

Education makes history as first Archaeology NVQs are achieved

At Tudor Merchant's Hall in Southampton on 7 January, members of the archaeological world gathered to celebrate education history. Ben Jervis has completed the UK's first National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Archaeological Practice and is now furthering his career through a PhD at Southampton University. The accredited qualification, awarded by EDI (www.ediplc.com), is the first of its kind and is being piloted on work placements funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (www.hlf.org.uk) and run by the Institute for Archaeologists (www.archaeologists.net).



The NVQ in Archaeological Practice recognises practical field skills, allowing archaeologists to develop their vocational ability through work experience, and demonstrate their competencies on paper. The NVQ is available to both new learners in the profession and amateur archaeologists who wish to gain basic skills in the subject.

Ben completed his NVQ on a work placement specialising in Medieval Pottery at Southampton Museums. His main duties included characterising pottery types by fabric and form, liaising with specialists in the field to identify particular types and producing reports of his findings.

Ben comments: "I am ecstatic to be the first recipient of the NVQ in archaeological practice, which along with the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA) workplace bursary scheme, has given me an excellent opportunity to develop my practical skills. I hope that the scheme will continue so that other colleagues can benefit from the advantages of a professional qualification. This experience will help me to continue my development as an archaeological professional over the coming years."

Trevor Meakin, Vocational Qualification Consultant at EDI, comments: "We are delighted to be celebrating this day with Ben and marking a new educational route for those who wish to pursue archaeology. This NVQ will enhance learners' employability and improve the capacity of the growing archaeological workforce in the UK."

Lindsey Buster has also completed her NVQ in Archaeological Practice and is pictured with Ben having just been presented with her certificate.

Offered at Level 3 and Level 4, the NVQ is based on assessment of evidence gathered in the workplace allowing on-the-job learning to be accredited. Learners' work is assessed by occupationally competent assessors who have at least two years' experience in the area they are assessing and are all monitored and passed through quality control procedures by EDI.



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