

HEI teaching funding subject price groups consultation  
Scottish Funding Council  
Donaldson House  
97 Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5HD

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## RESPONSE TO THE TEACHING FUNDING PRICE GROUPS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CONSULTATION

The Society is grateful for the opportunity to take part in the consultation on these price groups for higher education. Information on the Society is available from our website ([www.socantscot.org](http://www.socantscot.org)), but as the senior antiquarian body in Scotland we frequently respond to matters of interest and are consulted by Government on a range of issues relevant to the historic environment in Scotland. The Society is interested in the teaching of Scotland's history at all levels, and has a particular interest in archaeology.

Whilst we are sympathetic to SFC's desire to simplify its banding systems for teaching allocations, we are concerned that the proposal in your consultation document downgrades Archaeology to the lowest price band D, albeit the use of italics intimates that the subject is on the cusp with the higher, C, band.

The Society considers that archaeology as taught in higher education in Scotland is not meaningfully cognate with the other disciplines in band D. Archaeology is a field-based subject, with vital elements of science-based teaching and laboratory requirements, cognate with those in physical geography and, indeed earth, marine and environmental sciences (currently placed in band B). Archaeology requires equipment for teaching in the field (geophysics, GPS, laser and aerial survey, excavation equipment); laboratories and staff for post-excavation analysis (chemicals and appropriate stores, use of, or access to, isotopic analysis, DNA analysis, X-Ray Fluorescence spectrometry, Scanning Electron Microscopy, radiocarbon and other dating techniques); practical class based teaching handling material remains from site excavations. Other teaching materials include computing resources associated with Geographic Information Systems (GIS), 3-D modelling, statistical analysis and so on. The Society therefore strongly believes that allocation to the proposed band D will seriously impact on the ability of Scottish archaeology departments to deliver satisfactory teaching in Scotland and will place them collectively at a marked disadvantage to Departments based elsewhere in the UK.

### telephone

• general enquiries 0131 247 4133 • director 0131 247 4115 • facsimile 0131 247 4163  
• finance 0131 247 4135 • publications 0131 247 4145 • website [www.socantscot.org](http://www.socantscot.org) • email [info@socantscot.org](mailto:info@socantscot.org)



Overall, we submit that the teaching of Archaeology involves higher costs in relation to this practical component. The subject also requires a high level of intensive small-group practical teaching in laboratory and field settings, as well as the standard lectures and seminars based teaching.

The Society, with its substantial experience in this field, considers Archaeology to be more closely aligned to the proposed band C (and in some regards band B) subjects. The Society would highlight that the newest Archaeology Department in Scotland, established in 2007 in Aberdeen, was placed within that University's school of Geosciences and College of Physical Sciences.

We are also concerned that Archaeology is based on the return from a single institution. The Society has had over 200 years of experience in the field of archaeology and strongly feels that a single return does not represent the wider teaching of archaeology (since the Society doesn't know which institution this was from it is difficult to assess the teaching approach taken there). In any case that particular return was closer to the Band C indicative price than the Band D one.

Finally, we would stress that entrants to archaeological careers in government or similar organisations (e.g. HS, RCAHMS, NTS), independent charitable organizations like the Society of Antiquaries, or the applied sector companies which now conduct many of the archaeological projects in Scotland as elsewhere in Europe, continue to do so on the basis of their first degree qualifications. The Society also notes that the entry level for the professional body, the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), is still founded on the undergraduate degree. It is thus important for Archaeology in Scotland to be taught across the spectrum of the discipline as required by the Benchmark statement, not only for those students studying the subject preparatory to following other career paths, but also for those intending to become professional archaeologists.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara E. Crawford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

DR BARBARA CRAWFORD MA PhD FSA FRSE FSA Scot  
President