Career options with an archaeology degree

From field work and heritage to education and finance, an archaeology degree will equip you with skills that can open up a range of opportunities. Learn more about your options and how we can support you on your journey.

Studying this degree not only qualifies you to pursue professional archaeology, but as many graduates have discovered, it equips you with a very broad range of skills that can take you into many other professional fields.

If you decide not to pursue archaeology, it is important to assess your transferable skills and consider your wider interests and motivations in order to come to conclusions about your next steps after graduation. Archaeology, and many alternative careers, will require relevant experience and possibly another professional qualification, so it is important to think ahead.

What skills have I got?

Subject related skills include:
• application of theoretical and scientific principles and concepts to archaeological problems
• field work, post-excavation and laboratory techniques
• application of statistical and numerical techniques to process archaeological data
• interpretation of spatial data

An archaeology graduate will also typically have the following skills:
• interpersonal skills and experience of teamwork gained through fieldwork and practical projects
• numerical, IT and analytical skills
• ability to assess, evaluate and present evidence and new information
• presentation skills
• attention to detail

It is important that you can talk about these skills on application forms and in interviews.

Range of careers

It is common for graduates to develop their subject knowledge and skills further if they wish to pursue a career in archaeology. Nottingham students in the past few years have also gone on to do relevant masters courses, such as: museum studies, heritage management, geographical information science etc in order to enter related career fields. A small proportion have gone on to take professional training courses in law, advertising, human resources and teacher training. Outside of professional archaeology, recent graduates have gone into education, local authorities, the Civil Service, administration in the education sector, the arts, museums and heritage, finance, hospitality, retail, recruitment and film production.

Roles have included: media production runner, human resource manager, recruitment consultant, finance officer, account manager, museum assistant, teaching assistant and retail assistant.

Stepping stones

It is true to say that many archaeology graduates (and those from other arts subjects) take some time building up a series of steps to get to a specific career goal or even to decide what career suits them. This could be due to a variety of reasons for example:
• the sector they want to enter requires entry at non graduate level (for example, museum and heritage, publishing, arts administration and marketing)
• they are saving up to do a postgraduate course or travel and therefore their first destination is a stop gap to fund this
Building skills and experience

Work experience
Developing skills outside of your degree course will enhance your CV and allow you to provide evidence of these in applications and at interviews. Examples are listed below:

- The Nottingham Internship Scheme provides summer and graduate internships throughout the year. We work closely with a huge range of local and national businesses and organisations to bring you an exciting range of internship opportunities for both current students and recent graduates. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/uoninternships](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/uoninternships)
- The Nottingham Advantage Award offers interesting extracurricular modules to develop your employability. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/advantage](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/advantage)
- The Students’ Union offers a wide range of volunteering options both locally and internationally which you can fit around your studies – they have a fair at the start of every academic year but you can get in touch any time. [www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/activities/volunteering](http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/activities/volunteering)
- Students in Classrooms programmes are an excellent way of gaining experience in schools or with young people on campus. You need to apply early in the year for these opportunities. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentsinclassrooms](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentsinclassrooms)
- Undertake an exchange semester in another country – speak to your tutors to find out more about this option. [www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/societies](http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/societies)
- With our eMentoring programme, you can receive invaluable support via email from alumni while considering your career options. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/ementoring](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/ementoring)

Practice aptitude tests
Many graduate recruiters use psychometric tests during the recruitment and selection process. They are common across all sectors and career fields.

Practice will really help your performance. You can take practice tests and access other resources on our website. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/psychometrictests](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/psychometrictests)

Enhance your digital skills
Digital skills are essential in many career fields, including advertising, publishing, marketing and general commerce. They range from social media to coding and will definitely enhance your employability. Find out more on our website at [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/digital-industries](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/digital-industries)

How we can help

- You can talk to us about any aspect of your career such as your career options, work experience or internships, postgraduate study or if you have a query about your CV, application form or job interview.
- Talk to our team without an appointment at our drop-in service in the Humanities and Trent Buildings during term-time. The days and times are listed on our website. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/arts](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/arts)
- Alternatively book an appointment through My Career. These are available all year round and take place in our office on Level D West, Portland Building (above NatWest). [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/login](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/login)
- We offer a wide range of employer presentations and workshops throughout the year. We organise sector workshops covering careers in: publishing, advertising, marketing and public relations, archives, journalism, arts into business and law.
- Check out the graduate vacancies and internships listed on My Career and set up email alerts for new opportunities. You may also be interested in Nottingham Internships Scheme with summer placements in local small to medium-sized enterprises.

To generate career ideas take the skills and personality questionnaires on our website [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/ideas](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/ideas)
- Start exploring your options on our website [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students)

General advice

The Prospects website provides information on career options with a archaeology degree and job profiles. [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

Further sources of information

Our website has links to websites for archaeology, heritage and museum management [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/archives](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/archives)
For an overview of careers in archaeology [www.universityarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.universityarchaeology.co.uk)
For volunteering opportunities and careers information [www.archaeologyuk.org](http://www.archaeologyuk.org)
Institute for Archaeologists jobs information service [www.archaeologists.net/jis/online](http://www.archaeologists.net/jis/online)

Wider volunteering opportunities
A national network of arts volunteering [www.voluntaryarts.org](http://www.voluntaryarts.org)