

Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

Practitioners will be aware that this Department has been making determined efforts to secure excavation reports due on foot of licences issued in previous years and the co-operation of the profession in this regard is much appreciated. While this has been ongoing, the question is often asked as to the value of these activities if no knowledge is gleaned from them. The answer is, in my view, absolutely none – if the information obtained is not disseminated to a wider audience. This problem will be addressed (in part) by the publication of reports on a new archaeological web-site, which will be launched by this Department very shortly. Again, the response from the profession has been very positive and, to date, no archaeologist has refused to allow the publication of any of their reports on the proposed web-site.

In regard to current activities, the pace and extent of development in recent years has given rise to an unprecedented demand for archaeological services of all kinds. Particularly important, in the context of reportage, are the preliminary and final reports of excavation works. It is intended that these will also be published on the web-site. It is apparent, however, that the pressure of work now associated with the profession has led to variable quality of reportage and these deficiencies must be rectified.

These guidelines are intended to address this problem and to provide practitioners with a usable template for producing reports on their archaeological activities which could either be published in hard copy or on the web-site. While it is acknowledged that different sites will require different approaches, best practice in particular methodologies, and especially reporting on the results obtained from these methodologies, should be adhered to by every practising archaeologist. It is with this in mind that these guidelines should be read.

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Introduction

The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has responsibility for the implementation of the National Monuments Act (1930–2004). It is in this context that these guidelines have been prepared for the benefit of authors of reports which are required to be submitted by a holder of an archaeological excavation licence or by those who carry out excavations under Ministerial Consents or Directions. It is a condition of Licences, Consents or Directions that the directors of excavations must submit a 'preliminary report' within four weeks of the completion of the excavation or of each season of the excavation and a 'detailed report' (referred to as 'final report' below) within twelve months of the completion of the excavation. In addition, a 'concise report' must be submitted for inclusion in the *Excavations* bulletin for the year in which the excavation is carried out.

These guidelines provide details of the recommended formats for Preliminary, Final and Concise Reports as previously outlined in the *Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation* published by the then Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands in 1999. Advice on a recommended house style covering issues such as terminology, conventions, referencing, etc. is also included. It is hoped that, if authors adopt the recommended house style, a level of consistency and standardisation will be achieved over time that will not only benefit the end-user but will also facilitate the eventual electronic (web-enabled) dissemination of the reports. This level of standardisation should in no way impinge on individual authors' mode of expression or on the scope of reports, each of which is tailored to the circumstances of a particular site.

Recommended Format for a Preliminary Report on an Archaeological Excavation

1. Cover page (containing the following)

- Site name including townland and county. If in a town, use the street address followed by the town and then the county.
- Excavation licence number, consent number or direction number, as appropriate.
- Planning reference number(s) if appropriate.
- Name of the site director.
- Date of submission of the report.

2. Abstract

- Concise summary of the results of the archaeological excavation.

3. Introduction

- Planning background/description of proposed development, if relevant.
- Details of Consent or Directions, if relevant.
- Indication of archaeological significance before excavation.
- Aims and objectives of the excavation.
- Dates of commencement and termination of the excavation.
- Locational data including the following:
 - Town / townland name;
 - Copy of relevant OS map, including sheet number. Recommended scale for urban maps 1:1000 and for rural maps 1:5000 or 1:10560 (as available);
 - Sites and Monuments Record number, if applicable;
 - National Grid reference (twelve figure minimum – six easting and six northing);
 - Elevation OD.

4. The Excavation

- Description of area excavated with overall plan showing all cuttings.
- Description of the excavation methodology including finds retrieval and sampling strategies.
- Summary of excavation phases and stratigraphic character of the excavation.
- Reference to key archaeological features and significant finds.
- Photographs of significant details (where relevant).
- Post-excavation proposals including publication recommendations.
- Preliminary reports for development-led test excavations must contain an archaeological impact statement describing the possible direct or indirect effects of the proposed development on archaeological deposits, features or objects.
- Outline of timeframe for completion and submission of final report.
- Location of archive (artefacts and paper archive).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

- Preliminary interpretation and discussion of excavation results.
- Where relevant, include discussion of the impact of any proposed development on the archaeology of the site and suggest any additional mitigation deemed necessary.

6. References

Recommended Format for a Final Report on an Archaeological Excavation

1. Cover page (containing the following)

- Site name including townland and county. If in a town, use the street address followed by the town and then the county.
- Excavation licence number, consent number or direction number, as appropriate.
- Planning reference number(s), if appropriate.
- Name of site director.
- Date of submission of the report.

2. Acknowledgements

3. Abstract

- Concise summary of the report.

4. Introduction

- Aims and objectives of the excavation.
- Indication of archaeological significance before excavation.
- Dates of commencement and termination of the excavation.
- Locational data including:
 - Town / townland name;
 - Copy of relevant OS map, including sheet number. Recommended scale for urban maps 1:1000 and for rural maps 1:5000 or 1:10560 (as available);
 - Sites and Monuments Record number, if applicable;
 - National Grid reference (twelve figure minimum – six easting and six northing);
 - Elevation OD.

- Topography, geology, soils.
- Context in terms of neighbouring monuments and local artefact distribution.

5. Historical Background (where relevant)

- All sites dating from the historic period should be competently researched from an historic point of view and historical information relevant to the site should be presented.

6. The Excavation

- Description of area excavated with overall plan showing all cuttings. This should include presentation of topographical and other surveys conducted and reference to any previous investigation/excavation carried out at the site.
- Description of the excavation methodology including finds retrieval and sampling strategies. Indicate reasons for selected strategies.
- Summary of stratigraphic character of the excavation including phases.
- Full narrative description of the excavation including stratigraphic information, phasing (if relevant), reference to significant finds when describing contexts and interpretation. It is recommended that the stratigraphic sequence be described in chronological order, starting with the earliest phases. This section should be well illustrated with line drawings (plans and sections) and photographs.
- Condition of site post excavation (e.g. has it been backfilled?).

7. The Finds

- Catalogue of finds. Entries should include appropriate measurements, descriptions, associations and contexts.
- Detailed description, assessment and illustration of the significant finds or groups/categories of finds. This includes specialist reports on individual finds or categories of finds (e.g. flints, pottery, clay pipes).
- Indicate present location and final repository of finds.

8. Discussion and Conclusion

- Interpretation of excavation results and discussion of them in their overall context. This section should include discussion of the site's significance, classification and comparison with similar sites and could be accompanied by appropriate illustrations.

9. Specialist appendices/reports

- This could include reports on dating, soils, palaeo-environmental data, human remains, artefact conservation, site or monument conservation, etc. It is recommended that each specialist report have a non-technical summary and a statement of significance: these are to be inserted at the beginning of the specialist report. A catalogue of samples taken should also be included.

10. Description of excavation records

- Quantify the different types of record and state where they are stored.

11. Glossary (where relevant)

12. References

Format for Submission of a Concise Report on an Archaeological Excavation to the *Excavations* bulletin

The following information is to be listed at the beginning of the report and in the order outlined:

1. Site name (if any), townland and county. If in a town, use the street address followed by the town and then the county.
2. Site type and approximate date.
3. National Grid reference (twelve figure minimum – six easting and six northing).
4. SMR number (if applicable).
5. Excavation licence number, consent number or direction number as appropriate.
6. Name and address of director of excavation and company (if relevant).

The following information should be included within the text:

- Dates of commencement and termination of the excavation.
- Concise account of the results of the archaeological excavation (max. 500 words). It is recommended that the following be included:

- Reference to any standing remains at the site of the excavation or in the immediate area;
 - Type of excavation (e.g. testing, research, monitoring);
 - The main features uncovered and the range and number of artefacts retrieved;
 - Depths at which archaeology was encountered;
 - Extent of archaeological deposits left *in situ*;
 - Preliminary conclusions including interpretation and dating;
 - Nature, range and extent of human remains should be highlighted;
 - Types of samples recovered (e.g. animal bone, wood, slag);
 - Location of artefacts and site archive;
 - Whether this constitutes the final report on the site;
 - Proposed date of publication of final report and place of publication (if known) and references to any interim or other reports (e.g. in *Archaeology Ireland*).
- Avoid using Context or Feature numbers within the text as they can become very confusing in a short report, particularly when not accompanied by plans or sections.

Illustrations (drawings/photographs) are welcome, but must be suitable for reproduction in **black and white** as colour illustrations are not used in the bulletin.

For small scale testing or monitoring with negative results, shorter reports will be accepted, but these should include information on the evidence of the negative results and the reason for the licence to test.

Please remember to send your summary to the editor in good time. The current editor (2006) is Isabel Bennett, Glen Fahan, Ventry, Tralee, Co. Kerry. Email: isbennet@iol.ie. Ideally the summary should reach the editor by the end of January in the year following that in which the excavation took place, or earlier if possible. That is, if the work took place in June 2006, the report should reach the editor before the end of January 2007. If the work straddles two years, a note should be sent to the editor explaining this and that the site summary will be submitted in the following year. However, if you wish to submit an interim summary, that will also be welcome.

Style Notes for Excavation Reports

1. General Style Notes

Please ensure that placenames are spelled as per Ordnance Survey standard. In Gaeltacht areas the official Irish form of the placename should be used. Personal names should be spelled correctly and consistently throughout and between reports.

Please give dates in this form in the text: 'on 12 July 1999' (not 'on the 12th of July, 1999' or 'on 12/7/99').

Use initial capital letters, e.g. 'Test-pit 2', 'in Cuttings 5 and 6', 'Phase 3', 'Context 3' and 'Feature 7'.

Use metric units of measurement in contracted form, e.g. kilometres (2km), metres (23m), millimetres (45mm), and hectares (3ha). Centimetres (cm) are not normally used. If imperial measurements must be used, please give their metric equivalents in parentheses. Please repeat the unit of measurement, e.g. 'the enclosure measured 20m by 15m'.

Elide page numbers and dates as far as possible, except in the 'teens'. Thus, '182–194' becomes '182–94', '182–187' becomes '182–7', but '110–119' becomes '110–19'. (This does not apply to measurements.)

2. Abbreviations and other conventions

Spell out abbreviations on first mention, e.g. 'National Library of Ireland (NLI)'.

Non-English terms that have not been assimilated into English should be given in *italic*, e.g. abbreviations such as '*et al.*' and '*c.*' (for *circa*), and specialist terms such as '*tuyère*'. Use '*c.*' instead of 'approximately' or '*circa*': 'the trench was *c.* 1m deep'.

Spell out directions: 'to the north', 'a south-west/north-east-oriented trench'.

3. Hyphenation

As a general rule, compound adjectives ending in a past participle are hyphenated when they occur before the noun and left open when they follow, e.g. well-preserved house / the house was well preserved; stone-lined pit / the pit was stone lined.

An adverb ending in -ly should not normally be linked to a following word by a hyphen in any position in a sentence, e.g. poorly preserved structure; heavily overgrown bank.

Compound adjectives comprising an adjective or participle followed by a noun are always hyphenated, e.g. first-floor level; fourteenth-century house.

Hyphenate 'south-east', 'north-north-west', etc. Generally, hyphenate prefixes such as anti-, mid-, non-, pre-, post-, pro-, self-. Hyphenate compound nouns of the form 'drain-digging', 'origin-tale', 'tomb-builder'.

4. Dating – Notes on Terminology and Capitalisation

The following dating framework is suggested.

Mesolithic c. 7000–4000 BC

Neolithic c. 4000–2400 BC

Bronze Age c. 2400–500 BC

Iron Age c. 500 BC–AD 400

The medieval period in Ireland is the period from the 5th to the 16th century AD. This can be divided into three main divisions: the early medieval period from the 5th to the 12th century, the high medieval period from the 12th century to c. 1400 and the late medieval period from c. 1400 to the 16th century. The term Early Christian, if it is to be used at all, should be confined to what is actually early in the Christian period, i.e. the 5th to the 9th century AD. The Viking period, again if it is to be used, is probably only applicable from the 9th to the 12th century in the case of towns founded by the Vikings. There is also an option of using later medieval to cover both the high and late medieval periods if necessary. The period after c. 1550–1600 is best referred to in an archaeological context as the post-medieval period though if the century is known, and it should be in most cases, it should be used, i.e. 17th century, 18th century, etc.

medieval period 5th-16th century AD

early medieval	high medieval	late medieval
5th-12th century	12th century–c. 1400	c. 1400–16th century

Capitalisation for periods of time, etc.

prehistoric/prehistory
 later prehistoric/later prehistory
 Mesolithic/Stone Age/Bronze Age/Iron Age
 Early/Late Mesolithic/Iron Age, etc.
 Early/Middle/Late Bronze Age
 Early Christian
 Romanesque
 Gothic/early Gothic/late Gothic
 medieval
 early/high/late(r) medieval
 post-medieval
 The Desmond Rebellion
 The Confederate Wars
 The Suppression

(Where the above terms are capitalised, the capitals are retained when the terms are used adjectivally. The term 'period' gets a lowercase 'p', e.g. 'Viking period').

5. Illustrations

Illustrations may be submitted in both black-and-white and colour (except for the Concise Reports for the *Excavations* bulletin). They should be no bigger than A3 and all maps/plans/sections must include a scale. They should be referenced as Fig. 1, etc.

Photographs can be submitted in any format and colour (maximum size A4). They should be referenced as Pl. 1, etc.

6. References

Where references are included in the text there must be a References section at the end of the report, which will include all works and authors mentioned. When citing references within the text, the Harvard system (author, date and page number) is to be used. Note that there is no comma between the surname and the year (e.g. Walsh 1899, 54–5). Citations of multiple author–date references in the body text should be arranged chronologically and separated by semicolons, e.g. (Walsh 1899, 54–5; Hughes 1972, 26). For multi-volume works, specify the volume being cited in each case (Hunt 1974, vol. 1, 191). If the name of the author is cited in a sentence then this is followed by the year of publication and page number, e.g. 'Walsh (1899, 54–5) suggests that this did not occur until sometime later'. Otherwise, place the in-text reference at the end of the sentence, e.g. 'However, it has been suggested that this did not occur until sometime later (Walsh 1899, 54–5)'.

In a case where a book has been reprinted please cite the original date of publication in the in-text reference, e.g. (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 233) and refer to the reprint date in the References section at the end of the report, e.g. Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R.N. 1970 (Reprint 1988). *Medieval religious houses. Ireland*. Dublin. Irish Academic Press.

Style for parts of references

Author's name: cite surname first, followed by a comma and the initial or initials of the first name, followed by a full stop.

Date: the date of publication should immediately follow the author's initial.

Title of article: capitalise proper nouns only and do not place title in quotation marks. A full stop should punctuate the end of the title.

Title of book, report, etc.: If published, the title should be in italics. Capitalise proper nouns only. Use a colon between title and subtitle. The first letter of the subtitle should be in lower case. The title should be followed by a full stop, the place of publication and the publisher.

Journal titles: these should be capitalised and italicised, e.g. *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*. A journal should be

followed by the volume number (in bold type), the part number where relevant (in parentheses and not in bold type), a comma and page number or elided page numbers and a full stop.

Edited titles: Where an article is cited from an edited work, the title of the article is followed by a full stop. This is followed by the word 'In', the name of the editor(s), (ed.) or (eds.) as appropriate, a comma, with the title of the work, place of publication, etc. following this.

See sample references below, and note also the following points:

- Use two spaces before and after the date of publication.
- Give the page span of articles and chapters (in a book where a chapter is author specific).
- Give the total number of volumes in multi-volume works, and the date span if the volumes appeared over a number of years.
- In the case of a book in a series, give the series title and number in normal script (i.e. not in italics).
- In referring to archive material (e.g. unpublished SMR file) the following should given: location, file reference, document description and date.
- If in doubt, give more information rather than less.

Sample references

Journal

Eogan, G. and Roche, H. 1994 A grooved ware wooden structure at Knowth, Boyne Valley, Ireland. *Antiquity* **68**, 322–30.

Journal (part)

Hodkinson, B. 1999 The Rock of Dunamase. *Archaeology Ireland* **9** (2), 18–21.

Book

Thomas, J. 1991 *Rethinking the Neolithic*. Cambridge University Press.

Edited book

Bennett, I. (ed.) 1993 *Excavations 1999*. Bray. Wordwell.

Article in edited book

McKinley, J. 1989 Cremations: possibilities and limitations. In C. Roberts, F. Lee and J. Bintliff (eds.), *Burial archaeology: current research, methods and developments*, 65–76. BAR, British Series 211. Oxford.

Multi-volume works

Grove, W.J. 1905–25 *Historical and topographical notes etc. on Buttevant, Doneraile, Mallow and places in their vicinity*, 4 vols. Cork. Guy.

Books in a series

Simpson, L. 1994 *Archaeology in Temple Bar: excavations at Isolde's Tower, Dublin*. Temple Bar Archaeological Report – No. 1. Dublin. Temple Bar Properties.

Unpublished thesis

Mount, C. 1997 The Early and Middle Bronze Age in south-east Ireland: aspects of social and cultural distributions. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University College Dublin.

Unpublished report

Moran, J. 1980 Painted and stained window glass from Kells Priory, Co. Kilkenny. Unpublished specialist report. National Monuments Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

Unpublished file

National Monuments Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin. SMR number TN019-030----. Sites and Monuments Record file. 1996.

7. Cross-checking data

Please make sure that all placenames, find numbers, species names, etc. are given correctly and consistently throughout the main text of the paper, in the illustration/table captions and in the illustrations/tables themselves.

Please ensure that the spelling of authors' names and the dates of publication are consistent between the citations and the references, and that page numbers given in citations match any page span given in the corresponding reference.

Check that the numbers in tables add up to any totals given, and that the data in the text, figures and tables are correct and consistent throughout.

All figures, plates and tables should be numbered in sequential order (e.g. Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc.; Pl. 1, Pl. 2, etc.; Table 1, Table 2, etc.) and referenced in the main text. Treat appendices as separate entities in this context.

Acknowledgements

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