Statement of competence guidance and template
(Revised April 2022)

BEFORE you start this or the online form, please read the relevant application guidance and supporting performance criteria webpages to help complete it.

- **PCIfA application guidance**
  - ➢ PCIfA performance criteria
- **ACIfA application guidance**
  - ➢ ACIfA performance criteria
- **MCIfA application guidance**
  - ➢ MCIfA performance criteria

The statement of competence is the most important part of your application. It informs the Validation committee about how your skills and experience **demonstrate** the criteria in the competence matrix (PDF) for the grade you are applying for and helps them reach a decision. You can upload it to the online form.

Since April 2022 new requirements have been added to the application criteria. You may need to undertake some training in ethical competence before you apply to be able to **demonstrate** the perception of professional context part of the competence matrix. (See application guidance webpages above)

Remember the committee members do not know you or your work. Please take time to write it carefully and include all your roles and qualifications, where relevant, giving specific examples. You **MUST** include this information otherwise your application cannot be reviewed by the committee.

The template is on the second and third pages. Please refer to the competence matrix on the application guidance webpages above. For further information on how the competence categories apply in different areas of practice, please see our supporting specialist competence matrices.

Statement of competence template

Name of applicant:

Grade applied for: PCIfA ☐ ACIfA ☐ MCIfA ☐

Employed or voluntary work

Please give **detailed** information about your role and responsibilities **for your current and most recent roles over the last two years**. Use each heading of the competence matrix (above) as a guide. You should cover how you **demonstrate** the four areas - knowledge, autonomy, coping with complexity and perception of professional context - using **specific** examples. You may find it easier to give an example of a project/s you have done from beginning to end.

For any roles you've undertaken **longer than two years ago**, please give a **brief description** of the responsibilities held.

If you have worked on several short-term projects within one company or more in the same role, you can group these together.

The boxes will expand as you type, and you can copy and paste to add more boxes as required. Please ensure you write in the first person (e.g. I carry out/I undertake).

Position held:	Heritage Consultant
Organisation name:	Company name
Dates position held:	01/06/21- Present
Length of time in role:	10 months
Description of role and responsibilities and how these **demonstrate** competence in the four areas, giving specific examples	

I am primarily responsible for providing consultancy, fieldwork, and reporting services within the historic environment and archaeological sector, including:

- Undertaking the production of heritage planning documents and reports, such as Desk-Based Assessments, Heritage Statements, and Historic Building Recording.
- Carrying out site visits, walkovers, and site meetings as appropriate.
- Managing assigned individual projects, documenting when work is completed throughout the project.
- Providing expert advice on heritage issues within assigned projects.
- Evaluating the significance of heritage assets and the potential impacts of proposed developments.

Since joining the company, I have been involved in a number of commercial and community projects and have had the opportunity to work on them from beginning to end, including authoring whole reports and providing advice on how to manage the historic environment. Having only recently graduated university, I am in the process of improving my competency within the role through a thorough training plan delivered by my line managers and colleagues.

My interest in environmental and landscape archaeology, with a focus on northern Britain, has placed me in good stead to understand the heritage assets that I come across within my role. Preparation work for a community archaeology television series is also involved in my role, introducing me to the varying requirements of differing projects and clients.

The following details how my experience and competence form this position

Knowledge
The broad range of work undertaken in this position has given me a good working knowledge of the historic environment and how to manage and assess any impact of modern development on heritage assets. The series of impact assessments that I have been involved in from start to finish have demonstrated an

understanding of the significance of both heritage assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, and scheduled monuments. These reports exhibit my knowledge of how to manage development in order to foresee, and propose mitigation strategies for, any potential harm or loss of historic fabric, setting, or significance of the heritage asset. This role has also developed my knowledge of historic features and architectural terminology as well as how to identify phasing of development at a historic site. As the heritage impact assessments are intended to be used within the planning process for proposed developments, the variety of site types and locations has given me a good working knowledge of key planning legislation and policies relating to the historic environment. Documents such as the NPPF and local council planning policy are employed in combination with relevant guidance for practice within professional archaeology to advise on assigned projects. As such, the projects within my grey literature bibliography have given me a good working knowledge of where the work undertaken as archaeologists is incorporated in the planning process.

A large part of my work also requires using information technology. On a daily basis, I make use of standard software packages such as Microsoft's Office suite as well as Adobe's Acrobat Pro to view and edit reports. In addition, Microsoft Excel is used for viewing and manipulating exports of shapefile attribute tables. Furthermore, I also regularly use Quantum GIS for viewing and preparing geospatial data provided by local authorities when creating illustrations used within reports.

Autonomy
My level of autonomy has notably increased since starting in this role. During my first assigned project I had a large amount of supervision as I was learning new skills and the procedures undertaken. Since my first published report, I have been able to manage assigned projects from start to finish, often with limited guidance.

I have also developed an appreciation of the importance of communication, time management, organisation and the use of IT within remote based working and remote teamwork. Project management at my company allows for a clear understanding of each team member's role within a given project, with tasks being updated in real time. The autonomous work undertaken by each team member within collaborative projects affords efficient expenditure of each consultant's time.

The high levels of self-management required within my role has taught me the importance of arranging early site visits, acquiring HER data prior to site visits, and engaging with clients early within a scheme. By following these initial steps and being organised affords a better comprehension of the heritage issues to allow for accurate assessment of assets and evaluation of solutions to provide the best outcomes for both the client and the conservation of relevant heritage assets.

More recently, subsequent published reports demonstrate that I have a good degree of independence in setting up the project management, commissioning HER searches, undertaking mapping research, and assessing the impact of the proposed development to relevant heritage assets and the historic landscape. I still require some guidance when assessing some potential impacts within larger and more complex development projects. This is one area I would like to work on over the coming year to gain further autonomy and competency within my role, as outlined within my PDP.

Coping With Complexity
Entire assigned projects can be seen as a complex task in their own right, however, within each component of the report unique complex tasks specific to the project arise. When undertaking both the statement of significance, and assessment of impact sections within the reports, the process of identifying the significances within the given historic environment/ asset in accordance with commentary on the potential impact of the proposed development usually forms the most complex task. An additional layer of complexity is introduced when the conclusions have to ensure that advice, justification or opposition to a proposed development are provided in compliance with local and national planning policy, as well as ensuring my standard of work abides by professional guidance provided by both Historic England and CIfA.

Since joining my company, ongoing training and guidance has provided me with the fundamentals to tackle such complex tasks, through recognising the layers of tasks and issues which can be addressed individually order to complete entire reports. As I have furthered my competency within my role, complex tasks within

reports have become easier to tackle. The approach of breaking down the more complex parts of a document and addressing them individually has provided me with autonomy within my general report writing. Now, I am competent in completing such complex tasks (statement of significance and assessment of impacts) independently with occasional support and guidance for larger or more complex schemes.

When challenged with complex new tasks, I have been fortunate to benefit from the experience of one-to-one training with my colleagues and supervisors. Highlighted within my training was the importance of understanding the task at hand and the approach required to complete it. Aiding the progress of each consultancy project a 'management' checklist document is set up, principally to demonstrate the state of completion of each segment of the report and which team member is assigned to each individual task, should it be a shared project.

In combination with my training at my company and building upon my perception of complexity to university assessments, I found much success from breaking down each complex task into smaller projects. This method of management allows for a visible collapse of each task within the whole project, and how collectively they contribute to the completion of the whole report.

Perception of Professional Context
Entering this career right after graduating university meant that as a trainee, I had a lot to learn about the practice standards. As such, I have had to heavily refer to guidance issued by both national (NPPF MHCLG 2021) and relevant local policy in addition to professional practice guidance including:
CIfA's Code of Conduct 2014
CIfA's Standard and guidance for commissioning work or providing consultancy advice on archaeology and the historic environment 2020
CIfA's Standard and guidance for archaeological advice by historic environment services 2020
CIfA's Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment 2020
CIfA's Standard and guidance for stewardship for the historic environment 2020
CIfA's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) policy 2021
CIfA's Policy statements 2022

Specific guidance issued by Historic England have also been referred to within my published reports. Dependent upon the specific requirements for each project, I have found the most used guides within my work include:
Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings: Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse (Historic England 2017)
Practical advice on the maintenance and repair of traditional farm buildings (Historic England 2017)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England 2017)
Practical Building Conservation series of books (Historic England 2015).

All of the listed sources of guidance have greatly shaped my training as well as my practice and published reports. Further, these documents have aided my ability appreciate the historic environment and to form strategies in order to appropriately conserve heritage assets and determine potential impact. The process of completing heritage reports include specific sections to ensure each report abides by such guidance. For example, to comply with the practice standards each Heritage Statement incorporates the assessment of significance, assessment of impact, a walkover survey, and a section on relevant policy and how each proposed development may or may not align to that.

Fundamental documents such as the code of conduct and have provided a list of principals of which I should abide by to ensure a good standard of practice. For example, I have learned that the requirement to undertake a risk assessment prior to a walkover survey is essential. In turn, the risk assessment allows me to formulate health and safety plans to mitigate potential risk. The GDPR policy has taught me the importance of protecting data. As such, I have implemented a two-factor authentication system to both email and files on my work computer to safeguard sensitive data

Position held:	Work experience student
Organisation name:	Company name

	September 2020 to June 2021
Length of time in role:	Approx 2 weeks

Description of role and responsibilities and how these demonstrate competence in the four areas, giving specific examples

I attended site visits at a variety of locations with differing types of heritage assets and issues. I also received ongoing video-conferenced 'training' with managers and was provided with relevant reading material so that I might prepare for a career in the field of Archaeology upon my graduation. Additionally, prior to joining the company as an employee, I undertook a voluntary role in a community TV project under the management of my company and a TV company. The week-long excavation aimed to further understand the extent of the cemetery under the marketplace of a location.

Knowledge
The broad range of work and types of site visits undertaken in this position introduced me to the role of archaeology and consultancy within the planning process and the world of commercial archaeology. This provided me with a good expectation of what it would be like to have a career in archaeology following university. Additionally, as I was guided to certain literature, relevant CIfA guidance and the NPPF whilst at university, I was able to make the transition into my current role as Heritage Consultant with much more ease.

Autonomy
Working under supervision, from staff at my company, I was involved within excavations undertaken for a TV series. This role included excavation within a team and recording undertaken individually for the trench of which I was assigned. Within this role I received guidance of the methods in which are employed during excavation. The recording of this trench further built upon the foundation of basic archaeological recording I had gained throughout university and allowed me to create drawings and accounts from my own judgement.

Coping With Complexity
The excavation and recording provided a challenge for me. From this work experience I gained an understanding for the importance of each stage of excavation in addition to learning new techniques and developing basic skills. The significance of accurate recording within the process of excavation became evident. As such, I ensured I completed this individual task as accurately as possible in order to support the later stages of excavation which include the interpretation of evidence.
Individual tasks were completed independently following initial brief guidance, which contributed to workload which was allocated between the team members. This provided me with an opportunity to develop excavation skills required within commercial archaeology, outside of the research and university lead projects.

Perception of Professional Context
In order to complete the fast-paced excavations, a series of efficient steps and instructions were provided for the team to complete the excavations by the deadline. Site staff educated me on commercial excavation which built upon my excavation technique previously gained from research-based archaeology. The importance of an efficient and well recorded excavation was vital as the short week spent digging was further pressed for time from the intermittent pausing required for filming. For the team to complete this entire task, individual contribution was vital. From site manager to the excavation team, and finds specialists, I developed and understanding of the varying roles within the whole process of excavation.

Being new to the environment of a professional archaeological excavation, I was briefed by senior staff on the code of conduct, in particular the health and safety policy and procedure. For example, due to the public location of the dig, health and safety of the public when approaching the trench was a principal concern. As such, it was important to be aware of the people surrounding the trench and ensuring the boundary fencing was maintained.

Position held:	Volunteer
Organisation name:	Company name
Dates position held:	August 2020 and September 2020

Length of time in role:	4 weeks

Description of role and responsibilities

Volunteering on two excavations.

1. Two trenches were opened with the aim of studying the entrances of an Iron Age hill fort and to understanding the enigmatic square feature revealed from the geophysical surveying. The role included a variety of work throughout the full excavation from finds washing, excavating, recording, use of total station and further magnetometry.
2. One trench was opened with the aim of studying various subsurface features revealed in previous geophysical surveying carried out the previous year. The current interpretation is that the site was a large Roman settlement, with the initial finds supporting this theory.

The role of site staff was largely to help volunteers who were new to archaeology learn the basics of excavation whilst also being involved with and learning about a variety of roles within excavation including; finds washing, excavating, recording and further magnetometry.

Qualifications

Please list any relevant qualifications, including title, University and date of completion and a brief outline of the areas covered. The boxes will expand as you type.

Qualification title, University & date completed	Brief outline
BA (Hons) History and Archaeology A University Completed: July 2021	I was awarded First-Class Honours. The course covered numerous facets of the wide-ranging discipline, particularly affording expertise in British prehistoric and Medieval Archaeology. Key areas of my studies and achievements included: • First class Dissertation • Awarded the University Prize for Archaeology 2020 and 2021 (recognising general Academic achievement). • Study of practical skills including training in the use of geospatial software such as ArcMap as well as Geophysical surveying equipment and excavational technique. • Gaining an understanding of both theoretical archaeology and its relation to British and global history. • Undertaking university funded archaeological projects and excavations.

Additional Relevant Information

Include any further information that may be useful for the Validation committee to take into consideration when assessing your application. A CV can be uploaded to the application form for supporting information and copies of your job description(s).

If your experience has been gained outside of the UK, please provide some background information on how the profession operates in that country, how it is legislated and monitored, and how your work fits into this to assist the Validation committee.

List of projects/publications/grey literature

If you have published papers or articles, authored grey literature or internal reports or delivered presentations about your work **in the last 2 years**, please list them below. Where work is co-authored or the authors not defined, please indicate which part(s) you were responsible for.
You can also highlight those you are including as your examples of work.

- A N Other. DD/MM/YY. A Location: Heritage Impact Assessment. Company name.