

Reflecting on your current working practice, describe your working routine for a day, showing how you prioritise, delegate, and deliver tasks, and how you ensure that they meet the required standards within the time available. How do you manage the need to communicate effectively with different audiences?

Introduction

My role is as an Assistant Archaeologist at Cornwall Archaeological Unit (situated within Cornwall Council). Although my role is not specific to a certain discipline, the focus of my work is as a buildings archaeologist. I spend the majority of my time doing historic buildings projects, which can be historic building recordings, heritage impact assessments, related surveys and desk based assessments. The nature of historic building projects is that there is only a small amount of time spent on site and a large amount of time spent writing up fieldwork results. There are often also watching briefs associated with building recording projects and so these need to be written up as well.

Daily routine – timeline of a typical Wednesday

8:30am	Start work
8:30-9:00am	Check and respond to emails
9:00-9:15am	Check and start photogrammetry processing
9:15-10:00am	Report writing
10:00am-1:00pm	MA session
1:00-1:30pm	Lunch
1:30-4:15pm	Report writing
4:15-4:30pm	Check photogrammetry progress
4:30pm	End work

The above represents a normal working day on a typical Wednesday, but of course this timeline can be easily interrupted by a number of different factors.

8:30-9:00am Check and respond to emails

A typical working day starts with the checking of emails – usually these emails comprise corporate announcements, industry news, job adverts and updates from teams group chats. The majority of these are information that is unrelated to my role and are simply deleted. Ordinarily, Microsoft Outlook provides a notification when emails are received, and so when they are received during the day and I can see that they are something important, or an email that has been sent to me specifically, I will address the email there and then and give a response when required. Alternatively if I can see that it is a generic email, spam or advertisement, I will delete the email on arrival.

9:00-9:15am Check and start photogrammetry processing

There are several people in my organisation that have access to photogrammetry software, 3DF Zephyr, but I am the only user that has access to the full version which is capable of producing orthophotos, digital surface models and scaled models. As such I may from time to time be tasked with undertaking photogrammetry tasks which do not directly relate to my usual buildings work. One such recent example I have been working on was a project which was an investigation and recording of tin streaming earthworks which were being affected a road scheme. The project brief had come from an external consultant and specified that digital

terrain models and orthophotos were needed as part of the project. As such the drone imagery that had been taken on site was sent to me for processing to create these outputs. At the start of each day I would start the software running in the background while I continued with my other work.

9:15-10:00am Report writing

The remaining time between starting the photogrammetry software and beginning the MA session is spent report writing. Recently the focus of this has been on a historic building recording project at Antony House.

10:00am-1:00pm MA session

As part of this MA I attend 3 hour sessions on Wednesdays covering a variety of topics. I have made it known to my colleagues that I am undertaking the course and include it in my calendar, showing that I am busy. I do not generally have the time to respond to any emails during this 3 hour period and my colleagues have been made aware of my commitment. Informing my colleagues of my commitment has been successful and they do not contact me with teams messages or calls during these hours.

1:30-4:15pm Report writing

In the afternoon I return to focus on report writing and answering any emails I might have received during the MA session. It is during this period that I receive the most contact from colleagues, via Teams.

4:15-4:30pm Check photogrammetry progress

At the end of the day I will check the progress of the photogrammetry and usually at this point I will leave the computer powered on to continue processing during the night. If the processing is complete then I will usually save the project and pick it up in the morning unless more processing is required, in which case I will set this going.

Prioritisation

Often, I will be contacted during the day with a request from a colleague for something that needs to be done urgently, such as editing drawings or producing maps in GIS. When I receive small requests like this, I will usually pause what I am doing and give my attention to the requested piece of work. I can usually turn this around within the same day and then return to work on my previous project. If the request is a much longer piece of work, then I will need to discuss this with my colleague, or colleagues if I have two conflicting pieces of work from two different Senior Archaeologists. In this situation I will evaluate how urgent each piece of work is, how long each is going to take, and what the deadline is for each piece of work. Often one piece of work I am undertaking has an open deadline and therefore I am able to prioritise the other piece of work with a deadline and resume the more 'relaxed' project once the other piece of work is completed.

Delivery

The projects that I undertake are usually delivered in a few formats. The primary format is a PDF document that is emailed to the client. Generally, hard copies of reports are not provided. The

PDF report is exported from a Word document and sometimes these word documents are also provided to the client (such as the National Trust or Historic England). In cases where photogrammetry has been undertaken, a 3D model can be a deliverable and might be uploaded to Sketchfab, a website for 3D models, or simply sent to the client. Projects usually also require the images from the fieldwork to be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service, or sometimes sent directly to the client, which is done by transferring the data onto a memory card or stick and posting it to the client.

Delegation

I rarely have to delegate tasks however I will sometimes ask a colleague to help to do a piece of work if it needs to be done concurrently with a piece of work I am undertaking. Usually this will be mutually agreed who will undertake what task for a project.

Timelines

Keeping a track of the work I do is easy with the Council's proprietary timekeeping system, UniTime. The system contains project codes for all the projects that I undertake, and whenever a new project arises, a new code is created. Each code is then broken down into a few stages; usually project management, fieldwork, report writing and archiving. This system helps project managers and the team's management keep a track of how different projects are progressing, how much time has been spent on a project (out of a pre-determined allocation of time), and how much time has been spent on each individual aspect of the project. I know how much time has been allocated to a project I am working on and I can see via UniTime how much I have spent, and therefore work out how much time I have left.

Standards

At Cornwall Archaeological Unit we are in a fortunate position of being situated within the council and therefore we have a good relationship with the planning team. This allows us to ensure that the standards required by a planning condition can be met. This means that it is easy to contact them and get a full explanation of what is expected from us to satisfy the planning condition we might be undertaking the intervention for. Cornwall Archaeological Unit has a suite of templates which are in line with the Council's corporate themes, ensuring that each report is kept to the same visual standards.

Managing communication effectively

In order to manage effective communication, I use the tools provided by the Council. On my computer I have Microsoft Teams and Outlook. We are currently moving to Sharepoint which will increase our internal communication further. For external communication I also have access to a work mobile phone which can accept calls from outside the council, and it also allows me to pick up Teams messages, calls, and emails on the go. The mobile phone can also be used as a 4G hotspot when working remotely, and so I can access the full internet capabilities of my laptop wherever I am.

When emailing external people, such as clients or stakeholders, I always maintain a professional manner and ensure that my email signature is included in emails which contains information about my position, my email address and phone number, as well as our office address.

When communicating with people within my team, a less professional tone can be taken and communication is often done through Microsoft Teams, so the messages are much like text messages and are short, succinct and can contain abbreviations.