

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT FOR MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS

Introduction and outline of the session

The Museums Association (MA) is the independent body in the UK representing museums and the people that work in them. It has a responsibility to develop the skills and abilities of those that work in museums, paid or unpaid.

This session is about Continuing Professional Development within museums by looking at the system the MA has developed over the last 50 years – the Associateship of the Museums Association (AMA). It is not a system that would always work in other countries but shows some of the thinking and principles that can easily be adapted.

We will also look at CPD Plus, the scheme for continuing CPD after the AMA and the Fellowship (FMA).

UK Background

History of AMA

The Associateship of the Museums Association has been in operation for over 50 years. It is in-service rather than based on higher education courses. Up to 1995 it was partly based on higher education qualifications, was exam and practical based and was almost entirely aimed at curators.

The AMA is now:

- a level of MA membership (AMA)
- a professional development award helping all museum professionals take responsibility for their career through a programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- a sign of professionalism (it used to be required for many jobs but that is less common in the UK now)

Outline of current UK systems – routes into museums

Museum studies courses in UK universities are still strong and the MA has links to them but the AMA has broken away from them to encourage a more diverse workforce and to cover non-traditional museum roles. There are many more routes into museums in the UK and not all of them involve degrees.

UK museums workforce – profile

There has been a huge change in the UK workforce in last 30 years with new routes into the profession and an expanded range of skills. But there are still problems and the AMA and other initiatives are trying to address them. The problems include a profession that is :

- Predominantly female but still dominated by curators and led by men
- Middle class, white

- Does not always attract people with the required non traditional skills - marketing, finance, education etc
- Lacking a culture of CPD

UK museums needs

What is needed is:

- Greater diversity in terms of race, gender and economic and educational disadvantage
- Training in management and other generic skills
- Commitment to CPD

What is CPD? And what is it not?

- Managing your own learning throughout your career.
- Planning improvements and learning to deal with changes and challenges
- A way to improve your career
- A way of reflecting on your needs and desires
- It is not – random training, deeper understanding of only one topic, retrospective learning

AMA

The AMA is not about testing knowledge of a discipline but about ensuring we have museum professionals who understand and appreciate the world in which they work, the ethics of museums and who have a commitment and understanding of the principles and importance of self directed learning.

In this way, people who work in all disciplines from finance to education to retail to conservation can do CPD, get the AMA and be considered a true museum professional.

Costs

£260 Registration

£125 Annual Fee

£250 Professional Review

Approximately 400 people are going through the AMA at any one time.

Who can take the AMA?

People who:

1. Work in or for museums, full-time, part-time, voluntary or temporary.
2. Has worked in museums for a minimum of 3 years by the end of doing the AMA.
3. Is an individual member of the MA
4. Is committed to maintaining CPD after they have achieved the AMA in order to continue using the letters AMA after their name.

The criteria for people achieving the AMA are as follows:

Associateship of the Museums Association - Criteria

1. ***Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to museums, their purpose and their work.***

You must be able to demonstrate that you have a good understanding of:

- *the role and purpose of museums*
- *the work that museums do*
- *the context within which museums operate.*

The AMA Knowledge Journal will support you in meeting these criteria.

2. ***Develop and maintain effective relationships within and beyond the workplace***

You must be able to demonstrate that:

- *you can develop professional relationships within and beyond the workplace that support your professional development, your work and that of your organisation*
- *you are aware of how you communicate with others*
- *you have actively participated in networks.*

3. ***Think critically around issues facing the sector***

You must be able to demonstrate that:

- *you can think critically about topical and ethical issues*
- *you can discuss how these issues relate to your work and organisation and how they impact on the wider sector.*

4. ***Develop and enhance skills, knowledge and experience in a specific area.***

You must be able to demonstrate that:

- *you have built up expertise in a specific area(s) of interest*
- *you have developed ability in this area and understand how it relates to best practice*

- *you can discuss how your expertise benefits the public.*

5. Effect positive change in your work

You must be able to demonstrate that:

- *you have taken initiative and responsibility for an area of your work*
- *you have brought about a positive change in this area, thinking logically and creatively to solve problems*
- *this positive change has had an impact on your organisation and colleagues.*

6. Demonstrate effective management of yourself, time and resources.

You must be able to demonstrate:

- *how you have developed and applied an understanding of self management, including time, resources, and planning*
- *how you have developed an awareness of other management responsibilities such as budgets, projects, people, relationships and information*

There are 3 phases to achieving the AMA:

- The AMA Knowledge Journal will support you to assess and develop your understanding of the sector. You will then find a Mentor and move on to phase 2.
- Start proactively carrying out CPD, by planning your development, acting on your plans and then taking time to reflect on your development.
- Continue proactively carrying out CPD, complete a work-based project and demonstrate how you meet the AMA criteria by sitting a Professional Review.

Development is supported by an AMA mentor and the MA staff and you have access to workshops and regional support groups.

1. The Knowledge Journal

The Journal is designed to help you to develop a good understanding of, and commitment to, museums, their purpose and their work (criterion 1 of the AMA). It is a workbook, which sets out the 12 knowledge areas you will need to develop and has to be signed off by an experienced museum professional, likely to be an AMA.

Three sections:

1. Role and purpose of museums
2. The work museums do
3. The context within which museums operate

The Knowledge Journal is a tool that will help you throughout your AMA and by the end of the process you will need to be able to demonstrate a good understanding under all areas set out in the

Knowledge Journal. This will be assessed (along with all other AMA criteria) as part of your Professional Review but you will need to have done the first draft and have worked in museums for one year before you can find a mentor and begin your CPD.

2. Planning, Acting, Reflecting

2.1 The CPD Plan

The CPD Plan is a document where you map out your professional development for the next two years. The plan should be realistic and achievable in the context of your current role and reflect your future aspirations. At a glance all CPD Plans should:

- list the current main areas of your work
- articulate your longer-term career aspirations
- identify four or five developmental goals that you plan to achieve over the next two years
- define the skills, knowledge and experience you need to develop in order to achieve these goals
- set out the specific and timed activities you will undertake in order to meet your needs and goals
- be signed off by your mentor
- be assessed by the MA.

Your mentor will help you to draft and develop your CPD Plan. All plans need to be submitted to the MA for assessment. Once approved you will be able to begin accruing the 24 months of active CPD needed to achieve the AMA.

What you want to achieve will change with circumstances and as you learn more about yourself, you should therefore revise your CPD Plan at least once during your AMA. This revised plan should reflect any changes in your goals, aspirations or developmental needs

2.2 The CPD Log

The CPD Log is a personal working record of all the major CPD activities you have undertaken and their outcomes, for example what you have learned and how you are applying this.

By regularly filling it in, as and when you undertake key activities, it will help you to analyse your CPD and become an active learner.

The log is where you demonstrate that you have undertaken 35 hours of CPD a year for at least two years. The CPD Log is a working document; it is not assessed and only needs to be submitted at the end of your AMA.

Your CPD Log should include:

- development activities undertaken, including unplanned activities
- a reflection on what you have learned and how you have applied or intend to apply what you have learned
- dates of development activities
- the number of hours spent on development activities.

You can start filling in your CPD Log once you have submitted your first CPD Plan to the MA. The log should be maintained throughout your AMA and will be submitted with your final paperwork.

2.3 The CPD Summary

As part of CPD you should allow time to reflect on your development, the CPD Summaries provide an opportunity to do this. Throughout the AMA you need to complete two CPD Summaries: an interim and a final summary.

The interim CPD Summary ensures that your development is 'on track'. As with your CPD Plan, the summary should be signed off by your mentor and submitted to the MA for approval.

The final CPD Summary allows you to reflect on the whole process and capture your learning and development.

A CPD Summary is a formal piece of writing; it has a word limit and should be submitted to the MA for assessment. It is essential that it is reflective, honest and succinct.

3. Completing the AMA

3.1 The Work Based Project

The Work Based Project (WBP) focuses on an area of your current work that you want to do differently. It will help you to reflect on your work and develop new skills and knowledge to create positive change in your work.

The WBP supports work-based learning within a project framework, guiding you through generating ideas, developing and implementing these, reviewing your progress and evaluating its impact. It is linked to AMA criteria 5 and 6 and feeds into your CPD Plan and helps you to achieve your CPD goals.

Your project should be an area you can take responsibility for, although you may be taking responsibility for the first time. It must also be something that will change the way you work and have an impact on your organisation. It is up to you to choose a project appropriate to your needs. Your project proposal will be submitted to, and approved by, the MA as part of the interim summary.

The WBP should be completed within six months of your proposal being approved. At the end of six months you need to evaluate:

- what you have learned
- how your work has changed
- the impact this has had on your organisation

This evidence will help you meet the AMA criteria and will be submitted as part of your final summary. At the Professional Review you will give a short presentation to describe how the WBP has helped you meet AMA criteria 5 and 6

3.2 The Professional Review

The final stage is the Professional Review. This is an opportunity for you to articulate how you meet the criteria of the AMA, in a discussion with two senior museum professionals.

The Professional Review is a formal discussion lasting approximately 45 minutes. Two senior museum professionals (professional reviewers) will ask you questions and lead a discussion that will allow you to demonstrate that you meet the criteria of the AMA. You will be asked to give a five-minute (timed) presentation on your Work Based Project.

Mentors

Mentors are senior museum professionals (usually AMAs) who have volunteered to be trained in mentoring and to offer support to people undertaking the AMA. A directory of mentors is available

(c250) and mentees are encouraged to meet potential mentors and choose the most suitable. Mentors are not usually direct work colleagues.

Your mentor is there to support you throughout your AMA, encouraging you to take control of your own development and learning. Your mentor will help you to maximise your potential, develop skills and become the professional you want to be.

Mentor and mentee are required to have mentoring agreement to help you and your mentor agree your expectations of the relationship. You will need to write a mentoring agreement before submitting your first CPD Plan. It should include:

- frequency, length and location of meetings; generally three or four each year is recommended, one of these meetings needs to be face to face
- who initiates meetings
- how and how often will you contact your mentor
- what areas are appropriate to discuss
- what you expect from your mentor
- what your mentor expects of you
- what to do if something goes wrong in the mentoring relationship.

CPD plus

Continuous means just that and therefore the MA does all it can to encourage career-long professional development. The problem they and other professional bodies face is should they make it compulsory? And if they do, are they prepared to expel members who do not comply?

CPD Plus is a way to keep developing yourself and offers you the tools to continue to improve your skills, keep motivated and stay informed, using a familiar structure.

From a museums point of view, CPD Plus can help to develop staff in a cost effective way. Participants are aware of their own training needs and are constantly improving their skills and knowledge. They will be more motivated and will build a range of professional contacts.

To take part in CPD Plus you will need to carry out at least 35 hours of professional development a year. You should record your activities in a specially designed CPD Plus record. At the end of each year of your professional development you can submit your record to the MA for feedback. If your record is approved then a certificate will be sent out to you.

Through the CPD Plus scheme you will:

- Get recognition for your continuing professional development
- Increase your networks and contacts
- Advance your career
- Demonstrate to employers that you are committed to the profession and are carrying out a range of professional development activities
- Increase your skills, experience and personal competency

- Have a great attribute to add to your CV
- Gain confidence in your work and find it more rewarding and enjoyable

You are also entitled to the following benefits:

- A certificate confirming that your CPD record is up to date
- Access to a database of members to form learning sets and share skills and experience
- Invitations to CPD events
- Access to CPD workshops
- Information and guidance on learning sets and professional development
- Support and guidance from the MA

Costs

CPD Plus costs £50 a year.

Fellowship of the Museums Association (FMA)

There is always the need for some sort of recognition for those members who have contributed significantly to the profession. A reward for those who have done much more than their job.

At the MA, for many years, this was done in a relatively secretive way and was perceived to be about who you knew rather than what you had done. It was then replaced by a very rigorous CPD system. Neither of these extremes proved satisfactory. The current scheme is a compromise between the two.

Fellowship of the Museums Association (FMA) is a professional development award that recognises and encourages an advanced level of professional contribution, development and achievement by people in any area of museum work.

The Museums Association champions the value of museums to society and supports people who work in and for them (including volunteers). Its key values are independence, creativity, integrity and inclusivity - these values underpin the criteria for achieving the FMA.

The criteria for Fellowship are as follows:

Fellowship of Museums Association - Criteria

FMA's should:

1. *Lead change in an organisation, area of practice or thinking which also has significant wider impact:*

- *Lead an organisation and/or an area of practice or field of knowledge and creates a demonstrable benefit to colleagues, peers and/or the public.*

- *Innovate in areas of work of national, regional or local significance.*
- *Develop ways of working to support continuous improvement.*

2. Generously share their skills and knowledge:

- *Further knowledge, understanding and/or practice within the museum sector:*
 - *give their time to support and enable others, outside direct management to generate new knowledge and insights, e.g. through training, mentoring, learning programmes;*
 - *draw on external experts, expertises and resources to harness and build knowledge and skills;*
 - *communicate with the wider sector, e.g. publishing articles, presenting at conferences, writing blogs, tweeting.*

3. Invest in their own and others' development:

- *Support museums other than his or her employer (as adviser or trustee, for example) and/or plays a leading role in the work of museum sector groups e.g. committees of specialist groups/federations, working groups.*
- *Contribute to the development of others as a mentor and/or by participating in a peer learning network.*
- *Actively plan, act and reflect on his/her personal and professional development.*
- *Learn from others – both within and beyond the cultural sector.*

4. Advocate for museums and the work of museums:

- *Look beyond the museum sector, building relationships and advocating for the work of museums with organisations and/or individuals outside the museum sector.*
- *Demonstrate how the code of ethics underpins his or her work, and their wider sphere of influence.*
- *Proactively advocate and encourage others in their organisations to embrace the code of ethics (e.g. with governing bodies; in investment decisions).*

The assessment process

- The FMA is peer assessed in a face-to-face meeting where candidates demonstrate their continuing achievement of the FMA criteria.
- Candidates will need to submit a formal application at least one month prior to attending an appraisal.
- Those interested in applying for the FMA are asked to book in a preliminary telephone meeting with a member of MA staff before formally registering on the scheme.

Costs

£200 registration fee

£200 assessment fee.