

## Course outline

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### **Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the unit students will be required to demonstrate that they can:

1. interpret the display and use of objects in museums in terms of their historical and social function
2. design and undertake self-directed learning tasks in a museum context
3. use a wide range of museum learning resources

### **Week 1**

Outcomes: 1,2. Focus: museum history and issues
1. Students are introduced to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the structure and content of course</li><li>• assessment tasks and criteria</li></ul> 2. Students articulate their current conceptions of museums and explore various alternative conceptions, both past and present.
Out of class tasks: Visit a local museum and analyse what it is for Reading: Review of theatre and performance galleries, V&A, Museums Journal August 2009 Bring in something they collect to talk about next lesson

### **Week 2**

Outcomes: 1, 3, 4. Focus: Collections
1. Students present and discuss various local museums in the context of topics of week 1 and the reading. 2. Students compare different motivations for making and displaying collections, and different ways in which collections are ordered.
Out of class task: Reading: 'Pieces of Me' from Guardian, A.S. Byatt, excerpt from 'The Biographer's Tale', 'Collecting Reconsidered' (S Pearce, from 'Interpreting Objects and Collections').

### **Week 3**

Outcomes: 1, 2, 4.
1. Students explore the V&A building and a selection of galleries in the context of issues surrounding museums and collections covered in previous lessons.

Out of class task: Students prepare a presentation based on the V&A visit.  
Students investigate one V&A web resource.

#### **Week 4**

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4.  
Focus: collections

1. Students give presentations based on V&A visit and web resources.
2. Students feed back on readings discussed in Lesson 2. Students talk to Morna Hinton and Lucy Trench via videoconferencing about the British Galleries and labelling in the V&A respectively.

Out of class task: Students write a short report on how they think the V&A actual and virtual resources could support their practice.  
Students bring in a 'Piece of them' for next lesson, and research it in preparation for writing a label next lesson.

#### **Week 5**

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4.  
Focus: objects

1. Students explore different aspects of objects which can be brought out by different exhibitions
2. Students discuss different labels (using V&A text guidelines) and write a label for the object they brought to class.

Out of class task: Students start preparation of final assessment project.  
Readings: 'Not looking at kettles' (Ray Bachelor) from 'Interpreting Objects and Collections' and 'Teaching yourself to teach with objects' (John Hennigar Shuh) from 'The Educational Role of the Museum' (Hooper-Greenhill).

#### **Week 6**

Outcomes: 2, 3, 4.

1. Students have a Behind the Scenes tour of the V&A textiles department and visit the National Archives of Art and Design at Olympia.

Out of class task: Continue preparation of final assessment project  
Students add to their report on how the V&A can support their practice, taking archives into account  
Students complete a sheet analysing how their perception of the same object changes when it is put in six different positions (on the floor, on a table in the café, on the reception desk, in the Grand Parade gallery etc).

#### **Week 7**

Outcomes: 2, 3, 4.  
Focus: the visitor

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students feed back on the readings from week 5 and add to aspects of objects which can be brought out through different questions and displays.</li> <li>2. Students feed back on homework from week 6.</li> <li>2. Students interview course tutors on their learning preferences in museums.</li> <li>3. Students discuss first draft of their final assessment project.</li> </ol>
<p>Out of class task: Make notes in response to a questionnaire on their learning preferences in museums.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Continue preparation of final assessment project</p>

**Week 8**

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students feed back on responses to the questionnaire on their learning preferences.</li> <li>2. Students take part in group tutorials with course tutor(s)</li> </ol>
Out of class task: Complete final assessment project.

**Week 9**

Outcomes: 1,2,3
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students give a presentation of the final assessment task.</li> <li>2. Students fill in a course feedback form.</li> </ol>