Two AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award PhD Studentships

*Palaeolithic Archaeology of the Solent River: human occupation in its stratigraphic context*

**Department of Geography, Queen Mary, University of London** in partnership with the **British Museum** and the **Department of Archaeology, University of Reading**

The **Department of Geography, Queen Mary, University of London** in collaboration with the **British Museum** and the **Department of Archaeology, University of Reading** invites applications for **two AHRC CDA PhD Studentships** commencing in October 2009.

This **AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award** brings together academic research expertise and facilities and the collections and resources of one of the world’s major museums to address one of the critical Palaeolithic archaeological archives in southern Britain, that of the Solent River.

The Solent River was the largest river of southern England during the Quaternary (Ice Age) Period and a major gateway for early human populations entering Britain. Abundant early Palaeolithic artefacts are found in gravels that the river left behind. The main aim of the project is to achieve a better understanding of the nature and dating of this immense archaeological resource. Several major questions about early human occupation can be addressed through the archaeological record of the Solent River:

- When did humans first appear in the Solent Valley?
- When did handaxes and other technological innovations appear?
- Were there changes in population over time?
- How did the changing geography of Britain, in particular the formation of the English Channel, affect occupation in this area?

**PhD 1 (QMUL):** This PhD will concentrate on the stratigraphy and dating of the Solent River terraces and their correlation between tributaries by identifying key sites for studying the terrace gravels and using luminescence dating techniques to assess the age. This will be essential for understanding the changes in the archaeological record.

**PhD 2 (Reading):** This PhD will focus on the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic archaeology of the Solent River’s terrace deposits, identifying and analysing key collections and archives to assess the patterns of early human occupation in the region. New fieldwork will also be undertaken, to develop understanding of the contexts of the principal sites and artefact assemblages.

It is expected that the two studentships will work closely together on this project both in the field and in the analysis of the resulting geological and archaeological datasets. The information generated by this project will have a major impact on key issues about the early human record in Britain.
A key feature of this studentship is the collaboration with the British Museum, which will provide a complementary research environment, in which the students will gain knowledge of the work of a museum, the role it plays in education, and the links that it fosters with other research organisations. A full induction programme, in conjunction with other CDA studentship holders at the BM, will be provided to develop a broad understanding of the British Museum as an organisation, together with information to ensure the welfare of the students. This collaboration will also enable access to important research collections relating to the Solent River. Post-excavation processing facilities and training will also be available at the BM. Additional training will be provided in artefact recognition and in the wider issues in Palaeolithic archaeology to ensure a broad understanding of the overall project. The British Museum provides an additional maintenance payment of £1000 a year for three years to the student on top of the maintenance grant provided by the AHRC. The British Museum in will also provide up to £500 a year to cover travel and other expenses incurred by the student through their research at the British Museum.

The awards are available as three year AHRC Studentships, which includes maintenance grant at standard AHRC rates. PhD 1 will be held at Queen Mary, University of London. PhD 2 will be held at the University of Reading. The supervisory teams will consist of:

**PhD 1**  
Dr Simon Lewis (QMUL: main supervisor)  
Nick Ashton (British Museum)  
Dr Becky Briant (Birkbeck College, London)

**PhD 2**  
Dr Rob Hosfield (Reading: main supervisor)  
Nick Ashton (British Museum)  
Professor Martin Bell (Reading)

**How to apply**
You are required to make a formal application to the institution at which the studentship will be held. The steps required in making an application are as follows.

1. Before making a formal application, you should discuss the topic with the main supervisor for the PhD that you are interested in (Dr Simon Lewis, s.lewis@qmul.ac.uk, tel: 020 7882 8923 or Dr Robert Hosfield, r.hosfield@rdg.ac.uk; tel: 0118 378 7632).

2. Complete the application form for the institution concerned. These can be downloaded from either:  
http://www.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/apply/ (PhD 1; QMUL) or from  
www.reading.ac.uk/Study/apply/pg-applicationform.asp. (PhD 2; Reading)

**NOTE:** For QMUL studentships, ensure you use the postgraduate application form for non-Medicine/Dentistry students. In the section on Course Details you should only complete the sub-section entitled Study by research. In the last part of the section entitled Finance you should enter “advertised fully-funded studentship”.

**NOTE:** For Reading studentship, under Section 3 (Proposed Programme of Study), please enter the project title (“Palaeolithic Archaeology of the Solent River: human occupation in its stratigraphic context”) in Section 3b (Research Programme). In Section 10 (Funding) you should enter “Advertised fully-funded studentship” in the ‘If you are applying for funding…’ box.

3. You must include a full academic transcript (a record of courses taken and grades achieved) and two referees’ reports with your application. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the application being processed.
In addition, you should submit a 1000-word summary outlining:

- How the proposed research relates to current research on Pleistocene fluvial sequences and to current Lower and Middle Palaeolithic research in Britain.
- Relevant previous experience (academic and/or professional, including project management) in this field, and any relevant research training already undertaken.
- How you will develop the research topic.

4. Your completed application and all documents should be sent to the appropriate office:

   The Admissions and Recruitment Office
   Queen Mary, University of London
   Mile End Road
   London
   E1 4NS
   United Kingdom

   The Joint Faculty Office for Science and Life Sciences
   Geography Building
   University of Reading
   Whiteknights
   PO Box 227, Reading
   RG6 6AB
   United Kingdom

5. Please inform either Jennifer Murray (j.c.murray@qmul.ac.uk), Department of Geography Postgraduate Administrator, or Elizabeth Wyeth (m.e.wyeth@reading.ac.uk), School of Human and Environmental Sciences Research Administrator, when you submit your application.

Criteria for admission to PhD programmes:
Applicants should hold a good first degree (BA/BSc Honours or equivalent at first or upper second class standard) in Geography, Archaeology or a related subject and normally have, or be about to obtain, a Masters qualification in a discipline relevant to the PhD topic. If a student does not have a postgraduate qualification, they may be considered if they can demonstrate evidence of relevant experience beyond undergraduate degree level.

Please note that full funding is normally restricted to UK residents. Please check the AHRC website to confirm your eligibility for funding:

www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Documents/Guide%20to%20Student%20Eligibility.pdf

Closing date for applications: 15th May 2009

Interviews will take place during the week beginning 1st June 2009 and will be held in either the Department of Geography at Queen Mary, University of London or the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading.