

# The North East Regional Renaissance Learning Team Museum Careers Guidebook

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## 1. What are you interested in?

What am I going to study when I do my GCSE's?  
What will I do when I leave school?  
How do I get a job that interests and challenges me?

These are some of the questions you might have when you move from year 9 to year 10 or even when you leave year 11. The choices you make can influence the path you follow through the rest of your education and future employment. The choices you make may be based on what you are good at, what you enjoy or perhaps what you would like to do when you complete your education.

### *Notes*

What subjects are you taking at year 10?  
(place to write notes)

Maybe you have interests outside of school, or you are part of a youth organisation or perhaps you have hobby or pastime you are extremely passionate about.

### *Notes*

What Interests do you have?  
(Place to write notes)

What did you remember wanting to do when you were younger?  
(Place for notes)

All of these things can affect the choices we make and influence what we would like to do in our future jobs and careers. The things that motivate us in choosing certain jobs will vary from person to person. Some of us want jobs with good prospects and high salaries, some want jobs that interest and challenge them while some simply want job satisfaction.

We may have a clear idea about what we want to do as a job or career while some of us maybe undecided. Thinking back to when you were small you may have imagined yourself doing a certain job when you were older. Maybe it was a police officer, a doctor or a nurse. It could even have been a vet, a footballer, a pop star or perhaps a shopkeeper. Not many of us would have pretended to work in a Museum

This guide is designed to help you find out more about a career in the museum and gallery sector. The kind of work that takes place in these organisations is extremely varied. Throughout this guide we will show you the reality of working in one of these places. You will learn what museum or gallery roles are available and gain tips on getting that first job. The guide will also show you how to gain relevant experience and also where to get the education and training you may need.

## **2. The Truth about Museums**

When you think of a Museum what thoughts might come to mind, especially if you don't visit them regularly?

**Museums are dull places!**

**They are full of old people!**

**They are really boring!**

**They are full of lots of dusty old stuff no body cares about.**

These are just some examples of what teenagers who don't often visit museums and galleries thought. Many of us may have very outdated thoughts about what it is like to visit or work in a museum or art gallery. These views are often formed because of what we have heard in stories or seen in films or television programmes.

In contrast some students who recently attended a series of different Museum exhibitions and activities had this to say:

**Very enjoyable and good learning experience**

**It's good to come here. All the materials are useful and it helps you get more done, so hopefully you'll get a better grade at the end of it**

**The activities were really helpful and good fun!**

**I learned so much from the day. More than I thought, because when I was asked where and what I been doing I surprised myself as I was able to remember lots of information. Wow.**

**Why would anybody want to visit a museum?**

The Museums Association defines museums as follows:

*“Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society.”*

Museums have an important role in the lives of everyone. They aren't just there to keep a record of the past, allowing objects to collect dust. Museums display their collections in interesting and inspiring ways that enable people from all walks of life to have fun and learn from their visit. A visit to a Museum may give you new ideas and insight into your own life

There are hundreds of museums across the UK, and they all cover a variety of themes and subjects, From Fine Art to Natural History or Archaeology to Aviation. What ever your interest, there will probably be a museum out there that matches it.

Even in the North East region there are over 80 museums and galleries.

For more information about what is available across the region visit [www.ilikemuseums.com](http://www.ilikemuseums.com) or you can collect an “**I Like Museums**” guide from your local museum.

Museum and Heritage sites can vary in size. There are extremely small independent museums who have a small group of staff with one person performing many roles or museum organisations that may have a number of venues and sites and manage large teams of staff. There are a variety of roles that people have to perform in order to ensure their Museum is able to open to the public and is an exciting place to visit.

*Notes*

Can you think of any museum jobs?  
(place to add any notes)

There are so many different jobs you could do it would take quite a while to list them. The next part of this guide profiles a variety of museum jobs that people do across the region.

## **Career Profiles**

### **Museum Services Staff**

#### **Job Summary**

Museum Services staff can go by many different job titles but these are the people who are working on the front line, interacting with the public and the collections. They are the public face of a museum or gallery, performing tasks such as, answering visitor enquires, offering guided tours, staffing the reception or the shop, caring for objects and providing security. There is room for promotion in museum services with staff able to earn supervisory

responsibility and there is the potential to become a building manager of an entire museum venue.

### **Possible responsibilities**

- Staffing shops and enquiry desks
- Interacting with the public, enhancing a Museum experience
- Providing security to exhibition spaces
- Maintain the appearance and condition of museum exhibitions and collections
- Prepare spaces and equipment for events and activities

### **Qualifications**

There are no required qualifications apart from relevant training and experience; however a vocational qualification at level 2 and 3 in a related area could be useful.

### **Bob Weldon Visitor Services Manager, Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens**

#### **What was your favourite/best subject at school and why?**

*Mathematics, as most things in life can be explained or solved using maths.*

#### **What do you enjoy about your job?**

*Ever single day is different in some way. It is a pleasure to tackling new adventures!*

#### **What is your proudest moment in your current job?**

*Everyday watching people enjoying themselves in our venue. That's what makes me proud.*

## **Documentation Officer**

Museums and galleries may have extremely large collections and it is the role of a Documentation Officer to keep track of them. It is important that detailed records are kept because the history of collections, such as where they are from, who made them and what they were used for can be as significant as the collections themselves.

### **Possible responsibilities**

- Keeping accurate records of the museum collections
- Start records for new collection objects/work
- Provide support to curatorial staff
- Maintain and develop systems to keep accurate records
- Help to manage loans from the collections

### **Qualifications**

A Degree in an appropriate subject and relevant museum documentation training is essential. A related postgraduate Museum Studies qualification would also be useful.

#### Quotes

Jodi Mudd– Documentation Assistant - Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums

#### **What do you enjoy most about your work?**

Going behind the scenes at a museum is really exciting...It is a secret place that not many people get to see and is full of weird and wonderful objects. I have learnt so much about the world whilst at work – like you used to be able to get mugs with a moustache barrier to stop your moustache getting wet! And that a fire in started in Gateshead in 1854 was so big the flames jumped across the river and set Newcastle on fire! The job is always different; one day I could be vacuuming a racoon ready for display and the next I am tracking down objects from a museum that closed in the 1970's.

#### **What is your proudest moment in your current role?**

Becoming a detective – when I discovered a number of objects in a store that were untraced finds (we didn't know where they had come from) and I worked out that they had come from a Museum that closed in the 1970's – Much of the museum objects were thought to be lost and now I am working as a sort of museum detective trying to piece together the story behind the objects; where they came from, how they were collected, actually finding them and updating the records TWAM have in our database so that the information is there for everyone to see for years to come.

#### **Exhibitions Officer**

Exhibitions, permanent or temporary, are the reasons people visit Museums and Galleries. It is the job of an exhibitions officer to make sure they take place. They can plan and organise exhibitions using their organisation's collections or even buy in existing exhibitions that tour the country. They will be involved with the installation of these exhibitions and also dealing with the care and security of the objects on display. Exhibition Officers may even be involved with finding funding for the exhibitions and promoting them.

#### **Possible responsibilities**

- Planning or finding new exhibitions for museums or galleries
- Searching for sources of funding
- Keep detailed records of exhibition collections
- Advising on the display and care of exhibition objects
- Arranging transport and insurance for travelling exhibitions

#### **Qualifications**

A degree in an appropriate subject is required and a postgraduate qualification in Museum Studies may also prove useful

#### Quotes

Vivien Reid, Head of Exhibitions – Bowes Museum

**What drew you to this Job?**

I came out of Art College looking for something 'artistic' to do and happened to apply for a job assisting in displays and small exhibitions for a charity – the rest is history. I have good organisational as well as artistic skills, which suited this type of job

**What do you enjoy most about your work?**

Seeing a completed exhibition ready for opening to the public.

**What Career path did you follow?**

I completed my degree then first took a job doing displays for a charity. My first job in a Museum was on the display team, then several other positions in other institutions, rising from assistant to officer to manager – to Head

**Keeper or Collections Officer**

Museums with large collections may have Keepers or Collection officers to look after the various objects, artefacts and specimens. They may be responsible for a particular type of collection, for example Art, History or Textiles, with many more types of collection out there. The display and storage of these objects may also be their responsibility, as well as the condition of the objects and the records that must be kept along side them. They would also be responsible for finding and receiving new objects for their collections.

**Possible responsibilities**

- Maintaining the condition of the collections
- Keeping accurate records about the collections
- Researching their collections
- Preparing collections for exhibition or storage
- Working with learning and outreach staff to develop the use of the collection.
- Careful disposal of objects no longer required or suitable for the collection

**Qualifications**

A subject relevant degree and possibly a postgraduate museum qualification.

**Martin Routledge – Keeper of History - Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens****What drew you to this job?**

I have had a keen interest in history since my early school days. I read history at university. I did not want to go into teaching and I saw museums as a means of fulfilling my interest in being a historian.

**What do you enjoy most about your work?**

The diverse nature of the work that gets me out and about and, less selfishly, facilitating peoples' wish to find out more about their own heritage.

**What is your proudest moment in your current job?**

It is difficult to say but I am rather pleased with my latest exhibition which is Boom Town, Sunderland in the Nineteenth Century which, I hope, helps Sunderland people understand how the City has become what it was and to try and inspire them to take it onto new achievements in the future.

**Conservation Officer**

Over time objects deteriorate until they eventually wear out. In order for museums to hold objects for long periods they need to be conserved. A conservator may be an expert in a particular kind of object like furniture or textiles for example or may be skilled in working with a variety of objects. They would know how to look after objects so they didn't deteriorate as quickly over time or may even be able repair objects and restore them to their former glory. Conservators may be employed directly by Museum organisations or may even work for themselves on a freelance basis.

**Possible responsibilities**

- Preventing damage to collections from people, pest or the environment
- Restoring objects, artefacts and specimens
- Reporting on the condition of Museum Collections
- Monitoring the environment collections are displayed and stored in
- Training staff how to maintain museum collections

**Qualifications**

Conservators require at least a Degree in Conservation.

, Conservation Officer - Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

What drew you to this Job?

What do you enjoy the most about your work?

What was your favourite subject at school?

What is your proudest moment in your current job?

**Curator**

The title of curator can be used for a variety of different roles in Museums and Galleries. Traditionally a curator is the person who manages a Museum or Gallery's collection and could also be responsible for the day to day management of the venue and it's staff. The collections could be anything from paintings, sculptures, fossils, stuffed animals, toys or musical instruments. The level of responsibility can vary a great deal from venue to venue. A curator's role in a large museum organisation may involve the

management of a large building and its staff, large budgets and organising exhibitions and events. With smaller organisations or venues the curator may only have a small staff, or in some cases none at all and could be responsible for every thing from exhibitions, marketing, collections and the education programme. Sometimes a curator may simply go by the title of Manager.

Possible responsibilities

- Managing Museum Staff, permanent or voluntary
- Organising exhibitions and events
- Manage their building including it's security and maintenance
- Caring for their collections and exhibitions
- Helping the public to access collections and exhibitions
- Providing excellent customer care

**Qualifications required.**

Curators are often qualified to at least degree level in a related subject.

### **Geoff Woodward, Manager - North Tyneside Museums**

**What drew you to working in Museums?**

I have always found museums and heritage to be an absorbing and engaging subject and wanted to play a part in broadening knowledge and understanding the past to help other people become excited and entertained by our heritage.

**What do you enjoy the most about your job?**

Working with a great range of enthusiastic and knowledgeable people, with wonderful collections and sites and most of all seeing people enjoying their museum visit and gaining from the experience.

**What is your proudest moment in your current job?**

The launch of the 'Face of an Emperor' exhibition at Segedunum: It was a very successful partnership exhibition with The British Museum & Tullie House Museum which I project managed. Witnessing the increase in visitor numbers during the period it was on display, and reading all the positive comments from visitors about the exhibition made me proud,

### **Learning Officer**

Museums and Galleries are not just interesting visitor attractions. They can be places where people of any age can come and learn. It is the job of a learning officer help ensure that museums and galleries can function in this role. They may do this by providing events and activities for people of all ages and abilities such as school groups, youth organisations, adult learners, community groups, and families to name just a few.

Possible responsibilities

- Planning a programme of activities and events
- Delivering learning programmes to various groups visiting the museum.

- Developing resources to support learning visits to museum and gallery collections
- Marketing learning programmes to schools
- Researching developments in teaching and learning, eg National Curriculum
- Working with teachers

### **Qualifications**

A degree in a relevant subject and possibly a relevant post graduate degree in Museum studies or a teaching or youth work qualification.

Katy Swainston, Education Officer – Beamish Museum

### **What drew you to this job?**

I initially applied to be a demonstrator because I loved Beamish and liked the idea of making visitors days out enjoyable and interesting. I applied for my current post during my second season because the education department does exciting things and helps children have a deeper understanding of social history. I wanted to do this well.

### **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Our Museum is exciting and engaging and I can share that with other people. Working with the younger audiences since I moved to the Education department has been fun and enjoyable and allowed me to develop activities and resources that help teachers and pupils to benefit from experiences relating to history.

### **What was your favourite subject at school?**

English because I enjoyed expression through words- and I found it easy!

### **Outreach Officer**

Museums and galleries are there for everyone no matter who you are, but sometimes it is difficult for certain groups of people to visit or they aren't aware of what museums have to offer. That is where outreach officers can help. Like a learning officer, outreach officers can develop events and activities but they can take these out of the museum environment, working with community groups, ethnic minority groups, youth groups and many more. Their aim is to encourage groups to see the benefits of museums and galleries and hopefully encourage people to continue using them.

#### Possible responsibilities

- Developing events, activities and exhibitions with groups who don't often work with Museums
- Delivering activities to diverse groups
- Keeping aware of issues and developments in their local area
- Developing learning resources, materials and documents for groups

#### Qualifications

A degree an appropriate subject would be necessary. A post graduate degree in Museum studies or a teaching or youth work qualification could also be useful.

Quotes

Outreach Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

**What do you enjoy most about your work?**

**What is your proudest moment in your current role?**

**What career path did you follow?**

### **Communication Officer**

A communications officer or team can be responsible for the promotion and marketing of large museum organisations. Any written information in posters or leaflets would have been prepared initially by them. Any coverage their venue or site received in the media or press would usually start with them sending out a press release. The public image of a museum or heritage site is managed by a Communications.

Possible responsibilities

- Preparing press releases for exhibitions, and events
- Working with designers about the look of any printed materials
- Preparing information for any advertising and marketing material

Qualifications

Experience in this area is required for most jobs and a recognised qualification would in this area would help.

Katie D'arcy, Communications Officer Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

What drew you to this Job?

I was looking for a progression in Marketing and a move into PR so the role of Communications Officer seemed ideal as it involved both of these sectors. I was drawn to the museum service as I thought it would be an interesting place to work and I felt I could be really interested in the work I would be doing.

What was your favourite/best subject at school and why?

English was my favourite subject as I was very good at it! I enjoyed both Literature and Language and always got my highest grades in English.

What career path did you follow?

After university I moved back to the North East after getting a job at Northumbria Students' Union. I was Media Sales Coordinator and organised events such as Freshers Week as well as producing publications such as the student handbook, student diary and advising on the student newspaper.

During my time there my role developed to incorporate more marketing responsibilities and I began to do commissioned market research for the University as well as some PR for the Union. When I left there I moved to my current role at Tyne & Wear Museums

## **Designer**

The look of exhibitions, leaflets and publications that come from museum and heritage sites have to be designed. Some organisations will use outside firms to do all their design work while some have their own design teams to produce what they need. Designers may work with a range of other teams from communications, learning, outreach or exhibitions. They would be responsible for the overall appearance of any graphic work you may see related to the Museum or site.

### **Possible Responsibilities**

- Preparing graphic material from initial design to final completion
- Assisting with the design and maintenance of related websites
- Liaising with colleagues on any possible design briefs and advising on budgetary and technical constraints they may have.
- Meeting deadlines on time.

### **Qualifications**

A BTEC HND in Graphic Design is essential for this job. A Degree in Graphic design is not essential but would prove useful.

Paul Bewley –

## **Technician**

### **Job Summary**

There are people who design the many of the exhibitions and galleries you visit but who actually builds them and puts them together. That is the Job of the technicians. Technicians would have skills in joinery and carpentry and be able to follow instructions and diagrams. Work undertaken by the technicians could be in partnership with designers based at their museums and even external staff. Tasks can include simply installing and painting partition walls for art exhibitions to building rooms and cabinets that can rival the quality of a movie or theatre set.

### **Possible responsibilities.**

- Working closely with designers.
- Repairing and maintaining exhibitions, displays and interactive
- Providing technical advice on exhibitions and gallery spaces
- Sourcing and ordering materials

### **Qualifications**

It would be useful to have a recognised qualification or served an apprenticeship in carpentry or joinery but it isn't essential. Good experience in this area is essential.

Projects Technician – Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

What drew you to this job?

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

What career path did you follow?

What is your proudest moment in your current job?

Completing work on the Treasures of the Hancock Exhibition. The time we had to do it was near impossible, but we did.

## **Photographer**

A photographer working for a museum or gallery can have an extremely varied role. They could be documenting an organised event 1 day, photographing objects from the collections another and then manipulating digital images on a computer the next. The size of museum or gallery can determine the level of equipment they have or if they have a photographer at all. A good knowledge of the developments in photography and skills in using various related technologies would be extremely useful.

Possible responsibilities

- Photographing objects belonging to the collections, for use in variety of ways from museum records to leaflets and publications
- Using variety of photographic equipment and tools including digital media
- Preparing images using manipulation software so its suitable for a variety if uses
- Photographing activities and events that may take place.

Qualifications

Must hold at least a relevant Higher National Diploma and have a strong portfolio of work.

Les Golding: Photographer - Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

What drew you to this job?

I studied photography at school as an art subject.

What do you enjoy the most about your work?

The range/variety of subjects I get to handle and photograph

What career path did you follow from education then employment and then to your current job?

I started work at Sunderland Museum and Art Gallery 36 years ago then studied part-time for the C&G qualification (1973-76) and then studied part-time (1994-1999) for the BA in Fine Art Photography at the University of Sunderland

## **Finance Officer**

Museums and heritage aren't the richest of sectors. Funding can come from a variety of sources like local and national government, donations, grants, and retail for example. When money is invested in or sector it is important that it is managed effectively so the role of a Finance officer is important. They are the people that ensure the money in an organisation is accounted for. They train staff how to follow budgets and monitor when money is coming in an out of organisation. It is the finance team's responsibility to make sure that their organisation follows financial regulations and procedures.

### Possible responsibilities

- Maintaining computerised and manual financial systems
- Processing invoices for payment
- Monitoring different budgets.
- Administration of staff expense and travel claims
- Providing guidance to staff on financial regulations and procedures

### Qualifications

Relevant experience in a financial role is essential and qualifications in accountancy would be useful

Simon Bowers, Assistant Finance Officer –Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

What drew you to this job?

I have done similar jobs in the past and it offered a good Salary with a pension scheme.

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

My job is very varied and I'm never left doing the same thing for days on end. I most enjoy creating spreadsheets for use within finance. It's nice to see my work being used by so many people

What career path did you follow?

I finished my A levels then took the first job I was offered (finance position), I stayed there for a few years then went to work for a bank administering mortgages. I didn't like this so I went back to my original job. I did another 3 years then became a catering manager. When I met my wife we decided to move up to Newcastle. I came up without a job so I temped for 6 months and the got the job at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums and that was just under 5 years ago.

## **Human Resources Officer (HR)**

Museums, Galleries and Heritage sites have many different people working for them in a variety of different roles and it is the job of the HR team to recruit these people and ensure that they are able to do the job they have been employed to do. This can involve the HR staff monitoring and administering training and development, sickness and absence, health and wellbeing in the workplace, Payroll and advice managers and staff on employment laws and procedures. HR staff will work with an employee in some form or another from the initial appointment in the organisation and all the way through till they leave.

#### Possible Responsibilities

- Administer the recruitment and selection process for new staff
- Monitor staff development and provide or suggest training opportunities
- Advise managers on employment procedures and changes to employment policies and law
- Monitor sickness and absence records and work with staff to promote health and wellbeing.

#### Qualifications

Experience in a Human resources role and working towards a recognised qualification from the Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD) would be useful.

: HR and Training Manager –Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

What drew you to this job?

What do you enjoy the most about your work?

What is your proudest moment in your current job?

### **Trading and Development Officers**

Museums and galleries are funded from a variety of sources. These sources range from local government grants, business sponsors, charities, donations and retail. The role of a Trading or Development officer is to help raise funds for Museums and Galleries and the events and activities they deliver., This is an important role as without new and continuing sources of funding Museums and Heritage sites couldn't run effectively.

#### Possible responsibilities

- Help to prepare Funding applications
- Research possible sources of funding.
- Manage museums shops and stock
- Assist in the management of venue hire and Corporate events

#### Qualifications

Good GCSE's in Maths and English are required and a qualification in marketing or fundraising would prove useful.

What roles have you had in the Museum/gallery or heritage sector?

I've worked as Laing Art Gallery Shop Manager and now Trading Development Officer, looking after E commerce, wholesale, Image Reproduction & licensing and filming for all Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums venues

What is your proudest moment in your current role?

Working with our website shop which has online payment.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

The different possibilities and potential to develop our services.

## **Senior Manager**

The bigger the museum and gallery organisation, especially when there is more than one venue to look after, the more chance it will have high level management. Depending on the organisation size, these managers may have overall responsibility for various departments or a perhaps a series of venues. They will manage the managers, write business plans, devise policies and strategies, manage high profile projects that involve a great deal of money and perhaps attract media coverage. To become a senior manager you don't have to have specialised business degrees or high level management training. Many senior managers started at the bottom and worked up from many of the departments we have looked at so far.

### **Possible responsibilities**

- Management of staff, venues or departments
- Managing high profile projects and budgets
- Promoting their venues to a varied audience and to the wider Museum sector.

### **Qualifications**

It is expected a senior manager would hold a degree or achieved a similar qualification. Management and Financial qualifications would be useful and experience of managing staff, projects, or venues would be expected.

### **Career Path**

You can become a senior manager in a Museum organisation by following many different routes from exhibitions, visitor services, learning, or many other careers.

## **Iain Watson, Director - Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums**

### **What drew you to this Job?**

Opportunity to make a difference. Working for one of the country's leading cultural organisations.

### **What is your proudest moment in your current role?**

Many great moments, one of the best was getting the Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the Great British Art Debate project – a really interesting partnership involving Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, Tate Britain, Museums Sheffield and Norfolk Museums.

### **What career path did you follow?**

Following a masters degree I worked in University research and then undertook a teaching qualification which led to my first job in museums

### **Director**

This is the top job in a museum or heritage site. They may be also called the Chief Executive Officer or other appropriate titles. They are appointed by and answer to a committee of people, perhaps a local government official or a board of trustees. It is their responsibility to lead their staff and organisation and ensure the continued development. They have a direct overview of everything that happens from budgets, staffing, exhibitions, marketing, corporate policies and strategy.

### **Possible responsibilities**

- Find sources of funding to help develop their Museums
- Report on successes and achievements at local and national levels
- Ensure that all the branches that make up their organisation have the best available support and resources to enabling them to do their jobs effectively.
- Develop business plans and strategies to ensure their organisation is running efficiently

### **Qualifications**

It is expected a Director would hold a degree or achieved a similar qualification. Management and financial qualifications would be useful and experience of managing staff, projects, or venues would be expected.

For more information on careers in museums and heritage sites the following websites may be useful.

Website from the Museums Association which looks at career opportunities  
[www.museumsassociation.org/careers](http://www.museumsassociation.org/careers)

Website from Creative and Cultural Skills to help individuals find out more about careers in the creative and cultural sectors  
[www.creative-choices.co.uk/](http://www.creative-choices.co.uk/)

### **Getting that Job**

Like many jobs you would have to apply to the organisation and go through an interview. Working in the museums is no different. Knowing how to fill in an application form to ensure you get that interview and then preparing for the interview can be extremely nerve wracking. There is lots of advice out there that you can follow to help you do this correctly, just see the links below but here are our five top tips that can help you get that foot in the door.

- 1. Read the job specification.**  
You can save yourself a lot of effort by simply reading what skills, qualification and experience actually requires. If you meet the requirements go ahead and apply. If you don't meet the requirements don't waste your time because you won't get an interview.
- 2 Writing your personal statement on application forms**  
To help you get that interview you must effectively match up the job requirements to your own skills, experience and qualifications. You will stand a much better chance of interview if you can meet all the essential criteria and some of the desirable criteria on a Job specification.
- 3 Read the application form carefully**  
Make sure you know how to fill in your form. Does it need to be in block capitals, black ink, posted to a certain address or department? What is the deadline? All of these things can stop an application form from being processed and you don't get the interview you may deserve. Applications could be available in various formats, paper or digital. A word processed form may help you eliminate avoidable mistakes.
- 4 Research your potential employer**  
It's worth finding as much information you can about the job and organisation you are applying to. The more you know the more it will help to ease any nerves you may have and help you answer any questions. If possible, it is always worth visiting the museums you have applied to.
- 5 Selling yourself at Interview**  
Listen to the questions carefully and take your time to think about the answer. Preparing yourself for any questions you know may be asked will help, for example, why do you want this job? What are your strengths and weaknesses?. It is always worth remembering to answer questions positively, even if the question requires you to give a negative example, e.g. describe an experience that didn't go to plan? You would say what you learned from that experience.

For more information on applications, Interviews and CV's visit the following websites.

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/Workandcareers](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/Workandcareers)

Government website offering you information work & careers as well as confidential advice and practical help.

[www.nextstep.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nextstep.direct.gov.uk)

Government website offering further advice and guidance on a wide range of career profiles.

[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

UK website offering advice and guidance on careers for students and graduates. It is mainly aimed at university graduates but there is a lot of relevant advice regarding applications, CV's and Interviews

## **Volunteering**

One of the best ways of learning how a Museum or Gallery site operates and giving you valuable experience to help get you that first job is to Volunteer. Many museum and heritage organisations have volunteering coordinators who recruit and manage teams of volunteers who can work in various roles in their venues.

It isn't easy to get a place volunteering in a Museum or Gallery. Volunteering can prepare you for getting that first job even before in many different ways. Many of them you have to apply for and even go for interviews before you are given a place. Don't let that put you off because it is all excellent experience and when you finally have that place, it can be extremely rewarding and help you when writing your CV and applying for jobs. Voluntary work doesn't even have to be in Museums. There are many places you can volunteer which can help give you skills that can transfer to many different careers. The web links below can give you more information about volunteering in your area.

### Web Links

[www.direct.gov.uk/volunteering](http://www.direct.gov.uk/volunteering)

[www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

[www.do-it.org.uk/](http://www.do-it.org.uk/)

[www.timebank.org.uk/](http://www.timebank.org.uk/)

[www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com)

[www.twmuseums.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/volunteering)

[www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk/friends/volunteers-committee](http://www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk/friends/volunteers-committee)

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteering)

[www.english-heritage.org.uk/education](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/education)

## **Education and Training**

The range of course and qualifications that can lead you into a Museum career however not all museums jobs require a university degrees or specialist qualifications.

Remember there are many people who work in museums who knew that was what they wanted to do and planned their education and training after school to achieve that. It might surprise you that some people train for many other jobs before they found their skills being put to good use in a Museum. That dream job you have been looking for can appear in the unlikeliest of places.

As there are so many varied jobs available there is not one single route you would have to follow in order to get a job in the museum and heritage sector. Even if you compared two people doing similar jobs they may have followed completely different career paths. For example

2 Learning Officers who work in similar Museum venues in the north east

Learning Officer 1

Learning Officer 2

Based on the Job profiles given to you earlier you may already know that you want certain type of Career in the Museum and Heritage sector or you may not be sure what you want to do only that you would really like to work for a Museum, gallery or heritage site.

### **Year 10/11 (level 1 & 2)**

If you are interested in working in the Museum and Heritage sector you could follow a variety of routes. If you know what area you wish to work in then taking the GCSE's you feel relevant will help and the most History, Art and Science may prove useful for certain roles. If you know what kind of job you want to do knowing which GCSE will help you move to the right qualification it may not be the only route you can follow. If you would like to follow a vocational route into the sector there are qualifications available in some schools, in areas like Leisure and Tourism, which can help open a number of possible routes such as Visitor services, Museum

### **Year 12/13, Sixth form (Level 3)**

Studying AS and A2 levels is one route and again choosing the qualification that may best help you to the course you want to qualifications if they wish once again History would prove valuable however once again not essential. The vocational route is still open to students with

Over the next few years the new Diploma qualifications are being rolled out across the country. The following qualifications may be available from your school, 6<sup>th</sup> form or College and may offer a potential route into the Museum and heritage sector.

- The Diploma in Creative and Media
- The Diploma in Public Services
- The Diploma in Travel and Tourism
- The Diploma in Humanities

At Level 4 students who wish to continue on to university but haven't achieved the required qualifications to move to study their first degree have the

opportunity to take Foundation degrees in their chosen subject. There are courses available in a variety of Colleges and Universities in areas such as Art and Design and Travel and Tourism that could link into a future career in the Museum and Heritage sector. To find out more visit the UCAS website

<http://develop.ucas.com/FDCourseSearch/Gateway>

If you know that you want to work in the Museum or Heritage field there are specialist courses you can follow that can help you get a range of jobs in the sector. There are some University courses available that allow students to take Museum and Gallery Studies for their first degree, directly after leaving college or sixth form. Searching the UCAS website will help you find what is available across the UK. [www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk)

Many students opt to specialise in Museum and Gallery Studies after they have completed their first degree in. They could have studied a variety of areas such as History, Archaeology, Fine Art, Science for example however. There are many Universities across the UK that offer 1 year post graduate courses that allow students to specialise in Museums and Heritage work. Some of these courses are available in the North East of England.

The University of Newcastle [www.newcastle.ac.uk](http://www.newcastle.ac.uk)

- Museum Studies – MA, Post Graduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate
- Art Museum and Gallery Practice MA, Post Graduate Diploma
- Heritage Education and Interpretation
- Cultural and Heritage Studies

For more information on courses visit the Newcastle University website

The University of Northumbria [www.unn.ac.uk](http://www.unn.ac.uk)

- MA Museum and Heritage Management
- MA Cultural Management

Durham University [www.durham.ac.uk](http://www.durham.ac.uk)

- MA Museum and Artefact Studies

The University of Sunderland [www.sunderland.ac.uk](http://www.sunderland.ac.uk)

- MSc Cultural and Heritage Tourism development
- MSc Heritage Development

**This is just an overview what a career in the Museum and Heritage sector is like and the information is there to help you to see what opportunities are out there. Whatever your future Career may be let's hope it's the one you always dreamed of.**

**Contacts**

**Notes**