



ArtWorks
Cymru

Quality Principles

ARTWORKS CYMRU QUALITY PRINCIPLES

The journey to create these principles started with a big discussion in Carmarthen. We asked lots of questions - what does 'quality' mean when you are creating work with people? How do we know when we see / feel / hear quality? What do we need to do to ensure quality? We didn't really have a framework to help us structure our conversation.

Arts Council of Wales asked us to create the ArtWorks Cymru Quality Principles to move the conversation on. They will give you a way to talk about quality that can be used by everyone who is making participatory arts.

We expect artists and arts organisations to be the main stakeholders that use the quality principles, but we hope you will share them with your partners and use them in practice. They are designed to help you to think about how to make the good work you do even better, to show the value of this practice, and to make sure participants get the best experiences possible.

If you would like to tell us about your experience of using the principles, please contact us via the website and send us a case study. We're all in this together!

How to use the quality principles

- Find out about the Principles, and then think about what you want to focus on in terms of quality in your project or programme of work.
- You can work through them all or focus on specific principles that resonate with you. It's up to you.
- For each principle, we suggest key indicators of quality, but you should create your own bespoke indicators. You can use our worksheet to map your way through.

You can find an online version of this resource at www.artworks.cymru/quality-principles. Like this booklet, it is bilingual — English and Cymraeg!

The ArtWorks Cymru Quality Principles were funded by Arts Council Wales.



SECTIONS AND CONTENTS



Intention

- 5. Intention Overview
- 6. Artistic & Professional, Relevant & Inclusive
- 7. Inspiring, Engaging & Challenging



Activity

- 9. Activity Overview
- 10. Purposeful, Active, Hands-On & Reflective, Suitably Situated & Resourced
- 11. Collaboratively Planned, Evaluated & Safe



People

- 13. People Overview
- 14. Participant Centred, Focus on Participant Progression
- 15. Shared Ownership & Responsibility



Resources & Contributors

- 16. Tools & Resources
- 21. Contributors / About the Artwork



INTENTION

This segment explores the intention behind participatory arts projects and programmes, and how you might think about quality in relation to this.

We have identified three key quality principles in relation to a participatory arts intention:

- The intention should be artistic and professional
- The intention should be relevant and inclusive
- The intention should be inspiring, challenging and engaging

Artistic & Professional

Participatory arts practice has the art at its heart, and this principle makes a commitment to this. It also outlines that artists are professionals in the same way social workers, counsellors or medical professionals are. They should have relevant knowledge, skills and experience, as well as a profile in their field.

Key Indicators include:

- Artists are members of an appropriate membership organisation e.g. People Dancing, Sound Sense, National Association of Writers in Education
- Artists have a thriving arts practice in their own right
- Artists undertake ongoing professional development and training
- Projects in particular contexts involve training to support artists in delivery

Relevant & Inclusive

Participatory arts practice works with people in different situations, and quality practice is relevant to the context in which it is being delivered and to the participants the artist is working with. The practice is an inclusive one and focuses on enabling non-professionals to engage with the arts.

Key Indicators include:

- The key stakeholders are clear about what is being delivered to who and why
- Space is made for discussion about how to make the project / programme relevant to participants
- Artists and partners bring expertise to the table around the contexts they are delivering in
- The stakeholders and team have considered what inclusivity means in the frame of their project / programme

Inspiring, Challenging & Engaging

Participatory arts practice should inspire and engage participants, but it will also be challenging. Generally artists will be working with participants to develop new skills and do something they haven't experienced before. Quality practice will balance fun with challenge, and artists will seek to inspire participants to move outside their comfort zone.

Key Indicators include:

- The arc of the project / programme has been mapped out and the approach to key challenging moments has been discussed
- The key objectives of the work are communicated and understood by all partners and artists involved
- Artists bring their own practice into the room as inspiration
- Support is in place for artists and participants to make the journey of the project / programme

You can find descriptions of the highlighted words in the Glossary of Terms, found on page 17.



ACTIVITY

This segment explores the activity that is delivered within a participatory arts project or programme and what the key quality issues are.

We have identified three key quality principles in relation to participatory arts activity:

- The activity should be purposeful, active, hands-on and reflective
- The activity should be suitably situated and resourced
- The activity should be collaboratively planned, evaluated and safe

Purposeful, Active, Hands-On & Reflective

Participatory arts projects are doing projects. There is a process that will be undertaken, and often a definite outcome that the artist and **participants** are working towards. The artist will lead the work, but participants are actively involved, and will be making, performing, crafting and creating. The process will also offer opportunities for all stakeholders to reflect on what is happening in the project.

Key quality indicators include:

- **Activity** is well planned and paced
- There is a shared **journey** within the activity, which may lead to an outcome
- **Participants** are actively involved in the **arts practice** being delivered
- Opportunities are offered for all **stakeholders** involved to reflect on activity and its progress
- Creation is celebrated and valued

Suitably Situated & Resourced

Participatory projects require a range of resources. The key ones are:

Time | Space | Stuff | Staff

The resources need to be negotiated between everyone who's involved - those **beyond the room** (funders), those **outside the room** (project managers, or commissioners) and those **in the room** (the artists and the participants). Sometimes the resources are less than ideal for an excellent project. This will have an impact on the final **quality**.

Key quality indicators include:

- The space that is used has been carefully thought about and is fit for purpose
- The schedule takes into account the needs of the participants and gives enough time for artists to deliver what is planned
- Budget has been allocated for any resources needed
- Time is scheduled in for preparation and planning
- The project or programme has the appropriate staff in place

Collaboratively Planned, Evaluated & Safe

A good project needs to be carefully planned. This includes an understanding of the roles of everyone involved in the project. Work needs to be monitored and evaluated, with a view to continually improving what we do. However, evaluation should not happen just at the end of the project; it needs to be built in throughout the process. Projects need to be risk assessed and safe for everyone taking part.

Key quality indicators include:

- All stakeholders are clear about their roles within the project
- Time has been earmarked in the schedule for planning and evaluation
- Artists are involved in planning from an early stage
- There are appropriate risk assessments and safe guarding policies in place
- It's clear who holds responsibility for health and safety and first aid

You can find more information on who's involved in participatory arts projects online:
www.artworks.cymru/whos-involved





PEOPLE

This segment explores the people that are involved in a participatory arts project or programme and what the key quality issues are in relation to them.

We have identified three key quality principles in relation to participatory arts activity:

- Projects and programmes are participant centred
- Projects and programmes focus on participant progression
- There should be shared ownership and responsibility across all stakeholders

Participant Centred

Participants are at the heart of participatory **arts practice**. They are varied and individual; each **project** will need new thinking about the needs of the specific individuals and groups involved. If the needs of people 'beyond' or 'outside' the room conflict with the needs of participants, then further discussion is needed to confirm that everyone who's involved knows what they need to do to support the project. Think about the project from the participant's point of view and what it will look like to them if its good.

Key quality indicators include:

- The project or **programme** is designed around the needs of participants
- You have included the participants in the design and planning of the project or programme
- It is clear to all stakeholders how participants will be supported through their **journey**
- Any specific participant needs have been addressed e.g. dietary or access requirements

Focus on Participant Progression

Participatory arts projects enable participants to build skills and experience. Each process undertaken is focused on development. This can happen within one single session or across a whole project or programme. But often projects are stepping stones for participants, and can lead to another experience. Funders often talk about the **legacy** of work undertaken, and a consideration of participant progression makes a project more meaningful to everyone involved.

Key quality indicators include:

- A clear plan is in place for participant progression within a project / programme
- Participant progress is highlighted and celebrated in each session
- The potential legacies of the **activity** have been discussed at an early stage
- Participants are signposted to other projects or programmes once the activity is over

Shared Ownership & Responsibility

Quality work requires support from everyone who is involved. There can be a wide range of people involved in a project or programme: those **'in the room'** (the participants and artists) **'outside the room'** (commissioner, project manager, care workers, etc) and **'beyond the room'** (the funders, the company directors, etc.). They all have influence over the work and its outcomes.

Ownership in participatory arts projects is widely shared, and clear communication and support between stakeholders helps to build trust as work progresses.

Key quality indicators include:

- All stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities
- Partners are actively engaged and involved in planning
- Artists are well supported to develop and flex activity as they deliver
- All stakeholders advocate and value the activity and its outcomes
- The ownership of the activity and its outcomes has been discussed and is clear

You can find descriptions of the highlighted words in the Glossary of Terms, found on page 17.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

We have designed a set of tools to help you think about quality within the projects or programmes that you are delivering, and have printed them in this booklet. You can also download them from our online resource.

You will also find links to some of the other resources developed by ArtWorks Cymru, and to other membership organisations and websites with useful information.

www.artworks.cymru/tools-resources

LINKS TO MEMBERSHIP ORGANISATIONS

www.artworksalliance.org.uk

www.a-n.co.uk/news

www.communitydance.org.uk

www.artsdevelopmentuk.org

www.soundsense.org

www.trac.wales

www.engage.org

www.nayt.org.uk

www.nawe.co.uk

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Activity

What happens in the project or programme

Aims

The changes you are trying to make

Arts Practice

The approach that an artist takes to their work

Indicators

Well defined information that shows how a project or programme is performing

Intention

What the project or programme intends to deliver

Journey

The travel log of a participatory arts activity

Legacy

The long term benefits and changes that happen as a result of your work

Objectives

The activities or steps carried out to achieve your aims

Outcomes

The changes, benefits, learning or effects that happen as a result of your work

Participant

The person taking part in a participatory arts activity

Participatory Arts

Any arts programmes or projects for non-professional participants led or facilitated by professional artists

People

Who is involved in the project or programme

Professional Development

Skills, knowledge and experience gained beyond initial training informally or formally as you work

Programme

An ongoing participatory arts activity

Progression

The change that a participatory arts activity provokes in a participant through active participation in the project

Project

A time-bound participatory arts activity

Quality

The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something

Space

The defined area or place that a participatory arts project or programme is delivered in

Stakeholder

Anyone who has an interest or concern in a participatory arts project or programme

CHECKLIST — ARTISTS/COMMISSIONERS

Artistic intention & Professionalism

Are you a member of an appropriate membership organization, e.g. People Dancing, Sound Sense, National Association of Writers in Education?

How are you keeping your arts practice alive?

Have you offered the artists you are working with the appropriate training and support for your project?

How will you decide on the right artist to commission?

Relevant & Inclusive

Have you considered how to make your practice relevant?

Have you considered how to make your practice inclusive?

How is the project you are commissioning relevant to the participants you want to reach?

What do you need to do to make the project as inclusive as possible? What does inclusive mean in your project?

Inspiring, Challenging & Engaging

Have you considered what will inspire and what will challenge in your practice?

Have you developed ways in to more challenging material for participants?

What are the key objectives for the project you are commissioning?

How will you support artists to inspire, engage and challenge in your project?

Purposeful, Active, Hands-On & Reflective

Have you considered how you will get the participants involved in the project? What will they be doing?

Have you considered how you will offer opportunities to reflect throughout the process?

Have you discussed your expectations for the process and the outcome with the commissioned artists?

How will you celebrate and value what is created in your project?

Suitably Situated & Resourced

Is there sufficient space for the work? Is it the right space, particularly thinking about equalities and inclusivity?

Have you considered what 'stuff' you need to deliver the project?

Have you considered how much time is needed to properly prepare for this project and build relationships as well as to deliver the project?

Have you considered the staffing that the project needs?

Collaboratively Planned, Evaluated & Safe

Are you clear about your role on the project?

Have you considered how the project will be evaluated?

Have you planned the project collaboratively with all stakeholders?

Have you built reflection and evaluation time into the schedule?

Participant Centred

Have you designed the arts practice around the needs of the individuals and groups you are working with?

Have you considered specific needs in order to keep the work inclusive?

Have you considered the needs of the participants?

How will you support the participants through the project?

Focus on Participant Progression

Have you considered how you will enable participant progression in your project?

Can you signpost participants to other projects you are leading?

Have you considered what will happen to participants after the project is over?

Can you signpost participants to other projects or support further work?

Shared Responsibility & Ownership

Have you considered who will support you in the project delivery?

Have you discussed the project with them?

Have you discussed artistic ownership with the commissioner and the participants?

Have all stakeholders come together to discuss the project?

Is everyone clear what their role and influence over the project is?

REFLECTION TOOL

Use this tool to reflect on the quality journey of your project.

	PRINCIPLES	What worked well?	What would make the work even better?	What were the challenges?
INTENTION	Artistic Intention & Professionalism			
	Inspiring, Engaging & Challenging			
	Relevant & Inclusive			
ACTIVITY	Purposeful, Active, Hands-On & Reflective			
	Suitably Situated & Resourced			
	Collaboratively Planned, Evaluated & Safe			
PEOPLE	Participant Centred			
	Focus on Participant Progression			
	Shared Ownership and Responsibility			

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March 2016:

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A huge thank you to everyone who attended a Focus Group Session and contributed to this resource.

Thanks to Rachel Blanche and Chrissie Ruckley for feeding into Working Group Sessions. Thanks also to Diane Hebb, Amanda Loosemore and Sian Thomas at Arts Council Wales for their ongoing support and feedback over the last six months.

Web design, web resource & print design: Webber Design Ltd. www.webber-design.com



The ArtWorks Cymru Quality Principles were funded by Arts Council Wales.

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The paintings for Quality Principles developed from a previous body of work which I produced in response to a brief entitled 'Beneath The Surface.' Beneath The Surface was a collaboration with artists from Newport International Airspace (N.I.A) and encompassed installation, sculpture, site specific work and performances.

The paintings explored the improvement of Newport's city centre (The Friar's Walk development) which was taking place at that time. In order to prepare the site, a mural depicting Chartism was destroyed. Emotions ran high in response to this. There was also a discovery of an ancient priory which was dismissed as 'not being of any significant importance,' and this led me to base the paintings on ideas of loss and improvement. I'm fascinated by scenarios which are causing damage intentionally or not, and the ways in which we are reshaping our environment for the future.

I contacted the developers, who did everything they could to accommodate an artist wanting to use their offices as a temporary drawing studio. Their site manager gave me access to a huge archive of photographs of the site. I had endless material to use as a starting point. It was fascinating to watch heavy plant machinery creating patterns in the brown clay earth; to see foundations laid down; the graphic patterns that they created; to look at fragments of terracotta tiles, concrete pavements that were left behind.

I started thinking about ceramics. Not just the heartbreaking destruction of a mural created from mosaic, but through the process of making the paintings - simplifying lines and structures by drawing on top of the photos. This reminded me of Kintsugi – a Japanese process which celebrates imperfection and honours an object's history. If a pot, cup or plate was broken, rather than throwing it away, artisans would mend it with a mixture of gold powder along the broken seams resulting in an object that is unique and more beautiful than before. I thought about this as a metaphor for our city's regeneration.

For 'Quality Principles' the use of precious metals signifies value and each painting is linked by lines of gold leaf throughout, reflecting quality within each area. Kintsugi celebrates imperfections. As an arts practitioner, I know that I'm not perfect! Planning is an important part of everything I do. Sometimes, activities might have unplanned outcomes and this can be really positive. For me, it's all about reflecting on what's gone on before, making improvements by trying new ways to do things, innovating, and discovering new ways to enable others to express their own creativity. Talking to people, linking and connecting people's ideas, reshaping creative outcomes also seems to reflect the nature of Kintsugi. It seemed natural to me to make the paintings in this style.

Method

I took inspiration from Pantone 2016 using pale greens, blues, rose and lilac, using directional lines to describe the three concepts – directional movement (Activity); sharp edges to define the apex of a mountain (the Artist's Vision); lines surrounding a face (People/Inclusivity). The underlying structures were traced out onto canvas and hand-cut paper stencils were applied. Using mixed media (image transfers, Japanese paper and glazed acrylic paint), I created textured, weathered surfaces which suggest the passage of time. Surfaces are scraped back and glazes re-applied. Gold leaf is applied through stencils. My own photographs (textured surfaces of cracked flaking paint and broken tiles) were transferred onto canvas and re-painted.

— **Marion Cheung**, www.marioncheung-artist.com