

Unit AE1 Characterise the archaeological resource and recommend action

Elements

AE1.1 Describe the archaeological resource

AE1.2 Describe what data the resource has the potential to reveal

AE1.3 Describe the potential significance of the archaeological resource

AE1.4 Evaluate options and recommend action

Unit Commentary

This unit is for archaeologists who undertake the characterisation of any aspect of the archaeological resource (landscapes, sites, structures, objects). Characterisation involves synthesis of all the available information about the resource. If the available information is insufficient for an adequate understanding of character, it facilitates the design of work to bring that understanding up to an appropriate level. Understanding the character and significance of an archaeological resource allows due weight to be given to it in any situation threatening to damage or destroy it, whether by natural or human agency. An adequately informed understanding of the character and significance of archaeological evidence enables strategies for maintenance, repair or preservation to be devised, as appropriate to the situation that needs managing. It also enables the development of options that take account of the availability of resources and other practical considerations.

AE1 Characterise the archaeological resource and recommend action

AE1.1 Describe the archaeological resource

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) assembling, collating and reviewing all relevant data which defines the **archaeological resource**
- b) clarifying the **purpose** for which a description of the resource is required
- c) selecting methods for describing the resource which are appropriate
- d) **describing the resource** accurately and presenting information in a format that will facilitate further action and decision making

Occupational Context

1 Archaeological resource

- Sites/ landscapes
- artefact assemblages/ structures
- databases
- research literature/ publications
- professional resource e.g. consultancy

2 Purpose

- to instruct users
- to log
- to inform supervisors
- to design protection and preservation
- to develop an application for future research/ analysis/ interpretation

3 Describing the resource

- Reconstruct the history of the resource
- Detail composition of resource
- Detail application of resource in its own context
- Describe research already carried out on this type of resource/ Describe what research still needs to be carried out

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know about:

The Resource

- Types of archaeological resource
- Significance of resource
- Ways of analysing/ approaching resource
- Different values and functional capacity of different resources

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AE1.1 Describe the archaeological resource

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- Presentation skills
- Observation skills

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can describe the archaeological resource

The candidate should be questioned, based upon Resource Report documentation. This will provide detailed compositional and contextual information on the resource, offering statistical and qualitative data.

Evidence Rules

N/A.

AE1 Characterise the archaeological resource and recommend action

AE1.2 Describe what data the resource has the potential to reveal

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) reviewing available data about the resource and its context
- b) identifying comparative data, wider contextual information and precedents **relevant to the resource.**
- c) where appropriate, inviting the expert opinion of others regarding both the resource and its context.
- d) synthesising the **potential of the resource** to provide significant information and contribute to wider understanding of the historic environment
- e) preparing a report which describes, substantiates and presents the findings

Occupational Context

1 Relevant to the resource

- In terms of historical period
- In terms of culture
- In terms of form, composition and content
- In terms of field/ discipline

2 Potential of the resource

- invasive / non-invasive testing
- database development
- contribution to archaeological analysis/ interpretation/ research literature

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know about:

Data sources

- Types, range, variety
- Application and usage
- Compositions
- Related analysis methods
- Associated research/ professional expertise

Data Analysis

- Types and methods
 - Outputs
 - Measures
 - Requirements and limitations
 - Application to research
- 4 Associated expertise

AE1 Characterise the archaeological resource and recommend action

AE1.2 Describe what data the resource has the potential to reveal

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- Report writing and presentation skills
- Communication skills

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can describe what data the resource has the potential to reveal

The candidate should be questioned on documentary evidence which describes, substantiates and presents the potential of the resource.

- This should be in the form of a written report.

Evidence Rules

N/A.

AE1 Characterise the archaeological resource and recommend action

AE1.3 Describe the potential significance of the archaeological resource

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) reviewing all available data on the archaeological resource and its context
- b) defining the **criteria** by which significance will be determined.
- c) applying the criteria to determine the basis of **advice to interested parties**
- d) preparing a report assessing the significance of the resource

Occupational Context

- 1 Criteria will take account of:**
 - international, national and local policies
 - legal, regulatory constraints
 - historical significance
 - cultural importance
 - economic potential
 - social/amenity value
 - potential costs and benefits of taking further action
- 2 Advice to interested parties on**
 - preservation, conservation and protection
 - value and worth
 - safety and security
 - investment
 - presentation, exhibition, display and public dissemination
 - contacts, advisory, communicative and professional channels/ networks
 - related research/ accession in the field
 - future developments

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know about:

Resource potential

- Resource profiling
- Investigation requirements: human and material resources
- Legislative, statutory and funding regulations
- Organisational direction and policy

Presentation methods

- According to different user requirements (learning, research, education, entertainment, investment)
 - According to different social and cultural profiles of the audience
 - According to own professional and archaeological competencies
- 4 According to company or organisational policy and performance strategy.

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AE1.3 Describe the potential significance of the archaeological resource

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- Needs analysis
- Risk assessment
- Presentation skills

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can describe the potential significance of the archaeological resource

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the Significance Report, to explore

- the existing and potential significance of the resource, including proposals for immediate and strategic action and for supporting research and analysis.

Evidence Rules

N/A.

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AE1.4 Evaluate options and recommend action

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) assessing the **vulnerability of the resources**
- b) analysing findings from research in the context of policies, plans and resources and identifying significant factors affecting **future action**
- c) devising options for action most likely to optimise the recovery of data and the conservation of the archaeological resource
- d) where appropriate, consulting those with expert knowledge on the **viability** of alternative courses of action
- e) preparing proposals, plans and comparative estimates for alternative courses of action
- f) presenting options for action to interested parties and justifying preferred course of action

Occupational Context

- 1 Vulnerability of the resources**
 - ownership of the resource
 - condition of resource
 - location and environment
 - constraints on access
 - public interest and media coverage
 - strain on financial and human resources
 - legalities and funding/ statutory regulations
 - risk factors
- 2 Future action in terms of**
 - presentation/ dissemination
 - further research
 - intrusive investigation
 - conservation
 - policy change
 - organisational strategy
 - contribution to the discipline
- 3 Viability**
 - financial
 - political
 - ethical
 - strategic

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know about:

Options

- Policies and legal affecting future action
- Which experts and specialists to contact for further information
- Previous courses of action
- Types of analysis
- Audience: interests, access restrictions, presentation methods, motivations and requirements of interested parties

AE1 Characterise the archaeological resource and recommend action

AE1.4 Evaluate options and recommend action

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- Evaluation and analysis techniques
- Communication skills
- Risk assessment techniques

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can evaluate options and recommend action

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the documentation provided, to explore the following

- Proposals, plans and comparative estimates including evidence of extensive research.
- Statistical information detailing cost
- Qualitative information demonstrating recognition of public or professional reception and speculations upon interest and developments.

Evidence Rules

N/A.