

# Case Study

## Sixth Form Study Days

**ASHMOLEAN**  
MUSEUM OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

### The project

The Ashmolean Museum has been developing study days for sixth form students on an expanding range of subjects including Classical Civilisations, Art & Design, History of Art and Chaucer's World.

<http://www.ashmolean.org/education/ks3/>



### Background

Sixth Form Study Days involve a combination of lectures and gallery-based practical workshops. As part of The University of Oxford, The Ashmolean Museums is in an unique position to give access to world class collections and provide sixth form students with a taste of University style teaching. The aim of each study day is to support classroom teaching and give a wider context and challenge to students to think beyond their studies in school.

Study days offer a practical way of reaching large numbers of students and offering a wide choice of workshops and speakers, which would not be possible if we worked with individual schools.

### What we did

- > Consulted with teachers about what content they would find most useful and the best time of year.
- > Worked with University departments and Museum curators to devise a tailored programme for each day.
- > Developed relationships with other Oxford University Museums and Libraries to develop multi-site days.
- > Looked for opportunities to work on new curriculum areas and develop study days in consultation with groups of teachers. For example, the History of Art Study Day was developed in response to feedback and requests from a newly formed local group of History of Art teachers.

### Project aims

To give access to the collections and teach using objects, with object handling. To give sixth form students access to Oxford University academic teaching staff and Museum curators.

#### Students:

- > To widen their experience and knowledge of the subject.
- > To extend and enrich students' learning beyond the curriculum.
- > To experience Oxford University teaching.
- > To see the relevance of museum objects and collections to their studies and be inspired to use museum collections and objects in their own work.

#### Teachers:

- > Are supported in their lesson delivery in school.
- > Are more confident about how to use museum objects in their teaching.
- > Start of ongoing relationship with teachers

#### Museum and University staff:

- > Share their knowledge and experience with school age students.
- > Opportunity for ongoing relationships for students e.g. joining the Ashmolean CREATIVES Young People's Panel

'I just wanted to thank you on behalf of myself and the students from our school who experienced the brilliant A level Art sixth form study day at the Ashmolean. It was such an inspiring day with a great variety of talks, gallery visits and workshops. The exhibition has created great debates amongst the students and they are eager to return!'

Head of Art, Art & Design Sixth Form Study Day

## Project outcomes

- >Students and teachers have given very positive feedback across a range of different days and subject areas.
- >Students have made repeat visits to study days on a variety of subjects.
- >Local University Widening Participation Schools have responded by sending students on a regular basis. Some of these students have now been recruited to the Ashmolean's new Young People's Panel so are now developing a long term, ongoing relationship with the Museum.
- >The profile of the Museum's education offer has been raised with colleagues within the Museum and University Departments.
- >Museum Curators and academics have fed back that they have enjoyed and benefited from working with sixth form students.
- >Relationships with teachers locally and further afield have been developed and deepened through their involvement with study days.
  - >This has led to new requests for study days for different year groups such as Classical Civilisations for year 10 students from a Herefordshire school.
  - > We have developed new cultural partnerships within the city. A new Chaucer's World Day will also incorporate The Bodleian Library and The Story Museum, Oxford.
  - >Through a fruitful partnership with Articulation, an organisation which promotes public speaking about Art, local students have been given opportunities to deliver talks at Study Days.
  - >This has been a very positive experience for the speakers and also the students attending.

'I wanted to let you know that the students and staff who attended the Study Day were very impressed with the talks and enjoyed the experience. The staff particularly liked the speakers and workshop leaders who forced the students to come out of their comfort zones to make observations and answer questions!' Head of Classics, Class Civilisations Sixth Form Study Day

## Next steps

- >Continue to work with teachers to develop new study days and adapt existing ones.
- > Continue to involve and work with University Departments.
- >Continue to develop new relationship with a range of individuals; artists, professionals, institutions, colleagues to expand the offer.
- > Develop ongoing relationship with students and teachers to develop new programmes and opportunities.



## What we learnt

- >Plan a long time in advance (6 months minimum).
- >Brief all staff involved in advance about the curriculum and likely level of knowledge of students.
- >Build relationships with teachers and involve them in planning and giving feedback.
- >Advertise well in advance.
- >Be prepared for students attending in small groups without a teacher or as individuals.
- >Review safeguarding arrangements for all seminar (non-gallery) based sessions.
- >Modify the programme each time as a result of evaluation and feedback from teachers.
- >Adapt programmes to support curriculum changes.
- >Leave time for students to explore the Museum over lunchtime.
- >Where possible arrange for other subject based opportunities for students (e.g. visiting the Classics Department during lunchtime).
- >Send email reminders to everyone involved before the day and thanks afterwards.
- >Share feedback with everyone involved.

## Key contacts

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Ashmolean's Museum website Secondary pages  
<http://www.ashmolean.org/education/ks3/>