

Jobs in British Archaeology

As usual the variety of job titles caused problems and, again as usual, there was a problem getting accurate information, particularly for excavator jobs. Some organisations are even reticent about advertising their pay rates (which makes one fear the worst), and some larger units have a rolling recruitment programme and thus may not advertise or know how many staff were recruited from a particular advertisement.

Job numbers and contract length

There was a marked drop in jobs advertised in most categories. Again all excavator jobs were temporary. It will be interesting to see whether this changes with the new law on Fixed Term Appointments which, whilst it does not increase job security, does reduce the difference in employment rights between permanent and temporary staff.

There was only one advertisement for a Unit Manager in 2001, so the rest must be happy in their jobs! Finds and Environmental jobs were few, and the Illustrator category also showed some decrease.

Pay

The overall position was an increase of 3.8% but this masks some large variations. Excavators had real increases of 2.9% showing a marked slowdown from previous years and only just above RPI. Supervisors and Field officers fared even worse with a slight decrease for the former and a slight increase for the latter. Project Managers, however, forged ahead with an inflation busting 7.2%. Junior and Senior Cultural Resource Managers again had mixed fortunes with Junior posts leaping by 12.3% but Senior posts declining by 2%. Finds and Environmental posts gained 11.7% compared to the fall in the previous year but the figures were skewed by a couple of high paying posts on a very small base line. The reverse is true for Surveyors,

Designers and Illustrators who had a cut of 3.8% again skewed by a couple of low paying (Government funded!) posts on a small base line.

IFA membership

As in previous years few jobs cited IFA membership as a requirement. This is disturbing for higher ranking jobs (requiring Member level competence). Since many of the organisations placing these adverts are RAOs, it seems strange that such low priority is placed on IFA membership in recruitment.

IFA recommended minimums

On a more positive note most jobs are now above the IFA recommended minimum for each grade. It may mean these are now too low if most employers feel comfortable with them! However the problems of uprating them other than in line with Local

Authority grades need to be addressed before radical departures can be suggested. It is now noticeable that whereas many private employers originally paid below the minimum for PIFA level responsibility, now many are above and the average is held back by the Local Authority units who have little scope for independent increases.

If meeting the minimum is now longer a challenge, then the few who still cannot meet them really ought to be looking at their employment practices. English Heritage supports the work undertaken by the IFA to raise standards yet itself pays below the minimum. So come on EH make it your New Year resolution not to employ Project Assistants at £11,133 when the IFA recommends £11,817.

The overall number of jobs declined markedly this year, though how much is contraction in demand and how much is better management of work programmes is unclear.



For the ninth year relevant jobs advertised in the JIS weekly bulletin have been collated to give an overall picture of the archaeological job-scene.

James Drummond-Murray has just taken this task over from Gordon Malcolm and here presents some of his findings.



TABLE 1 Jobs in British archaeology, 2001 summary

CATEGORY	EXC	SUP	FO	PM	J CRM	S CRM	UM	FEC	IDS	Misc	TOTALS
No. of jobs	203	22	23	10	44	17	1	12	17	13	362
Mean starting pay	12378	12741	15572	20881	17532	23012	26000	16351	14908	19882	14576
Min. starting pay	10055	11523	13299	16725	12192	16173	-	11180	12799	15764	
Max. starting pay	14500	14270	20364	<28000	<22000	28422	-	24332	<22000	34664	
Achieve IFA min. pay	86%	55%	100%	90%	95%	95%	100%	82%	86%	N/A	
Temporary contracts	100%	50%	75%	10%	38%	30%	-	50%	35%	45%	
Mention IFA	0%	10%	20%	50%	15%	1 post	0%	0%	1 post	1 post	
Mention accom.											

EXC = Excavator; SA = Site assistant; AS = Assistant supervisor; SUP = Supervisor; FO = Field officer; PM = Project manager; JCRM = Junior SMR/CRM; SCRM = Senior SMR/CRM; UM = Unit manager; FEC = Finds, Environmental or Conservation; IDS = Illustration, Design or Survey

TABLE 2 Jobs in British archaeology: comparison of pay & job numbers, 2000 – 2001 (based on enhanced data)

		Mean pay			No. of jobs	
		2000	2001	Change	2000	2001
FIELD POSTS	Excavator	12024	12378	+2.9%	315	228
	Supervisor	12868	12741	-1.0%	10	22
	Field Officer	15518	15572	+0.35%	17	23
	Project Manager	19447	20881	+7.2%	19	10
CRM POSTS	Junior CRM/SMR	15608	17532	+12.3%	74	44
	Senior CRM/SMR	23486	23012	-2.0%	23	17
	CRM/Unit Manager	24404	26000	-	7	1
SPECIALIST POSTS	Finds / Enviro / Conserv	14632	16351	+11.7%	43	12
	Illustr / Design / Survey	15497	14908	-3.8%	23	17
MISCELLANEOUS		16848	19882	-	18	13
Overall		14033	14576	+3.8%	549	382

