

APPENDIX 1

DIGVENTURES' FIELD SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Casswell *et al.* (2019)

Archaeology Field Schools

DigVentures' field school curriculum for archaeology forms the basis of all our on-site vocational training opportunities. Field schools are available to participants of all skills levels to attend and receive hands-on training over the course of one day, two days or one week (or more). Field schools are designed and run by professional archaeologists, working alongside our Venturers to excavate and record archaeology to the highest standards. Due to the unique nature of each of the archaeological sites we work at, the content of the field schools may vary from project to project. However, our core learning curriculum will remain consistent across all our projects and provides an outline of the minimum our participants (or Venturers) should expect to achieve during their time with us on site.

Our archaeology field school is endorsed by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and designed to support the Archaeology Skills Passport.

About the projects

Each of our archaeological sites has a specific Project Design attached to it. This document will provide the research background to the excavation, outlining some very important details about the period, the location and what we hope to find. This is the place to find out what the aims and objectives are, where we will be putting our archaeological trenches and what the overarching strategy is for recovering all that vital archaeological information. You can also find the general methods statements here, and learn about the particular approaches we might be taking.

Each archaeological project is supported by a project microsite – and this should be your first point of call for your site preparations. Once you have had a look through the archaeological project design, you can have a look over the 'Plan Your Visit' section which includes the project set up and all the information you need to know to make your archaeological experience run as smoothly as possible. As the archaeological project continues, this is the place where the technical data recovered will be stored and where you can look up the archaeological information you have helped to excavate and record!

About the field school

Archaeology is a profession, as well as an academic field of study. Many years of experience, skills development and education are necessary in order to develop the expertise, and attain the necessary qualifications, to run archaeological excavations. Archaeology is also an activity which inspires enthusiasts all around the world, from active volunteers through to armchair archaeologists who devour every book, programme and magazine they can get their hands on. We are consistently amazed at the passion and level of knowledge of the people we meet through our work at DigVentures, and everyone has one thing in common: they want to learn more about how to do archaeology.

We have designed our field schools to help support anyone who is keen to roll up their sleeves, jump in the trenches and learn how archaeology is done. Whether you can join us for one day, a weekend or a full week (or two), we can teach you what you need to know to get the most out of your archaeological experience.

Our core learning curriculum

Our field schools provide a step-by-step guide through the core skills needed to contribute to an archaeological excavation. What do you need to know about the archaeology before you begin to dig? How do you recognise and excavated archaeological layers? What's the point of drawing in the age of digital? What's with all the string, and funny red and white sticks in the trenches? If you are with us for a single day, we will make sure you get to grips with the fundamental skills, such as using a trowel. The longer you can stay, the more you will learn. You can use the look-up table below to see which of the core archaeological skills you will learn on a DigVentures field school depending on the length of your experience.

Skill	Learning outcome	One Day	Two Days	Week +
<i>Professional ethics</i>	Can anyone just turn up and dig an archaeological site? Or is there more to it than that?	✓	✓	✓
<i>Site Safety</i>	Be aware of the particular Health & Safety issues on the archaeological project	✓	✓	✓
<i>Small hand tools</i>	Understand the correct use of the trowel and other smaller hand tools including their safe use and maintenance.	✓	✓	✓
<i>Large hand tools</i>	Understand the correct and safe use of larger tools as well as appropriate loading for buckets and wheelbarrows.	✓	✓	✓
<i>Site formation processes</i>	Understand the process of site formation, including fills, layers, structures or natural deposits. Everything is in the ground for a reason and sites come to look the way they do now for a number of different reasons. By the time you leave site you will have a basic understanding of why the site looks the way it does.	✓	✓	✓
<i>Stratigraphic excavation</i>	Understand the concept of physical and chronological stratigraphy as well as the methods of recording the sequences and be able to remove layers and fills in the correct order for structured excavation.		✓	✓
<i>Artefact recording</i>	Understand how to recover artefacts safely from archaeological deposits, how to store finds on-site and how to complete the Small Finds record.		✓	✓
<i>Context recording</i>	Understand the procedure for the completion of a standard context record sheet using Digital Dig Team.		✓	✓
<i>Survey</i>	Appreciate the concept of site/national grid systems and placement of trenches within this. It is important we know exactly where archaeological remains were found			✓

Skill	Learning outcome	One Day	Two Days	Week +
	and you will be familiarised with the use of traditional hand tape measurements and in the application of GPS and total station readings.			
<i>Measured drawing (planning and section drawing)</i>	Understand the various elements that must be present on a plan and section drawing, including the use of conventions and how the drawing is located.			✓
<i>Photography</i>	Have a basic grasp of the fundamental requirements for camera use and the sequenced methodology of photographic recording.			✓
<i>Sampling</i>	Understand the procedure for the collecting archaeological samples for artefacts and ecofacts, including why we take them, how they are recorded and what happens next.			✓

National Occupational Standards

All our training programmes are built upon the framework of National Occupational Standards (NOS) developed by the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists. The NOS for archaeological practice defines the range of skills that archaeologists may need to perfect in order to do their job. They provide the perfect framework for training programmes as they break down a complicated job into a collection of individual skills and tasks. This is great for both practising and avocational archaeologists as it provides a clear roadmap for skills development.

To help that skills development, you can find the individual NOS standards which this course supports below. If you would like to record your own skills development, we recommend you use the Archaeology Skills Passport. This has been developed in line with NOS, and provides a simple record book of your learning achievements.

The learning outcomes from this course are defined using National Occupational Standards (NOS). This course *supports* and *contributes* to the Knowledge Requirements for particular units within the NOS for Archaeological Practice. These are:

AC5 Contribute to intrusive investigations

<https://www.ukstandards.org.uk/PublishedNos/CCSAPAC5.pdf>

This includes:

- Preparing for operations, including understanding the methods used, the safety arrangements, identifying suitable equipment and applying technical standards
- Undertaking intrusive investigation, including identifying, investigating and recording archaeology and using appropriate tools competently
- Preparing records and schedules, including making accurate records and verifying data

Recording your archaeology skills

For those participants who are keen to develop their archaeological skills-set, we recommend using the Archaeology Skills Passport to record the skills you learn as you progress. Depending on whether you are joining us for a couple of days or a full week, you will have the opportunity to learn or add to the skills you already have. The course contributes to a number of Core Skills as identified in the Skills Passport, and the table above provides an outline of which should be expected to be achieved during your experience.

Providing feedback

Once you have completed your fieldwork with us, we will ask a couple of additional questions about your experience. This helps us see how much you have learnt while you have been part of our excavations and also makes sure we are doing a great job! If there is anything you would like to know or would like to tell us while you are still digging, just speak to a member of the team.

The Field School Curriculum – what to expect!

Dig For One Day

Morning briefing

On the first morning of your arrival to site, you will be greeted by the DigVentures welcoming party where members of the team will introduce themselves and their roles. We will ask you to introduce yourself as well, and ask a little about why you decided to join the dig. All new Venturers will then receive a full project briefing and site induction, while existing Venturers will head out to the trenches to make a start. The project briefing will include a background to the archaeological research, detailing why we are digging the site, what we are hoping to achieve and what our archaeological strategy and methodology is. As part of the site induction, all Venturers will be talked through our site Risk Assessment, where a member of the team will highlight any particular Health and Safety issues or advice. We will also create your own Venturer profile on the project Digital Dig Team website and then head out to the trenches.

To the trenches!

When you arrive on site you will receive a full orientation from one of the DigVentures team. This begins with a background to the period we are investigating, re-capping the aims of the dig and the site's significance. You'll be shown any relevant aerial maps, previous research and geophysics results of the area. Venturers are then introduced to each trench, where you can see what we've found so far and what we plan to achieve by the end of the dig. You will learn about the tools of the trade, why we excavate and record the way we do and what to do when you find something. Finally, we will run through the day's tasks and what you will be doing while you are on-site.

Trowelling 101

The most important tool in an archaeologist's kit is their trowel. No matter what site you're on there's always plenty of trowelling to be done. This may be the first time you come face to face with archaeology which is still in the ground and yet to be discovered - it's important we get the basics nailed before developing your skills further.

Skills and learning

Learning opportunities will present themselves throughout the day while we are on site and will vary from site to site, depending on what we are investigating, what we have found and what stage the project is at. As a minimum, you will walk away from site having learnt the following skills:

Skill	Learning outcome
<i>Professional ethics</i>	Can anyone just turn up and dig an archaeological site? Or is there more to it than that?
<i>Site Safety</i>	Be aware of the particular Health & Safety issues on the archaeological project
<i>Small handtools</i>	Understand the correct use of the trowel and other smaller hand tools including their safe use and maintenance.
<i>Large handtools</i>	Understand the correct and safe use of larger tools as well as appropriate loading for buckets and wheelbarrows.
<i>Site formation processes</i>	Understand the process of site formation, including fills, layers, structures or natural deposits. Everything is in the ground for a reason and sites come to look the way they do now for a number of different reasons. By the time you leave site you will have a basic understanding of why the site looks the way it does.

Dig For Two Days

Morning briefing

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To the trenches!

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<i>Artefact recovery and recording</i>	Understand how to recover artefacts safely from archaeological deposits, how to store finds on-site and how to complete the Small Finds record. Where possible, participants will also learn how to wash and quantify different artefact types and materials.
<i>Stratigraphic excavation</i>	Understand the concept of physical and chronological stratigraphy as well as the methods of recording the sequences and be able to remove layers and fills in the correct order for structured excavation.
<i>Context recording</i>	Understand the procedure for the completion of a standard context record sheet using Digital Dig Team.

Dig For A Week (or more)

Morning briefing

On the first morning of your arrival to site, you will be greeted by the DigVentures welcoming party where members of the team will introduce themselves and their roles. We will ask you to introduce yourself as well, and ask a little about why you decided to join the dig. All new Venturers will then receive a full project briefing and site induction, while existing Venturers will head out to the trenches to make a start. The project briefing will include a background to the archaeological research, detailing why we are digging the site, what we are hoping to achieve and what our archaeological strategy and methodology is. As part of the site induction, all Venturers will be talked through our site Risk Assessment, where a member of the team will highlight any particular Health and Safety issues or advice. We will also create your own Venturer profile on the project Digital Dig Team website and then head out to the trenches.

To the trenches!

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<i>Context recording</i>	Understand the procedure for the completion of a standard context record sheet using Digital Dig Team.
<i>Survey</i>	Appreciate the concept of site/national grid systems and placement of trenches within this. It is important we know exactly where archaeological remains were found and you will be familiarised with the use of traditional hand tape measurements and in the application of GPS and total station readings.
<i>Measured drawing (planning and section drawing)</i>	Understand the various elements that must be present on a plan and section drawing, including the use of conventions and how the drawing is located.
<i>Photography</i>	Have a basic grasp of the fundamental requirements for camera use and the sequenced methodology of photographic recording.
<i>Sampling</i>	Understand the procedure for the collecting archaeological samples for artefacts and ecofacts, how to record them, why we take them and what happens next.