

Archaeology Training Forum

Meeting 11am on the 26 June 2014
Hungate Excavation HQ

MINUTES

Attendees:, Kate Geary, Tara Sutcliffe, Robin Turner, Rebecca Jones, Peter Connelly, Kenny Aitchison, Bob Hook. All thanked PC and YAT for their hospitality.

1. Apologies: Bob Croft, Ken Smith, Mark Beattie-Edwards, Anthony Sinclair, Rai Karl
2. Minutes of last meeting (8 April 2014)

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as correct
3. Matters arising & action points from last meeting
 - CCSkills contact: KG noted that Rob West attended the HEF Skills Task Group on behalf of CCSkills, KG to ask him to a contact. BH suggested Stephen Kennedy. **Action: KG to contact**
 - SCFA liaison: PC has spoken to Carl Heron from SCFA, he will be attending the FAME Forum and is PC is meeting him in advance. PC has put together draft questionnaire asking FAME members about whether they take student placements which will be turned into survey monkey poll.
Action: PC to report back to next ATF and to SCFA re capacity.
 - MAST representation on ATF: KG to find out whether AS did contact MBE re MAST
 - Researcher Development Framework: PC has checked with AS but no further information available
4. Report from CCSkills

No report had been received.

KG, BH and KA reported that the CCSkills rep on the HEF Skills Task Group had responded to perceived criticism that CCSkills lacks representation within the cultural (as opposed to creative) sector. He had welcomed more engagement with the historic environment but it was not clear what the benefits to the sector were. BH/KG will circulate further information if and when available. BH noted that CCSkills has a target for creative apprenticeships for 2015 and is keen for partners to contribute by branding external training schemes which helps to meet their objectives.

The role of CCSkills and the National Skills Academy was discussed as was the wisdom of having this as a standing agenda item when there is very rarely anything to report. It was agreed to remove as a standing item.

Action: KG to remove from future agenda

The role of CCSkills with regards to NOS and NVQs was also discussed. BH noted that the UK Commission for Education and Skills (UKCES) has ownership of NOS, current thinking is that NOS will cease to exist in coming years but will be replaced by similar statements of competence. The implications for ATF were considered, particularly with relation to linking training courses to NOS as a condition of ATF endorsement. BH clarified that all the work that went into NOS has not been wasted. It was suggested that ATF could take ownership of the standards and can promote to employers through FAME as an industry owned set of standards.

It was suggested that we could invite someone from UKCES to next meeting.

Action: BH to contact UKCES to see who we should approach

The potential to invite other external organisations was discussed. HLF was suggested but it was noted that they are restricted in the meetings they attend due to conflicts of interest. It was noted that it would be useful to invite them to attend as observers.

The Forum then discussed who else it should be talking to. It was noted that government expects employers to talk directly to BIS (in England). BH is in contact with BIS.

Action: RJ and RT to find out who we should be talking to in Scotland

RT noted that CCSkills in Scotland are trying to be active. The Arts and Business Scotland partnership is starting to engage with heritage.

David Connolly of the British Archaeological Jobs Resource (BAJR) joined the meeting and it was agreed to take the item on the BAJR Skills Passport at this point.

5. Skills Passport

CD outlined the background to the development of the Skills Passport. Although the idea goes way back, much of the development work was undertaken as part of a project with Hannah Cobb and Manchester University on the Ardnamurchan Transitions Project. The passport has been simplified following feedback and is aimed at career entry archaeologists. Skills are assessed by supervisors on a novice to expert scale and signed off. Also includes a CPD log. DC also noted that there are plans to also develop a careers passport for more experienced staff. The passport was tested with students in the initial phases (through ATP), more recent testing has been carried out with trainers. DC will be working with Hannah Cobb on future schemes.

There was some discussion about how skills were signed off and whether this process was open to abuse. DC noted that the aim is to get skills signed off four times by different supervisors or employers.

ATF members were enthusiastic about the passport and keen to help promote it. PC suggested DC talk to FAME and offered to raise it with the FAME board. RT asked

whether there was scope to link to skills to NOS, DC explained that the skills listed in the passport are more detailed than NOS but was keen to explore potential.

Action: KG to discuss with DC re how we can incorporate NOS

DC also reported that a number of different universities are keen to use it with their students. The costs are £7.50 +p&p, employers can buy in bulk.

6. ATF Vision and forward plan

i. Career entry pathways

KG described the IfA Pathway to PIfA initiative. KA suggested looking at the ICON Career Pathway on website.

Action: KG to give short presentation at next meeting with supporting papers circulated in advance

ii. FAME/SCFA working party

PC has been in touch with SCFA and invited them to send a representative. PC reported on other progress under matters arising

iii. NVQ development

KG reported on current situation, EDI/Pearson are dropping cultural heritage and archaeology awards. A new awarding organisation is being sought, the Scottish Qualifications Authority is reportedly taking on the Scottish Awards and may also be interested in those offered in the rest of the UK. KA reported that ICON has also been trying to get its Conservation Technician qualification (CTQ) onto QCF. The potential for IfA becoming an Awarding Organisation was discussed but KA noted that the rules have changed to make it harder to become an awarding organisation.

BH noted that qualifications could also be offered outside of the QCF, they just wouldn't be nationally recognised. Demand for a non-accredited award would be an issue.

The need to develop a plan B, if no new awarding organisation comes forward, was emphasised.

Action: KG to find out who owns IPR, when new body is likely to have come about and whether IfA could be an awarding organisation.

iv. Website

TJS reported that CBA no longer has capacity to support external websites, Sarah Howard is moving websites onto wordpress which then can be updated easily by anyone within a group. SH prepared to put together some instructions. ATF needs to give CBA instructions on what it wants to do. Need to think about update policy, how many times we want to update.

It was noted that the change gives us an opportunity to think about what information needs to be on the website and how often it's practical to update.

Action: all to think about what else we would want to see on that website, bring ideas to next meeting

TJS also reported that CBA is considering changing the way TORC appears and integrating it into a broader package of training facilities. The ownership of TORC was discussed: originally it was a subset of ATF but has been kindly hosted by CBA and now can't be maintained in current form. The ownership of the domain name needs to be clarified. It was agreed to invite Sarah Howard to attend the next meeting to present more concrete proposals.

Action: KG to invite

7. QAA review of the archaeology subject benchmark statement

There was some confusion as to whether the consultation period for the new benchmark statement had passed.

Action: KG to check and confirm

8. ATF award

The lack of response to the individual ATF training award was discussed and it was suggested that we revert to a single award next year. It was noted that the award has always been open to nominations from individuals

9. AOB

RJ noted that Newcastle University have developed a Mooc online course on Hadrians Wall – aimed at GCSE level but open to everyone and free to access. Welcome development.

Action: RJ to circulate link, to be launched in September.

Action: IfA and CBA to pick up as a news item in due course.

Bob Hook distributed a careers map for food industry which is being used as means to promote the sector to school leavers as a careers choice. It was agreed that something similar would be useful for heritage to demonstrate the available career and how they link together. BH noted that EH can produce something internally within next 3 months.

Action: all to agree job terms and titles in the next few weeks to roll out.

RJ also noted that the Scottish Archaeology Strategy is coming out for consultation and includes a strategy for skills.

Action: RJ to send to KG to circulate for consultation by end of Aug

RT noted that Scotland's Urban Past project has been awarded funding by the HLF. All offered their congratulations. Recruiting will start shortly for a project team to start in November.

10. Dates of Future Meetings:

24th September in London

Action: BH to check availability of meeting room and confirm

December meeting to coincide with TAG in Manchester (15-17 December)
tbc.