

Caroline Grime

Finance Officer; The Whitworth Art Gallery

MA Art Gallery and Museum Studies

Since starting the MA in Art Gallery and Museum Studies at The University of Manchester I have been able to use the skills that I have developed both to support my role as finance officer at The Whitworth Art Gallery and my long-term career plans.

Learning Outcomes:

Exhibition Making:

As part of my MA I studied a module called “Objects and Exhibitions” which looked at exhibition planning, design, installation and evaluation. This provided me with many practical skills such as planning an exhibition layout and writing interpretive materials suitable for different audiences. I have been able to use these skills for a project that I have undertaken at The Whitworth Art Gallery, working for the Aimhigher co-ordinator to produce an exhibition at Sale Waterside Arts Centre. I will be able to use this work experience to further my career in the Museum sector and to move towards a more creative role in the future. I am currently working on another Aimhigher project, designing and installing a touring exhibition, so I am continuing to use the skills that I have developed to support the Whitworth Art Gallery and to add to my portfolio of work experience.

Research Skills:

Coming from a background in accountancy, my research experience was limited when I began the MA, especially as I did not complete a research project at degree level. The MA has enabled me to focus on developing my research skills and I have attended several workshops to aid me with this as part of the course. I have been able to put these research skills to use at the gallery, for instance I have completed some research for a project to redevelop one of the gallery spaces, looking at interpretive methodologies in other galleries in a benchmarking exercise. I am now working as part of the steering group on this project with an

involvement in developing the interpretive materials as well as representing finance and development. This will allow me to see the project through from start to finish, which will be an invaluable experience for me, particularly as I have an interest in moving towards Development and Project Management in my future career.

#### Report Writing:

The MA is assessed through written coursework and I have attended workshops on academic and report writing as part of the course. These have helped me to develop my formal writing skills and the MA has improved my confidence in this area. I have been able to use these skills when preparing business case reports at work. For example, I produced a business case for the gallery shop redevelopment, which resulted in the University agreeing to fund the project. I was able to use the knowledge that I have gained, of issues affecting the museums sector, to put together a persuasive argument for the project. The knowledge and insight that I have gained through my studies has also played an important part in the support that I give to our Development Officer. In communicating with funding bodies it is vital that I am aware of current issues and if I am to pursue a career in this area these skills and this knowledge will be transferable.

As well as the skills outlined above I have also developed my presentation and communication skills through taking part in regular seminars and a group presentation. I have taken part in a group project, which has allowed me to develop my team-working skills, and balancing my full-time job and part-time studies has allowed me to improve my time management skills.