

Module 3: Physical Exhibitions

Curator	Someone who devises and implements plans for exhibitions.
Exhibition	The organisation and display of a museum's collection.
Collection	The body of objects and artworks belonging to a museum or on loan to the museum that are either on display or in storage.
Collection Policy	Helps a museum decide what objects can be acquired, presented, conserved, stored and loaned.
Invigilator	An invigilator is someone who supervises an exhibition. They watch over the exhibition to ensure the objects are safe and secure and may also provide a welcome and information for visitors.

What does a curator have to think about when creating an exhibition?

Concept

The main idea or theme of the exhibition.
This is what ties the exhibition together.

Display mechanisms

Methods of displaying objects.
Examples include display cases or vitrines, hung on the wall, on plinths.

The relationship between the objects

Can help the curator decide how they are organised.
In the Hunt Museum different rooms are organised by material or chronology.

How the visitor interacts with the objects

An example from the Hunt Museum is the drawers.
Visitors can open drawers and discover objects and artworks for themselves.
Object handling is sometimes used to support learning in relation to them.

Information and labelling

Directional signage guides visitors around the exhibition and building.
Gives objects context or meaning.
Tells the visitor what they're looking at.
Important for intellectual accessibility.

Lighting

Good lighting guides a visitor around an exhibition.
It can draw the eye to a display or create atmosphere.
Can be natural or artificial

Practical considerations

Examples include the amount of space in the gallery, how much funding is available.

Safety and security

Make sure visitors and objects are kept safe from harm.

Visitors

Making sure there are no tripping hazards.
Keeping fire exits free and unblocked.

Objects

Putting alarms in display cases.
Having invigilators in rooms keeping an eye on exhibits.



On the next page are three examples of rooms from the Permanent Collection and information about the temporary gallery space. Can you compare the different displays to each other using the above points?

The Study Room

Drawers protect light sensitive objects and encourage visitor interaction with exhibits.



The Treasury

The room is designed to resemble a church or cathedral.

Atmospheric lighting means the room is dimly lit while spotlights make the gold and silver shine.

A central display case gives visitors a 360 degree view of the exhibit.



The Captains' Room

Windows are partially covered to protect artworks. These are hung on the wall away from direct light.



The Temporary Exhibition Gallery

Example of a White Cube Gallery; plain white walls were designed to minimise distractions but can also be painted any colour.

Walls and platforms of different heights can be constructed depending on the exhibition.

This is a very flexible space suitable for all kinds of exhibitions.