MA Museum and Gallery Practice
Degree Handbook 2017-18

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Introduction** .................................................................................................................................................. 4

**Aims, Objectives and Learning Outcomes** ...................................................................................................... 5

  Aims and Objectives ........................................................................................................................................... 5

  Learning Outcomes ............................................................................................................................................ 6

**Degree structure** ............................................................................................................................................... 6

**Core modules** .................................................................................................................................................. 7

  Principles in Museum and Gallery Practice (Term 1, UCLQG311, 15 credits) ................................................. 7

  Exhibition Project (Term 1-2, UCLQG313, 30 credits) ...................................................................................... 7

  Museums Policies and Practice (Term 1, UCLQG321, 15 Credits) ................................................................. 7

  Research Methods for Museum Studies (Term 2, UCLQG014, 15 credits) .................................................... 8

  Dissertation (Term 2, UCLQG097, 60 credits) .................................................................................................. 8

**Optional modules** ............................................................................................................................................. 9

  Collections Care and Management (Term 2, UCLQG012, 15 credits) .......................................................... 10

  Materials Vs. Cultures (Term 2, UCLQG013, 15 credits) ................................................................................ 10

  The Digital Museum (Term 2, UCLQG315, 15 credits) ................................................................................... 10

  Placement I (Terms 1 and 2, UCLQG318, 15 credits) and Placement II (Terms 1 and 2, UCLQG328, 30 credits) ......................................................................................................................... 11

  Museum Learning, Outreach and Public Engagement (Term 2, UCLQG323, 15 credits) ................................ 12

**Teaching Methods** ......................................................................................................................................... 12

  Part-time Option .................................................................................................................................................. 13

  Teaching and Learning ....................................................................................................................................... 14

  Study Visits ......................................................................................................................................................... 14

  Student Conduct and Responsibilities ............................................................................................................... 15

**Degree assessment** ........................................................................................................................................... 15

  Distinction ......................................................................................................................................................... 15

  Merit ................................................................................................................................................................. 15

  Pass ................................................................................................................................................................. 15

  Fail ................................................................................................................................................................. 16

**Online resources** ............................................................................................................................................. 17

  Gulf resources ................................................................................................................................................... 17
Museum collections online ................................................................. 17
Blogs and mailing lists ........................................................................ 17
Museum organisations ........................................................................ 17
Museum jobs ...................................................................................... 18
Museum and Gallery Practice Literature .............................................. 19
Journals ........................................................................................... 19
Books and Readers .......................................................................... 20
Introduction

This handbook is for the MA in Museum and Gallery Practice at UCL Qatar. It is intended to serve as an introduction to the programme and as a reference source that students should consult throughout their studies. The handbook outlines the aims and objectives, degree structure and content and presents the core and optional modules, as well as key information on UCL Qatar policies, teaching and learning methods and key resources.

The handbook should be used alongside the UCL Qatar Graduate Handbook, which contains useful information on UCL Qatar as a whole.

If students have any queries about the MA in Museum and Gallery Practice, they should contact the Degree Coordinator, Professor Alexandra Bounia.
Aims, Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The MA in Museum and Gallery Practice provides students with the opportunity to acquire relevant knowledge and professional skills in the field of museum studies, with a focus on the Arab world. Key areas of museum theory and practice are taught such as exhibition development, museum management, museum policies and politics, museum representation, museum ethics, and social responsibility. Whilst providing vocational training in a range of practical museum skills, the degree encourages theoretical reflection and critical thinking in relationship to museum practices. Students will acquire knowledge, understanding and practical experience of the approaches and methods that inform current museum and gallery work in Qatar and the Gulf region as well as internationally.

The Master’s degree offers a set of core modules that allow students to develop a sound theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of current museological practice. Optional modules allow the students to specialise in a number of areas of expertise, including museum materialities, the digital museum, and collections management. In addition, students will be able to select an optional placement module through which they will have the opportunity to implement and further develop their skills in a real museum or gallery context, or in a cultural consultancy or design firm, if appropriate. Research, analytical and critical skills will be demonstrated in a supervised research project which will result in a dissertation. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have developed the knowledge and skills to work in museums and galleries, and to actively contribute to the development and innovation of the museum and cultural sectors in the Arab world and internationally.

Aims and Objectives

- To introduce students to the practical and theoretical issues of museum and gallery studies in the international museological field, with a particular focus on the Arab and Islamic world;
- To explore key areas of museum studies including museum history, museum management, exhibition development, museum policies and politics;
- To encourage students to develop critical understanding and awareness in relation to museums and a reflexive approach to professional practice;
- To provide training in relevant, practical and transferable, skills such as report writing and data analysis, project management, leadership, presentation skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills.
Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the MA programme, students will:

- Have developed a critical awareness of theoretical and professional themes and relevant issues in museum and gallery studies, at local, regional, and international levels;
- Have a good knowledge of relevant museological literature and other art and heritage resources;
- Have a good understanding of the principles and ethical considerations which govern the museum and gallery profession, as well as of relevant national and international legislation and key advisory bodies;
- Have acquired a number of skills necessary to operate as critical and reflexive museum practitioners in the Gulf region or internationally, including exhibition production and evaluation, collection research and management, museum management, and audience research;
- Have a good knowledge of the emerging museum and heritage sector in the Gulf region and the wider Arab and Islamic world;
- Have developed key transferable skills such as academic writing, report writing, critical thinking, oral and written communication, project management, teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, and time management skills;
- Be able to carry out independent research and extended academic writing.

Degree structure

The Master’s degree is structured so as to allow students to meet the objectives and achieve the learning outcomes. The programme comprises of four core modules (3 x 15 credits and 1 x 30 credits), optional modules (either 3 x 15 credits or 1 x 15 credits plus 1 x 30 credits), and a dissertation on a topic relevant to the Master’s degree (60 credits). Several core and optional modules include study visits to museums, galleries and heritage sites, in Qatar and abroad.

We cannot guarantee that all the optional courses will necessarily run each year. If there are any modules that are integral to your study, you should check whether they are running in the relevant academic year. Some optional modules may be offered as one-week short courses with visiting academics.
Core modules

Principles in Museum and Gallery Practice (Term 1, UCLQG311, 15 credits)

Module Coordinator: Dr Catharina Hendrick

The module introduces students to the history and theory of museum and gallery development and the formation of their collections. The module will explore the fundamental principles that underpin museums and galleries as institutions. It will consider the meaning and interpretation of objects and works of art and how these meanings and interpretations change and develop over time and from different perspectives. We will utilise case studies from museums and galleries in Europe, America and the Middle East, and will encourage discussion of the similarities and differences between the emerging museums in the Gulf and wider Middle East and the historical development of museums and current museological practice in Europe and the US. The module will encourage critical thinking in relation to the role of museums and galleries in shaping and presenting culture and identity at a local, national and transnational level. The module introduces the key strands and readings that underpin the MA programme, and encourages students to begin to think critically in general about all aspects of museum and gallery practice.

Exhibition Project (Term 1-2, UCLQG313, 30 credits)

Module Coordinators: Dr Catharina Hendrick and Dr Georgios Papaioannou

This module explores how museums and galleries communicate with their audiences, and how they create meaning and ‘knowledge’ through their methods of communication and interpretation. The module teaches key skills such as text writing, project management, teamwork skills, exhibition design and evaluation. Students utilise their skills in an interpretation project which usually takes the form of an exhibition. The module is central to the degree, allowing students to put into practice learning outcomes from other modules. During term 1, the module will focus on developing key skills. In term 2, the students will focus on developing the exhibition, which will open towards the end of the term. The exhibition itself is a student-led project and students are expected to work as a team and in a professional manner with outside partners to deliver an exhibition and associated programming to a professional standard.

Museums Policies and Practice (Term 1, UCLQG321, 15 Credits)

Module Coordinator: Professor Alexandra Bounia

This module aims to introduce students to the internal and external policies that govern museum operations and shape their managerial structures and practice, impacting significantly on how these institutions function and interact with local,
regional or international communities. Students will be introduced to several issues of contemporary museum policy and management practice. The course will draw on theoretical and practice-based academic research in this area of museum practice, as well as on the experience of museum practitioners working in Doha and beyond. Throughout the module students will be invited to reflect on the challenges and uncertainties that museums increasingly confront.

**Research Methods for Museum Studies (Term 2, UCLQG014, 15 credits)**  
*Module Coordinator: Dr Georgios Papaioannou*

This course offers an overview of multi-disciplinary research methods used for the study of museums and other cultural heritage institutions. Students will be introduced to different research methods and types of data sources employed in scholarly museum research. They will be invited to consider the strengths and weaknesses of these methods and consider their effectiveness when critically studying practice in museums. The aim of this module is to introduce students to different methods of documentation and critical assessment of museum practice, from the different vantage points of a number of overlapping disciplines and methodologies that have engaged with heritage practice. Each lecture and seminar aims to present a method, which is presented in a way that allows the students to understand how museum and critical heritage theory is shaped by practice.

The final goal of the module is to prepare students for the primary research that they will conduct in the context of other assignments or their dissertation, by also helping them define the best methodologies for their dissertation questions.

**Dissertation (Term 2, UCLQG097, 60 credits)**  
*Module Coordinator: Dr Sumayya Ahmed*

The dissertation is a piece of extended academic writing of 12,000 words. The dissertation element provides the students with the opportunity to pursue research according to an agenda of their own devising, on a topic relevant to the Master’s degree and decided in discussion with the Degree and Module Coordinators in term 2. The Degree and Module Coordinators will advise on topics and suggest relevant supervisors and advisors. The dissertation allows students to utilise theoretical frameworks and methodologies learned through the Master’s degree, to develop data analysis skills and to explore in detail relevant topics of personal interest. These topics may be related to their placement, their place of work, and may act as a starting point for further PhD research.

The module will include a taught element in term 2 with classes on developing research questions, literature reviews, research methods and resources, structure, argument and presentation, and will be closely supervised through one-to-one
tutorials throughout the research and writing period. During term 2 students will meet with their supervisor to develop and deliver the following:

1. Research topic
2. Research questions and indicative bibliography/resources/case studies
3. Literature review
4. Structure and chapter headings
5. First chapter review

A thesis proposal will be due in February 2018. Students will complete the dissertation from April to July. The supervisor will meet with each student at regular intervals during the writing-up period, in person or via Skype/phone.

The deadline for the submission of the dissertation is **Tuesday 24th July 2018, 12pm midday.** Guidelines for researching, writing and producing the dissertation can be found in the Dissertation Module Handbook.

**Optional modules**

Students have the opportunity to choose a number of optional modules in specific areas of museum studies where they wish to specialise. The number of optional modules that students select will vary according to the particular combination of modules selected. With the exception of one (Placement II, 30 credits), each optional module is 15 credits. The optional modules are taught by UCL Qatar academic staff with contributions from local and regional specialists, as well as by visiting lecturers from other institutions, including the University of Manchester. Students can choose a pathway through the degree by selecting modules that are more closely connected in terms of content and approaches. Suggestions for themes and module combinations are as follows, but you are free to combine any two optional modules, schedule permitting:

- **Museum and Curatorial Studies**: Museum Learning, Outreach and Public Engagement; Digital Museum; Placement I; Placement II
- **Materiality / Collection Care**: Collections Care and Management; Materials Vs. Culture
**Collections Care and Management (Term 2, UCLQG012, 15 credits)**

*Module Coordinator: Professor Alexandra Bounia; Principal Lecturer: Dr Stavroula Goffomitsou*

This course will examine in detail the care and management of museum collections. The aim of the course is to provide students with a solid foundation regarding theory and practice of collections care and management and it will cover a variety of topics, including documentation of objects and collections; collections management systems; agents of deterioration; environmental monitoring; evaluation of microenvironment and its effect on collections; preventive conservation; remedial conservation; pest management; risk assessment and management; disaster planning; security; managing loans; managing museum collections and storages; and widening access to collections.

On completion of the course the students will have a holistic understanding of the principles of collections care and management.

**Materials Vs. Culture (Term 2, UCLQG013, 15 credits)**

*Module coordinator: Professor Alexandra Bounia; Principal Lecturer: Dr Franca Cole*

From the clothes we wear to the books we read and the buildings we live in, we spend our lives surrounded by things. We have museums, storerooms and shelves full of things and still we excavate, buy and acquire more. What does it all mean? Why do we do it? And how do we explain this to others? The Materials Vs. Culture module focuses on what we can learn from the physical object. This is contrasted with the body of material culture theory that has developed to help us understand both ancient and modern objects and how our interpretations may change because of context or a point in time. Each session is built around a different theoretical approach which is explored through hands-on work with objects, pair/group discussion, and museum and site visits. Classwork includes handling objects and giving short informal and formal presentations. By the end of the module students will be able to handle and investigate a variety of different objects and have developed a critical awareness of a broad range of material culture theories. Students will be able to use this theory to help them interpret a variety of different things/spaces/sites and communicate their ideas through both oral presentation and written text.

**The Digital Museum (Term 2, UCLQG315, 15 credits)**

*Module Coordinator: Dr Georgios Papaioannou; Principal Lecturer: Dr Kostas Arvanitis (University of Manchester)*

The Digital Museum module combines a critical and theoretical study of the role of digital media in museums and galleries. The module aims to consider digital media in
a holistic way, according to which they are organically integrated into museum work and exhibition processes. It also aims to examine information and communication technologies from a museological point of view. The module investigates digital museum policies and strategies in the context of the information society; the online version of the museum; the role of interactives and interactivity in exhibition spaces; and the use of mobile media and social software in order to personalise the visitor's/user's experience and enable an additional way of creating and communicating digital museum content. It also covers topics such as writing for the Web, usability, accessibility and navigation of websites, virtual reality and context-aware technologies, as well as authorship, sustainability, the semantic web, interoperability and reusability of digital content in museums.

Placement I (Terms 1 and 2, UCLQG318, 15 credits) and Placement II (Terms 1 and 2, UCLQG328, 30 credits)

Module Coordinators: Argyris Karapitsanis and Professor Alexandra Bounia

Students who do not have any professional experience are strongly recommended to take one of the available Placement options, which will enable them to apply and further develop their learning and skills in the context of a real institution.

Each student can choose to take a 20 (working) day placement (UCLQ318) at a museum, gallery or similar heritage institution according to their interest and the availability of placements. Typically the 20 day placements will be carried out in Mid-April/Mid-June of each year. They may take place in the student’s home institution (if they are employed in a relevant institution), or in a different approved institution in Qatar or abroad.

Students interested in acquiring a more substantial practical experience will be able to select a longer placement option (UCLQG328). For this module, each student will be assigned a 40 (working) day placement, which will typically take place between Mid-April and Mid-June of each year. Students may take either Placement I or Placement II but not both.

For both optional modules (UCLQG318 and UCLQG328) the student will be required to complete a project that will benefit the institution in which they are placed. The project can be connected to any area of museum/gallery work covered in the MA programme, including museum management, museum education, community engagement, exhibition making, museum interpretation, collections care and management, museum marketing, and digital technologies.

The module will include a number of hours of taught workshops (term 1) seeking to strengthen students’ ability to search for and secure employment in the museum sector. Students will be required to take the lead on identifying and securing their
placement, with the full support of the module coordinators. They will be strongly encouraged to treat the Placement module as a real ‘job application’, thus confronting the realities of the job market.

In the institution where the placement takes place, each student will report to a named member of staff who will oversee their work on a day-to-day basis and confirm completion of the placement at the end. Each student will produce a written report, which will summarise their work and specify the skills that they have learnt or improved. Further details of the placement can be found in the Placement Module Handbook.

UCL Qatar may be able to provide financial assistance for the placement. Funding applications are available from Argyris Karapitsanis and may be submitted after a placement arrangement has been secured and all required documentation has been received and signed. If approved by UCL Qatar, students may be eligible for financial support to supplement costs for placement related expenses which may include: transportation to and from the placement site, accommodation, meals, travel and/or liability insurance, and/or special equipment necessary for the placement.

Museum Learning, Outreach and Public Engagement (Term 2, UCLQG323, 15 credits)

Module Coordinator: Argyris Karapitsanis

This module examines the role of museum learning and its relationship to interpretation of collections through a study of learning theories and museum-based practice. The course has a central practical element related to learning/education, as well as lectures covering education theory and relevant case studies. It also looks at current trends in the field and what that means for the museum education practitioner. The examination of theory is critical to understanding the motivations and learning styles of diverse audiences, whilst offering a framework for educational programming and other learning activities for visitors. In addition, this course explores interpretative programming in museums, partnerships with schools, and community programs. An overview of evaluation within museum education practice is included. Emphasis will be on aligning methodologies with theory to ensure quality of experience through a combination of lecture/seminar, study visit, group project and self-directed study.

Teaching Methods
During the induction week there will be a general introductory session at UCL Qatar for the students on the MA in Museum and Gallery Practice programme. In this session we will talk through the programme structure and module options. We will also go through the handbooks and make sure that all students are able to access module and programme information on the Moodle site. Throughout the Master’s course, teaching will be delivered through lectures, seminars and practical classes.

Part-time Option

The MA in Museum and Gallery Practice can be taken part-time over two years. This option is particularly suitable for students who already work in the museum and heritage sectors in Qatar. The total credits remain at 180. In Year 1 students will take three core modules at 60 credits plus 15 credits of optional modules.

In Year 2 students will complete one core module at 15 credits, 30 credits of optional modules plus the dissertation at 60 credits and. Part-time students can choose to take either Placement I or Placement II option modules (but not both). In Year 1 they can only choose to take Placement I. The structure of the part-time option is as follows, but note that the availability of options can change from year to year:

**Year 1:**

**Mandatory Modules (60 credits)**
- Principles of Museum and Gallery Practice (term 1)
- Museum Policies and Practice (term 1)
- Exhibition Project (term 1-2)

**Optional Modules (15 credits)**
- Museum Learning, Outreach and Public Engagement
- Digital Museum
- Placement I
- Collections Care and Management
- Materials Vs. Cultures

**Year 2:**

**Mandatory Modules (15 credits)**
Research Methods for Museum Studies

**Optional Modules (30 credits)**
- Museum Learning, Outreach and Public Engagement
- Digital Museum
- Placement I
- Placement II
The MA in Museum and Gallery Practice is a postgraduate degree and students are expected to take a high level of responsibility for their learning and studying. Each module comprises a set number of contact hours (lectures, seminars, workshops, fieldtrips) which are compulsory, and an additional number of hours allocated to background reading and the preparation of project work and assessed module work. *Students are expected to complete the essential readings listed in the module handbooks prior to a class* in order to be able to comment on the readings as part of the discussions. A UCL Master's requires active student participation in this and other ways as this enriches the learning experience and the class dynamics.

There will be a variety of methods of delivery which include lectures, seminars and discussions, workshops, and practical classes, and student-led seminars and presentations.

The majority of teaching is, where possible, scheduled for the afternoons, between 3 – 6pm. A number of the modules are taught by visiting lecturers, sometimes in collaboration with the Museum and Gallery Practice academic staff, who will deliver the majority of the contact hours in an intensive week of teaching (e.g. the option Digital Museum). Students must ensure that they are available to attend throughout these weeks.

**Study Visits**

There are a number of study visits to museums, galleries or other heritage sites in Qatar or abroad, if appropriate, arranged as part of individual core or optional modules. Each visit is specific to the module and may involve meeting museum or gallery staff or other cultural practitioners and behind-the-scenes tours, or practical tasks relevant to the module. All visits are compulsory. Travel arrangements will be made for each visit, or students might be expected to make their way to the museum/gallery and meet there with colleagues and lecturers.

Students are encouraged to visit museums, galleries and heritage sites in Qatar or abroad, if they have the opportunity to travel during the course of the programme. These visits will serve to enrich class discussions and written work.
Student Conduct and Responsibilities

Students are asked to pay attention to the Student Code of Conduct as referred to in the Graduate Handbook. The Code sets out important standards of behaviour reasonably expected of students by UCL.

Degree assessment

The Board of Examiners normally meets within 1-2 months following the conclusion of the Master’s Degree. At that time students who have completed 180 UCL credits (or the equivalent 1800 learning hours) and passed all elements may be recommended for the award of a Master’s Degree. Results will be graded as a Distinction, Merit, Pass, or Fail. The requirements for each grade are as follows:

Distinction

The award of distinction must be given to students on Masters programmes if they have satisfied all of the following criteria:

- The overall weighted average mark over 180 credits is 70% or higher; and
- The mark for the dissertation is 70% or higher; and
- There are no marks below 50%, no condoned marks, no re-sit marks, and all marks are first attempts.

Merit

The award of merit must be given to students on Masters programmes if they have satisfied all of the following criteria, but do not meet the criteria for an award of distinction:

- The overall weighted average mark over 180 credits is 60% or higher; and
- The mark for the dissertation is 60% or higher; and
- There are no marks below 50%, no condoned marks, no re-sit marks, and all marks are first attempts.

Pass

For an award of a Masters degree students must have completed 180 UCL credits or the equivalent 1800 learning hours and obtained an overall average mark of 50% or greater which must include a mark of 50% or greater for the dissertation.
• A maximum of 25% of the programme's taught element (i.e. excluding the dissertation and placement) may be condoned at 40 – 49%.
• A student may be required to make specified amendments to their dissertation within one month provided that:

  a) The amendments are minor and the dissertation is otherwise adequate;

      and

  b) The student has satisfied all other requirements for the award of a Masters degree.

**Fail**
A candidate will be considered to have failed the Master's Degree if:

• The overall average mark is less than 50%; or
• The mark for the dissertation is less than 50%; or
• The mark for any element is less than 40%.
Online resources

Gulf resources
MAPcollective: a platform for sharing resources on museum practice, museology and museums in the Arabian Peninsula: http://www.mapcollective.org/


Museum collections online
Many museums have made their collections available online via their websites. In addition, there are some websites that draw together collections from a number of museums. Some of the better known ones are listed here:
Cornucopia (UK) - UK collections online: http://www.cornucopia.org.uk/search/place
Culture24 (UK) - Latest news, exhibition reviews, links, event listings and education resources from thousands of UK museums, galleries, heritage sites, archives and libraries, all in one place: http://www.culture24.org.uk/home
Europeana (Europe) - Explore Europe’s cultural collections: http://www.europeana.eu/portal/
Google Art Project (International) - International art collections online, including the Museum of Islamic Art and Mathaf, Doha: http://www.googleartproject.com/

Blogs and mailing lists
Centre for the Future of Museum’s blog: http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.co.uk/
Institute for Cultural Practices: http://culturalpractice.wordpress.com/
Museum 2.0: http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/
Museum 3: http://museum3.org/
The Incluseum http://incluseum.com/author/incluseum/
Thinking About Museums https://exhibitdev.wordpress.com/

Museum organisations
American Association of Museums: http://www.aam-us.org/
Group for Education in Museums (UK): http://www.gem.org.uk/
Museums Association (UK): [http://www.museumsassociation.org/home](http://www.museumsassociation.org/home)


Sharjah Museums Department: [http://www.sharjahmuseums.ae/](http://www.sharjahmuseums.ae/)

**Museum jobs**

Leicester University museums jobs desk (international): [http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/JobsDesk](http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/JobsDesk)

Jobs.ac.uk - academic and academic related jobs, including curatorial: [http://www.jobs.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.ac.uk)
Museum and Gallery Practice Literature

Journals
The most useful sources of current practice and theory are the journals. The main UCL library subscribes to many journals online all of which can be accessed from the UCL electronic journals webpage: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Library/ejournal/index.shtml

The main international journals are:

Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites: http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/maney/cma
Journal of Education in Museums: http://lcoastpress.metapress.com/content/120190/
Journal of Material Culture: http://mcu.sagepub.com/content/current
Museum Anthropology: http://museumanthropology.org/museum-anthropology/
Museums Journal: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal
Museum Management and Curatorship: http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/09647775.asp
Museum News: http://museumnews.net/
Museum Practice: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice
Museums and Society: http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/museumsociety
New Media and Society: http://nms.sagepub.com/
One World Archaeology: http://www.worldarchaeologicalcongress.org/publications/books/48-one-world-archaeology
Public Archaeology: http://maney.co.uk/index.php/journals/pua/
Technology and Culture: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/technology_and_culture/
The International Journal of Heritage Studies: http://journals.academia.edu/InternationalJournalOfHeritageStudies
University Museums and Collections Journal: http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/browsing/umacj/
Visitor Behavior: http://www.visitorstudiesarchives.org/vb.php
World Archaeology: http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rwar20/current#.UekEF9L28rU

Books and Readers

The most important books are listed in the individual module handbooks and reading lists. Most are kept in the UCL Qatar library. There are an increasing number of ‘readers’ which include reprints of important articles and/or specially commissioned articles on particular museum topics, as well as recent edited volumes showcasing innovative approaches to museums and heritage and broad introductions to general critical frameworks. These are often well worth investing in. Recent examples of these and other useful edited volumes or monographs are listed here:


