CIfA | Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

What you need to know

Joining a CIfA inspection panel

www.archaeologists.net

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What is a Registered Organisation?

Registered Organisations are businesses and suppliers of archaeological services that have been assessed and inspected by CIfA and are members of CIfA

The Registered Organisations scheme is a unique quality assurance scheme in archaeology. It is a 'kite mark' indicating high professional standards and competence.

Registered Organisations have demonstrated they have the skills to provide informed and reliable advice and execute appropriate schemes of work while minimising uncertainty, delays and cost.

Registered Organisations subscribe to the same codes of professional conduct and practice as individual accredited members.

Registered Organisation Scheme Inspections

- CIfA registration is for a finite period (normally 3 years) after which organisations must re-apply.

- As part of their application organisations are subject to an inspection (which includes a site visit for organisations that undertake intrusive works). This allows them to review their practices and procedures and to benefit from various recommendations for improvement.

- The inspection (under normal circumstances) is repeated for each registration period.

- The inspection is a process of rigorous peer review undertaken by a panel. As well as the CIfA facilitator there will be two or three other panel members.

Do I qualify as a panel member?

- ❑ Members of the Registrations committee (Organisations)

- ❑ Responsible Post Holders or their nominated deputies, who must be senior employees of a   Registered Organisation and an accredited member of the Institute

- ❑ Relevant curators for organisations carrying out contracting and consulting work

- ❑ Relevant (Institute-accredited member) contractors or consultants for organisations carrying out curatorial work

- ❑ Other accredited members of the Institute with relevant technical knowledge

- ❑ Historic environment specialists who are not members of the Institute and who have relevant technical knowledge

- ❑ A member of Institute office staff, or appropriate representative, to take minutes, guide procedure, and write up the final inspection report

Regulations for the registration of organisations https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa
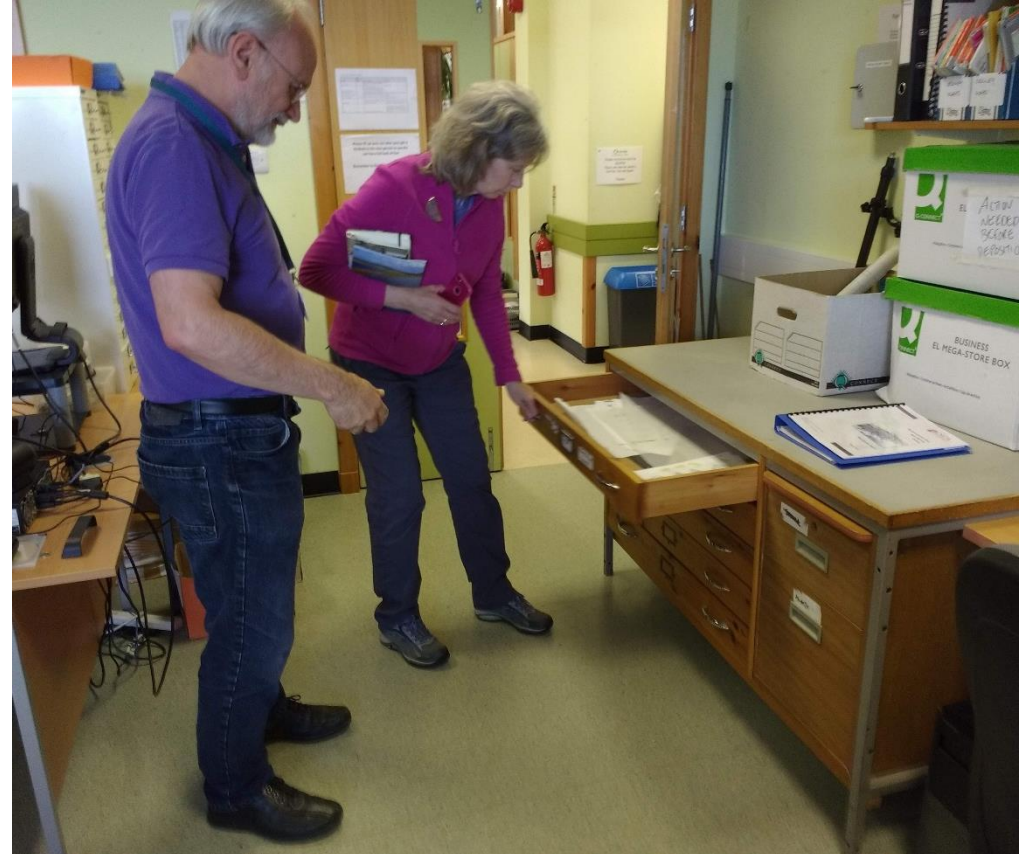
Before the inspection

As part of their application the organisation submit supporting information. As a panel member, it is there for reference but you are not expected to read it all.
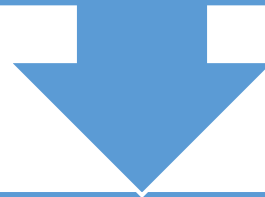
Key documents for review from the organisation are the

| Application form | Project reports |

Supporting information available for reference

Copy of the signed record of the resolution passed by the governing body	Organisational diagram	OHSAS 18001, ISO 45001, SSIP certification or equivalent or H&S Policy and H&S manual/procedures	Organisational skills audit and training plan	Example of an individual training plan
Quality system accreditation certificate or Quality system documentation/procedures	List of grey literature reports (normally for the last two years)	Details of organisation's publication record	Archive deposition strategy and programme	Example of a data management plan
Example of a project-specific Selection Strategy	List of repositories	Conflict of interest and/or other ethical business policy	Business Continuity Plan/Disaster Recovery Plan	Volunteer policy
Public benefit/Community engagement/Outreach policy	Policy on environmental protection	HR policies	Staff handbook	Investors in People certification

Application form

Two main sections to the form

1. Historic Environment Investigation and Research

2. Organisation Information

Separate sections for curatorial organisations and educational organisations

- Stewardship role/archaeological advice

- Educational role

Project reports

We will send you a list of grey literature produced by the organisation to be inspected and ask you to choose a couple of reports for review.

You will use your knowledge and experience and check them against the requirements of the Standards and guidance. A training module on reviewing reports is available on the panel members resources page.

You will also choose the project for the "talk through". The project talk through is an overview of how the organisation approaches a project from end to end; including its management, as well as the quality checks that are undertaken.

Pre inspection meeting

- To discuss the application and project reports.
- To plan the day and identify any particular focus.

Inspection Day

The CIfA rep will chair the meeting to ensure the agenda is covered and the panel take breaks. The CIfA rep takes notes for the report. (The panel take their own notes)

The morning session usually runs from 10 – 12.45 with scheduled breaks

The Responsible Post Holder (RPH) starts with an introduction to the organisation, including any changes that have taken place during the three years since the last inspection.

Morning session

This session then continues as a meeting with the management team to discuss:

- the structure of the organisation
- staffing and employment
- CIfA membership and promotion of the Institute
- training and CPD
- public benefit
- health and safety
- archives and publications
- commissioning
- quality assurance and the project talk through

Afternoon session

Site visit and talk to staff

Between about 1.30 – 15.00 the panel split up to talk to staff and visit a site if one is available on the day.

We are keen to include staff who are away from the main hub – on site, in other offices or working from home.

The panel will talk to staff in person, or if they are remote from the office they can log straight into the Zoom link from a laptop, tablet, or phone.

The panel talk to all the staff together, or in groups.

We ask that the managers are not present for this.

Site visit

The site visit will include observations and conversations with staff. It is useful if this is a reasonably substantial project (not just a watching brief) and if there are a number of staff available.

The site visit can take place on inspection day or can be arranged before or after, possibly conducted by the historic environment advisor alongside their monitoring visit.

There is a form to guide the site visitor.

Photo: South West Archaeology

Feedback

After talking to staff, the panel meet for half an hour to decide what has impressed and where they have concerns or have identified areas for possible improvement.

The panel meet back with the management team at 3.30 – 4.00pm to feedback their comments.

Inspection report

The CIfA representative writes the inspection report and sends it to the panel.

The panel add their amendments and when all are happy it goes to the Responsible Post Holder to be checked

Finally it goes before the Registration Committee who decide whether to register the organisation and whether to issue conditions or recommendations.

CIfA Registered Organisations

INSPECTION VISITS FORM

Draft copy circulated to panel	
Draft copy reviewed and approved by panel	
Draft copy reviewed and approved by RPH	
Final report filed	

Organisation:

Date:

RPHs:

Names of panel members: Kerry Wiggins, CIfA representative and inspection facilitator,

Declarations of interest:

1   Was the purpose of visit explained by the inspection panel to the Responsible Post-holder?
                                                                    YES/NO

2   Did the panel members introduce themselves?   YES/NO

3   Was the procedure for the day explained to the RPH
    - private review of form/meeting by panel?   (prior teleconference)   YES/NO
    - discussion of form and any queries and comments arising?   YES/NO
    - site visit (if relevant)?   YES/NO
    - talk to staff?   YES/NO
    - inspection of relevant papers?   YES/NO
    - discussion of findings with Responsible Post-holder?   YES/NO
    - record taken of discussion?   YES/NO
    - report back to RCO which will make final decision?   YES/NO

4   Whom did the panel speak to and about what? (Names and topics)

5   Previous recommendations: See previous registration letter

6   Post – meeting:

Panel recommendation to RCO: To Register for 3 years with recommendations
(no longer discussed with the RPH at the inspection visit. The panel can discuss during the inspection day and confirm it afterwards when this report is circulated. Only those things mentioned in the report can be mentioned in the recommendations to the RO committee).

This section is only for the panel members and CIfA representative(s). This part of the report is removed from the RPH version that is circulated.

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Insert suggested recommendations or conditions – recommendations are either 'to be considered' (no deadline) or 'to be implemented' (with a suggested deadline). Conditions should also have a suggested deadline. Any recommendations and/or conditions must be associated with those concerns or comments outlined in section 7.2 below.

Condition
Insert numbered conditions

Recommendations to implement
Insert numbered recommendations with deadlines

Recommendations to consider
Insert numbered recommendations

Explanation/summary of panel recommendations to RCO:
Once conditions and recommendations have been listed, an additional explanation/summary needs to be provided to explain to RCO the reason behind the panel recommendations. For example, 'the reason this is a condition is because it has been recommended at several previous inspections and not implemented etc.' Or 'the reason this has not been suggested as a condition (as in previous inspections) is because...'

7   What things impressed/caused concern? (report back to RPH in final interview at end of visit)

The panel would like to thank XX and XX and the team for their hospitality and time on the day of the inspection.

7.2 What caused concern/comment?
Insert numbered comments

7.3 What impressed?
Insert numbered comments

How did the Responsible Post-holder respond to the panel's comments on these issues?

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Please visit our Inspection panel resources page for more information

https://www.archaeologists.net/panelresources

Or contact us with any questions

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