

WHY SHOULD YOU BECOME ACCREDITED IF YOU WORK FOR A REGISTERED ORGANISATION?

ClfA, like other professional institutes in different sectors, accredits both companies and individuals. As a result, we’re sometimes asked: *why do we need both?*



What accreditation does for you. Credit: ClfA



Archaeology is usually not regulated by government, so ClfA helps the profession regulate itself. Through professional accreditation (PCIfA, ACIfA, MCIfA) we support archaeologists in demonstrating their skills, experience and commitment to good practice. We set, promote and measure compliance with standards, providing quality assurance for the profession. To do this, we need to provide standards for people, processes and outcomes.

The standards for processes and products are found in our 13 *Standards and guidance* documents. Our standards for people are delivered through individual accreditation and organisational registration, helping individuals and employers show that they meet recognised benchmarks of competence and professionalism. By becoming accredited, you join a network of thousands of professional archaeologists committed to high standards and enhancing their careers.

Registered Organisations

In archaeology, as in other professions, those who require archaeological input generally engage organisations through contracts or other formal agreements. By accrediting (registering) an organisation, ClfA assesses and endorses its ability to deliver high-quality processes and outcomes. This accreditation gives confidence to those who rely on or benefit from an organisation’s services, providing assurance that the organisation meets professional standards and can be trusted by service users, the profession and the wider public.

“ I believe ClfA membership is important for everyone working within archaeology – not only for career progression, but because it connects you to a vital UK network offering specialised training, a dedicated jobs bulletin, and the professional recognition employees seek in a competitive market. ”

Johanna Fuller PCIfA (13732), Archaeological Field Technician, ADAS

A Registered Organisation is expected to be made up of skilled individuals who can make informed, ethical decisions. When staff have individually demonstrated their competence and commitment to professional practice, ClfA, the organisation itself, and those engaging with its work can be confident that high standards will be met consistently.

Individual accreditation

Individual accreditation recognises a person’s skills, competence and understanding; in short, it’s about **you**. It is an endorsement of your own **personal** achievements.

Accreditation is an important investment for your career, enhancing your reputation, opportunities and connection to the profession. It shows that your expertise has been recognised by peers and reflects your professional dedication and commitment to ethical practice. The application process itself helps you to reflect on the skills and knowledge you have gained, as well as areas which need continued development to reach the next grade of accreditation.

Being accredited sets you apart as someone who has agreed to follow an agreed code of conduct and professional standards, regardless of whether or not the organisation you work for is registered. Individual accreditation supports high standards across the profession and helps give archaeologists a stronger collective voice.

“ It came as a bit of a shock recently when I realised I’ve been a member of ClfA for just over 30 years. Looking back, the organisation has been a constant source of support – from practical resources to personal guidance – at every stage of my career. I’ve been fortunate. My employers have always encouraged my professional development, supporting each membership upgrade and giving me the time needed to serve at events and committees. Accordingly, ADAS actively encourages all new archaeological staff to explore what ClfA offers as a member. Every new starter is given the chance to meet the membership team, ask questions and apply for membership, as soon as they’re ready. As their skills grow, we support them in upgrading their membership status too. This approach keeps confidence high. It reassures staff that their skills matter, that they are recognised professionally, and that each step forward contributes meaningfully to their career development. For us, that recognition isn’t just a formality – it’s a foundation for building strong, capable, and confident archaeologists. ”

Andy Manning MCIfA (1507), Principal Heritage Consultant, ADAS

Useful links

You can read more about what we mean by professional archaeologists at: www.archaeologists.net/join/accredited/overview/profession

ClfA’s Ethical Practice Framework: www.archaeologists.net/standards

Interested in applying for accreditation? See our guidance online: www.archaeologists.net/join