

9 An Etiquette Guide to... Post Ex.

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The joy of post ex. A guide to what happens after excavation...

- 1) As with excavation, enjoy not having lectures or seminars again – it really does feel nice saying this is *actually* part of your course.
- 2) Post excavation is a nice way to reminisce about fieldwork and how much you loved it/hated it and how much you miss it (or not).
- 3) Do not forget while cleaning artefacts such as pottery and/or bone that this is actually part of your group and not a mothers group to sit around and chat, so make sure you pay attention while your cleaning as you do not want to break or damage any of the stuff.



Figure 1 – The Joy of Post Ex – Top Left: Flotation (not as nice as it sounds) – Top Right: “Dem (Fish) Bones, Dem (Fish) Bones...” – Bottom Left: Restored Pot at YAT Conservation Labs – Bottom Right: Hard at Work on Excavation Records (All Images Copyright – Mark Simpson)

- 4) While chatting away you will sometimes forget to change the dirty water for cleaning finds, this is a bit of a hassle especially as it is a long walk over to the sink, but you cannot really wash finds properly otherwise.
- 5) Harris matrix! You either get it the first time or not. But do not be embarrassed if it takes you a long time to understand, just say so to the post excavation leaders, they will completely understand.
- 6) Remember post excavation is a group effort – do not let your group down by not turning up or pulling a sickie!

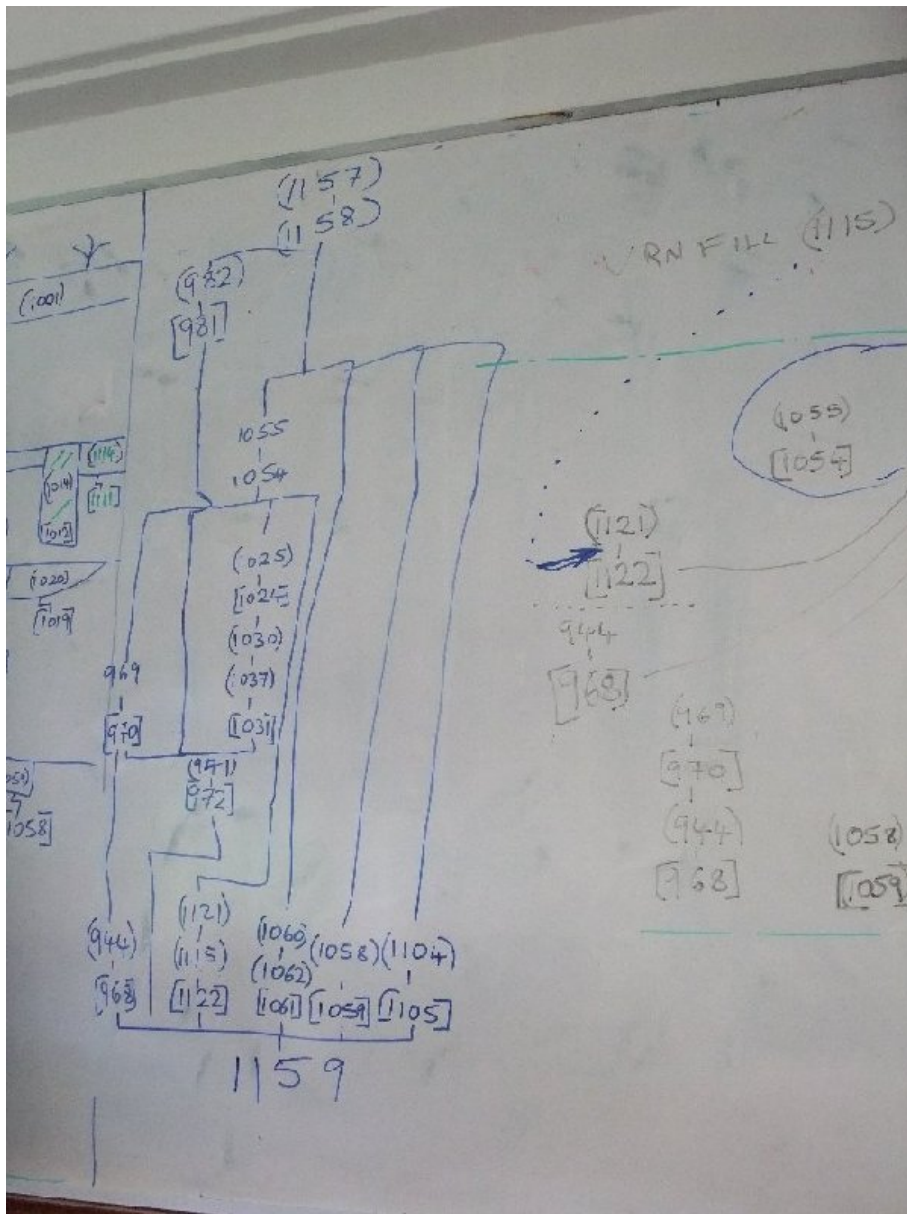


Figure 2 – No, not the Harris Matrix! (Image Copyright – Mark Simpson)

7) Floatation might sound like some kind of therapy session, but trust me it is not! Plunging your hands into cold water on an already cool British summer day is not fun. But it also does not last too long.

8) You will get to play with the sieves and tweezers during Finds Processing, which is quite fun. Less fun maybe when you have just pulled out your 73rd tiny fish bone, but it is all worth it in the end. No, really!

9) Enjoy the exhibition it may seem a bit weird at first but it is a nice way to get to know the department and your fellow students – I would not really advise drinking until after, because...

10) After the exhibition when the free wine starts flowing do not get too excited and drink until you are drunk. Remember you are still in front of members of staff so you do not want to look stupid.

11) This heralds the end of your first year, so enjoy the company, the sun (if there is any) and the free wine (in moderation) on Exhibition day, because you will miss it all over the long summer break.



Figure 3 – Top Left and Right: Finds Washing, in the Sun and Shade – Bottom Left: Fancy Tile – Bottom Right: Exhibition! (Image Copyright – Mark Simpson (Top Right and Bottom Right)/Khadija McBain (Top Left and Bottom Left))