



Historic Environment Advisor Apprenticeship consultation response 19 March 2019

Q1: Are you providing consultation feedback on behalf of yourself or a group?

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation is the professional body of the United Kingdom representing conservation specialists and historic environment practitioners in the public and private sectors. The Institute exists to establish the highest standards of conservation practice, to support the effective protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and to promote heritage-led regeneration and access to the historic environment for all.

Q2: Does the apprenticeship standard as written reflect the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours expected of someone performing the role of a Historic Environment Advisor? Would you suggest any additions or changes?

The IHBC objects to current proposal for the high-level (Level 7) Historic Environment Advisor Apprenticeship. The IHBC supports and welcomes in general the creation of new apprenticeship opportunities to work within the historic environment. Apprenticeships have the potential of attracting a wider range of young people to work in the sector.

IHBC has worked with the Historic Environment Trailblazer Group to try to ensure that the apprenticeship model being developed meets the needs of employers and apprentices. However we do not feel this has been achieved and the current proposal will not be fit for the purposes it is intended.

The Historic Environment Advisor Standard attempts to combine archaeology and building conservation into a single standard and this will not produce a training structure which works for conservation specialists. It fails to recognise that there are two distinct but complementary professions whose values will be diminished by trying to combine them.

The IHBC has consistently suggested the standard should be developed as the core and options alternative which would allow certain generic historic environment aspects to be covered but would recognize and promote the difference between the two distinct professions.

We have noted that the IfA has supported other core and options models, for example, the Heritage Engineering Technician Standard has 6 separate options. It seems to us that this approach would be quite achievable here.

Q3: It is suggested the apprenticeship standard is delivered at Level 7 (guidance on levels is available below). Is this appropriate?

The level of the standard is appropriate but the standard fails to understand the special skills that distinguish conservation practice from generic heritage activities and should be redrafted as a core and options model.

Q4: It is suggested that this apprenticeship typically takes 36 months to complete. Do you agree this is a reasonable duration?

The length taken for the apprenticeship is a reasonable duration but the standard fails to understand the special skills that distinguish conservation practice from generic heritage activities and should be redrafted as a core and options model.

Q5: The training for this apprenticeship will be delivered through the completion of a relevant Masters degree. Employers will be able to chose from a range of courses, including specialist courses in Archaeological or Conservation Advice. Do you agree that this provides a sufficiently distinct range of options for employers seeking to train expert advisors in both specialist and flexible roles at this level? Please explain your answer.

The IHBC believes that the Apprenticeship Standard conflates archaeological and conservation duties with the risk that the standard fails to lead towards a professional qualification in either discipline. Instead of a single standard we have been promoting a 'Core and Options' approach which would allow an element of generic training but then allow the apprentice to choose an archaeology or conservation specialism to enable a more in-depth development of skills to meet the needs of employers and gain an appropriate professional qualification.

Q6: Is your organisation likely to consider using this apprenticeship standard to upskill existing staff, if so, please indicate possible numbers?

Q7: Is your organisation likely to consider using this apprenticeship standard to take on and train new staff, if so, please indicate possible numbers?

IHBC members and their companies and employers would be likely to use an apprenticeship standard at this level to train staff but would find the currently proposed standard with its attempt to combine archaeology and building conservation into a single standard would not work for their needs.

Q8: Might you or your organisation be interested in delivering training for apprenticeships on this standard? If so, in which areas?

The Institute does not offer formal qualification training but does provide a wide range of CPD opportunities. It would however, be interested in taking on the End Point Assessor (EPA) role.

Q9: Do you have any general comments about this apprenticeship standard?

The Institute is currently working with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) to provide an alternative core and options model. Without prejudice to this we will be offering detailed comments on the current proposed L7 standard to the Trailblazer Working Group.

The Institute does not support the L7 Standard as it has been prepared and would request that the IfA recognise our serious concerns and ask that the Historic Environment Trailblazer Group be encouraged to revisit the alternative of a core and options format.