

Section 1 Context and background

1.0 Context for the Evaluation

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport commissioned 12 learning projects consisting of partnerships between national and regional museums during 2003-2004. The partnerships focused on two areas – Education and Community. The Strategic Commissioning 2003/4: National and Regional Partnerships Guidance Notes describe the scope and intentions of the scheme (henceforward DCMS/DfES scheme or programme). The DCMS/DfES scheme will extend over three years, and 2003/4 was the first and pilot year of the scheme. RCMG was commissioned to evaluate the first phase of the scheme.

At the same time, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA; formerly Resource: the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries) awarded funding to the museums that make up the Renaissance in the Regions First Phase Hubs to extend their school services. RCMG evaluated this programme between August and November 2003 and submitted the final report *What did you learn at the museum today?* in February 2004. It was intended that as far as possible the two evaluations should work in parallel.

This report of the DCMS/DfES Programme presents in detail the data and evidence from the evaluation, which was carried out between August 2003 and the end of March 2004. It is accompanied by a short advocacy document, also entitled *The Value of Museums: Inspiration, Identity, Learning*, which sets out the main themes and key findings of the evaluation.

The DCMS/DfES evaluation was initially planned for completion by December 2003; subsequently, however, it was extended, and data was collected up until the end of March 2004. An Interim Report was submitted to DCMS in March 2004 and two earlier reports were submitted in September and November 2003. Meetings were held with DCMS on November 26th 2003 and January 19th 2004. Seminars with delegates from participating organisations were held on July 24th 2003, October 20th 2003, January 22nd 2004 and June 16th 2004. The interim findings, mainly on the quantitative side of the evaluation, were discussed with seminar participants including DCMS at the January seminar. At the June seminar, both quantitative and qualitative findings and interpretations were discussed with participants, including DCMS, DfES and delegates from organisations taking part in the next phase of the Strategic Commissioning scheme.

The Generic Learning Outcome system developed by RCMG and MLA was used to structure both the evaluation of the DCMS/DfES Strategic Commissioning National/Regional Museum Education Partnerships 2003-2004 and the Renaissance in the Regions Education Programme. Five broad categories of learning outcomes were identified during the Learning Impact Research Project (LIRP) conducted earlier

for MLA by RCMG. Learning outcomes are distinguished from learning itself (learning processes) and from learning objectives (the intentions of teaching). Learning outcomes are the effects or results of learning – i.e. the outcomes of successful learning processes or experiences. Each individual learns in their own way, using their own preferred learning styles, and according to what they want to know. Each person experiences their own outcomes from learning but individual learning outcomes can be grouped into generic categories.

The five Generic Learning Outcomes are:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Skills
- Attitudes and Values
- Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity
- Action, Behaviour, Progression

(See two papers by Hooper-Greenhill and Moussouri on the MLA website www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/lirp.asp. The final project summary report is at www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/00insplearn.asp)

The GLOs have been developed on the basis of deep knowledge and long experience of the power and potential of learning in museums, archives and libraries. The GLOs have been verified through the piloting process of LIRP. Learning from culture has the potential to be broader, more open, less structured and more motivating than learning within the formal sector. While cultural learning is entirely complementary to formal learning, it has its own character and the GLO system reflects this difference. There is a greater emphasis on the inspirational and motivational aspects of learning from culture, and on the contribution that culture can make to the developing sense of self and personal identity. The flexibility of the GLO system allows the diversity of learning in museums, archives and libraries to be captured and measured.

The Generic Learning Outcomes enable the identification, capture, categorisation and discussion of learning in museums, archives and libraries. In effect, the wide-ranging, but frequently formerly invisible, effects of learning through culture are brought to visibility through the GLO system. Using the GLOs, learning may be researched using either quantitative or qualitative methods and standard good research practice. The GLOs may be used to structure (or pre-code) research studies or tools, or may be used to categorise (or post-code) what people say about their learning experiences. References and comments pertaining to each of the GLOs may be counted and compared in relation to the others, and the GLOs may be compared across time and/or compared between organisations, thus presenting a broad survey of learning. The data that results from in depth interviews or focus group discussions about the impact of learning may be sorted into themes that expand and explore the generic outcomes of learning in detail and complexity, thus giving a deep description of learning. Both depth and breadth may be linked. It is this approach that has informed the evaluation plan for the DCMS/DfES scheme.

1.1 Research aims and intentions

The broad aim of the evaluation research was to assess the educational impact of the DCMS/DfES scheme. In addition, it was intended to link this research to the evaluation of the MLA Renaissance-funded Education Programme, so that a national picture of the educational impact of museums emerges. The specific research objectives of the evaluation of the DCMS/DfES scheme are set out in Section 1.2 below. Links to the evaluation of the MLA scheme have been established through the use of a common conceptual framework based on the GLOs and the use of common tools, and the results of the DCMS/DfES evaluation are compared where feasible with the Renaissance findings in this report.

In the Strategic Commissioning 2003-2004: National/Regional Museum Education Partnerships Guidance Notes some desired and measurable outcomes for the projects to achieve are set out. The specific research objectives for the DCMS/DfES scheme accommodate these proposed outcomes.

The desirable and measurable outcomes from DCMS Strategic Commissioning 2003/4: National and Regional Partnerships Guidance Notes pages 4-6 are set out as follows:

A. Education	
1	Fulfilment and satisfaction from achievement for children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased learning within a subject area ▪ Increased understanding of connections between subjects ▪ Increased learning across subjects
2	Increase in self-confidence and self esteem for children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased cultural understanding and respect and tolerance for others ▪ Increased ability to work with others ▪ Increased involvement in class, school or community events ▪ Ability to make informed choices beyond and within planned experiences ▪ Positive attitudes to experience and desire for further experiences
3	Increase in confidence, expertise and personal satisfaction of teachers
4	Increase in total numbers of children and young people who participate in educational programmes in the regions
5	Increase in participation of schools (teachers and students) in development of museum programmes
6	Increased satisfaction of schools with museum education programmes (as seen through educational attainment of children)
7	New partnerships developed with schools
8	Increase in volume of on or off-site education by museum education staff
9	Increase in object-based teaching at museums or schools

Table 1.1 DCMS/DfES desirable and measurable outcomes for children and teachers

B. Communities	
1	Improved outcomes (motivation, engagement, self-confident, comfort, satisfaction) for participants in museum programmes
2	Enhanced perception of importance and value of museum and services they provide amongst participants
3	Increase in participation in the museums activities by communities
4	Increase in outreach sessions provide by national museums
5	Increase in the number of visits to national, regional or hub museums by new users
6	New partnerships with communities, or community led bodies
7	New projects developed through partnerships with communities or community led bodies: e.g. education programmes, exhibitions, handling sessions, etc
8	Repeat visits by new users or increase in repeat visits by targeted groups

Table 1.2 DCMS desirable and measurable outcomes for communities

By dividing the proposed outcomes into learning outcomes and educational outputs, the relationship to the GLO scheme can be seen. The specific objectives for the evaluation focus on learning outcomes. This was confirmed during discussions with DCMS at the time of commissioning the extension of the evaluation.

<p>Learning outcomes for children</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased learning within a subject area ▪ Increased understanding of connections between subjects ▪ Increased learning across subjects ▪ Increased cultural understanding <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased ability to work with others ▪ Ability to make informed choices beyond and within planned experiences <p>Attitudes and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in self-confidence and self-esteem for children ▪ Increased cultural understanding and respect and tolerance for others <p>Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fulfilment and satisfaction from achievement for children <p>Activity, Behaviour, Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased involvement in class, school or community events
<p>Learning outcomes for teachers</p> <p>Attitudes and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive attitudes to experience and desire for further experiences ▪ Increase in confidence, expertise and personal satisfaction of teachers ▪ Increase in satisfaction of schools with museum education programmes (e.g. as seen through educational attainment of children)
<p>Educational outputs for museums and schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in total numbers of children and young people who participate in museum educational programmes in the regions ▪ Increase in participation of schools (teachers and students) in development of museum programmes ▪ New partnerships developed with schools ▪ Increase in volume of on or off-site education by museum education staff ▪ Increase in object-based teaching at museums or schools

Table 1.3 DCMS/DfES desirable and measurable outcomes for children and teachers linked to the Generic Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes for communities

Attitudes and values

- Improved outcomes (motivation, engagement, self-confident, comfort, satisfaction) for participants in museum programmes
- Enhanced perception of importance and value of museum and services they provide amongst participants

Educational outputs for communities

- Increase in total numbers of children and young people who participate in educational programmes in the regions
- Increase in outreach sessions provide by national museums
- Increase in the number of visits to national, regional or hub museums by new users
- New partnerships with communities, or community led bodies
- New projects developed through partnerships with communities or community led bodies: e.g. education programmes, exhibitions, handling sessions, etc
- Repeat visits by new users or increase in repeat visits by targeted groups

Table 1.4 DCMS desirable and measurable outcomes for communities linked to the Generic Learning Outcomes

1.2 Specific research objectives

The specific objectives for the evaluation were developed through discussion with DCMS and in relation to the desired and measurable outcomes set out in the Guidance Notes (as above). These objectives were confirmed during the negotiations for the extension of the research.

- 1) To ascertain who benefited from the DCMS/DfES scheme and what was the increased volume of educational and community-based activity as a result of the DCMS/DfES scheme
- 2) To describe the approach of the 12 projects
- 3) To assess the value of the DCMS/DfES scheme by identifying the learning outcomes for teachers, children and communities in quantitative and qualitative terms
- 4) To review the character of the partnerships between national and regional museums
- 5) To establish some tools and methodologies that can be used in a generic manner at a later stage of the DCMS/DfES scheme if appropriate
- 6) To review the social value of museum education and community work and the potential for the future

Six specific objectives are identified above; however, the most substantial part of this research focuses on assessing the value of the scheme by identifying the learning outcomes (i.e. Objective 3). This objective is specifically met in Chapters 7 to 10 of this report, which deal with the quantitative and qualitative findings of the evaluation in detail.

Objective 1 enables evaluation in relation to participation and outputs. This objective is achieved in Chapter 4, which gives overall participation figures, Chapter 3, which includes details of outputs in each project, and Chapters 5 and 6, which examine who benefited in terms of the teachers and pupils who completed evaluation forms, and how the museum projects were used by teachers.

Objective 2 is met in Chapter 3, in which each project is described and summarised. This objective is also integral to the case studies in Chapter 10. Objective 4 is integrated into the whole evaluation scheme –the strengths and weaknesses of the partnerships are assessed as part of the main body of the work. Issues are raised particularly in Chapter 10. Objective 5 has been achieved through the methods and tools developed and used in the evaluation, which can be re-used later if appropriate. Objective 6 is encompassed by the conclusions to this report and also by the accompanying advocacy document, also entitled *The Value of Museums: Inspiration, Identity, Learning*, which sets out the main themes and key findings of the evaluation. The report is set out with a succinct Executive Summary, which is supported by robust and comprehensive evidence for the claims made. Conclusions are drawn in Section 11.