Connecting Collections
Opening Doors

Volunteering, internships, work experience and apprenticeships at the University of Cambridge Museums

Survey and proposals for future work

Report by Eve Lacey, April 2012
Introduction
This report is the outcome of an internship at the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) between January and April 2012, funded by the MLA’s Renaissance programme. The purpose of the project was two-fold. Firstly, we intended to develop the opportunities which the University of Cambridge Museums provide for those coming into the sector, and wanted to carry out a study that would inform the strategic direction of this work. This report is the outcome of this study.

Secondly, we were keen to explore ourselves what it meant to work with interns: what they could bring to the team, as well as what benefits we could offer. Hence, Eve Lacey, the author of this report, was also our pilot intern. The pros and cons of internships are very much in the news at the moment, and we wanted to understand how we can develop an approach that is fair, sustainable and mutually beneficial. In this, we acknowledge the help and support provided by Les Waters of the University Careers Service and Katherine Willcox, of the University’s Temporary Employment Service who administer the University of Cambridge’s Internship Scheme. Linda Brooklyn, Personnel & Workforce Development Manager at the Fitzwilliam Museum, played a key role in the development and management of this project and in providing opportunities for our intern to place her work in the wider context.

With Major Partnership Funding from ACE now in place, we are in a position to develop these areas of our work, and this report provides a clear framework, in terms of both practice and policy, to take it forward.

Reflecting on the impact of this internship, Linda, Eve and I all feel it has exceeded our expectations, and provided unexpected benefits:

“I was expecting a relatively self-contained research project, that would entail a lot of working alone and reading but, in addition to this, I have been able to meet and work collaboratively with people from external agencies and the university museums, looking at proposals for a more cohesive work placement strategy for the future” Eve Lacey

Eve has made a substantial contribution to our work, and her recommendations and proposals will have considerable influence on future policy and practice.

“I feel Eve is a strong advocate for both the Internship programme and the nature of the research she has undertaken.”
Linda Brooklyn

I hope that this report is of wide interest within and outside the UCM and the museums sector. If you would like further information about this work please contact either Linda Brooklyn or myself at the addresses below.

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This project was undertaken to research the current state of volunteering, work experience, internship and apprenticeship policy nationally, regionally and within the university museums. The aim was to learn from best practice and to find out how a central hub for all the University of Cambridge Museums could facilitate a more efficient and fairer system in order to diversify the workplace.

The results of the research were used to create two pilot proposals – one work experience placement and one apprenticeship organised collaboratively across four or five museums each.

In the course of my research I met with many members of the University of Cambridge Museums and the wider community, who were all very generous with their time and made valuable contributions to this report. Eve Lacey
• Most university museums are inundated with requests for volunteering and work placements.
• Most museums feel that they are understaffed and have too many time constraints to supervise volunteers, work experience students, interns and apprentices.
• Of the different types of placements there is least precedent for apprenticeships, both locally, regionally and nationally, but potentially more funding available in this area from national and local government initiatives.
• There is a tendency towards ‘ad hoc’ organisation of internships and work placements, which risks unfairness, nepotism and a degree of informality that could be (accidently) exploitative.
• Across the university museums, there is a generally positive attitude towards increasing social responsibility but a reluctance to put it into practice, and a feeling that it cannot be made a priority due to time constraints from other areas of museum business and research.
• There is a general consensus that work placements should be spread out more across departments within museum in order to redistribute applications and decrease the commitment required from each participating museum.

Proposed functions of a central hub:
• Redistribute applications across museums and departments within them, as well as creating a central pool of volunteers that can be called upon for large, centrally organised events like Twilight at the Museums.
• Make community development connections and promote social responsibility by simultaneously prioritising and facilitating the initiatives.
• Formalise the recruitment process to make it fairer, principally through a centrally managed University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) website.
• Run pilot work experience schemes that could also lay foundations for apprenticeships beginning the following year.
• Provide a roving coordinator to ease strain on museum staff and to be an accessible point of contact for members of the public who have difficulties with the online application procedure.
• Administer expressions of interest from volunteers via a system of monthly induction rather than rolling recruitment, as well as operating a waiting list.
• Recruit interns following requests from museums.
• Formulate collaborative work experience timetables that allow the participants to spend a portion of the placement with each different museum.
• Work with FE colleges and training providers to write a workable apprenticeship framework.

1. General Information
   a. Scope

I conducted my research through meetings with representatives from the university museums, phone interviews with national museums from Manchester to Brighton, discussing best practice within regional and local museums (from the Cambridge and County Folk Museum to the Museum of East Anglian Life) and meeting with potential partners from Job Centre Plus, Connexions, charities and the local council. I discussed the current situation and the possibilities of working as a Central Hub with at least one representative from each of the UCM.

This project has also coincided with a great wave
of national attention of the topic, and my proposal takes into consideration widespread discomfort with unpaid internships and protests following the Tesco Workfare scheme as well as looking to national and local government efforts to facilitate organisations employing more apprentices as potential funding streams.

b. Survey of findings
Exploring national policy revealed varied understanding and use of the terms volunteering, work experience, internship and apprenticeship. The UCM should agree on definitions for each category, and I propose suggestions on pages 13-14. The term ‘traineeships’ is very vague can be used as a way to get around the guidelines in place for internships and apprenticeships. I recommend that the UCM should avoid the term as it lends itself to exploitation.

Overview of findings
In the month leading up to and during this research project, ACE and the Museums Association (MA) both released their own guidelines on internships. Both organisations view internships as mutually beneficial to the participant and the museum, and agree that the organisation has a responsibility to make sure that the placements are not exploitative.

The MA guidelines state that museums should pay reasonable work-related expenses and give interns access to other staff benefits; the intern should have a clear assignment, management structure and opportunities to train and develop their skills during the placement. The MA guidelines also stipulate that internships should last between two and three months, if unpaid, and two and 12 months if paid. The ACE guide to internships in the arts goes further to state that interns contribute to the work of an organisation and are therefore entitled to worker status and the National Minimum Wage.

Nationally
Full findings are available on request, but I include here examples of best practice or strategies that may be of interest to the UCM, observed from policies in Manchester, London, Oxford and Brighton. Museums in these cities either do not have an official internship programme or else they offer unpaid internships on an ‘ad hoc’ basis through a personal or professional relationship that made the arrangement possible.

Manchester Museum runs the hugely successful ‘In Touch’ volunteering programme, which targets people who are socially, culturally or economically excluded including long-term unemployed people, those with limited skills, young offenders, asylum seekers and people with mental health problems. Local, long-term unemployed people are offered a ten-week cultural heritage course (including options such as external training and a literacy qualification. Each volunteer is offered a tailored programme, including health and safety induction, role training and in-house training. Every volunteer is given a handbook and assigned a supervisor within their chosen department, with regular meetings scheduled. Supervisors also arrange meetings, coffee afternoons and trips to local cultural venues specifically for volunteers. The roles vary from education-based positions supporting visiting schools and education staff, to cataloguing the collections, to visitor engagement roles at object handling sessions, to outreach events and public programmes. Volunteers are entitled to max. £5 each travel expenses and lunch provided if they are in the museum for over 4 ½ hours.
The Natural History Museum advertises volunteer and work experience vacancies online, with role descriptions. Here, volunteer opportunities are usually based on one day per week for a minimum of four months.

The British Museum Volunteer charter is available online and states, among other things, that ‘Volunteers are not a substitute for employees and the Museum does not recruit volunteers to displace them. A volunteer accepting full or part-time employment in the Museum shall not be expected to continue his/her voluntary work.’ The British Museum recently advertised a traineeship initiative that was 300 times oversubscribed with 1533 applicants for five places. The British Museum also coordinates with London-based partners to run the ‘Young Graduates’ programme for students in years 12 and 13. This programme stretches from April to August during holidays each year, with an induction day in April followed by a series of open days across different partner museums in July. This provides an introduction to the individual departments from which students select their internship placement. Young Graduates participants will receive a series of introductory seminars during a one day Saturday workshop in July. Participants then complete at least a two week internship in one of the partner museums and galleries throughout July and August 2010. This is a good example of combining two areas of the central hub, and could work as a model for providing a pilot work experience programme that would work as an extended selection process for an apprenticeship the following year.

The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford operates a waiting list for volunteers, who can register online. The Museum also offers traineeships as part of the Skills for the Future HLF programme where trainees work 36.5 hours a week for a £13 500 bursary. The ‘bursary’ means that the employee must sort out tax on a freelance basis, and this is another potential barrier for inexperienced young people.

The Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums run a Museum Collective, comprised of 16-21 year olds who organise events as well as playing a crucial role in the young people’s advisory group. At the Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums, traineeships are unpaid placements which require the participant to volunteer two days a week for 4-6 months. There are no clear guidelines as to whether a trainee is salaried, bursaried or unpaid, and the placements are usually not fixed-term.
There has been less precedent of formal apprenticeship programmes across museums nationally. The Argus (Brighton’s local newspaper) published an article about Arts Council England (ACE) funding declaring that ‘Apprenticeships will be created and efforts made to involve more diverse groups and young people in museum work’. However, the Volunteer and Training Manager from the Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums said apprenticeships would depend on external funding as those proposals were cut from their ACE bid (for which they received £2m+) but they hope to find other funding, in which case City College would be the learning provider for the programme and the Volunteer and Training Manager would be in charge of coordinating.

Regionally
The Museum of East Anglian Life (MEAL) is an outstanding example of best practice regarding social responsibility and community development. They run several supported volunteering projects and therapeutic placements for local residents with mental health problems, and for prisoners serving the last three months of their sentence. The Victorian Walled Garden project was run on MEAL grounds by the community mental health team and become part of their rehabilitation programme.

The Volunteer Coordinator at the Cambridge and County Folk Museum and Cambridge Museum of Technology is currently implementing a volunteer coordination system at which aims to become volunteer-run by the end of her three-year placement.

Looking into national, regional and independent museums highlights the differences between each. For example, MEAL has 80 acres of land that it can rent out to community development programmes, and offer a great deal of volunteering tasks that do not require the high security checks that would be necessary to work with, for example, the University Museum collections.

University of Cambridge Museums (UCM)
Funding, staff and time constraints:
- Museums often feel that they are under-staffed and do not have the time to dedicate to inducting and training volunteers, work experience students, interns and apprentices.
- The Fitzwilliam Museum does not reimburse any volunteer expenses.
- Funding is often a hindrance, though centrally allocated funding would be an incentive to work collaboratively across the museums.
- While it is sometimes seen as too much hassle to make the initial steps, those museums that have an established volunteer workforce (for example, the Polar Museum) recognise their contribution as invaluable.

Collaboration and sharing resources:
- There is great room for sharing best practice and resources to minimise the individual workload for each museum as well as redistributing interested applicants to whichever museum needs them most.
- A series of collaborative work placements/apprenticeships, with one day per month of training and supervision offered by each museum would enable smaller museums to take part in placements that they could not support alone.
- Each museum has a varying backlog of work e.g. Classics has very little whereas Sedgwick has a huge backlog of documentation work, especially at the Brighton building stores. Central hub must be very flexible: the best way to make museum-wide policy is not to make
blanket demands but to take the considerable differences in size, staff and funding into account

• There is a general consensus that all work placements should be spread more evenly across museum departments, rather than concentrated in Education or Outreach, where it is assumed that the staff already have experience with and links to schools and young people. There should be opportunities for those who are interested in beginning a career in cultural heritage to enter via different routes.

Administration and recruitment:
• There are occasional insurance issues, either linked to the university policy (as was the case with a volunteering outreach programme at the Sedgwick Museum), or a wider risk assessment. These problems can potentially be avoided if arrangements are made through an agency like Connexions.

• There is least precedent for apprenticeships nationally, regionally and locally but there is also more funding available and a lot of incentives for employers to start new schemes, particularly for initiatives that target 16-18 year olds.

Equality and outreach:
• There are currently a lot of ad hoc unpaid internships or traineeships, organised through external universities or organisations and so not commissioned for discrete tasks. These relationships could be difficult to regulate or integrate into a fair and accessible central hub.

• The current demographic of volunteers is mainly university students or retired professionals. While the central hub should aim to broaden this range, the coordinator should also be careful not to risk the enthusiastic contribution of the current cohort through centralisation.

• There are many differences between independent and university museums, and coordinators should make allowances for factors such as priceless collections and police checks.

• Unavoidably, university museums cannot run entirely to promote social responsibility and many departments require, and currently rely on, very qualified or specialised assistance from volunteers. The central hub would not want to jeopardise this store of dedicated (often retired) volunteers. This is another reason (aside from Workfare) why efforts targeted at vulnerable or unemployed adults should sit in the realm of short-term work experience or apprenticeships, so that the main aim of the placement is training and there is no space for accusations of exploitation and free labour. The specialised help required by museums should then remain in the already established domain of volunteers, who have no obligations and can leave at any time, for any reason. Any task that requires a degree of expertise and also some short-term commitment should be delegated to a paid intern. UCM internships could be made infinitely more accessible by introducing standardised payment and a fair and open recruitment process – this is enough for a role that still requires a certain amount of prior training.
c. Proposed system overview
According to the provisions made by the UCM’s ACE funding, the Central Hub with initially consist of one Volunteer and Work Placement Coordinator who will undertake the majority of the coordination, liaising and administration as well as an assistant to the Personnel and Workforce Development Manager, who could also assist with the development of new recruits. The work will be located in three main spheres: online – the management of applications via a centralised website and formal application procedure; within the local community – liaising with schools, Connexions, charities, training providers and funders to ensure the success and sustainability of each work placement; across the university museums – as a roving supervisor and coordinator. In the early stages when the hub is effectively managed by one central coordinator, some pilot schemes should be set up for the first year that the coordinator can supervise whilst managing applications and inductions.

2. Management structure
a. Functional objectives
The functional objective is to create a central hub that will administer a web-based management structure and have a roving presence to coordinate between museums, departments and the wider Cambridge community to create a formal, fair, accessible and centralised volunteer and work placement system.

b. Performance objectives
In accordance with the Arts Council England (ACE) goal on Leadership and Diversity, the central hub should include a roving coordinator and liaison officer to ensure that the UCM offers a seamless and integrated cultural experience from the volunteer and work placement perspective, encouraging cohesion across museums and their departments.

A centralised system should use the museums’ excellent academic research and collections to ensure that they all work collectively to reach the same excellent standard in terms of social responsibility, and become pioneers in the fair treatment and training of young people.
c. Constraints

Real and perceived barriers
The exploitative and exclusive nature of unpaid internships has been well-documented in the national news over the past year, but a recent scandal over the Workfare programme raised another cause for concern. Tesco prompted national outrage when it advertised a permanent night shift position with no obvious training provided, offering only Job Seeker’s Allowance and expenses in the way of remuneration. Following the scandal, Tesco, Poundland and Boots withdrew their support for the scheme and Greggs, Argos, Waterstones, Maplin and TK MAXX are reconsidering their involvement. UCM placements would offer training, fixed term placements and would not have an ulterior motive of exploitation. However, in the current climate it would not be advisable to target vulnerable or unemployed adults for unpaid labour. Therefore an outreach programme for long-term unemployed people should be categorised as work experience rather than volunteering in order to avoid any accidental exploitation. Within this category, any placement must be short-term and there must be real training provided, preferably with a tangible qualification as the outcome.

Many of the University of Cambridge Museums already have their own volunteer or work placement programmes in place, and a few have their own commitments to various funding streams. For example, Kettle’s Yard is restructuring its volunteering policy in line with a consultant’s recommendations to fulfil the terms of their HLF funding. To allow for these plans to be fulfilled without interruption, the central hub must plan to integrate the new system gradually so as not to threaten existing museum resources.

The central coordinator must allow for alternative provisions in the case of problems from the user end. Potential applicants may not have internet access; text may not be appropriate for those with limited basic skills or visual impairment. The coordinator must then have an accessible presence to be approached directly or via telephone rather than online. This will involve some extra publicity (not just online), potentially through contacts at Connexions, schools, community development teams and Job Centre Plus. The coordinator must also consider those current volunteers, who are often retired and who are less likely to have good computer skills – their commitment should not be threatened by a centralised online system.

d. Evaluation criteria

- Have non-traditional audiences been welcomed into the museums?
- Does the centralised website make the application more fair and accessible?
- Has the central hub enabled the University of Cambridge Museums to work in collaboration?
- Is there an increased diversity in the museums’ workforce?
- Have university museums been able to support more work placements as a results of the decreased administration workload?
- Has a larger pool of volunteers created more efficient and welcoming museums, in front of house and elsewhere?

e. Recommendations

Consultation
The central hub should organise consultation meetings with representatives of each museum about how to best integrate the recruitment systems in the early stages. Through group discussion, the central coordinator should timetable a gradual centralisation process with varying engagement from each museum to allow them to meet their own commitments.
The central hub could run a few pilot work placement schemes, which each museum can observe and then select the elements that would work best for them. Consultation must then continue throughout all the UCM projects, including communal analysis of pilots. The outcomes of all pilots should tie into the ACE bid proposal of ‘unlocking Excellence for All’ – each scheme will make the museum more accessible to people who have not visited the museums before. The pilots should draw on pre-existing programmes that work well but could be made available to more diverse audiences or timetabled so that participants spend a portion of their placement in different museums.

Following discussions with Cambridge Regional College Work Placement Coordinators, the UCM should consider offering a collaborative work experience timetable that allows participants to come one day a week for four, five or six weeks, rather than trying to fit it all into one week. This model would not be detrimental to the placement, which would take place on a different site each day anyway, but it would make the programme much more accessible to applicants who may need to coordinate their time around other commitments, such as college or childcare, and more manageable for those with disabilities or special educational needs.

**Collaboration**

After a period of consultation, the museums should aim to collaborate on volunteering and work placements. This would involve sharing resources, advice and best practice. The central hub should propose a collaborative timetable for a work experience placement spread across four or five museums to ease the strain on all involved. The central coordinator should also organise the redistribution of volunteers and work placement applications to control inundation of requests and make sure that applicants are aware of all the University museums and can indicate a second and third choice when they initially express interest.
This redistribution technique might also extend, for example, to a horticultural hub for the Botanic Garden to link up with college gardens and direct volunteer applicants and trainees there.

The UCM should capitalise on the proximity of their venues (all within one square mile of the city centre) to make sure that work experience participants and apprentices can learn about the cultural heritage sector in a variety of different venues.

Central Support
The Volunteer and Work Placement Coordinator should aim to centralise operations whilst maintaining each museum’s individuality. The first step in this process will be recruiting and creating a pool of volunteers which each museum can call upon for big events like Twilight at the Museums. This year most volunteers were recruited through the University’s department for Community Affairs (Office of External Affairs and Communications). A group recruited and organised directly for the UCM could demonstrate to all the museums how a centralised service could work for them.

In the early stages of the central hub, the coordinator should concentrate on designing a website to standardise the recruitment procedure. There should be a link to this UCM page on each of the university museums’ websites. This website will include forms for potential volunteers to express their interest, forms for museums to request interns for discrete short-term tasks, and spaces to advertise upcoming work experience opportunities and apprenticeship placements.

Social Responsibility
One of the early challenges to the central coordinator would be to facilitate a process whereby a tradition of academic excellence is partnered with social responsibility. In some cases, this requires a change in ethos to acknowledge that providing accessible education to the general public is not an act of charity but an embedded part of the museums’ role in society.

A central coordinator should organise administration, timetables and funding to free up staff time and to ensure that academic research and outreach programmes need not be mutually exclusive. The University of Cambridge museums have a responsibility to take the excellent range of collections, skills and research from an elite and exclusive institute of higher education, and to make them as accessible as possible to as wide a demographic as possible. As stated in the UCM’s bid for ACE Major Partnership Funding, the museums have the capacity to act as a gateway to world-class scholarship and a primary function of the central hub will be to ‘create new long-term relationships with people and places of low cultural engagement and opportunity’.

Working with a wider demographic will also prove invaluable to the museums in term of diversifying the workforce, coming under the scrutiny of fresher, younger eyes and playing an increasingly important and relevant role in society.

Social responsibility will come in different forms. Many museums have expressed a concern that it would be unproductive to turn away keen, qualified individuals in favour of those with fewer skills and less experience. Another role of the central coordinator would be to set different targets for different placements. Internships, for example, will be more suitable to those who have a degree or previous work experience, who feel more confident working without supervision on a discrete project and who will therefore get the most out of that opportunity. The greatest improvement to the accessibility of internships is to ensure that they are all paid a fair wage, according to the
ACE guidelines that they have worker status and are contributing to the work of the organisation. There is a lot of room for widening access through work experience programmes and eventual apprenticeships, looking to the Manchester University Museum ‘In Touch’ model, whereby the museums could work alongside an FE college or other training provider to offer invaluable work experience and an NVQ or a Functional Skills qualification to those who have thus far struggled to find employment. Work experience placements should also be utilised as a means of publicising, recruiting and selecting apprentices.

We must also consider making more areas of museums accessible – work experience opportunities should not only be for proto-curators. This would entail an effort to spread volunteering, work experience, apprenticeships and internships across all departments. At the moment, Education departments are often the first port of call for young people on placements, but we should not assume that collections and exhibitions departments necessarily require more skilled individuals, and we should not overlook the training and career prospects available to those who would want to enter museums via photography or technician levels. These plans can build on existing projects.

3. Proposed System
a. Description
I propose the formulation of a central hub, which would comprise of a collaborative team with input from various sources but largely run by a central coordinator whose draft job description I include here:

**Job Title:** Central Volunteer and Work Placement Coordinator

**Reports To:** University Museums Development Officer Personnel and Workforce Development Manager

**The Role**
The position will be based at the Fitzwilliam Museum but will form a central hub with links to each of the University museums. The requirement is to manage the handover from individualised, and often ad hoc, systems for selecting and supervising volunteers, work experience placements, interns and apprenticeships to a formalised, accessible and fair system of recruitment and supervision.

The Central Volunteer and Work Placement Coordinator will be responsible for enhancing the museums’ social responsibility and their role in community development through work placements and training opportunities for local residents who are less likely to approach the museums independently.

The successful applicant will work with the Personnel and Workforce Development Manager and her assistant to cultivate links to local schools, charities and other organisations and to administer the creation of new work placement opportunities from 2012-15.
Another key component of the proposed central hub will be a centralised UCM website, through which (eventually) all applications and advertisements for volunteering, work experience, apprenticeships and internships are filtered. This website can be the external face of a welcoming and accessible group of cohesive and connected collections. It can also become a platform to publicising the opportunities available on existing placement, through the blogs and photo diaries of participants.

I suggest that the homepage contains clear definitions of each term to clear up any confusion and to introduce staff and applicants to the expectations and guidelines surrounding each role before the placements begin.

**Proposed definitions for adoption across the UCM:**

**Internship**

An internship is a temporary, fixed-term placement (usually between two and six months) that requires a job title and a wage. It is the first step of a career and, as such, should not require extensive experience from applicants, but should provide enough experience during the placement that the participant is then qualified for a permanent job within the host organisation or elsewhere. Interns have worker status because they contribute to
the work of the organisation. Interns should have a supervisor to manage and chart their progress throughout the placement.

**Apprenticeship**

An apprenticeship provides vocational learning for people aged 16 and over. An intermediate apprenticeship leaves the participant with an accreditation equivalent to five good GCSE passes. Apprentices must be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week. Within Cambridge University museums, apprenticeships should provide a non-graduate entry route into the museums and cultural heritage sector. Apprentices should have a supervisor to manage and chart their progress throughout the placement, as well as an external assessor to evaluate the framework and Skills for Life.

**Work Experience**

Work experience placements are organised through schools, charities, individuals or agencies and offer participants the opportunity to spend one or two weeks outside school to learn new skills and develop their self-confidence, timekeeping and communication skills as well as to discover more about whichever career path they are interested in. Each work experience student or participant should be allocated a mentor who can supervise their placement. Work experience placements are an opportunity for the University museums to exercise their social responsibility and provide invaluable training opportunities and career guidance for those members of the local community who find it more difficult to gain employment.

**Volunteering**

A volunteer offers their time, skills and experience to an organisation free of charge. They do not have a contract of employment but will usually sign a volunteer agreement that defines the supervision, support and training they should expect, as well as insurance cover, confidentiality and health and safety measures. Volunteers do not have the rights of an ordinary employee or worker and the relationship between volunteer and organisation can be terminated at any time by either party. Some volunteer positions will require criminal record and police checks. Volunteers are not entitled to the National Minimum Wage; they are entitled to be reimbursed expenses for costs incurred through voluntary work. If a volunteer receives any other kind of payment, benefit or training that is not relevant to the role then the employer risks creating a contractual relationship.

**Student Placement**

A student placement is coordinated via a university within or outside the UK and constitutes part of a course of study. These placements are unpaid, but students may be given support towards living and travel expenses. A programme of placements sustains and supports professional capacity as well as broadening national and international collaborative partnerships. They will generally be organised by individual museums on the basis of existing relationships with university courses.

None of the above should replace full-time, salaried staff.
Case study: Anna Lowe

“After starting Sixth Form in 2010, I decided that I didn’t want to continue studying and would rather work instead. After applying for jobs, I realised how hard it was to secure even an interview without any prior experience, and even more so due to the current economic climate. Therefore, I decided to look at the apprenticeship website, and couldn’t believe how many apprenticeships were being advertised. I then applied for the Creative and Cultural Development Assistant role, created by both The Arts Council and The Fitzwilliam Museum. I was lucky to get the job, and worked for a year as an apprentice. As a result of this, I am now working part time in the Education Department at The Fitzwilliam Museum and as the administrator to the Creative Programmer for the London 2012 programmer.

My apprenticeship was an extremely valuable and rewarding experience. I learnt so much, and I now feel confident to apply for more jobs as I feel I have the correct work experience to help me up the job ladder.”

Case study: Eve Lacey

“I graduated with an English degree in 2011 and spent the following autumn struggling to find work that was both interesting and paid. Internships were in the news a lot at the time for bad practice so I was delighted to find the advert from the UCM. Unlike most internships advertised, it was paid and involved a discrete project that I could take responsibility for, rather than simply hovering around a sector that I would like to eventually work in. My internship was extended for a third month and I am now working as the Connecting Collections Administrative Assistant.

When I started the job I had no idea how much I would learn, or how many helpful and encouraging people I would meet. I will approach new assignments and jobs with more self-confidence and with higher expectations of what I should set out to achieve.”
c. Benefits and savings

- Centralising and streamlining the application process will save museum staff time.
- Effective organisation and management will allow museums to tap into a resource of volunteers that could prove invaluable but that is currently wasted because requests are so frequently denied because staff do not have the time to induct or supervise the applicants.
- Providing an improved image of the University museums as socially responsible. Providing cultural development for the region – a marketing opportunity to attract press attention and future funding that will enable successful projects to continue.
- Short-term tasks can be completed by interns, thereby freeing up current staff time to concentrate on more long-term or more expert projects.
- Central organisation will facilitate the creation of work placements that compliment and feed into each other. For example, an intern could supervise a short-term volunteer project and an apprentice could make worksheets for Twilight at the Museums or future work experience students.

The museums should be established as training providers (when linked with an FE college) and excellent venues in which to learn the skills necessary to pursue a career in cultural heritage.

A successful and wide-reaching volunteer recruitment policy could also contribute to welcoming non-traditional audiences into the museums. This project recognises work placements as a vital means for museums to reach out to the public, and diversify the people who both visit and work for the museums. In making the museums more accessible and attractive to volunteers and apprentices from different demographics, the museums will - in the process - reassess their collections with fresh eyes and make adjustments that will affect accessibility for audiences, too.

This is an opportunity for the UCM to set a national example. Just as the Manchester ‘In Touch’ model established itself as a template for other museums to follow, the UCM, via the central hub, can prove itself as an excellent employer that will reach and train a new generation of museum audiences and workers.

Thank you to all the following for their input: Linda Brooklyn (Personnel and Workforce Development Manager), Liz Hide (UCM Development Officer), Beverley Donaldson (Zoology), John Donaldson (Classical Archaeology), Rachel Sinfield (Fitzwilliam), Sarah Finney (Sedgwick – Brighton site), Sarah Hammond (Sedgwick museum), Liba Taub (Whipple), Heather Lane (Polar), Judy Fox (Botanic Garden), Sally Marsh (Botanic Garden), Wendy Brown (MAA), Sarah-Jane Harknett (MAA), Lara Gisbourne (KY), Rosie O’Donovan (KY), Kate Carreno (Fitzwilliam), Ariadne Henry (Community Development Officer), Barbara Seymour (OPPS Developments), Barbara Craddock (Job Centre Plus), Tony Butler (Museum of East Anglian Life), Jude Tustian (Connexions), Hilary Ketchum (Folk Museum), Hazel Courtley (Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service), Sara Whybrew (ACE), Barbara Seymour (OPPS Developments), Frances Gee (Cambridge Regional College), Sue Foakes (Cambridge Regional College).

d. Impacts

The greatest impact in terms of the ACE Key Performance Indicators will be to Leadership and Diversity, though the central hub should also contribute to the museums’ improved services to Children and Young People as well as to attracting new Audiences.

After three years, the central hub should have successfully initiated a process of diversifying the museums’ workforce, and in the process opened the UCM up to new ideas suggested from a fresh perspective. It should create sustainable relationships with local community groups and introduce new people to the museums as visitors, volunteers and through work experience taster sessions.