

Heritage Skills Careers



What Are Heritage Skills?

If you have ever dreamt of a career where your work and specialist knowledge helps to preserve buildings of historic and architectural importance, then working in heritage skills could be perfect for you.

Older buildings including homes, palaces, churches and ancient monuments, require specialist care and conservation. It is the responsibility of a construction worker or professional who has expert knowledge of traditional building methods to restore and protect these buildings. However, the number of skilled building professionals qualified to work and preserve these iconic historic buildings does not meet the current and future demand.

Demand is outstripping supply and increased recruitment strategies are required to attract the estimated **6590** craftspeople needed to solve the current skills shortage

- (National Heritage Training Group, 2005)

There are many ways to train to become a heritage skills specialist. This leaflet will introduce the range of opportunities available to school leavers, experienced construction workers or anybody interested in heritage skills.

Do you have what it takes?

The unique nature of heritage buildings means that no two jobs are alike. Therefore, to be successful, heritage skills workers must constantly adapt to meet new challenges. Heritage construction jobs are largely based outdoors, although there will also be times when you have to work and train offsite and with a variety of people including Architects, Engineers and other skilled workers so teamwork skills are extremely important.



Working on heritage sites also involves continuous training. The variety within each job means that you will always be learning new techniques to complete new challenges. There are also plenty of opportunities for continued professional development throughout your career. This means that you can tailor your job to meet your interests.

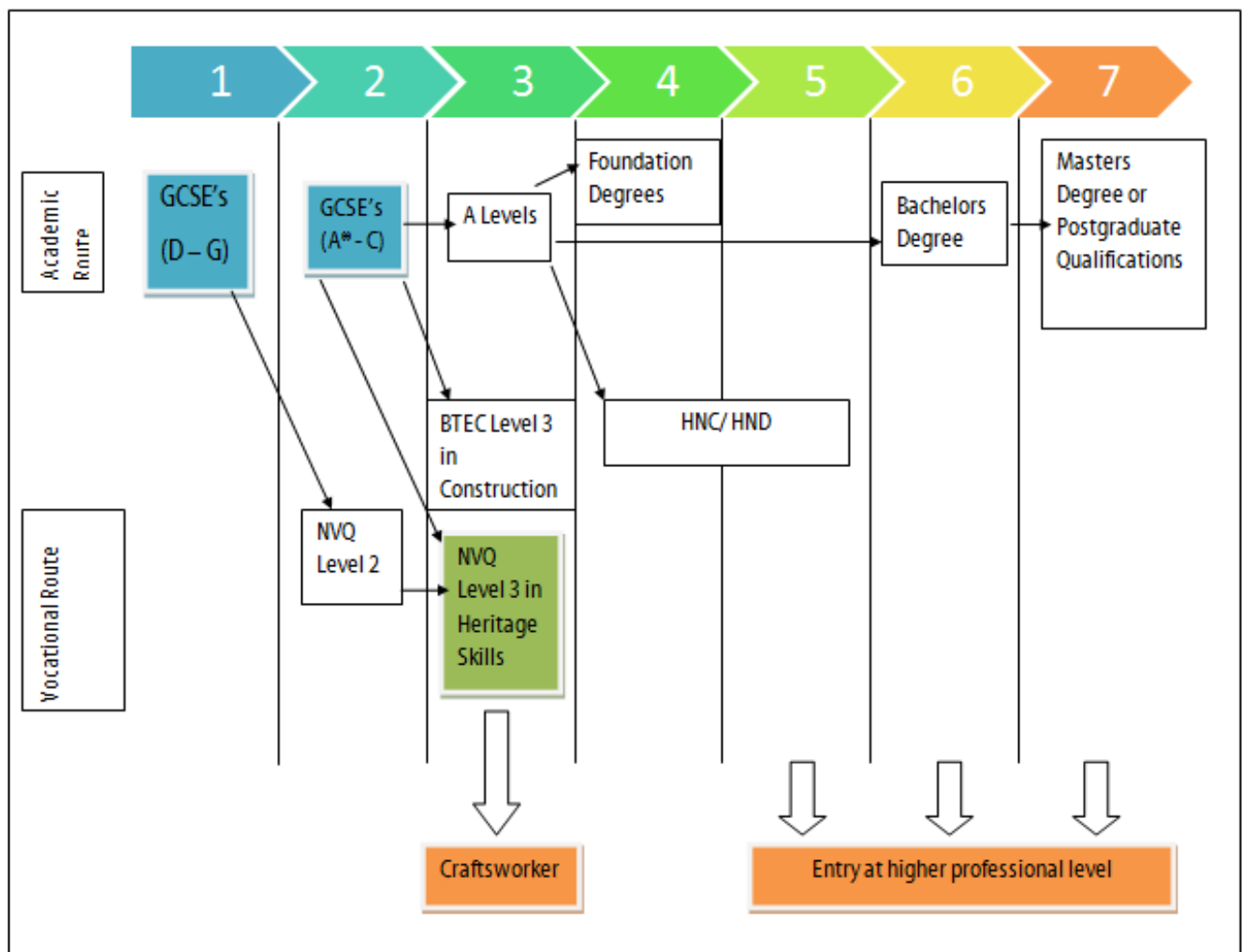
What Qualifications and Experience Do I Need?

There are several routes into working in heritage skills sector, and which path is right for you is mainly due to whether you wish to become a trained craftsperson or enter the sector at a higher level, such as a manager, engineer or a building specialist. But whichever path you choose it is essential to have some form of professional qualifications to demonstrate your competence and awareness of health and safety in your chosen area.

If you already have experience in construction and want to train to be a craftsperson in heritage skills, then the NVQ Level 3 may be the most appropriate and relevant way for you to convert your existing knowledge in construction techniques. However, if you have experience in construction and want to work at a higher level, then there are many academic routes available for you.

The below diagram shows the potential options available for you based on the level of qualification you already have or want to gain. Within this, there is plenty of flexibility, and opportunity to progress professionally once qualified, or to retrain as a craftsperson.

Qualification Levels and Options



NVQ Level 3 in Heritage Skills

To become a qualified heritage craftsman, the NVQ Level 3 is essential in recognising the specific skills you have. The NVQ is suitable for school leavers and adults returning to study with an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent, and people who are already working in the construction industry.

Aside from gaining a professional qualification and experience of hands-on training, the main benefit of the NVQ Level 3 is being able to apply for your Gold Heritage CSCS card. This card proves that you are a recognised tradesman who has specialised skills in your area and will allow you to work on large sites and reassure clients on smaller jobs.

NVQ's Level 2 and Level 3 in heritage skills are available in the following areas:

Trowel Occupations:

NVQ Levels 2 & 3, Bricklayer, Craft Mason

Wood Occupations:

NVQ Levels 2 & 3, Site Carpentry, Bench Joinery, Wheelwrighting

NVQ Level 2 Heavy Structural Timber Framing

Roofing Occupations:

NVQ Level 2, Hard Metals and/or Lead
NVQ Levels 2 & 3, Roof Tiler, Roof Slater and Roof Slater & Tiler (combined)
NVQ Levels 2 & 3, Thatching option route

Decorative Finishing and Industrial Painting Occupations:

NVQ Levels 2 & 3, Painter and Decorator

Façade Cleaning/Repair:

NVQ Level 2, Façade Preservation

Plastering:

NVQ Levels 2 & 3

Accessing Operations and Rigging:

NVQs Levels 2 & 3, Steeplejacking

Stonemasonry:

NVQ Levels 2 & 3

There is an equivalent SVQ available where there is an NVQ.

Apprenticeships

Did you know? Apprenticeships can lead to an NVQ Level 3 qualification, a technical qualification (like a BTEC) or even a HNC, HND or a Foundation degree!

Apprenticeships are a brilliant way to experience first-hand what it is like to work on heritage skills projects whilst having the opportunity to study for an NVQ level 2 or 3 at the same time, and earn while you learn! If you are more practical in your approach then an

apprenticeship might be right for you. Apprenticeships are available through many colleges, but businesses might also offer apprenticeships directly. To find available places, visit:

<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Be-An-Apprentice/Searching-for-Vacancies.aspx>

Higher Education Qualifications Specific to Heritage Skills

If you would prefer to enter the heritage skills sector at a higher level, then pursuing formal academic qualifications and accreditation could be for you. This can lead to exciting and varied careers in civil engineering, conservation architecture, buildings management and many more specialised areas where your expertise and knowledge will be highly valued. Working with heritage projects at a higher level means that you are more likely to see the project through start to finish. Work consists of a mixture of office and on site time and it is extremely important that you are comfortable in communicating with others and working in teams.

The most typical qualification routes into these careers are outlined below, but it is important to also gain relevant work experience at a professional level in your chosen specialism to set you apart from other candidates and also to ensure that you enjoy working in your job role.

Bachelor Degrees

Bachelor, or 'undergraduate', degrees are a fantastic way to develop your skills and passion for a subject, learn about the issues that face practitioners and develop your own academic interests. In Bachelor degrees, you will often have the choice to take optional modules in heritage specific areas, although each program varies depending on the university or college you choose. Bachelor degrees which are related to heritage careers are:

Archaeology BA
Architecture BSc
Art History BA
Building Surveying BSc

Civil Engineering BSc
Classics/ Ancient History BA
History BA
Town Planning BSc

Masters Degrees and Post Graduate Qualifications

Masters degrees are usually undertaken in one or two years and are focused on developing your skills in your chosen area, usually with a mix between academic and practical study. These are highly desirable for employers as they demonstrate commitment to your chosen field, higher knowledge and ability to apply skills. Masters degrees associated with heritage careers are:

Conservation Architecture
Buildings Management
Building Surveying

Historic Preservation
Heritage Management

Professional Accreditation

Alongside gaining degrees, there is also the chance to become accredited, this means that your work is to a recognised international standard. Professional organisations such as the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors also accredit certain degree courses at UK universities.

Job Roles

Builder

Using traditional techniques, builders work with a range of local materials to resolve the challenges of maintaining the structure of heritage buildings.

Blacksmith and Metal Workers

Blacksmiths forge and shape metals for practical or decorative use. Frequently using metals such as iron, copper and brass, their work can also involve restoring antiques or making new items to match older pieces.



Buildings Surveyor

Surveyors provide professional advice on all aspects of property and construction, frequently valuing physical assets. However, you can train in specific issues regarding heritage properties. Work is extremely varied and although it is unlikely for you to be working on historic and architecturally important buildings all the time, your expertise in this field will be highly valued.

Carpenter and Joiner

Primarily make household objects out of wood, but also larger structural pieces for heritage builds. These include staircases, gables, door frames and interior pieces. Heritage carpenters and joiners need specific knowledge of how wood weathers and changes over time and how to minimise these changes.

Conservations Architect

This field of architecture specialises in the preservation and conservation of historic buildings and monuments, design is an important aspect of this work. Conservations architects will often hold Masters degrees in this subject as their work is highly skilled.

Dry Stone Waller and Earth Waller

Wallerers repair or make new walls from local materials and usually work in small teams. Their work maintains and preserves walls which are already made in this style.

Glaziers

Glaziers restore and preserve plain glass, the work of a glazier can also be to help design and install traditional glass in a new build.

Heritage Management

Heritage Management work focuses on preserving the historic fabric of buildings, heritage sites and towns and cities. Often work is based in historic houses and is also involved in the running and preservation of these sites.

Although not involved directly with the structural preservation of a building, heritage managers organise buildings works and preserve all aspects of a historic home or heritage site.

Lead Worker

Lead shaping and welding using traditional techniques is an area in high demand. Many heritage buildings have used lead, and the role of the lead worker is to maintain and repair these.

Painter and Decorator

To be a painter and decorator for heritage properties, you need to have an understanding of the traditional materials used in historic homes and the methods used to decorate interiors and exteriors. Work is intricate and requires a great deal of attention to detail.



Plasterer

The main role of the heritage plasterer is to repair, make and replicate plaster work in heritage properties, including walls, floors, but also decorative pieces.

Roof Slater and Tiler

Slaters and Tilers use modern techniques alongside heritage skills to help design and construct roofs and tiling. Often, a slater and tiler will work with traditional materials and learn aspects of conservation roofing.

Steeplejack

Steeplejacks carry out conservation and structural surveying of buildings in areas not usually accessible, such as roofs, monuments and, as the name implies, steeples. Their report's directly affects the actions of conservators, architects and engineers.

Stone Masons

Stone masons specialise in particular areas of stonemasonry, which can be cleaning and repair of old buildings, facade preservation or carving. Their work is normally outside and can be at heights. Masons may also need to know about lime mortars and an understanding of structural impacts of their work.

Progression and Opportunities

Heritage is an area of construction which is experiencing growing demand. There are 375000 listed buildings in the UK and 20% of housing stock is pre 1919 (heritage properties). The development of the Heritage NVQ Level 3 and Level 2 qualifications, and recent growth of Masters Degrees specific to heritage preservation are recognition of the need for heritage skills to maintain and preserve these buildings. It is clear that there definitely is a future in heritage.

At all levels and occupations within heritage skills construction and preservation of the historic environment, there is room for growth and expansion into new fields, learning new techniques or training for a higher qualification. Continued Professional Development is recommended no matter what job you have in order to keep up with the latest advances, methods and practices.

Where Can I Find Out More?

For Training/ Education Providers:

<http://www.nhtg.org.uk/careers/findtraining/index.aspx#0>

<http://www.constructionskillssolutions.com/>

<http://www.emcbe.com/>

www.ricscourses.org

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/search_courses.htm

For Extra Information:

<http://www.nhtg.org.uk/careers/heritageskillsintro/index.aspx>

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/diploma/cbe/pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.nect.org.uk/heritage-skills-initiative/what-are-heritage-skills>

<http://www.buildingconservation.com/>

