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978-0-521-73469-1 - *Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways*

Joe Flatman

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Becoming an Archaeologist

Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways is an engaging handbook on career paths in the area of archaeology. It outlines in straightforward fashion the entire process of getting a job in archaeology, including the various career options; the training required; and how to get positions in the academic, commercial, and government worlds. It also includes a discussion of careers in related heritage professions, such as museums and conservation societies. The book includes a series of interviews with real archaeologists, all young professionals who began their careers within the past ten years. These insider guides offer essential tips on how they got their first jobs and progressed in their careers. Written in an accessible style, the book is essential reading for anyone interested in the realities of archaeology in the twenty-first century.

Joe Flatman is the County Archaeologist of Surrey in southeast England and a senior lecturer at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. He has published widely on issues of archaeological practice, ethics, and law in archaeology. His most recent books include *Ships and Shipping in Medieval Manuscripts* and *Archaeology in Society: Its Relevance in the Modern World* (coedited with Marcy Rockman).

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Frontmatter

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*To my parents, Frances and Martin Flatman
With my love and thanks for providing a unique grounding in the pleasures
and perils of professional life
“Not all Greeks were Spartans”*

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Frontmatter

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A Guide to Professional Pathways

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Institute of Archaeology, University College London



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Frontmatter

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978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

Joe Flatman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Tables and Figures</i>	page ix
<i>Preface and Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction	1
<i>Why Archaeology Matters – Archaeology in the Real World</i>	2
<i>What Is This Book About?</i>	5
<i>A Note on Terminology</i>	6
One: What Is – and Isn't – Archaeology?	8
<i>What Is Archaeology?</i>	8
<i>The History and Development of Archaeology as a Career</i>	11
<i>World Archaeology</i>	17
<i>Thematic Routes in Archaeology</i>	17
<i>Archaeology as a Career: The Contemporary Archaeology Job Market</i>	30
<i>The Archaeological Mind-set: The Pleasures of Archaeology</i>	37
<i>What Isn't Archaeology? Archaeology and Ethics, Professional Standards, and Codes of Conduct</i>	38
<i>Interviewee: Joe</i>	43
Two: Skills and Training	47
<i>Introduction</i>	47
<i>Why Study Archaeology?</i>	48
<i>Archaeology and Disabilities</i>	49
<i>Going on Your First Archaeological Project</i>	50
<i>Pre-university Education and Training</i>	56
<i>Archaeology in the School Curriculum</i>	57
<i>Academic Pathways in Archaeology</i>	58
<i>Choosing Your Degree Specialty</i>	62
<i>Getting into the University of Your Choice</i>	64
<i>Choosing a University – Courses and Locations</i>	66
<i>Selecting Courses at University</i>	68
<i>Postgraduate Qualifications – Graduate School and the MA/MSc</i>	73
<i>Studying for a Doctorate</i>	76
<i>Additional Training and Skill Sets</i>	78
<i>Interviewee: Marcy</i>	80

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

Joe Flatman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

Three: Cultural Resource Management	84
<i>Introduction</i>	84
<i>Types of Work Undertaken by CRM Archaeologists</i>	86
<i>Significance of CRM in the Profession</i>	89
<i>A Day in the Life</i>	91
<i>Career Structure and Qualifications</i>	97
<i>Lifestyle</i>	99
<i>Consultants and Specialists within Larger Non-archaeological Organizations</i>	104
<i>Freelance Archaeology</i>	106
<i>Interviewee: Cass</i>	107
Four: Academia	110
<i>Introduction</i>	110
<i>A Day in the Life</i>	111
<i>Career Structure and Qualifications</i>	116
<i>Lifestyle, Career Progression, and Employability</i>	118
<i>Working Conditions</i>	120
<i>Specialist Archaeological Staff</i>	122
<i>Interviewee: Andy</i>	123
Five: Local Government	127
<i>Introduction</i>	127
<i>A Day in the Life</i>	128
<i>Career Structure – Development Control Officers</i>	132
<i>Career Structure – Historic Environment Records and Their Officers</i>	141
<i>Career Structure – Specialists</i>	143
<i>Lifestyle</i>	148
<i>Skills, Expertise, and Qualifications</i>	149
<i>Interviewee: Hannah</i>	151
Six: Central Government	154
<i>Introduction</i>	154
<i>Central Heritage Organizations in the UK</i>	154
<i>Central Heritage Organizations in the US</i>	158
<i>Central Heritage Organizations in Australia</i>	164
<i>Non-archaeological/Heritage Organizations</i>	165
<i>A Day in the Life</i>	170
<i>Career Structure, Qualifications, and Experience</i>	173
<i>Interviewee: Dave</i>	174
Seven: Public and Community Archaeology	177
<i>Introduction</i>	177
<i>Public Archaeology Organizations</i>	178
<i>Lifestyles, Career Structures, and Qualifications</i>	180
<i>Teaching Archaeology at the School Level</i>	184
<i>Archaeological Outreach Organizations</i>	185
<i>Professional Archaeological Organizations</i>	187
<i>Archaeology and the Media</i>	188

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

Joe Flatman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

<i>Museum Archaeologists</i>	190
<i>Interviewee: Kara</i>	193
Conclusion	197
<i>Top Ten Tips for Budding Archaeologists</i>	197
Appendix 1: Useful Websites	201
Appendix 2: Glossaries	207
<i>Official and Unofficial Terminology, Concepts, and Meanings</i> <i>(Including Legal Terms)</i>	207
<i>Organizations and Acronyms</i>	211
Appendix 3: Suggested Equipment to Take on an Archaeological Project	214
<i>Things to Do before You Go on Fieldwork</i>	214
<i>General Items</i>	215
<i>Archaeological Equipment</i>	216
<i>General Clothing</i>	216
<i>Footwear</i>	217
<i>Outerwear (Situation Dependent)</i>	217
<i>Health and Hygiene</i>	217
<i>Miscellaneous – Serious and Essential</i>	218
<i>Miscellaneous – Not-So-Serious Possibilities That Are Not Essential</i>	219
<i>Things That You Absolutely Should Not Even Think about Bringing or Doing</i>	220
<i>Camping Equipment (If Instructed to Bring)</i>	220
References	221
Index	229

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

Joe Flatman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Tables and Figures

Tables

1. Primary archaeological employment sectors in the UK, January 2008	<i>page</i> 31
2. Comparison of the 2007 Irish, 2004–05 Australian, 2007–08 British, 2004 and 2005 US, and 2007–08 European surveys of archaeologists	34
3. A guide to the different educational systems of the UK, US, and Australia	60
4. The pros and cons of studying toward a higher degree in archaeology	74
5. The pros and cons of working in CRM archaeology	92
6. The pros and cons of working in academic archaeology	112
7. The pros and cons of working in local government archaeology	130
8. The pros and cons of working in central government archaeology	171
9. The pros and cons of working in public archaeology	181

Figures

1. The structure and interrelationships of the archaeological job market and related disciplines	7
2. The development of archaeology as a career	13
3. The major thematic groupings in archaeology and related disciplines	19
4. The realities of twenty-first-century maritime archaeology	27
5. The archaeological mind-set	39
6. Fieldwork training in action	52
7. The realities of fieldwork, part 1	53
8. The realities of fieldwork, part 2	55
9. Archaeology in the school curriculum	59
10. Archaeology in the university curriculum, part 1	67
11. Archaeology in the university curriculum, part 2	71

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

Joe Flatman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Tables and Figures

12. The structure and interrelationships of the CRM archaeology sector	87
13. The realities of fieldwork, part 3	88
14. The realities of fieldwork, part 4	89
15. The realities of fieldwork, part 5	94
16. The realities of fieldwork, part 6	95
17. The realities of fieldwork, part 7	97
18. The realities of fieldwork, part 8	105
19. The structure and interrelationships of the academic archaeology sector	111
20. The life of an academic archaeologist, part 1	115
21. The life of an academic archaeologist, part 2	121
22. The structure and interrelationships of the local government archaeology sector	129
23. Working in local government, part 1	137
24. Working in local government, part 2	139
25. The structure and interrelationships of the central government archaeology sector	155
26. Working in central government, part 1	157
27. Working in central government, part 2	159
28. Working in central government, part 3	162
29. Working in central government, part 4	163
30. The structure and interrelationships of the public and community archaeology sector	179
31. Public archaeology in action, part 1	183
32. Public archaeology in action, part 2	189
33. Museum archaeology	191

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

Joe Flatman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface and Acknowledgments

I wrote this book primarily to help prospective archaeologists (in particular, archaeology students) better plan their futures. However, this book is also borne of my frustration at the widespread misunderstanding of the practice of archaeology and lifestyle of archaeologists in the modern world. As a consequence, although I have tried to paint a balanced portrait of archaeology throughout the book, this is, inevitably and unashamedly, partly a personal perspective – one to which some readers may take exception. I make no apologies for that. One thing that I would emphasize in particular, however, is that although this book is about “professional” archaeology, it is absolutely not a call for a solely paid archaeological sector in which all voluntary/amateur/avocational/community/independent involvement has been driven out of existence. As a long-standing member of the UK’s Council for British Archaeology (dating back to my teenage membership in the Young Archaeologists Club), and lately and very proudly serving on that organization’s board of trustees, I would emphasize my belief in the key place of the independent individual or group in archaeology, and that archaeology – and wider society – are big enough places to see both paid and unpaid archaeologists working to the highest professional standards. I do not believe that these two ways of doing archaeology are mutually exclusive, as some commentators suggest. Nor do I believe that the improved living and working standards so many archaeologists urgently deserve can only and inevitably come through the loss of the volunteer. As I highlight repeatedly throughout this book, I sincerely believe that the single best thing that anyone can do to get involved in archaeology is to join his or her local archaeological or historical society.

In terms of acknowledgments, first and foremost I am extremely grateful to Beatrice Rehl at Cambridge University Press for seeing the potential of a book on this subject, commissioning it, and then editing it, as well as to her assistant Amanda Smith for much other hard work in bringing the book to fruition. Thanks also to James Dunn, Production Controller at Cambridge University Press, for keeping us all on track. Barbara Walthall, the Project Manager at Aptara responsible for this book, must then particularly be thanked for her exceptional work in preparing this book for publication; Deborah Wenger, who so diligently copyedited this work; as well as other – alas unnamed – production and proofreading staff are thanked. Similarly, I wish to give special thanks to my managers, Patricia Reynolds at Surrey

Cambridge University Press

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface and Acknowledgments

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978-0-521-73469-1 - Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface and Acknowledgments*

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