PRACTISING ETHICAL

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Professional membership organisations such as CIfA have a central role in maintaining integrity and trust across a wide range of industries – from engineering and finance, medical and legal, to education, technology and archaeology. These professional organisations set standards, guide behaviour and ensure the accountability of their accredited members. Through their codes of conduct they set out the expected ethical standard of conduct, shaping how individuals and organisations act in ways that protect the public interest and enhance the reputation of their professions.

COMPETENCE IN ARCHAEOLOGY

The ethical standards set out in these codes of conduct go beyond compliance with laws. The principles and rules in CIfA's *Code of conduct* have been created by CIfA professionals and encompass honesty, fairness, responsibility, integrity and respect. They are there to help members consider and deal with situations and make responsible decisions, where right and wrong are not easily perceived and may not even be fixed.

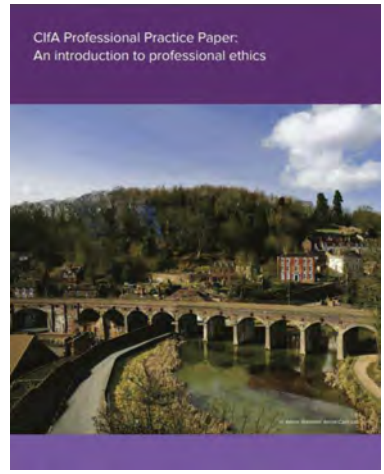
Ethical challenges are rarely black and white and often require us to balance competing interests. Professional organisations can also help with this by offering training and resources to support members in navigating these dilemmas.

CIfA has a range of different resources available, listed below, and runs regular online ethics workshops. These interactive workshops allow participants to consider case studies developed from real-life experiences in archaeological practice. The case studies explore the different roles members may have, and the conflicting perspectives and motivations. The workshops tease out the ethical dimensions of everyday work and where these may go beyond the contract when perspectives and motivations differ. They allow those taking part to practise making ethical judgements by discussing the various considerations with peers and provide techniques for comparing options which can be taken away to use for ethical decisions in real life.

Having awareness of ethical standards and being able to make judgements based on these are important skills to develop. They help to enhance the credibility of individuals and offer assurance that decisions are made within a recognised framework and in the public interest.

The other ethical resources available on our website www.archaeologists.net/work/profession/ethics include

- CIfA *Code of conduct*
- *Everyday ethics* elearning module – an introduction to professional ethics, also explaining how the *Code of conduct,* standards and guidance help us to avoid acting unethically
- the archaeological ethics database – brings together sources on archaeological ethics in a single place for the use of students, researchers and professional archaeologists. It includes over 500 sources relating to ethics in archaeology
- *An introduction to professional ethics* Professional Practice Paper – a starting point to help archaeologists develop awareness of ethical issues in the profession. It examines what ethics are and what comprises ethical behaviours, and then, using specific case studies relevant to archaeology, sets out a series of questions and discussions on how these issues could be addressed. The case studies cover topics such as gifts and hospitality, equality and diversity, conflicts of interest, and archaeology
- ethical case studies – this document includes a variety of ethical scenarios which may be familiar to professional archaeologists. These are in addition to the case studies contained in the Professional Practice Paper



An introduction to professional ethics *Professional Practice Paper. Credit: CIfA*

"[The CIfA ethical competence workshop] was really good and thought provoking. It definitely made me more aware of ethics. It's something we all deal with all the time but actually thinking about it is so useful"