Module outline

**Unit 1 – Communication in theory and in practice** aims to introduce the various ideas discussed in Units 2 and 3 by introducing the cultural model of communication. Unit 1 looks at the many and varied ways that museums communicate (intentionally and unintentionally), both through exhibitions and more widely through other areas of museum work. Unit 1 also considers the role and purpose of an education policy in the museum context.

**Unit 2 – Teaching and learning** considers the various learning theories that have shaped museum research and practice over the last few decades. This unit considers what we mean by learning and how we can 'teach' in the museum environment. Although we consider the role of education for school groups in museums, this unit is not confined to an examination of learning for school-aged children, but looks beyond to informal and lifelong learning for all visitors.

**Unit 3 – Visitor Studies and Evaluation** investigates the role of evaluation, focusing in particular on evaluating learning in museums and galleries. In exploring the field of visitor studies, the unit uses studies undertaken by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG), based in the School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester.

**Unit 4 – Museum marketing: Understanding and reaching audiences** is concerned with audiences, and the opportunities and limitations of visitor studies. Utilising several theoretical and practical angles this unit considers how we can understand and reach diverse museum audiences. It concludes with a consideration of the role of marketing in museums, which provides links between organisations and audiences, both existing and potential.

**Unit 5 – Media: objects** is the first unit of six that detail the various media, or tools, available to museum staff; be they communicators, interpreters, exhibition officers, curators, or educators. Objects, a unique feature of museums, offer an amazing resource and a powerful communicative medium. In this unit, we look at the way objects can be used to engage audiences, paying particular attention to the sense of touch and the way multi-sensory engagement with objects can stimulate learning.

**Unit 6 – Media: text** is the second unit looking at the interpretive and communicative media available to us as museum professionals. In this unit we will consider the recommendations for easy-to-read writing as it applies broadly to all sorts of museum texts, from object labels to orientation information, and also other textual materials such as task-sheets, leaflets and to some extent catalogues. Unit 6 aims to equip you with the necessary skills to write effective text with diverse audiences in mind.
Unit 7 – Media: design components continues our media tool-kit by looking at how museums and galleries are working creatively with space, light, and word, to create engaging experiences. These design components of the gallery space can often have a profound effect upon the visitor experience and the meanings that can be made.

Unit 8 - Media: graphics and sound continues our exploration of the media tool-kit by looking at how museums and galleries work with graphics and sound. By no means exhaustive, Unit 8 points to some of the key communicative media used in exhibitions.

Unit 9 – Media: gallery interactives takes a broad look at the theory and ideas that underpin the creating of in-gallery digital interactives, as well as some of the practical issues surrounding their use. Increasingly within museums, opportunities for interactivity are privileged as we understand more about processes of learning and recognise the power of active participation. Unit 9 will also consider the potential for museums of interactive technologies such as Virtual Reality. Through these discussions, Unit 9 takes us back to some of the fundamental questions on the nature of a museum experience and theorises a key link between the selection of media and the meanings and messages that can be made.

Unit 10 – Media: people is the last of the units in our media tool-kit, which looks at one of the most important communication media – people – whether they be museum educators, interpreters, docents, guides, front-of-house staff, actors, storytellers, artists, visitors; in fact anyone who aims to interpret something for an audience. The potential of theatre and creative writing workshops are just two areas considered in this unit that suggest the way face-to-face interpretation can be used in museums.

Unit 11 & 12 are Research skills units. In addition to the formal units that make up a module (Units 1 –10), there is time set aside for you to explore the various research skills and methods in your Research Skills Guide on Blackboard.