

Student Self-Evaluation

Module	Exhibition 2.0
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This document helps facilitate the assessment of the module listed above.

Please evaluate your project or projects under each heading using the guidelines provided. Add visuals as necessary to support your evaluation. Consider each section in relation to your exhibition outcome, and your process and engagement with the timetabled sessions.

You will be assessed on your exhibition outcome with additional consideration made of observed module engagement and your evaluation.

Name	Steve Allison
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Part One: Knowledge and Understanding Skills (30%)

Applied Skills, research and experimentation

In this section, students should discuss and evaluate the application of existing and newly acquired skills, and knowledge to their outcomes.

Demonstrate research into exhibition strategies with analysis of exhibitions visited. Discuss your process regarding exhibition options – framing, mounting, installation, performative etc. – as appropriate, commenting on any experiments undertaken.

Use visuals as necessary.

Approx. 350-450 words.

Response:



Linder: *Danger Came Smiling*

The first exhibition I visited for this module was *Linder: Danger Came Smiling* at the Glynn Vivian. As a solo exhibition, it offered a valuable insight into how a single artist presents work across different media and stages of their career. I was particularly attentive to the framing strategies employed. I left with the impression that smaller works benefit from relatively large frames and window mounts, which draw the viewer closer and create a sense of looking inward from a distance. Conversely, the larger works appeared more effective when paired with subtle, minimal frames, allowing the viewer to feel more immersed in the scene rather than positioned outside it.



Gwen John: Strange Beauties

The second exhibition I visited was *Gwen John: Strange Beauties* at the National Museum. My observations here reinforced the impressions formed at the Glynn Vivian. Window mounts again proved effective for smaller works, providing both structure and visual focus. However, I found some of the frames overly ornate. In certain instances, the decorative quality risked competing with the image itself. Whilst such frames may be appropriate for older oil paintings, particularly when the intention is to evoke a specific historical or opulent aesthetic, I felt they were less suited to more restrained or intimate works on paper.

The third exhibition I attended was *Penny Hallas: Sighting*. Although I connected with aspects of the work, I felt that the presentation methods used in this exhibition would not be appropriate for my own practice. The installation strategies were effective for Hallas's



Penny Hallas: Sighting

conceptual approach, and they do align with the clarity and material restraint I aim for in my work. Nevertheless, I felt that creating floor standing installations was beyond my capabilities and budget.

Initially, I had considered a range of presentation methods for my own exhibition. However, visiting these exhibitions made it clear that photographs, and, in many cases, paintings, benefit from the formal relationship between picture and frame. I realised that some of the alternative display methods I had been considering were motivated more by a desire to do something different than by a genuine creative rationale.



Valleys exhibition

Having resolved that framing was the most appropriate approach, I returned to the *Valleys* exhibition at the National Museum, which I had visited previously. The *Coalfaces* series resonated strongly with me, both aesthetically and conceptually. I felt that a similar framing strategy would complement my own work, and this became the basis for the presentation decisions I ultimately adopted. The frames are thin aluminium, which is subtle and the images have no covering.

Part Two: **Cognitive and Intellectual Skills** (20 %)

Evaluating the specific needs of exhibition display

Consider the module in relation to other practical outcomes. How have you considered your work specifically in this context, rather than in publication form, or as a portfolio of work. Considerations could include discussion of practicality in relation to the exhibition space, edit, scale, sequence, distillation from a larger body of work etc.

Use visuals as necessary.

Approx. 250-350 words

Response:

The work I have produced for the book project relies on the accumulation of a significant number of images for its meaning to emerge. The project's themes, urban change, cultural erosion, and the shifting function of civic spaces, depend on the viewer encountering multiple photographs in dialogue with one another. The images also benefit from being presented at a large scale, allowing the viewer to engage physically with the work and to read the cultural detail embedded within each scene. However, I recognised from the outset that space would be limited in a group exhibition context. It became clear that a smaller, more focused subset of images would be necessary to present a coherent body of work without compromising the conceptual integrity of the project.

For this reason, I selected images from a related project I have been developing alongside the book, *Last Orders*. This work examines the social transformation brought about by the closure and repurposing of pubs, once central institutions within many communities. Although developed independently, the project is closely connected to the broader themes explored in the book, and several of the images appear in both bodies of work. Whilst I had selected five images, I was also conscious that I might not be able to exhibit all five if space became constrained. Importantly, I felt the project's core message would still be communicated effectively even if the number of images had to be reduced to three images.

My initial intention was to print the images at 100 × 80 cm. After calculating the wall space required, I reconsidered this approach. The scale would have been visually effective but impractical within the shared exhibition environment. I ultimately decided on a final print size of 60 × 50 cm, which I felt offered an ideal compromise. At this scale, the images remain large enough to provide an immersive viewing experience, whilst occupying significantly less wall space. This decision also increased the likelihood that all five images would be accepted during the curatorial process, reducing the risk of having to further limit the selection.



Exhibition Installation

Part Three: **Practical Skills** (30%)

Practical Work Submission - Exhibition

Apply both existing and newly acquired skills to the process of conceiving and mounting a group exhibition. Engage with any workshops or technical assistance to develop these skills.

Discuss processes involved in conceiving the work for submission and evaluate choices, for example, the use of inhouse or external fabrication and problem solving during both the run-up to, and final installation.

Consider and comment on the relationship between initial and developing concept *and* exhibited work.

Use visuals as necessary, including process and final installation images.

Approx. 350-500 words.

Response:

I initially considered a range of methods for exhibiting the work produced for the book project. From the outset, I was aware that the project's message relies on volume. The accumulation of images is essential for meaning to emerge. At the same time, I recognised that the images require space between them in order to breathe, and that the viewer needs physical room to engage with the work. I also felt that the photographs needed to be

presented at a scale that would offer an immersive experience. Whilst the book format is the ideal vehicle for this body of work, a group exhibition presents a number of practical and spatial challenges.

After careful consideration, I decided to exhibit a smaller, more focused subset of the work. The *Last Orders* project, which I had been developing independently but which shares thematic and visual connections with the book, offered a coherent alternative considering the exhibition context. Several of the images appear in both bodies of work, and the project's exploration of pub closures and their repurposing aligns closely with the broader themes of social change and civic decline.

Once the selection of images was resolved, the next step was to determine the most appropriate method of presentation. In the early stages, I considered introducing texture to the images to create a gritty, tactile quality. I explored the possibility of printing on self-adhesive vinyl, which would allow the texture of the wall to show through, and I also considered producing canvas wraps. However, it became clear that printing on vinyl would not contribute meaningfully to the conceptual aims of the work. Its primary benefit would have been ease of installation rather than any creative rationale. Similarly, after visiting several exhibitions, I noted the absence of canvas wraps in contemporary photographic display and concluded that this method would not be suitable. I realised that my interest in textured surfaces stemmed more from a desire to do something different than from any genuine conceptual intent.

Having decided that framing was the most appropriate approach, I aimed to achieve an effect similar to the *Coalfaces* images I had seen in the *Valleys* exhibition at the National Museum. Those works were custom framed, which was beyond my budget. After researching various options online, I found aluminium frames that appeared to offer a comparable aesthetic. However, these frames were designed to include a perspex cover and a window mount, neither of which aligned with my intention to present the images without a barrier between the viewer and the print, which would create reflections and reduce the clarity.

I produced a test print on lustre photographic paper and attempted to adapt the frame. I quickly realised that both the perspex and the mount were necessary to provide structural rigidity, without them the print simply fell through the frame. This led to the conclusion that the image would need to be adhered directly to the perspex. The process proved challenging, as the adhesive was extremely tacky and offered no opportunity for repositioning. Although I eventually achieved the visual effect I wanted, the print developed ripples that were unacceptable.

Despite these difficulties, the test confirmed that the method was conceptually and aesthetically appropriate. I therefore decided to proceed but sought assistance to ensure the final results were of a professional standard. With Daf's help, we successfully framed all of the images, achieving the presentation quality I had envisioned and prepared the work for installation.

The sequencing of the images was determined largely through an intuitive process. I selected five photographs representing different stages in the life-cycle of a pub, one abandoned, one converted into a shop, one repurposed as accommodation, one transformed into a takeaway and one now operating as a restaurant. I positioned the abandoned pub at the centre of the sequence, as this stage typically precedes any form of repurposing and therefore functions as a conceptual anchor for the project.



Two of the images include roads that run either to the left or the right of the building. To maintain a visual and directional balance, I placed these images at opposite ends of the sequence. The remaining two photographs were positioned between these anchor points, creating a coherent progression across the five works.



The frames included a slight lip, which informed the installation method. Each frame was hung using two screws inserted into the wall, allowing the frame to rest securely on the fixings. This approach ensured consistency across the sequence and provided a clean, unobtrusive presentation that supported the work's overall aesthetic.

Part Four: Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice. (20%)

Engagement with Taught and Studio (non-timetabled) Sessions; Professional Engagement

Have you participated in all tutorials and group seminars, and completed all the related tasks? How good has your time management been throughout the module?

Present exhibited work to a professional standard with a view toward professional audiences and potential clients and collaborators.

Consider group engagement and dynamics – your contributions in terms of team engagement (specified roles, help offered during the installation process etc.). What have you learned from the process to feed forward into future exhibition planning?

Approx. 250-350 words.

Response:

I attended all scheduled sessions for this module and found the learning outcomes to be highly constructive. The introduction to exhibition strategies and modes of presentation has been particularly valuable, as these insights will directly inform how I plan and deliver future exhibitions. Developing an understanding of curatorial expectations and professional display conventions will also be beneficial when seeking recognition from curators and exhibition organisers, with the longer-term aim of securing opportunities in higher-profile contexts.

I believe my work was presented effectively. Despite the budget constraints, the framing solution achieved a professional finish that complemented the images. Printing the work in-house on lustre photographic paper provided a clean, polished surface quality that enhanced the tonal range and gave the images a strong visual presence.

I initially put myself forward for the role of chairperson, as this aligns most closely with my organisational strengths and communication skills. Given my limited experience in graphic design and social media marketing, I felt this was the area where I could contribute most meaningfully to the group. When two other members also expressed interest in chairing, I chose to step aside and allow them to take on the primary responsibility. It was agreed, however, that I would remain part of the chairing committee in a supporting capacity. As a committee, I feel we maintained a clear overview of the process and managed the group effectively. One weakness I identified was the delay in finalising the invigilation rota. Our focus had been on resolving the main exhibition decisions, and once these were completed, we momentarily overlooked the ongoing administrative tasks that followed.

At a group level, communication was not as cohesive as I would have preferred. There appeared to be a noticeable divide between Fine Art and Photography, with limited cross-disciplinary dialogue in the early stages. As a committee, we addressed this issue directly, and by the time of installation both groups were working together more fluidly and collaboratively.

As a group, we offered assistance wherever it was needed. My own installation was relatively straightforward, which meant I had sufficient time to support others during their setup. The group worked effectively throughout the installation period and demonstrated a strong sense of cooperation during the opening event. The catering team organised a welcoming bar with a well-considered selection of beverages, which contributed positively to the atmosphere of the evening. Overall, I feel the exhibition was a success, both in terms of the quality of the work presented and the professionalism shown by the group.