

Evaluating projects

Evaluation is a crucial part of any project. This is the stage when the most focussed ‘learning’ takes place and so students should be encouraged to develop their evaluation skills and techniques. Evaluation can also be a creative process, as it forms the initial stage of developing future work.

It might be useful to think of the evaluation process in three stages:



It is important to decide how you will measure the success of the project during the initial planning stages. By doing this, evaluation becomes built into the project, and the right information is gathered along the way.

Consider whose opinions you need to capture, and at which key points. Students? Teachers? Church Partners? Audience? Professional Artists? There are many different ways to record this information, depending on the target group. See www.ascendance.org.uk !!!!! for examples.

When all the feedback has been collated, it is useful to produce some kind of written report. This should be broken down into different headings, which might include planning, participants, artistic quality, audience experience, partners, logistics, educational outcomes etc... The ‘project manager’ (or students taking on that role) should reflect on each area, referencing the evidence gathered during the project.

Towards the end of the report, the project manager should consider ideas/opportunities to develop the work in future, learning from the previous project. A ‘S.W.O.T.’ analysis might help with this.

Finally, it is important to consider how to disseminate what has been learnt from the project. Evaluation needs to be honest and objective, in order to identify ways to improve in the future. However, it may be necessary to have more than one ‘version’ of the final evaluation report, considering the relevance/sensitivity of particular sections for different readers.

For further information, see Partnerships for Learning: A guide to evaluating arts education projects by Felicity Woolf. Available as a free download from www.artscouncil.org.uk

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats