- ➔ Despite many disabled students experiencing problems, several reported very positive experiences of archaeological fieldwork training
- ➔ Fieldwork training was seen as a two-way process with the necessity for all students to make the most of the opportunities available
- ➔ It was asserted that the subject providers should not over-compensate in the case of students with specific needs.

Phases of the Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project

1

Assessment

The issues surrounding and the current practices relating to disability and archaeology were evaluated through questionnaires. The experiences of disabled students and professional archaeologists were investigated as individual case studies.

2

Characterisation

A generic method of assessing the physical and cognitive demands of the various archaeological tasks was developed, and the pro-forma of the tool kit produced.

3

Controlled testing

The pro-forma tool kit was tested and refined through controlled tests with disabled and non-disabled volunteers.

4

Field trials

The suitability of the tool kit was assessed through field trials on actual training excavations with disabled and non-disabled volunteers.

Archaeological employers, results of questionnaire survey

- The number of disabled workers employed in commercial archaeology is probably less than the national average, but greater than previously estimated
- The highest reported incidence comprises hidden disabilities (especially diabetes and arthritis which tend to be late onset conditions), followed by dyslexia
- Disabled employees are mostly employed in field investigation activities whatever their impairment, including restricted mobility
- The majority of employers are aware of the implications of the disability legislation and consider that they have either satisfactorily altered, or do not need to alter their procedures
- The major concerns of the employers are:
 - the ability to do the job
 - risk factors and Health and Safety
 - full disclosure during the recruitment process
- There was a mixed reaction to the employment of disabled staff in Archaeology and to the survey itself; on the whole, the positive comments tended to outweigh the negative ones.

The complete Phase 1 report and all the case studies can be found on the IAA project website:

http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible/index.php

Phase 2: Characterisation

The aim of the characterisation phase was to closely observe archaeological field techniques and to detail the physical and cognitive demands involved. The techniques included in the analysis were those taught and assessed as part of undergraduate courses currently being provided by University Archaeology Departments in England, Scotland and Wales. This information was obtained from the results of the questionnaire survey in Phase 1. The archaeological techniques considered in the characterisation included: excavation, planning, the processing of artefacts, environmental sampling, surveying, surface survey and geophysics. The range of tasks in archaeology is constantly changing. Rather than being exhaustive, this list includes the activities that are indicative of fieldwork training.

Working closely with Occupational Therapists and Access Consultants, the physical and cognitive demands of each archaeological task were established. This characterisation provided the 'norm': the physical and cognitive abilities that are required to successfully carry out these activities.

The pro-forma of the Archaeological Skills Self-Evaluation Tool kit (ASSET) was developed using the information gathered in Phases 1 and 2 of the project. This included:

- ➔ The archaeological tasks being taught to undergraduate Archaeology students
- ➔ The transferable skills gained through archaeological fieldwork training
- ➔ The physical and cognitive abilities required to perform the different tasks.

The full Phase 2 report with details of the characterisation can be found on the IAA project website:

http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible/index.php

Phase 3: Controlled testing

The pro-forma of the tool kit was subjected to a series of controlled tests using a group of disabled and non-disabled volunteers. In the light of these tests the effectiveness of the tool kit was evaluated and, where problems arose, these informed its resulting development. A number of factors were also identified during the tests which were used to inform the Guidelines for Good Practice that are included in this guide.

The archive report with the full results of the Phase 3 controlled tests can be found on the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) website:

http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/archive/iaa_hefce2006

Phase 4: Field trials

In the summer of 2006 the tool kit was trialled on three separate training excavations run by the Universities of Reading and Bournemouth. The parts of the tool kit that needed refining were identified and a number of factors were also identified during the trials which were used to inform the Guidelines for Good Practice that are included in this guide.

The archive reports with the full results of the Phase 4 field trials can be found on the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) website:

http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/archive/iaa_hefce2006

The Archaeological Skills Self-Evaluation Tool kit (ASSET©)

Introduction

The tool kit has been designed for users with little or no previous experience of archaeological fieldwork. It will give them an idea of their potential to successfully complete various archaeological tasks, according to their physical and cognitive abilities and their transferable skills related to participating in archaeological fieldwork. It is important to acknowledge that abilities and skills are not static; they change and develop with experience and time. It is essential that the potential identified by the tool kit be tested in the field so that the actual skills and abilities can be determined in a real life context. By doing this, the user can identify their areas of strength and weakness and develop a sense of self-awareness through self-discovery when participating in fieldwork.

The tool kit can be used several times so that the development of skills and abilities can be tracked over time, and after each period of participation in fieldwork. The incorporation of transferable skills into the tool kit gives it uses beyond the context of simply obtaining and developing practical archaeological skills. It can be easily integrated into programmes of Personal Development Planning (PDP) and Careers Management Skills (CMS).

Availability

ASSET© is available for public use and can be found on the project website http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible

And on the Council for British Archaeology's website at <http://www.britarch.ac.uk>

Format of the tool kit

Prior to fieldwork training

Part 1: Self-evaluation of abilities

This consists of a series of questions about everyday activities designed to identify an individual's abilities in relation to particular archaeological tasks and transferable skills.

Part 2: Pre-fieldwork abilities and tasks

Through comparison with the answers to the questions in Part 1, the individual is given an idea of their 'potential' to carry out specific archaeological tasks and their transferable skills at different levels of ability.

Participate in fieldwork training

After fieldwork training

Part 3: Post-fieldwork abilities and tasks

The individual evaluates their 'actual' ability to carry out specific archaeological tasks and their transferable skills at different levels.

Part 4: Self-evaluation of skills

The individual evaluates their competency with particular archaeological tasks and transferable skills.

Embedding ASSET© in the curriculum

The last decade has seen unprecedented changes in the Higher Education curriculum. Institutions are now expected to respond to changes in the labour market and to equip graduates with the skills and abilities for the changing world of work. There have been significant advances in relation to widening participation, enhancing employability and encouraging Personal Development Planning (PDP) which involve the identification, and development of key skills. These aspects of the curriculum encourage good practice and high quality in teaching and learning.

Apart from the specific archaeological skills gained through participation in fieldwork training, employers are looking for evidence of a range of transferable skills that represent an 'all-round-individual'. They are interested in a number of key 'competencies':

- Flexibility and capacity to cope with change
- Self-motivation
- Analytical ability
- Decision making
- Communication and inter-personal skills
- Team working and potential leadership ability
- Organisation and prioritisation
- Mental and physical stamina.

These competencies are gained through participation in archaeological fieldwork training, but they need to be recognised, understood, tracked, evaluated and recorded. This can be done through a process of Personal Development Planning (PDP). In many institutions PDP and modules such as Professional and Career Management Skills are on-going processes which involve a number of stages relating to professional and transferable skills involving identification and planning, action and evaluation. This then feeds back into the first stage of identification, and the process is repeated.

ASSET© can be fitted neatly into existing programmes of PDP as it has been designed to identify, test and evaluate both the professional and transferable skills that are gained through participation in archaeological fieldwork.

Case study: ASSET[©] embedded in a Professional Skills Module

Identification and planning

1st year, summer pre-fieldwork briefing

- ➔ Introduction to archaeological and transferable skills
- ➔ Complete ASSET Part 1
- ➔ Print ASSET Part 2
- ➔ Identify skills to be acquired/developed.

Action

1st year, summer Field School

- ➔ Participate in archaeological fieldwork training.

Evaluation and reflection; Identification and planning

2nd year, Professional Skills Module

- ➔ Introduction to PDP and Career Management Skills (CMS)
- ➔ Complete ASSET Parts 3 & 4
- ➔ Compare potential (Part 2) and actual (Part 3) abilities
- ➔ Reflect on skills acquired/developed
- ➔ Identify skills to be acquired/developed
- ➔ Begin compiling PDP progress file.

Action

2nd year, summer Field School

- ➔ Participate in archaeological fieldwork training.

Evaluation and reflection; Identification and planning

3rd year, Professional Skills Module

- ➔ Complete ASSET Parts 3 & 4
- ➔ Compare with previous year's results
- ➔ Reflect on skills acquired/developed
- ➔ Identify skills to be acquired/developed
- ➔ Continue compiling PDP progress file.

Making archaeological fieldwork training inclusive

Introduction

These guidelines are not set rules to be followed in every case where reasonable adjustments are being considered. They provide examples of successful good practice and are based on the experiences of the subject providers and Disability Support Services in HEIs, the positive and negative feedback of disabled and non-disabled students participating in archaeological fieldwork, the experience of academics and students in Geography and Earth Sciences and the applied research of the IAA project. They are an aid to devising strategies to allow for the full participation of all students in fieldwork training.

To make archaeological fieldwork training inclusive, two major factors need to be considered:

- Are all the students achieving the specific learning outcomes of particular archaeological tasks?
- Are all the students gaining the transferable skills associated with particular archaeological tasks?

The feedback from students has also identified the aspects that are important to them with regards to fieldwork and these also need to be taken into consideration to ensure full participation:

- A real experience of field archaeology
- A personally rewarding experience with the feeling of being able to make a contribution
- A sense of achievement in tackling new tasks
- Pride and satisfaction at being given areas of responsibility.

Reasonable adjustments

Physical

This is the actual physical provision that has to be put in place in order to allow for the inclusion of all students. It may involve cases such as providing wheelchair access or simply supplying written material in alternative formats for dyslexic or visually impaired participants. This is what the general perception of providing access involves. However, is it reasonable for an excavation director to 'anticipate' every possible disability among an increasingly diverse population of students? An archaeological excavation is a dynamic and changing environment. Some individuals may be precluded from participation in certain tasks due to physical or financial limitations. The 'anticipation' of a need and the provision of what is 'reasonable' need to be considered carefully.

Management

More pragmatic and viable solutions lie in the way in which fieldwork is managed and the attitudes and mindset behind how it is carried out. This requires the adoption of particular attitudes towards inclusion:

- An attitude of acceptance balanced by a realisation that not everyone can do everything, regardless of whether they have a disability or not
- An anticipatory policy need not simply mean having physical provision in place, it is more important to have an attitude that anticipates that reasonable adjustments may have to be made for some participants; it is a case of being prepared to be flexible and making changes if it is necessary
- The director of a training excavation is usually in a very advantageous position when it comes to making fieldwork inclusive, as they are likely to know something of the students who will be participating and if any have a declared disability
- With a willingness to be flexible and consider whether there is another way that a particular task can be done and the learning outcome still achieved, most adjustments become simple common sense.

.....
'Before embarking on fieldwork there is full discussion with individual disabled students about their needs leading to a choice of an appropriate project.'

Archaeology Department

.....
'Fieldwork arrangements for individual disabled students are handled case-by-case, according to student choice about which fieldwork project they will participate in and the nature of their disability. Working arrangements are made such that any student can take part in as much of the work of the project as possible where Health and Safety issues allow.'

Archaeology Department

.....

.....
 'If you have disabilities, all you have to do is let people be aware of what they are and what you are capable of. Allowances can be made for things; it is good the way it works.'

Neville: mobility impairment

Knowledge and understanding

The basis of knowledge and understanding of disability can be gained through Disability Awareness Training. Many University staff have undergone this, but making this training available to fieldwork supervisors will help to include all students in fieldwork. Archaeological fieldwork is very much about team effort and personal interaction. Disability Awareness Training for all students should also be considered as this will be of benefit to all participants in working with their peers, and in preparation for employment.

A basic understanding that most disabilities are not particularly 'visible' is essential. Not realising that potential difficulties are present has been of great concern to many students. As part of a two-way process, there should be a willingness to understand on the part of the subject provider and a willingness to supply full information on the part of the student. This can be most successful where the student is armed with a full self-awareness of their potential abilities. The student will also be able to advise on any technological aids which will help in making any provision easier.

It is therefore important to encourage full disclosure by the students, while emphasising the confidentiality of this information. This has been successful where a system is in place to facilitate the procedure and where the departments work closely with their respective Disability Support Services and Disability Representatives.

Preliminary discussions with individual students, perhaps by the personal tutor, to ascertain their potential abilities and limitations can facilitate the formulation of a strategy whereby they can fully participate. The boundaries for disclosure of confidential information to supervisors and peers can also be set, and medical, Health and Safety and risk factors assessed. If deemed necessary, individual Risk Assessments can be written. This is part of the process of foreseeing potential difficulties, as advised by many of the Disability Support Services. Following the experience of several departments, other aspects such as special arrangements for transport and accommodation can be considered at this stage.

.....
 'Reasonable adjustments are considered on a case-by-case basis, anticipation of potential cases in fieldwork planning, design of written materials, equipment orders eg. toilets, staffing, review of fieldwork components, assessment strategies.'

Archaeology Department

Regular review of the provisions made during and after fieldwork by both the student and the subject provider has proved to be an important strategy. This ensures that any arrangements will reflect the dynamic and changing nature of ability, and any provisions made will not become a set of rigid 'rules'. The successful development of students' abilities and greater participation has been achieved where the assessment attitude has been one of making as few adjustments as possible.

General guidelines

There are five basic factors that will lead to the successful participation of students into archaeological fieldwork training:

- An attitude of acceptance
- Open discussion to facilitate planning
- Flexibility in providing adjustments/alternatives
- A recognition that ability is an attribute that will change and develop with experience and time
- Simple common sense solutions are usually the most successful; these are arrived at through knowledge and understanding.

Access to fieldwork can be at different levels, including access to transport, accommodation, and social and recreational facilities, as well as the actual fieldwork or excavation site itself. At a general level this will involve discussion of the type of project in which an individual will participate. At a more detailed level it will be to ensure that the participant has full access to the facilities, environments, tasks and activities involved in the fieldwork.

.....
'The strategy involved finding and providing appropriate transport, installing ramps, providing a disabled toilet, and visual aids were amended to become more tactile for partially sighted students.'

Archaeology Department

.....

In having a flexible attitude and approach to making reasonable provision, it is important to remember that many adjustments involve basic practical solutions. If a participant is unable to do a particular task on one part of a site, they may well be able to gain experience of that task and achieve the learning outcomes on another part of the same site.

The physical and psychological demands of fieldwork are obvious to all practitioners, but environmental factors may also need to be considered for some participants. These can include the weather conditions, the presence of dust, and the accommodation and catering arrangements.

.....
'Hot weather conditions made things rather difficult for a period. I was away for a while and then off sick for nearly a week, so my attendance was disrupted. I wasn't keen on the camping and felt I would have been less tired had I not been obliged by circumstances to do so.'

Julian: heart condition

.....

'Physical aspects of the course can be very challenging, with work I can do even being hampered by outside influences. For example, field trips can involve difficult climbs to and from sites, and weather conditions can hinder my stamina and attentiveness. Similarly, the meat of excavation and practising field work suffers, as does my attendance, due to the effects of weather and lack of strength and stamina.'

Martin: heart condition, muscular pain, Phenylketonuria, Asperger's, Avoidant Personality Disorder

.....
 'Students with conditions which affect their ability to carry out strenuous activities (eg. heart conditions) have been given alternative areas of responsibility (eg. photographic coverage), rather than just a 'lighter load.'

Archaeology Department

.....

Physical stamina is often cited as an area of difficulty by both disabled and non-disabled students. As already noted, this is a dynamic factor that may decrease, or sometimes even increase, with time. A successful approach has involved arrangements whereby some participants do physical tasks, such as excavation, for part of the day and other tasks, such as surveying or finds processing, for the rest of the day. In some instances where individual students have been unable to carry out strenuous activities a successful alternative has been to give them tasks that involve a level of responsibility, rather than just simply a 'lighter load'.

Just as the way in which an excavation is managed needs to be flexible, so does the attitude towards individual participants. Their abilities are not static but dynamic, changing and developing as they gain more experience and are able to extend their perceived limitations. It may be that adjustments needed in one season of fieldwork could be lessened or even abandoned in a later season.

A 'macho' image and competitive ethos surrounding fieldwork was also a concern to some students. An attitude of acceptance would include fostering the understanding of different levels of ability amongst different individuals within the group.

.....
 'Amongst the younger students there was competition to do as much geophysics in a day as possible and I found this competitive ethos difficult to cope with. There was also the psychological pressure to make an effort and not to make excuses, even when I felt ill. Although I look perfectly fit and able, this is not the case. My health problems and the psychological pressure affected my confidence.'

Julian: heart condition

.....

'In University now there is a lot of competition and at times you could see that other students felt that she was holding them back. It did stress her at times, but it seems to be the attitude of the Institutions. This was a problem for her, she has to do everything in a ponderous manner and other students showed impatience.'

Angie: Buddy, talking about working alongside a student with a visual impairment and Ataxia

.....

'The difficulties I have had are misunderstandings of why I am doing something in a particular way. Because of my back injury I cannot kneel for too long. I got shouted at a lot because I was not kneeling properly. I find it less painful lying on my side. It is just a lack of understanding of why I do things in a certain way; they just assume that I am doing it wrong.'

Mark: dyslexia, Irea's syndrome, asthma, back injury

.....

There is a danger of over-compensating when implementing adjustments or providing assistance and some individuals may even take exception to special arrangements being made for them. Experience on the IAA's controlled tests and field trials has shown that once an individual has had a task explained and shown to them, they should be allowed

to find the easiest way to do it themselves. The result is that they work out their own adjustments through supervised trial and error.

The coping mechanisms developed by some individuals in relation to their disability are actually transferable skills that can be applied to the context of archaeological fieldwork. They may be a means by which a task can be performed successfully in another way, or they may enhance an individual's ability to do a specific task. This can only be discovered through discussion, experiment and evaluation.

Students with some disabilities explain that they are unable to work every day because they have 'good days' and 'bad days'. This is especially the case with mental health and some unseen disabilities such as heart conditions. In these cases a flexible attitude based on prior discussions has proved successful in many instances.

.....
'The hot weather had made some days hard and I had also been ill at one point. My physical and mental stamina was stretched, but I felt that I had got the benefit from the challenges that I faced. I would sum up the experience as having good days and bad days.'

Evelyn: dyslexia, dyspraxia
.....

Peer support is seen as very important by many disabled students. This can be very difficult to structure in an effective manner as it raises issues of confidentiality for the individuals concerned. However, it is something that tends to happen naturally and grows organically and therefore should be encouraged. It may also reduce the amount of special provision that has to be made, to the benefit of both the student and the subject provider.

.....
'I had low blood sugar on site one time. I made the mistake of not telling the site supervisor and he got quite upset about it when he found out. He said, as a diabetic, I should not be working in the field, I should be desk-based; an unknowing sort of comment. Fortunately, the other students I was working with said: "No, she can do fieldwork perfectly well".'

Sandra: RSI, diabetes
.....

The provision of support workers and mentors for individual students has proved successful on many projects. This worked best when there was an attitude of acceptance to their presence. The use of a 'buddy' system, whereby an experienced student works alongside a disabled participant, has been shown to work well on the IAA's field trials, as well as on other projects.

.....
'My mentor basically kicked my backside from year one to year three. Without her help, I doubt I could have kept on track or got the good grades that I am getting now. They cannot really get her to help me on fieldwork, as she is usually looking after other people as well. But I do have a note-taker who also acts as a kind of mentor.'

Mark: dyslexia, Irea's syndrome, asthma, back injury
.....

Some students are given extra time in exams because of specific disabilities and their feedback suggests that some aspects of fieldwork could have similar allowances, with

them being allowed to do their personal best. This is especially the case in relation to the assessment of their performance on fieldwork.

.....
 'Because it can take me a little longer to do things, that can be quite frustrating. Everybody else gets on with it and I am still standing there. I understand what I am meant to be doing, but not really. I feel stupid, but I know that I am not stupid, and other people also know that I am not stupid. I do find it quite intimidating when everyone rushes off doing things. It might only be one little thing that has not clicked with me. I do not always feel comfortable.'

Jane: dyslexia

In providing alternatives for individual participants some subject providers have substituted museum work or similar activities for the actual experience of fieldwork. When considering such an option the question must be asked whether such an alternative achieves the intended learning outcomes of fieldwork as required by the student's degree and whether the individual student expectations are being met. There is also the question of whether the student will be gaining experience of an appropriate range of transferable skills through a substituted activity.

.....
 'A student with severe arthritis was allowed to work in a museum rather than to excavate on medical grounds. However, as places on field projects are becoming increasingly difficult to find, museum experience is becoming more regularly defined as 'field experience'.

Archaeology Department

The social aspect of archaeological fieldwork training is something that is continually referred to by students; it also leads to the development of several transferable skills. Full participation in the social aspects of a fieldwork project needs to be ensured.

Feedback from the supervisors on several fieldwork projects has emphasised that difficulties with particular tasks are not always due to a disability. They can be the result of a lack of self-confidence. This is overcome by instruction and experience.

Any adjustments made can be of benefit to all the participants in fieldwork training, not just those with a disability. This is especially the case where these relate to Health and Safety.

Including students with dyslexia and similar conditions

The main difficulties that students with dyslexia and similar conditions experience on archaeological fieldwork are aspects of completing site records and planning, as well as cognitive abilities related to organisational skills. The extent to which the ability to successfully complete activities will be affected will vary from individual to individual. For some, an amount of support will need to be provided, whilst for others hardly any at all will be necessary.

The main factors to consider are:

- ➔ The provision of written materials in alternative formats and/or on different coloured paper
- ➔ The provision of graph paper printed with bold lines and/or in different colours
- ➔ Exact instruction in procedures and the willingness to repeat instructions if requested
- ➔ The careful checking of recorded data and drawn plans with the student; this is usual procedure for all students on a training excavation and should not cause any distress
- ➔ Working with a 'buddy'
- ➔ The provision of a notetaker if necessary.

People with dyslexia tend to have good oral communication skills. Anecdotal evidence has suggested that the different spatial perception which is part of dyslexia can be an asset in the recording of some aspects of the archaeological record, such as three-dimensional features. However, on the IAA field trials students with dyslexia experienced greater difficulties than had been expected.

What students say

'In practical work I feel everything has to be spelt correctly, so I feel better if someone helps write things up such as descriptions of finds. I also need to be shown something more than once before I remember how to do it.'

Gayle: dyslexia, asthma

'Support when writing out context sheets, I found them very confusing and hard to cope with.'

Katherine: dyslexia

'Filling in context sheets is always an issue as I worry about spelling.'

Tom: dyslexia

'I forget details easily if I am not doing something; such as, if I have not surveyed for a while I will get confused over back and fore sights and the calculations needed. It will take a lot of revision and people explaining things over and over until I remember and understand again.'

Samantha: dyslexia

'In excavating I can see stuff that nobody else can; like differences in the soil stratigraphy and features, more than anyone else I know. It is almost second nature to me. I find it hard to believe that other people cannot see the same things. With lots of field experience they can, but it seems to me that they have to learn it much more. I think that being dyslexic has meant my spatial awareness skills and my abilities to make connections between things are much increased.'

Darren: dyslexia

'Extra time and further explanation and clarification when necessary, staff support and help when required.'

Frank: dyscalculia

'I found on Monday it was the first time my dyslexia came into the foreground and I didn't have a strategy to deal with it. I could not take the measurements for the section of my post hole. I felt very incompetent and stupid. The frustration exasperated my bad mood and I felt really ill.'

Evelyn: dyslexia, dyspraxia

Including students with hidden disabilities

The potential provisions that may have to be made for students with a hidden disability will vary considerably between individuals. The main difficulties reported include physical and mental stamina, and aspects of the domestic facilities on fieldwork training.

The main factors to consider are:

- It is essential to understand the details of an individual's condition, especially with regard to potential physical limits, medication required and dietary considerations
- In relation to physical ability, the establishment of flexible working patterns
- Facilities and procedures for the storage, taking and replenishment of any medication
- Special dietary needs
- Individuals should be reassured that they must report any difficulties to their supervisor or site director; if a culture of acceptance has been fostered this will not be a problem.

What students say

.....
'There was flexibility in activities and times I could attend the archaeological dig. For the other practical assignments there was an alternative assignment if I missed them and most of the assessment work was not meant to be handed in straight away after being taught about it.'

Rachel: ME

.....
'I am asthmatic and, if I have a chest infection, the dust on site can make it worse.'

Angie: dyslexia, asthma

.....
'There is no provision, or guidelines, on how to accommodate epileptics in academic and developer-funded archaeology, apart from general first aid knowledge.'

Irene: epilepsy

.....
'I found it hard participating in the heavy work involved in the archaeological dig, but was usually given other things to do (eg. metal detecting, trowelling, finds processing). I missed one of the fieldtrips and two of the practicals due to ill health- although I was given alternative assignments – I missed out on the information ie. the talks about different sites etc.'

Rachel: ME

.....
'On the dig that I was recently on, there was a misconception that when people say they are disabled or have 'disabilities' they are still treated like they have a plague or will break if they do any work.'

My conditions are hidden to most people, but I had to disclose for safety reasons (which I understand), but I am stable and do not require special treatment. This fact was hard to get across and almost makes me wish I had not told the site director. I am sure he was only looking out for me, but it was most annoying and may have offended other people.'

Michael: dyslexia, epilepsy

Including students with visual impairments

Visual impairments vary greatly in their severity and effect on ability. Some individuals may have peripheral vision, tunnel vision or a general difficulty in visual perception outside of a limited range, as well as many other effects such as simple colour blindness. It is essential to establish the actual visual ability of each individual prior to the consideration of what provision may have to be made for them. The overriding concern will be the aspects of Health and Safety involved; not only for the visually impaired student, but also for the other participants in fieldwork training, and 'navigating' the area of fieldwork.

The main factors to consider are:

- ➔ The student should familiarise themselves with the area of fieldwork by learning its 'geography', including the areas of work, the location of tool huts and other facilities, and the 'routes' across and between these different areas
- ➔ Encouragement to use any special lenses that they may possess
- ➔ The provision of written materials in alternative formats, such as large print, tactile or recorded, and/or on different coloured paper
- ➔ The provision of graph paper printed with bold lines and/or in different colours
- ➔ The provision of a notetaker
- ➔ Where visual perception has a limited range, what is visible may need to be placed into its wider context through explanation
- ➔ Strong colour contrasts on obstacles such as grid pegs, equipment and lines and strings; this will be a benefit to all the people working on a site
- ➔ The attachment of eye-cups to optical equipment will help to blank out excess light in some cases
- ➔ Working with a 'buddy'.

People with a visual impairment may often have increased aural abilities. They sometimes demonstrate enhanced tactile skills which can be useful for aspects of identification, such as artefacts and different stratigraphic contexts.

What students say

.....
'All aspects of fieldwork have required more time, concentration, etc. from me and this has been difficult.'

Veronica: visual impairment, ataxia

.....
'Although I was unable to take in the whole of the excavation visually, I had no difficulties trowelling a specific area and recognising and collecting artefacts, as I was able to see the area immediately around me. I required assistance in navigating the area of excavation and in using a wheelbarrow to dispose of the spoil.'

Joseph: visual impairment

.....
'In trowelling I scan the ground in front of me by touch to learn the 'geography' of the area to be excavated. I then carefully trowel towards myself holding the trowel in my right hand and feeling what I was doing and for any artefacts with my left hand.'

Karen: registered blind, diabetes

.....
'My tactile skills have been a help to some extent. I think knowing what pottery feels like certainly helps when you find some bit in the ground that looks like a bit of stone. The tactile element has definitely helped me. That is certainly how I did most of my sorting through spoil. I picked up the shovel and went through the whole lot just feeling for things. I know if I had just looked I would probably have missed things.'

Veronica: visual impairment, ataxia

.....
'There were minor problems with a few activities. The red tags on the yellow geophysics lines had been difficult to distinguish in bright sunlight.'

Freddie: colour blind, Asperger's, dyslexia



.....
'If the idea that we cannot all do everything could be accepted, I don't see why archaeology can't be inclusive'

Disabled archaeology student

Including students with hearing impairments

The main factors to consider are:

- From the outset determine what is the preferred and most effective method of communication
- Even if a student is using a hearing aid, there can be limitations to its effectiveness and these need to be established through discussion with the individual student
- Ensure that the students with a hearing impairment receive all the relevant information whilst working on site, especially informal briefings
- Provide information in a written format whenever possible, or consider using a hearing loop
- Background noise can drown out, and wind blow away, verbal instructions; be prepared to repeat instructions individually and ensure that these are understood
- When attracting the attention of a student with a hearing impairment while they are performing a physical task, follow the guidelines for attracting the attention of someone working with mechanical machinery while wearing ear defenders: approach them from the front and attract their attention by hand signals
- Be careful not to work too closely behind someone with a hearing impairment
- Ensure that all students with a hearing impairment become fully integrated into the social aspects of a fieldwork project.

People with a hearing impairment sometimes demonstrate good abilities for concentrating on details.

What students say

.....
'There are limitations to my hearing aid, but the electronic equipment provided by Access/Local Council did allow me to be treated in a similar manner as other students most of the time.

At odd times the supervisors on site were a bit quiet, I sometimes turned up the volume on my hearing aid, but at no time did I have to ask them to speak louder.

I tried to opt for normality and cope by using the technology, but I do need to be spoken to the face more. At the weekly site summaries the speaker moved his head away at times and I missed some bits.

I did not have any real problems working as part of a team, as we worked in loose groups. If I had wanted 100% communication, I would have had to tell the whole group about the condition and tell them to look at me when speaking. I often said: 'Sorry, say that again'. If communication was important at any time, I would probably explain it to everyone.'

Paul: hearing impairment

Including students with mobility impairments

The main factors to consider are:

- ➔ Health and Safety considerations will be of paramount importance, both for the individual concerned and for other people involved in the fieldwork
- ➔ Access to all aspects of the fieldwork, including: transport, accommodation, toilet facilities, routes to the site of fieldwork and routes onto and across a site
- ➔ Flexibility in allowing an individual to find the easiest/most comfortable way to do a physical task; for example, can they sit or lie down to trowel if necessary?
- ➔ If a particular task cannot be successfully completed in one area, can it be done on another part of the site?
- ➔ Working with a 'buddy'.

People with mobility impairments best know their own abilities and possible limitations. It is important to allow them to work within their own boundaries to start with, and then encourage them to extend these as the fieldwork progresses.

What students say

'I cannot sustain a repetitive activity for many hours/days at a time. This causes undue pain and decreases productivity. For me, it is essential that I rotate my activities in order to maximise my productivity.'

Abigail: RSI, whiplash, back pain, congenital hip disorder

'Personally, difficulties I have found within fieldwork have been physical issues such as leaning over too long digging causing back pain, as well as not having enough body strength to dig at a more efficient rate in comparison to others and in carrying buckets to and from the sifting areas.'

When I did take part in fieldwork, I found that not only the staff but the students were helpful in giving support during excavating. For example, I was allowed to take 5 minute breaks if needed and certain aspects of the excavating that I could not manage, other students freely took over when asked by the staff.'

Alison: fused elbow, lipoma

'Difficulties and hindrances are down to my own general health and sense of well being, pain can be a drain. I have developed my own way of negotiating around the training excavation and will tackle most jobs on the site.'

Neville: restricted mobility, crutches

'They knew that I had MS because I had told the organisers up front. There was no point in hiding it; there would be Health and Safety issues if I felt wobbly in a trench. I told them that I do not do mattocks; it is just something I do not do. You have to know your limitations, but I did everything else. When I felt tired, I went over to the Finds Hut and did some washing, cataloguing or marking. It was not regulated and they saw me as a responsible adult.'

Anita: MS

'I am very limited to what I can do physically at the moment. I do not walk very far, run or dance and I do not perform handstands. I cannot kneel; I just spend all day lying down trowelling which gets you closer to the archaeology with a better chance of spotting things. It is the only way I can do it.'

Neville: restricted mobility, crutches

Including students with mental health issues

The main factors to consider are:

- An understanding that although mental health issues are not a very 'visible' disability, they can be exceedingly debilitating for the individuals concerned
- The boundaries for disclosure need to be established
- Procedures and facilities for the storage, taking, and replenishment of medication
- Some individuals may have 'good days' and 'bad days' and on the latter they may not be able to participate; a procedure to accommodate this needs to be put in place both to keep the individual concerned at ease, but also to counter any resentment that might be felt amongst their peers
- Full integration into the social aspects of fieldwork should be aimed at, but this should not be insisted on if the individual concerned is unhappy about too much social contact; again issues of peer resentment may need to be addressed
- The provision of a support worker, mentor or 'buddy'; this may raise issues on confidentiality.

Mental health issues can be of a great concern to many staff and other students because of the potential unpredictability of some conditions. However, if full disclosure is encouraged, boundaries established and pragmatic procedures put in place, unpredictability can be reduced to a minimal level.

What students say

.....
'The staff have been exceptionally supportive. They know all about the medication I am taking and if I need to talk to someone I can go and see them. If there is any change in the medication or anything for special needs, I know they are always there. The various members of staff who know about my condition ask every now and then how I am. Makes you feel that there is a degree of consideration, understanding and care and that has enabled me to give my best.'

Harry: depression/anxiety

.....
'I just wish that people would understand that I have good days and bad days. Some days I just can't work.'

Valerie: depression

.....
'Mental health wise, there were problems at the training dig last year as a student. I was not in the best physical health or mental health. I had become a regular face getting involved sitting in the environmental hut doing stuff at my own pace.

As a student, I do not think anyone had sat down and considered my disabilities or my special needs. My supervisor had not been spoken to about it. I was difficult one day when I said: 'I can't sieve today'. I can't physically sieve and I am not mentally capable of sieving every day.

My supervisor had not been made aware of my condition. I had to sit down with him and explain my problems. It would have been nice if there had been a little more interaction in the first place where they could have known what to expect.'

Simon: dyslexia, arthritis, upper limbs disability, depression

Including students with Asperger's Syndrome

The main factors to consider are:

- Ensuring that all instructions and explanations are fully understood and a willingness to repeat these if necessary
- Issues of communication are a two-way process and ensuring that information supplied by the student is fully understood is important as well
- Aspects of social integration; the use of a support worker, social mentor or 'buddy' can be helpful in this aspect.

People with Asperger's Syndrome can be very attentive to detail and may become extremely expert on specific topics.

What students say

'I was so worried before I came on the Field School. I thought I would have so many problems with everything, especially the social side. But all the work has been great and having a social mentor has meant that I have been able to join in.'

Freddie: Asperger's, colour blind, dyslexia



Using a 'buddy' system on archaeological fieldwork training

These guidelines are based on case studies and the experience of the IAA project team observing a 'buddy' system in action during the project's Phase 4 field trials.

The main factors to consider are:

- If possible, the role should be taken on by another student who has experience of archaeological fieldwork
- If there is no previous relationship between the 'buddy' and the student concerned, it is essential to establish one
- Talk to the student: find common ground and discover their abilities and limitations
- Observe how they do things, such as how they walk or gather up equipment: discover their abilities by observation
- Formulate an effective strategy to overcome any potential obstacles
- Look at access
- Ask questions as they go along: what they are doing, how and why
- Learn when to help and when to let them get on with a task
- If necessary give a wider view of things so that they can obtain an overview
- When they become competent at a particular task, be willing to stand back and 'let go'
- Each case is different; individuals have differing abilities and limitations.



Making archaeological field trips inclusive

Much of what has been advised for archaeological fieldwork training is also applicable to archaeological field trips. The main aspects to consider are:

- Establish the Learning Outcomes of the field trip and ensure that all students can achieve these
- Full access to transport, sites, accommodation and other facilities; these aspects are directly related to writing Risk Assessments for field trips
- If one site is not accessible, consider whether the Learning Outcomes can be achieved by visiting another site
- If a field trip, or some aspects of a field trip, cannot be accessed by some students, consider providing the information in different formats: illustrations, written material or tape and video recordings

As with the general guidelines for making fieldwork training inclusive, doing the same for field trips can be achieved in a culture of acceptance with a willingness to be flexible over the arrangements.

More detailed information about making field trips inclusive can be found in the work of the Geography Discipline Network's 'Inclusive Curriculum Project' at <http://www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/icp>

Checklist for inclusive archaeological fieldwork training

Pre-fieldwork

- ➔ Establish learning outcomes of fieldwork – archaeological and transferable skills
- ➔ Disability Awareness Training:
 - Essential for key staff – Director/s and supervisors
 - Consider all students receiving training; this will address possible feelings of resentment over others receiving 'special' treatment
- ➔ Consultation with individual disabled students, in conjunction with Disability Support Services, if necessary, to anticipate:
 - Any needs/possible modifications necessary
 - Flexibility in working hours to address issues of stamina and environmental sensitivities
 - Specialist equipment required
 - Boundaries of disclosure
 - Need for support workers and 'buddies'
 - Health and Safety issues, Risk Assessments
 - Transport arrangements
 - Accommodation and dietary arrangements:
 - Shared or single room and location, eg ground floor
 - Diet and mealtimes
 - Provision of disabled toilets
 - Access to site/s and facilities – distances, routes and surfaces
 - Medicines – supplies, storage, place for administering
- ➔ Pre-fieldwork information:
 - Verbal, written, email
 - Written materials – large font sizes, sans serif fonts, coloured paper as necessary; checklist layout (reduces anxiety).

During fieldwork

- ➔ Allow individual students to become familiar with the 'geography' of the site – location of site huts, tool shed etc, and safe and practical 'routes' around and across the site; with assistance if necessary
- ➔ Ensure any extra equipment is in place
- ➔ Exact instruction in procedures and willingness to repeat if necessary
- ➔ Ensure flexibility in tasks/assessment
- ➔ Ensure inclusion in formal and informal social activities
- ➔ Regular review of procedures, modifications and Risk Assessments in consultation with individual students.

After fieldwork

- ➔ Full review of procedures, modifications and Risk Assessments in consultation with individual students and Disability Support Services.

Examples of minor adjustments

- Strong colour contrasts on grid pegs, equipment, lines and string
- Written materials, including graph paper
 - large font sizes, sans serif fonts, coloured paper, tactile format as necessary; checklist layout (reduces anxiety)
- Verbal communication – use of hearing loops, allow audio taping, note that hearing/taping can be difficult in windy conditions or with background noise
- Adaptations to equipment as necessary, eg eye cups on optical instruments
- Organise work in groups and shared tasks; this will help to provide peer support especially with written and numerical data
- Flexibility:
 - In the way tasks are carried out, eg after instruction allow individual students to find the most comfortable way to do particular tasks
 - Tasks undertaken, eg alternate strenuous and lighter activities if necessary
 - Alternative tasks, preferably involving a level of responsibility, not just a 'lighter load'
 - Time for tasks/assessments as necessary, eg rest periods.

Examples of major adjustments

- Individual transport arrangements
- Individual accommodation arrangements
- Individual dietary provision
- Medication – special storage facilities and privacy for administering
- Disabled toilet facilities
- Provide portable IT equipment
- Provide access ramps, these may need to be moved/adjusted given the dynamic nature of fieldwork
- Provide firm surfaces around the site to allow for easy/safe movement
- Provide note takers/support workers
- Provide specially assigned 'Buddies'
- Alternative forms of assessment
 - Pictures/presentation instead of written
 - Written instead of presentation
- Alternatives to fieldwork, eg museum experience, laboratory work.

Making archaeological excavations accessible

With the increasing interest in Archaeology by the general public, there is also an increasing interest in visiting excavations in progress. Some fieldwork projects may also have an obligation to educate and inform the public, especially if they involve scheduled monuments or are funded by public bodies.

Audits of accessibility for members of the general public visiting the University of Reading's Silchester and Bournemouth University's Knowlton excavations were carried out with the assistance of an Access Consultant. These audits have been used to inform guidelines for making archaeological excavations accessible to the general public.

The following guidelines provide a 'check-list' of aspects to be considered when looking at the accessibility of an excavation for the visiting general public and provide links to where more detailed information can be found. Not all of these guidelines will be applicable to every excavation. There will be varying emphasis on the different aspects of access involved, this may well depend on whether the fieldwork is in an urban or a rural context. Just as the procedures for making fieldwork training inclusive can be a benefit to all students, making archaeological excavations accessible will be of benefit to all visitors, especially with regard to Health and Safety.

Guidelines 'check-list'

Approach

- Public transport links
- Sign posting.

Car parking

- Distance from site – alternative access
- Disabled parking areas – presence and location
- Surface – firmness
- Toilet facilities – accessible.

Route to site

- Signage – accessible
- Surface – firmness and breaks
- Width – passing places
- Inclines – along and across path
- Steps – alternative routes
- Overhanging vegetation – walking tunnel
- Resting places – seats and perches
- Gates and barriers – accessible.

Facilities on site

- Surfaces of publicly accessed areas – firmness and breaks
- Viewing points – ramps and platforms
- Seating – varied forms
- Visitor centres/huts and shelters – accessible
- Toilets – accessible
- Guided tours – use of hearing loops, signers
- Picnic facilities.

Information

- Available in alternative formats – large print, audio, tactile, QuickTime VR
- Information boards – location and height
- Emergency/safety information – formats
- Websites – meet accessibility requirements.

Staff and students

- Dealing with members of the public – disability equality training.

Reviews

- Regular reviews – facilities and procedures.

These guidelines identify the main areas that should be considered when making an archaeological excavation accessible to the general public.

Detailed information about the different aspects of access can be found in The Fieldfare Trust's 'A Good Practice Guide to Countryside Access for Disabled People' and 'Physical Accessibility Standards'; available at <http://fieldfare.org.uk>

Guidelines on making buildings accessible can be found in 'The Design of Buildings and Their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People – Code of Practice'; available at: <http://www.bsi-global.com>

Guidelines on the accessibility requirements of websites can be found in 'Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites'; available at: <http://www.bsi-global.com>

Guidelines on accessible written material can be found in the Royal National Institute for the Blind's 'See It Right'; available at: <http://www.rnib.org.uk>

Conclusion

Making archaeological fieldwork training accessible is not a difficult task if it is approached in a thoughtful way and managed pragmatically. Just being prepared to make provisions and adopt adjustments to include all students in fieldwork is an 'anticipatory' measure in itself. Not all of these measures will work the first time, but with a positive and flexible attitude solutions to difficulties can be found. The main factors identified by the IAA project are:

- A culture of acceptance – not everyone can do everything
- Knowledge and understanding – methods of self-evaluation can enhance this
- Dealing with every case on an individual basis – every individual disability is different
- Flexible provisions and attitude – ability will change and develop with time and experience
- Pragmatic, practical solutions – finding different ways of doing things
- Regular reviews of general and individual procedures.
- The provisions made to include disabled students can be of benefit to all students participating in fieldwork training.

An example of successful provisions and adjustments

'Paraplegic student: discussion with student, agreed on-going dialogue:

- Hygiene issues identified, special toilets/washroom ordered
- Student self-evaluation of skills to identify areas of strength/competence, this information used to tailor student's contribution to the project ie. from strength rather than weakness
- Selected peers trained in personal assistance
- Student wished to participate in all activities wherever possible with no 'special' assessment allowance
- On-going monitoring of situation at instigation of student only
- Student subject to routine supervision and role adjustment.

Result – no problems encountered, student performance exemplary.'

Archaeology Department
.....

Useful information

Legislation

Disability Discrimination Act 1995. London: HMSO.

Disability Discrimination Act 2005. London: HMSO.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. London: HMSO.

Guidelines

Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology Project

http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible

Inclusive Curriculum Project (Geography Discipline Network).

<http://www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/icp>

A Good Practice Guide to Countryside Access for Disabled People.

<http://fieldfare.org.uk>

Physical Accessibility Standards.

<http://fieldfare.org.uk>

The Design of Buildings and Their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People – Code of Practice.

<http://www.bsi-global.com>

See It Right.

<http://www.rnib.org.uk>

Sign Design Guide: A Guide to Inclusive Signage.

<http://jmuaccess.org.uk>

Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites.

<http://www.bsi-global.com>

Organisations and public bodies

Further information and more guidelines can be obtained from these organisations:

Access Association

<http://www.access-association.org.uk>

CADW

<http://www.cadw.wales.gov.uk>

Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE)

<http://www.cae.org.uk>

Council for British Archaeology (CBA)

<http://www.britarch.ac.uk>

Countryside Agency

<http://www.countryside.gov.uk>

Deafworks

<http://www.deafworks.co.uk>

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

<http://www.dft.gov.uk>

Disability Rights Commission

<http://www.drc-gb.org>

English Heritage

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>

Fieldfare Trust

<http://www.fieldfare.org.uk>

Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Archaeology

<http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/archaeology>

Historic Scotland

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk>

MENCAP

<http://www.mencap.com>

Mind

<http://www.mind.org.uk>

National Trust

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk>

National Trust for Scotland

<http://www.nts.org.uk>

RCAHMS (Scotland)

<http://www.rcahms.gov.uk>

Royal National Institute of the Blind

<http://www.rnib.org.uk>

Royal National Institute for Deaf People

<http://www.rind.org.uk>

Sensory Trust

<http://www.sensorytrust.org.uk>

Web Accessibility Initiative

<http://www.w3.org/WAI>

Inclusive Accessible Archaeology

The IAA Project was funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning, Phase 5 (FDTL5).

It was a collaborative project led by Professor Roberta Gilchrist of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading, with the School of Conservation Sciences at Bournemouth University and the Research Group for Inclusive Environments (RGIE) at Reading.

The project received the active support of a number of stakeholders including the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), the Council for British Archaeology (CBA), English Heritage and Oxford Archaeology, as well as the Higher Education Academy's Subject Centre for History, Classics and Archaeology.

This project would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support and involvement of the fieldwork teams at the Universities of Reading and Bournemouth, and the disabled students and volunteers who tested the tool kit.

Additional copies of this guide, together with a full text version can be downloaded as a PDF at:

<http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/guides/archaeology/index.php>

and

http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible/index.php



**Subject Centre for
History, Classics
and Archaeology**

http://www.hca.heacademy.ac.uk/access-archaeology/inclusive_accessible/index.php