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In this edition of *The Archaeologist*, we're looking at initiatives that bridge the gap between the 'academic' and 'commercial' worlds. From synthesis and knowledge transfer to education, training and skills, nurturing closer relationships between archaeologists working in a university setting and archaeologists working in industry delivers benefits for the discipline.

Many of the articles that follow focus on the skills gap between university education and career entry roles. Anna and Amanda from ClfA's Professional Development and Practice team outline the ways ClfA has been addressing sector skills, including through apprenticeships delivered in partnership with the further and higher education sectors, accredited degree programmes which enhance the vocational skills taught at university, and employer training schemes which bridge the graduate skills gap. Phoebe Wild talks about her experiences as a Level 7 Archaeological Specialist apprentice, which combines completing an MA with the University of Wales Trinity St David with structured on-the-job training. Hester Cooper-Reade of Albion Archaeology describes a commercial-academic collaboration at Hinton St Mary, Dorset, where students, volunteers and commercial archaeologists worked together as part of a wider collaborative project that will hopefully lead to the

relocation of the famous Hinton St Mary mosaic to a Dorset museum. And Louise Rayner shares the experiences from some of the students who have undertaken the four-year ClfA-accredited BA in Archaeology degree at University College London, which includes a placement year with Archaeology South-East.

Picking up on the skills theme, Kenneth Aitchison of Landward Research and Chris Dore of Heritage Business International explore the lack of career pathways in archaeology as one of the factors affecting the sector's ability to recruit sufficient skilled staff. This, and other skills issues, were discussed earlier this year in a round-table discussion facilitated by ClfA and attended by key sector organisations. This discussion considered the challenges facing higher education, issues around the supply of and demand for skills, the need to increase and diversify both entry routes and new entrants, and the need to create sustainable, rewarding careers. The ethical and commercial drivers for a more coordinated sector approach to skills development, including the need for technically and ethically competent archaeologists to deliver public benefit, were highlighted and could form the basis of a new sector skills strategy for archaeology – something we're looking forward to discussing with sector partners over the coming months.