The Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East

Summative Evaluation Report

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1 Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from the summative evaluation study of the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East at the V&A Museum. The gallery opened in July 2006 and aimed to develop interest in, and to promote understanding of, the diversity of Islamic art, and to inspire in all people an appreciation of its beauty. The evaluation aimed to assess the success of the gallery and whether it meets its aims. The particular objectives of this study were to explore 1) who is visiting the gallery and why; 2) how successfully the gallery layout and intellectual hierarchy convey the main gallery themes to visitors; 3) the effect of the interpretative devices (low- and high-tech) on visitors' experience and understanding; and 4) whether the information provided is both suitable and accessible for all visitors. The methodology employed a combination of unobtrusive tracking, face to face interviews and Personal Meaning Mapping. The main findings can be summarised as follows:

Visitor profile and motivation

- The visitor profile was dominated by white men and women between the ages of 25-54 years. A third of all visitors were involved in creative industries.

- Slightly more than half of the participants had never visited the V&A before. However, the majority of visitors described themselves as regular museum visitors and had visited a museum in the previous year.

- Visitors' motivations for visiting the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East were categorised across three dimensions: 1) education; 2) practical issues; and 3) aesthetic experiences. One in 3 participants visited the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East by chance.

Use of gallery space and knowledge communication

- The average time spent in the gallery was 4 minutes.

- The words and phrases that people initially articulated in their PMMs about Islamic art touched a wide range of topics most of which are represented in the gallery.

- However, respondents did not seem to be able to elaborate extensively on their concepts and therefore did not demonstrate a very deep understanding of the concepts they originally cited.

- When overall assessed using the Knowledge Hierarchy Model visitors were able to identify the core message of the gallery, several design parameters of Islamic art as presented in the thematic area of "content of Islamic art", as well as various forms of art displayed in the Gallery.

- Visitors demonstrated a larger familiarity with aspects of Islamic art that are, in general, more widely disseminated, and may even be considered stereotypes when discussing Islamic art (such as design parameters and role of religion).

- However, they did not seem to be able to put the above elements in the context of particular thematic areas of the exhibition and/or create links between various aspects that would indicate the achievement of a deeper level of knowledge.

- In addition, visitors did not seem to understand the themes around which the gallery was organised.

Use and impact of interpretative means[1] on visitors

- Approximately one in 4 visitors read the introductory panels to the gallery whereas 2/3 of the participants were observed reading some of the labels.

- Slightly more than 1/3 of visitors were either observed to use or said that they had used one of the gallery interpretive devices.

- The vast majority of visitors felt that the exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery enhanced their experience because 1) they learned and/or experienced something new; 2) of the exhibition design; and 3) of aesthetic or affective reasons.

- The vast majority of visitors who said that they had used the interpretive devices felt that these exhibits enhanced their experience of the gallery to a lesser or greater extent. All visitors agreed that the interpretive devices were easy to use.

- All visitors but one felt that the exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery somehow improved their knowledge about Islamic art mainly because: 1) they learned and/or experienced something new; and 2) the quality of information provided was very high.

Suitability and accessibility of information

- The vast majority of visitors found the information provided in the gallery easy to access. Slightly more than 2/3 of the participants also commented that the information offered in the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East was interesting.

- Almost 2/3 of the participants mentioned aspects of Islamic art that they would like to find out more about but were not explored in the gallery.

Based on the above findings we recommend the following:

- The subject sections/thematic areas of the gallery need to be clearer. They should have clear indicative titles so that visitors are able to prioritise sections in visiting terms. Perhaps each display case should have a main title indicating the broader thematic area and a subtitle indicative of its content.

- Consider providing visitors with advance organisers that would enable them to orient themselves to the gallery and to the topic of Islamic art. For

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[1] The interpretative means of the gallery were both low and high tech and included labels; panels; film; audio; and interpretive devices such as the interactive map and the Islamic style guide

example, leaflets with colour-coded gallery plan diagrams that would indicate the most important thematic areas or exhibits could be published and placed in prominent positions at all four entrances/exits of the gallery as well as at the information desk of the museum. Introductory information to each thematic area could be also included in the leaflets in order to further help visitors to organise the visit in their mind and get a better and clearer idea of the basic messages of the gallery.

- The introductory panels are missed by many visitors. It would be a good idea if this introductory information was also provided in paper – perhaps on the back page of the leaflet so visitors do not miss essential information that would prevent them understand key concepts of Islamic art.

- Provide opportunities for visitors to revisit the ideas presented in the exhibition with publications and/or relevant information on the museum's website.

- Visitors expressed an interest in finding out more about themes that are not presented in the gallery. Consider offering some extra material about Islamic art for example books that visitors could browse when resting in the seating areas, more information on the museum's website, a variety of events and educational activities.

- Make clear that the gallery presents a specific geographic region within Islamic world and not Islamic world in its totality.

- The interpretive devices should be made more prominent so that people see them and interact with them. Perhaps a notice needs to be added next to them to draw people's attention to them.

- A couple of visitors were frustrated to find out that they could not use some of the interpretive devices because they were out of operation. Make sure that interpretive devices' operation is monitored and maintained.

2 Introduction

The Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East opened at the Victoria and Albert Museum in autumn 2006. The gallery was designed to develop interest in, and to promote understanding of, the diversity of Islamic art, and to inspire in all people an appreciation of its beauty. The collections include ceramics, textiles, carpets, metalwork, glass, woodwork and more. The gallery is intended to show the above collections in new ways, using all the benefits of modern display techniques, and restoring them to the prominence they deserve. It also provides more interpretative material, exploiting new technologies to allow a far better understanding of what is on show.

Audience Focus Ltd – a London-based museum consultancy - was commissioned by the V&A Museum to carry out the summative evaluation of the Jameel Gallery.

The aim of the evaluation, as stated in the brief, was to assess the success of the gallery and whether it meets its aims. In order to achieve the above goal this study sought answers to the following evaluation questions:

1. Who is visiting the gallery, and why?

2. How successfully the gallery layout and intellectual hierarchy convey the main gallery themes to visitors?

3. What's the effect of the interpretative devices (low- and high-tech) on visitors' experience and understanding?

4. Is the information provided both suitable and accessible for all visitors?

2.1 Methodology

The methodology used in this study was mainly qualitative in nature and employed a combination of unobtrusive tracking, face to face interviews and Personal Meaning Mapping (PMM). Data were collected by an evaluator working at the Interpretation, Evaluation and Resources Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum (JS). Analysis, interpretation and writing up were conducted by an Audience Focus evaluator (OF).

Tracking data were collected on 5, 11 and 19 June 2007 (a copy of the evaluation tool is provided in Appendix I). Interview and PMM data were collected on 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19 June 2007 (a copy of the evaluation tool is provided in Appendix II).

Demographic and psychographic data were statistically analysed. Data from tracking and interviews were qualitatively analysed looking for common themes and patterns.

PMMs were analysed across four semi-independent dimensions: extent, breadth, depth and mastery[2]. The first dimension looked at the use of appropriate vocabulary and was an indication of the *extent* of someone's knowledge and feelings. Subsequently, the total number of words/phrases visitors wrote in response to the

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[2] A full analysis of the meaning maps is provided in Appendix VI.

keyword "Islamic Art" was reported. The second dimension looked at the *breadth* of one's understanding, the range of someone's conceptual understanding. Visitors were assigned a number, based on how many concepts they were able to convey in their PMM. Additional numbers in brackets with the multiply symbol (x) in front of them indicate the frequency a particular concept has been mentioned by a specific visitor. The third dimension looked at the *depth* of one's understanding, how deeply and richly someone understood the concepts he/she used. Finally, the fourth dimension looked at *mastery*, the overall facility with which someone used their understanding, whether the quality of someone's understanding was more like that of a novice or like than of an expert. For the last two categories visitors were assigned a score from 1-5 based on their ability to provide sophisticated and detailed concepts and ideas. In brief, visitors who scored 1 showed little and very general understanding of the concepts cited, visitors who scored 3 showed a moderate understanding, whereas visitors who scored 5 demonstrated a deep and sophisticated understanding of the topics they mentioned.

3 Evaluation Findings

The following sections present the main findings from the analysis of the tracking, interview and PMM data.

3.1 Unobtrusive Tracking

3.1.1 *Sample*

A random sample of V&A visitors was selected as they entered the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East. A total of 38 visitors were unobtrusively observed in order to record how they used the space of the gallery. At the end of the observation they were asked a series of demographic and psychographic questions. Eight out of 38 visitors refused to answer the additional questions and therefore it was only their exploration of the gallery that was recorded. As seen in Table 1 there was almost an equal number of men and women in the sample. There were more visitors from the age groups of 35-44 and 25-34 as compared to the other age groups.

	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-65	65+	Total
Male		2	2	4	4	2	1	1	16
Female	1		5	4	1		3		14
Total	1	2	7	8	5	2	4	1	30

Table 1 *Tracking visitor profile by age and gender, N= 30 respondents*

3.1.2 Dwell times

Table 2 below shows the approximate time visitors spent in the gallery. As can be seen in Table 2, only 6 visitors spent more than 9 minutes, while only 3 visitors spent from 25 to 26 minutes. Given this skewness of the data the *median*[3] and *mode*[2] values were calculated along with the arithmetic mean which was calculated to be 6.50 minutes. The mode value was found to be 3 whereas the median value was 5. It would be therefore more appropriate to say that the average time spent in the gallery was approximately 4 minutes and not 6.50 minutes as the arithmetic mean suggests.

Minutes	Number of visitors
1-2	7
3-4	11
5-6	7
7-8	7
9-11	3
25-26	3

Table 2 *Time spent in the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East, N= 38 respondents*

There was no difference in the time spent in the gallery between morning and afternoon visitors.

3.1.3 Visitors' use of the gallery

The following patterns seemed to emerge regarding visitors' use of gallery space:

- Twenty visitors came in through the southeast entrance; 13 visitors came in through the southwest entrance; and 5 visitors came in through the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art.

- Fourteen visitors left the Jameel Gallery through the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art; 8 visitors used the shop exit to leave the gallery; another 8 visitors used the southwest entrance/exit to leave the gallery and 6 visitors left the gallery through the southeast entrance/exit; 2 visitors rested in the gallery seating areas after their visit and their exit point was not recorded.

- More than 2/3 of visitors followed a direct route in the gallery, that is, a visiting path dictated by the exhibition design without distracted detours or deviations. Ten out of 38 visitors were observed taking an indirect route for a part of their visit and stopped to look at something they had missed or to revisit an exhibit or a part of the gallery.

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[3] The Mean or Arithmetic Mean is considered here as the sum of the observations divided by the number of observations in the data set; the Median is the number which is in the exact middle of the data set; the Mode is the number that appears times most often in the data set.

- All visitors spent time looking at different exhibits in the gallery. Tables 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix III show in detail which exhibits drew visitors' attention to "scan", "look at" or "thoroughly look at".

- Nine visitors read the introductory panels of the gallery.

- Approximately 2/3 of visitors were observed glancing or reading labels or at least part of them. Table 4 in Appendix III presents a detailed list of the exhibits' labels that visitors were observed read.

- Seventeen visitors were observed interacting with at least one of the four interpretive devices of the gallery. In particular, 6 visitors used the interactive map; 5 visitors listened to the audio; 4 visitors used the style guide; 3 visitors watched the video about mosques and one visitor watched the video on court life.

- Sixteen visitors were either observed or overheard talking with members of their groups. In 6 of those cases, we were able to listen in on part of visitors' conversations unobtrusively. Two visitors talked about the size of ardabil carpet; 2 people engaged in discussion about mosques and 2 other people were overheard organising the rest of their visit to the Museum.

3.2 Interviews and Personal Meaning Mapping

This subsection presents the main findings of the combined interviews and Personal Meaning Mapping we carried out with a random sample of visitors in the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East.

3.2.1 *Sample*

In total, 33 visitors were sampled during this phase of the evaluation. Visitors were approached and asked to be interviewed on exiting the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East. Interviews were carried out at the seating area of the gallery. Visitors were first asked to complete a PMM with the keyword 'Islamic Art'. Three visitors did not complete PMMs.

	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-65	65+	Total
Male		4	3	2	2	2	2	2	17
Female		1	5	2	3		1	4	16
Total		5	8	4	5	2	3	6	33

Table 3 *Interview and PMM visitor profile by age and gender, N= 33 respondents*

As was the case with the overall sample, there was almost an equal number of men and women in the sample (Table 3). There were more visitors from the age group of 25-34 as compared to the other age groups.

3.2.2 *Motivation for visiting*

Visitors were asked why they chose to visit the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East. Responses were categorised across the following dimensions (Table 4):

Categories of Motivation	For example	Visitor #
Education Seeking an experience that would suit one's personal interests; seeking information (general or specific) or cultural content	"I like Islamic art"; "I have an interest in Islamic art and how it spreads throughout the world"; "I just arrived from Turkey and thought it would be a good idea to come"	17
Practical issues Practical issues that people take into consideration including free entrance or accessible location	"it was the first gallery we came across"; "because it looked interesting as they walked past"; "we just wandered in"	10
Aesthetic experiences Engaging in aesthetically oriented experiences	"it's beautiful art"; "because of the beauty of the gallery"	3

Table 4 *Motivation for visiting the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East, N= 30 respondents*

One of the main reasons for visiting was people's specific interest in Islamic art as well as their curiosity to see or find out more about particular exhibits. Three visitors referred to aesthetic reasons as the major motivations for their visit, whilst a very small number of visitors said that they were encouraged to visit the Jameel Gallery by word of mouth and marketing communications (for example: "we heard about it through friends"; "we saw advertisements"; "we heard positive responses about it"). Finally, one in 3 visitors said that they visited the gallery by chance.

3.2.3 *Visitors' meaning making of Jameel Gallery and Islamic art*

At the beginning of the interview visitors were given a sheet of paper with the keyword "Islamic Art" in the middle and asked to write as many words, concepts and thoughts that came into mind in relation to the keyword (see Appendix IV). After completing their PMM they were asked to expand on specific words. In total 30 visitors were sampled.

Visitors' unprompted responses about Islamic art displayed a great amount of vocabulary within a range of the following 12 shared concepts[4]:

1. Design parameters (17 visitors)

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[4] A full list of the categories of visitors' responses are presented in Appendix V. A full analysis of the meaning maps is provided in Appendix VI.

2. Forms of art (16 visitors)

3. Religion and religious art (14 visitors)

4. Aesthetics – appreciation (7 visitors)

5. History and culture (7 visitors)

6. Place and environment (6 visitors)

7. Politics and power (6 visitors)

8. Influences (6 visitors)

9. People, feelings, relationships (6 visitors)

10. Personal associations and interests (5 visitors)

11. Architecture (4 visitors)

12. Comments on exhibition layout and interpretation (4 visitors)

There was quite a spread of references of the above concepts (see Appendix V) with the most common spread being the one of design parameters, forms of art, and religious art.

Despite the large amount and variety of concepts revolving around Islamic art, the depth analysis revealed that respondents did not have a complex or detailed understanding of the concepts they originally cited but rather a superficial knowledge. In general, respondents did not seem to elaborate a lot on their concepts and did not demonstrate a deep and sophisticated understanding of Islamic art. Furthermore, they were not able to create links between different concepts and ideas. Thus, 22 respondents scored 3 or less out of 5 on "depth" category, while 20 respondents scored 3 or less out of 5 on "mastery". Only two respondents seemed to have good "mastery" of Islamic art (see Appendix VI).

The PMM findings were supported by the comparison between the shared concepts presented above and corresponding data from the front-end evaluation study. This comparison indicated that visitors reported similar things in relation to Islamic art no matter whether they had visited the exhibition (summative evaluation) or not (front-end evaluation). More particularly, the following seven categories: design parameters, forms of art, religion and religious art, history and culture, place and environment, architecture, and comments on exhibition design were mentioned in both studies. Taking into consideration the front-end evaluation finding that there were no notable differences between concepts about Islamic art and concepts about Islamic world, we also investigated a collective comparison between summative evaluation data for the keyword "Islamic art" and front end evaluation data for both keywords "Islamic art" and "Islamic world". This comparison proved to be more enlightening as it revealed that all but one concept reported in the summative stage had been also mentioned in the front end phase of the project. The newly emerged category, which constitutes one of the key messages of the gallery, was reported by 6 visitors and was the concept of "influences" in Islamic art. The fact that the vast majority of visitors who had visited the Jameel Gallery (summative stage) mentioned similar things about Islamic art with people who had not visited it (front-end stage), may suggest that the gallery does not provide sufficient help with furthering visitors' pre-existing knowledge and enhancing their understanding of more challenging and complex issues of Islamic art.

In order to gauge visitors' knowledge of the exhibition content in particular, as opposed to the general knowledge they might have about Islamic art, visitors were

also assessed using the knowledge hierarchy model. The knowledge hierarchy model, as perceived by Deborah Perry, represents "an internal knowledge structure, which is at the intersection of the exhibit developers' and the visitor's organisation and understanding of the exhibition or programme topic" (Perry 1993). The knowledge hierarchy scale created was based on the main messages of the exhibition, as presented in the interpretative plan of the gallery[5]. Table 5 attempts to distil the main messages of the gallery.

Messages	Description
Core message	Islamic art is beautiful, varied and interesting
Challenge stereotypes (such as)	Islamic art is all the same, just squiggly lines and pretty patterns; it is complex and sometimes mysterious; it has no relevance to visitors and is isolated from other cultures; it is all about religion; it has no figurative content
Influences	Religious and secular life, technological advances and links with the rest of the world all played a role in shaping Islamic art
Content of Islamic art	Calligraphic inscriptions; ornament based on geometric principles and plant forms; figurative themes.
Art for religion	Islam was an important factor in the development of Islamic art; calligraphy and ornament were unusually important in Islamic religious art; religious art was influenced by contemporary court art, with a strong political content. The design constraints imposed on religious Islamic art were different to secular Islamic art.
Art for the court[6]	The secular culture of the Islamic courts played an enormously important role in moulding Islamic art. Objects of secular art are the product of a sophisticated culture in which poetry played an important role. The wealth of the Islamic courts is reflected in the high technical design qualities of court art. Court art reflects the political life of the Islamic Middle East, often through the development of dynastic styles.
The rise of ceramics	Ceramic tableware reflects the artistic and technological interaction with Europe and China. Islamic ceramics are important because they exist in a continuous sequence since the 8th century and show frequent technological advances. Islamic ceramics are rarely a court art: they represent the aspirations of those outside the court, whereas the courts used imported Chinese porcelains and precious metal vessels. Islamic traditions in ceramics do not exist in isolation: constant contacts with China and Europe make them part of a world culture in ceramics.
Ottomans and Safavid styles	Ottoman and Safavid styles are different but have a shared origin and shared characteristics. The two styles evolved in different directions because of different artistic and cultural influences.
Qajar Iran	Qajar art is interesting and important. It has a very unique and unusual style and demonstrates the incorporation of European influences (e.g. portraits). Much Qajar art has been lost or destroyed.

Table 5 *Main messages found in the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East*

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[5] The version of the interpretative scheme used for the knowledge hierarchy assessment is dated 9 October 2004
[6] The display case showing court art was empty at the time of the research

Visitors' understanding of the gallery content was holistically assessed by taking into consideration not only their PMMs but also the responses they gave when interviewed. During the interview, visitors were specifically asked to describe the main themes or messages of the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East. Half of the visitors interviewed said that they could not identify any particular themes. The responses of the remaining visitors, who could recognise specific themes, have been categorised as follows:

- Forms of art for example, clothes, carpets, paintings, pottery, mosaics, textiles, tiles, rugs, dishes, tapestry, ceramics, bowls, metalwork (6 visitors)

- Art and design for example, decorative forms, craft, architecture, "pattern and decoration in Islamic art", "many themes in the patterns" (6 visitors)

- History for example, "progression and rise of Islamic culture", "historical representation of Islam over the last 1400 years "(2 visitors)

- Aesthetic appreciation, for example, "beauty", "beauty is the only theme" (2 visitors)

- Culture for example, "integration of daily life, culture, spirituality, all tied up to religion" (one visitor)

- Geography, for example "European, Chinese" (one visitor)

Two visitors said that they could not tell whether there were themes in the gallery or not.

Visitors' overall understanding of the gallery was estimated using a scoring scale similar to the five-point rubric used to measure depth and mastery in analysing the PMMs. At the low end of the scale were visitors who knew little about Islamic art and showed no or little interest in discovering more whilst at the top end were visitors who demonstrated understanding of all or most of the main messages and themes of the gallery[7].

Similarly to the depth and mastery scores, which were not particularly high, visitors' scores based on the knowledge hierarchy model were moderate to low. More specifically, 7 visitors scored a one, 12 people scored a two, 8 people scored a three and only 3 visitors scored a four (see Appendix VIII).

Broadly speaking, visitors were able to identify the core message of the gallery, which is summed up by the phrase "Islamic art is beautiful, varied and interesting". They were also able to identify design parameters of Islamic art as presented in the thematic area the "content of Islamic art" as well as various forms of art displayed in the gallery. Moreover 1/5 of visitors referred to influences in Islamic art.

However, visitors did not seem to be able to assimilate the information presented and therefore reach a deeper and higher level of knowledge and understanding. They demonstrated a familiarity with some aspects of Islamic art (especially design parameters and relationship with religion) but not an ability to create links between those aspects. For example, most of the respondents were able to list several design parameters related to Islamic art but they were not able to distinguish different styles and periods. Likewise, they referred to the relationship between art and religion but

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[7] Appendix VII provides an explanation of how visitors' knowledge was assessed within the context of the exhibition

without being able to expand much or to overcome the stereotype that everything in Islamic art is closely tied to religion. Moreover, only a few visitors made use of specialised terms and none of the visitors interviewed seemed to understand the way the gallery was organised.

It is also worth noting here that the sample for this study was consisted of well experienced museum visitors, several of whom were interested in art or had art-related qualifications. As was the case with the front-end evaluation study, it was all visitors and not solely the self-confessed "novices in Islamic art", who were not capable to clearly demonstrate a deep understanding of Islamic art and identify complex concepts.

The fact that visitors spent an average of 4 minutes in the gallery should be also taken into account in interpreting the above findings. It could be argued that visitors would have gained a more holistic understanding of Islamic art given they had spent more time in the gallery. However, the fact that visitors chose to spend a limited amount of time, may suggest that, although the gallery engages them in exploring the history, beauty, and significance of Islamic art, it should perhaps consider providing them with more interpretative guidance in order to foster a more meaningful dialogue with the exhibits and help them reach a deeper level of knowledge and understanding.

3.2.4 *Visitors' use of the gallery*

Visitors were specifically asked whether they had used any of the interpretive devices of the gallery. Twenty four visitors said they did not use any of the interpretive devices whereas 9 visitors said they had used some of them. Of the 9 visitors who said they tried some of the interpretive devices, 6 explored the style guide, 4 watched the mosques video; one watched the court life video; and one listened to the poetry audio. All 9 visitors found the interpretive devices easy to use. However, two visitors reported some problems. In particular, one visitor said that the style guide wouldn't return to the home page easily while a second visitor complained that the style guide "cracked halfway through". A third visitor highlighted that he tried to explore some of the interpretive devices but he could not as "they were not working".

We particularly asked visitors to rate the interpretive devices on a scale from 1 to 4 (4 standing for the highest score) according to how much they believed these exhibits enhanced their experience of the gallery. Visitors' opinions were divided in half (see Figure 1). One visitor said that the interpretive devices did not at all enhance her experience of the gallery, 3 visitors thought that these exhibits enhanced their experience just a bit, another 3 visitors said that these exhibits quite enhanced their experience and 2 visitors only felt that these exhibits enhanced their experience very much. People who rated the interpretive devices a 1(not at all) or a 2 (just a bit) argued that they offered nothing new (2 visitors) and that essentially there was no need for them in the gallery as "exhibition was so well done" (one visitor). On the other hand, people who rated the interpretive devices a 3 (quite) or a 4 (very much) referred to the comprehensive and comprehensible explanations provided by the interpretive devices (2 visitors) as well as to the fact that the devices were very appealing and therefore they enjoyed them very much (2 visitors). So on balance it seems that the interpretive devices had a positive impact on visitor experience to a lesser or greater extent.
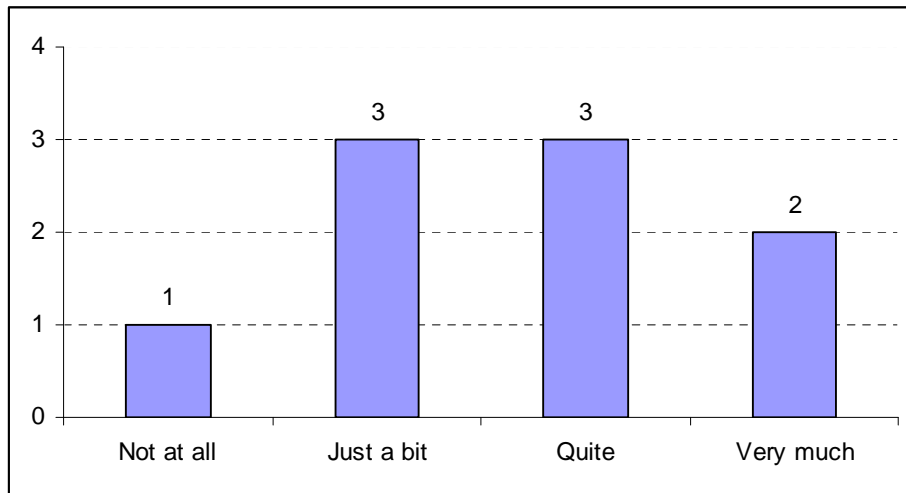
Figure 1 *Visitors' views on how much the use of the interpretive devices enhanced their experience of the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East, N= 9 respondents, (Source Q 5 of the questionnaire, Appendix III)*

Visitors who did not use the interpretive devices did the same scoring exercise but in relation to how much they thought all exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery in general, enhanced their experience. The response was very positive as 23 out of 24 people said that the exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery enhanced their experience "quite a lot" (13 visitors) or "very much" (10 visitors) (see Figure 2). One visitor only felt that the exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery enhanced his experience "just a bit" because he felt that "it could have been more enhanced if there were more objects provided".
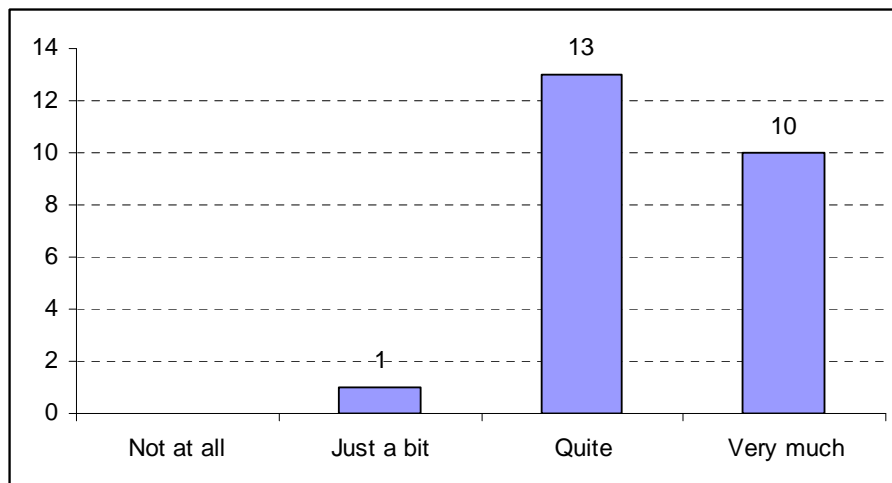

Figure 2 *Visitors' views on how much gallery exhibits enhanced their experience, N= 24 respondents, (Source Q 5 of the questionnaire, Appendix III)*

Overall visitors rated high the gallery exhibits and interpretive means for the following reasons:

- Learning and experiencing something new (9 visitors), for example:

  o "I have never experienced anything like this before"

- o "it made me realise more than making me aware of; it broadened my mind"

- o "the explanations were very clear and simple"

- o "it helps put the art into context"

- o "it gave a feel of what is Islamic art"

- Exhibition design (9 visitors), for example:

  - o "the space is good and calmer compared to the other galleries"

  - o "it is very beautifully displayed"

  - o "the layout is good and easy to access"

  - o "it is spacious enough to enjoy the objects"

- Affective and aesthetic reasons (5 visitors), for example:

  - o "I enjoyed it very much"

  - o "it confirmed views about beauty of Islamic art"

  - o "it was beautiful"

  - o "it was interesting"
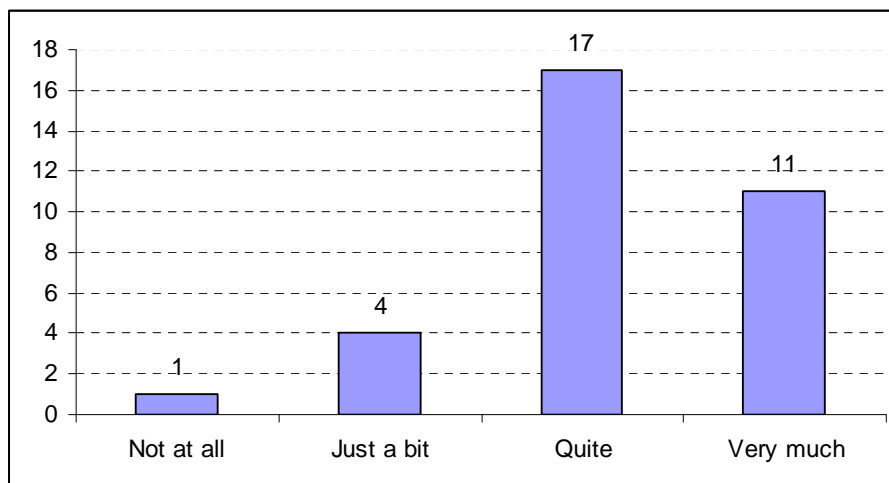
Figure 3 *Visitors' views on potential improvement of their knowledge about Islamic art after visiting the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East, N= 33 respondents, (Source Q 6 of the questionnaire, Appendix III)*

Visitors were also asked to rate how the gallery exhibits helped them improve their knowledge about Islamic art along a four-point scale. As shown in Figure 3, one visitor rated the exhibits as "not at all"; 4 visitors rated them as "just a bit"; 17 visitors rated them as "quite"; and 11 visitors rated them as "very much".

The Jameel Gallery exhibits and interpretative means seemed to rate low because:

- Visitors needed more information and/or more specific information (4 visitors), for example:

  o "my aim is to find out about patterns in Islamic art and there is little info on this so I felt my knowledge had not been improved upon"

  o "it must have larger variety and include all Islamic art throughout the world, India, China, Bulgaria, Russia, Greece, Italy, etc."

  o "I already know quite a bit about history so I only got additional ideas from this visit"

  o "I needed more detail"

- One visitor admitted she did not feel that the gallery improved her knowledge on Islamic art because she "didn't read info on all pieces".

Visitors who rated the exhibits high did so for the following reasons:

- Learning and experiencing something new (14 visitors, of whom 10 had no or limited knowledge of Islamic culture), for example:

  o "new to Islamic culture so I feel I have learnt quite a lot"

  o "I got many ideas from the exhibits"

  o "I learnt something about the social context in which these objects were made"

  o "my eyes opened to different mediums in Islamic art"

- High quality of information provided (8 visitors), for example:

  o "the info provided was very interactive and interesting"

  o "there were good descriptions of items, they were well described and the language was clear"

  o "the panels were informative"

  o "there were many examples with good, clear explanation"

- Exhibition design and content (2 visitors), for example:

  o "because of the gallery layout; there are more on carpets and textiles compared with the British Museum"

- Three visitors said they rated a 3 instead of a 4 because they felt "there was too much info missing" (2 visitors) and because "many of the exhibits were too far up or badly lit to enjoy them properly".

Visitors were specifically asked to comment on the information provided in the gallery. Twenty two visitors found the information interesting. Only one visitor said that he did not find the information interesting at all. Moreover, 30 out of 33 visitors commented that the information provided in the gallery was easily accessible.

Another 2 visitors did not find the information provided easy to access, while one visitor did not reply to this question.

Eighteen visitors said that they wanted to find out more about aspects of Islamic art and culture that were not at all explored in the gallery. Things that visitors said include:

- Sufism, music of Islam, paintings, art plays, clothes, manuscripts, religion, world influences

- "how the art was created during this time and what is the Asian art impact elsewhere"

- "some art from Pakistan and Indian Mongol emperors"

- "Were there any public objects? What kind of access to art did people have?"

- "more about how ordinary people lived"

- "more about older carpets with geometric patterns and rare Ottoman carpets"

Finally, 9 visitors offered some general comments about the gallery. Four people commented on the lighting which they found "too dark and [made text] hard to read". One visitor suggested that the interpretive devices "need to be made more obvious" while another visitor said that he would have liked more interpretive devices in the gallery. Moreover, one visitor found the text "not very engaging; very serious and dull", while a second visitor commented that "if I wanted to follow up something in depth I'm not sure if this could be done just in gallery alone". On the positive side of the balance sheet, 5 visitors made very positive comments about the gallery such as "very well organised"; "clean"; "helpful information"; "very beautiful experience"; "very well presented" whereas 2 other visitors said that they "would love to come again".
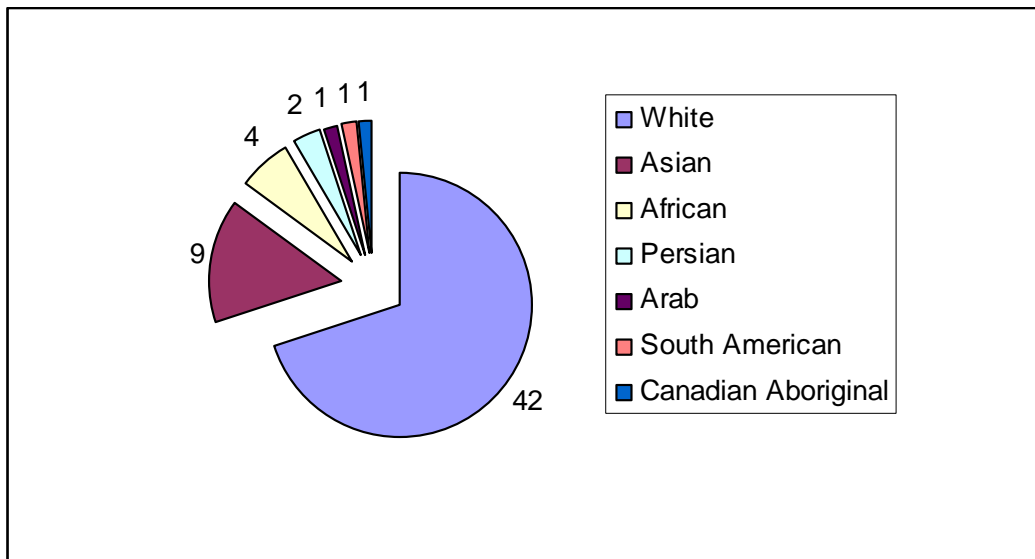
4 Visitor Profile

4.1.1 *Demographics*

A total of 71 visitors took part in this evaluation study. Eight of those visitors refused to provide any additional demographic or psychographic information, when asked to do so after having been observed using the gallery. Therefore the final visitor profile was shaped by 63 individuals.

Almost 2/3 of the participants were in a social group - 26 were in a family group and 13 were in an adult group. Twenty-four visitors were visiting the V&A Museum alone. As seen in Figure 4, there was almost an equal number of men and women in the sample, while 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 age groups were overrepresented in this study as compared with the remaining groups.
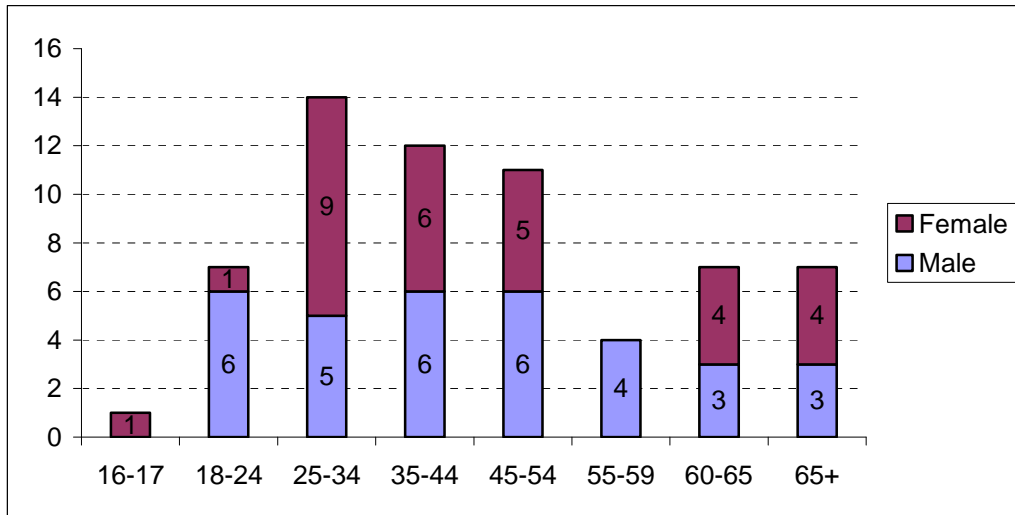
**Figure 4** *Visitor profile by age and gender, N= 63 respondents*

Figure 5 *Visitor profile by nationality, N= 60 respondents, missing 3*

More than 2/3 of the participants were white followed by 9 Asians, 4 Africans, 2 Persians, one Arab, one South American and one Canadian aboriginal (see Figure 5).

Figure 6 shows the occupational status of visitors. As can be seen, approximately 1/3 of the sample was professionals in the creative industries, 1/6 were students, another 1/6 was working in a broad managerial/banking/consultancy/attorney area and the remaining visitors belonged to other professional categories.

In addition to the occupation profile, 16 out of 63 respondents described themselves as having an art related qualification or having passed exams on an art subject.
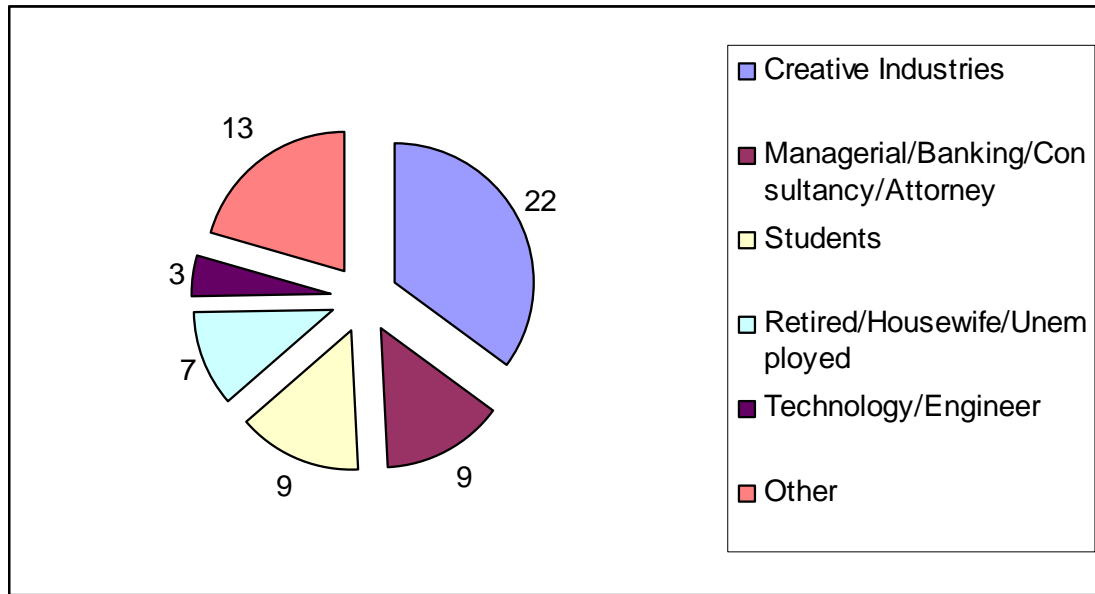
Figure 6 *Visitor profile by occupation, N= 63 respondents*

4.1.2 *Museum visiting*

More than half of the participants had never visited the V&A Museum before. Of the remaining 28 visitors who had visited the museum in the past, 10 had not visited in the previous year, 8 were frequent visitors and had visited the museum from 2-4 times in the previous year, 4 had visited just once in the previous year, and 6 visitors could not answer the question, as they did not remember whether or how many times they had visited the museum in the previous year.

Museum	Number of visitors
Art museum or gallery (for example the Tate Modern, the Musée d'Orsay, the National Gallery, etc)	38
Encyclopaedic museum of human history and culture (for example the British Museum, the Royal Ontario Museum, the National Museum in Japan, etc.)	31
Archaeological/ethnographical/historical museum (for example the Archaeological Museum in Ankara, the Museum of European Cultures in Berlin, the Museum of London, etc.)	12
Natural history museum	10
Science museum	8
Historic house or heritage site	4
Military or war museum	2
Can not remember	7

Table 6 *Museum visiting, N= 63 respondents in each case*

The majority of visitors said that they were regular museum visitors while 6 visitors reported that they visited museums occasionally. All visitors said that they had visited some kind of museum in the previous year. As can be seen in Table 6 the most frequently visited museums were art museums and galleries with encyclopaedic museums of human history and culture to closely follow.

Twenty-four out of 63 respondents said that they had visited the above museums on their own while 38 visitors said that they were in a social group (17 said that they visited with a family member; 9 with friends; 6 with friends and family; 4 with friends or on their own; 2 with their family or on their own). One visitor commented that each visit depended on particular circumstances and therefore, he could not answer that question.

4.1.3   Leisure time activities

Table 7 describes visitor profile in relation to free time activities. As can be seen more than half of the sample reported that in their free time they are engaged in sports and outdoor activities, arts and craft related activities as well as reading and writing.

Leisure time activity	Number of visitors
Sports and outdoor activities	34
Arts and crafts	31
Reading and writing	27
Travelling and sightseeing	12
Other	5
No answer	2

Table 7 *Leisure time activities, N= 63 respondents in each case*

Approximately one in 3 visitors said that he/she reads art magazines and a variety of magazines was reported. We mention indicatively the Royal Academy magazine, the Arts Newspaper, the Art News, the Tate magazine, and the Creative magazine. The frequency of reading art magazines ranges from quarterly per year (3 visitors) to once or twice a month (13 visitors) and every week (one visitor).

Finally, almost one in 2 visitors reported that he/she watches art programmes on the television. The History Channel was the most frequently cited channel to broadcast art programmes. Art programmes included the Brian Sewell programme, the Simon Scharma programme, the Culture Show, and programmes on contemporary artists. Frequency of viewing varied from once a month (6 visitors) to once or twice a week (2 visitors).

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

This evaluation study was designed to assess the success of the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East and whether it meets its aims. In particular this study aimed to meet the following objectives:

- who is visiting the gallery and why;

- how successfully the gallery layout and intellectual hierarchy convey the main gallery themes to visitors;

- the effect of the interpretative devices (low- and high-tech) on visitors' experience and understanding; and

- whether the information provided is both suitable and accessible for all visitors.

Throughout the evaluation a large number of data related to the objectives of the study has been gathered. The main findings of this study can be summarised as follows:

Visitor profile and motivation

- A total of 71 visitors took part in the study.

- Two thirds of the participants were in a social group (family or adult group); the remaining visitors were visiting the museum alone.

- There was almost an equal number of male and female visitors in the sample and more people from the 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 age groups as compared to other age groups.

- Slightly more than 2/3 of the participants were white.

- One in 3 visitors were professionals in the creative industries; one in 6 were students; one in 6 were working in the management / banking / consultancy / attorney area and the remaining visitors belonged to other professional categories.

- Slightly more than half of the participants had never visited the V&A before.

- The majority of visitors described themselves as regular museum visitors and said that they had visited a museum in the previous year. Art museums or galleries and encyclopaedic museums of human history and culture were the most frequently visited museums. One-third of those visitors said that they prefer visiting alone. This matches the actual breakdown of who participants visited with.

- The most frequently cited leisure activities were sports; arts and crafts; and reading and writing. One in 3 visitors reported that he/she reads art

magazines in his/her free time whereas one in 2 visitors said he/she watches television art programmes when available.

- Visitors' motivations for visiting the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East were categorised across three dimensions: 1) education; 2) practical issues; and 3) aesthetic experiences.

- One in 3 participants visited the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East by chance.

Use of gallery space and knowledge communication

- The average time spent in the gallery was 4 minutes. More specifically the mode value was found to be 3 minutes, the median value was 5 minutes and the arithmetic mean was 6.50 minutes.

- The most frequently observed behaviours were "looking" and verbal interactions.

- The words and phrases that people initially articulated in their PMMs touched a wide range of topics most of which are represented in the gallery under different categories. Visitor shared concepts are: 1) design parameters; 2) forms of art; 3) religion and religious art; 4) aesthetics – appreciation; 5) history and culture; 6) place and environment; 7) politics and power; 8) influences; 9) people, feelings, relationships; 10) personal associations and interests; 11) architecture; and 12) comments on exhibition layout and interpretation.

- However, respondents did not seem to be able to elaborate extensively on their concepts and therefore did not demonstrate a very deep understanding of the concepts they originally cited.

- Moreover, with the exception of the category "influences" all concepts cited by visitors who had visited the gallery in the summative evaluation study were similar to concepts cited by visitors who had not visited the gallery in the front-end evaluation study. This finding suggests that the gallery reinforces pre-existing knowledge, familiar experiences and interest in Islamic art but it needs to do more in order to enhance visitors' understanding on more complex issues of the subject matter.

- When overall assessed using the Knowledge Hierarchy Model visitors were able to identify the core message of the gallery that "Islamic art is beautiful, varied and interesting".

- They also identified design parameters of Islamic art as presented in the thematic area of "content of Islamic art" as well as various forms of art displayed in the gallery.

- Visitors demonstrated a larger familiarity with aspects of Islamic art that are in general more widely disseminated and may even be considered stereotypes when discussing Islamic art (such as design parameters and role of religion).

- However, they did not seem to be able to put the above elements in the context of particular thematic areas of the exhibition and/or create links between various aspects that would indicate the achievement of a deeper level of knowledge. This finding applies to all visitors and not exclusively to "novices in Islamic art".

- Finally, visitors did not seem to understand the themes around which the gallery was organised.

Use and impact of interpretative means on visitors

- Approximately one in 4 visitors read the introductory panels to the gallery whereas 2/3 of the participants were observed reading some of the labels.

- Slightly less than half of visitors tracked were observed interacting with one or more of the interpretive devices of the gallery.

- The overall sample of visitors who were either observed to use or said that they had used one of the gallery interpretive devices was 26 or slightly more than 1/3 of the sample.

- The vast majority of visitors felt that the exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery enhanced their experience because 1) they learned and/or experienced something new; 2) of the exhibition design; and 3) of aesthetic or affective reasons.

- The vast majority of visitors who said that they had used the interpretive devices felt that these exhibits enhanced their experience of the gallery to a lesser or greater extent. All visitors agreed that the interpretive devices were easy to use.

- All but one visitor felt that the exhibits and interpretative means of the gallery somehow improved their knowledge about Islamic art mainly because: 1) they learned and/or experienced something new; and 2) the quality of information provided was very high.

Suitability and accessibility of information

- The vast majority of visitors found the information provided in the gallery easy to access. Slightly more than 2/3 of the participants also commented that the information offered in the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East was interesting.

- Almost 2/3 of the participants mentioned aspects of Islamic art that they would like to find out more about but were not explored in the gallery.

Based on the above findings we recommend the following:

- The subject sections/thematic areas of the gallery need to be clearer. They should have clear indicative titles so that visitors are able to prioritise sections in visiting terms. Perhaps each display case should have a main title indicating the broader thematic area and a subtitle indicative of its content.

- Consider providing visitors with advance organisers that would enable them to orient themselves to the gallery and to the topic of Islamic art. For example, leaflets with colour-coded gallery plan diagrams that would indicate the most important thematic areas or exhibits could be published and placed in prominent positions at all four entrances/exits of the gallery as well as at the information desk of the museum. Introductory information to each thematic area could be also included in the leaflets in order to further help visitors to organise the visit in their mind and get a better and clearer idea of the basic messages of the gallery.

- The introductory panels are missed by many visitors. It would be a good idea if this introductory information was also provided in paper – perhaps on the back page of the leaflet so visitors do not miss essential information that would prevent them understand key concepts of Islamic art.

- Provide opportunities for visitors to revisit the ideas presented in the exhibition with publications and/or relevant information on the museum's website.

- Visitors expressed an interest in finding out more about themes that are not presented in the gallery. Consider offering some extra material about Islamic art for example books that visitors could browse when resting in the seating areas, more information on the museum's website, a variety of events and educational activities.

- Make clear that the gallery presents a specific geographic region within Islamic world and not Islamic world in its totality.

- The interpretive devices should be made more prominent so that people see them and interact with them. Perhaps a notice needs to be added next to them to draw people's attention to them.

- A couple of visitors were frustrated to find out that they could not use some of the interpretive devices because they were out of operation. Make sure that the operation of the interpretive devices is monitored and maintained.

Appendix I: Jameel Gallery - Tracking Sheet

Tracking Map Key

→	direct route
--->	indirect route
Y	read introductory panel
o	scan exhibit
●	look (<5 secs)
Ø	thorough look at exhibit
X	interact with exhibit (read label or interact with interpretive device, watch video, etc.) – for interactives record time
↔	interact with group member
÷	interact (with V&A staff)
#	interact (with other visitors)

Time in: Time out: Overall time spent in the gallery:

Other comments:

Hello, my name is …. and I work at the V&A. We would like to find out more about our visitors and I was wondering whether you could help me by answering a couple of questions. They will only take 5 minutes.

1. Have you been to the V&A before? If yes, how many times have you been in the last year?

2. Do you visit other museums or art galleries? If yes, do you remember which ones you have visited in the last year?

3. Did you usually visit with friends/family or on your own?

4. What other things do you do in your free time? (hobbies etc)?

5. Have you passed any exams or got any qualification in an art subject? If yes, which one?

6. Do you read any art magazines? If yes, which ones and how often (once a month etc)?

7. Do you watch any TV programmes on art? If yes, which ones and how often (once a week etc)?

8. Age profile for themselves (and family members if appropriate):

5-7 8-12   13-15   16-17   18-24   25-34   35-44   45-54   55-59   60-65   65+

9. What is your occupation?

10. Which ethnic group would you say you belong to?

Thank you very much for your time and help.

Gender   M   F

Visiting with: Alone   Family   Family & friends   Adult group
Date   Time   Evaluator

Appendix II: Jameel Gallery - Questionnaire

Interviewer: If you are interviewing a group write down what each person says and indicate who says what e.g. M (for man), W (for woman), G (for girl), B (for boy)- if more than one, then M1, M2 etc.

Hello my name is … and I work for the V&A. We would like to find out what you think about the gallery you just visited. Would you like to share your views with us? It will only take 10 minutes.

1. Why did you choose to visit the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Middle East?

2. On this sheet of paper, I'd like you to write down as many words, ideas, images, phrases or thoughts that come to mind related to Islamic art.

Prompt 1: Can you explain why this word/etc came to mind? {specific word}
Prompt 2: Do you want to expand on that? {general}
Prompt 3: What does this word mean? or Just to confirm, this word is … {if unclear}

3. Do you think there are any obvious themes to this gallery? If yes, what are those themes?

4. Did you use any of the interactive exhibits in the gallery? [replica touch object; interactive map; Islamic style guide; objects in context –mosques, palaces (video); poetry (audio)] Yes / No
    a. If yes, which ones?

    b. Was it/were they easy to use?

5. On a scale of 1-4 how much did these exhibits enhance your experience of the gallery?

1 Not at all	2 Just a bit	3 Quite	4 Very much

5a. Why?

6. On a scale of 1-4 how much did these exhibits improve your knowledge about Islamic art?

1 Not at all	2 Just a bit	3 Quite	4 Very much

6a. Why?

7. Overall how do you feel about the information provided in this gallery? {Probe: is it interesting? Complex? Easy to access? Is there anything else you'd like to find out more about?}
Why?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add?

And now some questions about yourself:

9. Have you been to the V&A before? If yes, how many times have you been in the last year?

10. Do you visit other museums or art galleries? If yes, do you remember which ones you have visited in the last year?

11. Did you usually visit with friends/family or on your own?

12. What other things do you do in your free time? (hobbies etc)

13. Have you passed any exams or got any qualification in an art subject? If yes, which one?

14. Do you read any art magazines? If yes, which ones and how often (once a month etc)?

15. Do you watch any TV programmes on art? If yes, which ones and how often (once a week etc)?

16. Age profile for themselves (and family members if appropriate):

5-7   8-12   13-15   16-17   18-24   25-34   35-44   45-54   55-59   60-65   65+

17. What is your occupation?

18. Which ethnic group would you say you belong to?

19. Gender   M   F

Thank you very much for testing this gallery for us.
Visiting with:
        Alone   Family   Family & friends   Adult group

Date   Time   Evaluator

Appendix III: Exhibits that caught visitors' attention to scan, look at, thoroughly look at and read about

Exhibit	Number of visitors
Ardabil carpet	5
Safavid Iran	
ceramics	4
church vestment	3
manuscripts	2
the Safavids and blue and white	1
The Mamluks	
silk and book covers	1
Content of Islamic art	
inspired by plants	3
calligraphy	2
geometry	2
the Islamic Middle East	2
images and poetry	2
rise of ceramics	1
Qajar Iran	
Iran under the Qajars	1
central Asian dress	1
Ottoman Turkey	
princess kaftans from Ottoman Turkey	2
animal pelt designs	2
Iznik ceramics after 1550	1
silks and velvets	1
carpets	1
Art for religion	
Qur'ans	1
honouring the dead	1
tomb of Buyanquli Khan	1

Table 1 *Exhibits that engaged visitors to scan, N= 38 respondents in each case*

Exhibit	Number of visitors
Ardabil carpet	9
Safavid Iran	
carpets and textiles	5
astronomical instruments	4
church vestment	4
Safavid ceramics and colour	3
the Safavids and blue and white	3
manuscripts	2
The Mamluks	
silks and book covers	3
Mamluk secular art	1
sultan Qaitbay	1
Content of Islamic art	
images and poetry	6
inspired by plants	1
calligraphy	1
geometry	1
the Islamic Middle East	1
Qajar Iran	
central Asian dress	6
Iran under the Qajars	6
Ottoman Turkey	
Iznik ceramics after 1550	7
tile top table	5
artistic exchange with Europe	3
silks and velvets	3
princess kaftans from Ottoman Turkey	3
carpet with medallion design	2
Iznik ceramics before 1550	1
basin with golden horn design	1
embroidery	1
Art for religion	
honouring the dead	6
tomb of Buyanquli Khan	6
marble basin	4
minbar	2
tomb marker	2
Transition from antiquity	6
Mongol ceramics	2

Table 2 *Exhibits that engaged visitors to look at, N= 38 respondents in each case*

Exhibit	Number of visitors
Ardabil carpet	1
Safavid Iran	
church vestment	1
blue and white	1
The Mamluks	
silks and book covers	1
Mamluk secular art	1
Sultan Qaitbay	1
Content of Islamic art	
images and poetry	1
calligraphy	1
Qajar Iran	
Iran under the Qajars	1
Ottoman Turkey	
Iznik ceramics before 1550	1
princess kaftans from Ottoman Turkey	1
carpet with medallion design	1
Art for religion	
Qur'ans	6
minbar	5
tomb marker	3
honouring the dead	1
tomb of Buyanquli Khan	1
Transition from antiquity	3
Interpretive devices	
interactive map	1

Table 3 *Exhibits that engaged visitors to thoroughly look at, N= 38 respondents in each case*

Exhibit	Number of visitors
Ardabil carpet	2
Safavid Iran	
carpets and textiles	6
chelsea carpet	4
manuscripts	2
astronomical instruments	2
church vestment	1
Safavid ceramics and colour	1
the Safavids and the blue and white	1
The Mamluks	
carpet fragment	1
Content of Islamic art	
geometry	5
inspired by plants	4
calligraphy	4
images and poetry	2
the Islamic Middle East	1
Qajar Iran	
central Asian dress	1
Ottoman Turkey	
Iznik ceramics after 1550	6
Iznik ceramics before 1550	5
fireplace	4
princess kaftans from Ottoman Turkey	3
silks and velvets	2
medallion carpet	2
tile top table	2
late Ottoman art	1
artistic exchange with Europe	1
brass door fitting	1
Art for religion	
minbar	6
honouring the dead	2
tomb of Buyanquli Khan	2
marble basin	1
tomb marker	1
Qur'ans	1
Transition from antiquity	1
Mongol ceramics	1

Table 4 *Exhibits that engaged visitors to read about, N= 38 respondents in each case*

Appendix IV: Example of a PMM

Islamic Art

What comes to mind?

- things
- ideas
- questions
- words
- what you
- picture/imagin
- past experienc
- feelings
- interests
- related theme:
- places
- comments
- opinions
- Etc...

Islamic Art

Sophisticated — combination of sentiment | beauty
very strict & correct pattern —
great combination of colour often.

Complex beauty

Non-human themes — one of restrictions (not portray any living human.

Mathematics as art — use geometrical symbols — related expressions

Religious and art ex...

Also related in concept

Also ex pression of wealth and power

not all about beauty —
art is used to express
the power — how it off
bit art.

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Appendix V: Categories of visitors' responses to "Islamic Art"

1. **Place and environment** [dirt; geographical information; Cairo; Baghdad; Medina; Tehran; Silk Route; the city of Isfaham; Iznik; Armenia; Iranian; Jerusalem; Quds; Omar; China; sandy]

2. **Politics and power** [Taleban; Shah; politics; money; opulence; sultan; expression of wealth and power]

3. **History and culture** [Islamic history; culture and tradition; Mongol; glory age; history; interesting culture; old culture; Ottomans; Rumi; interesting history]

4. **Influences** [fusion with the west; influences on European art; style and influence on design; influences by China; influences on other parts of the world]

5. **People, feelings, relationships** [secret; prejudice - lack of understanding in Europe; awe; difference; curiosity; depth; women's issues; skills of making objects; veiled women]

6. **Personal associations and interests** [friendly; "the interest I have is to know more about Islam. My questions will be how much the world knows about Islam?"; "I would like some pictures to take home to Gaza"; "Omar Kayan and Arabian nights that I read as a child"]

7. **Religion and religious art** [strange voices; pray; Islamic religious items; Muslim objects; Koran; religion; mosques; mihrabs; dedication; devotion; zeal; infinity of God; faith; Dervish; Sufi; religious symbols; Muhammad]

8. **Architecture** [palace; mosques; mihrab; domes; moorish architecture; mosques designs; architectural design]

9. **Aesthetics – appreciation** [modest; diverse; intricate; fine; beautiful; rich; interesting; enlightening; great beauty, almost spiritual; amazing carpet; designs on human scale; beauty; mesmerising; sophisticated; complex beauty]

10. **Design parameters** [repetition; flatness; bright colour; excessive patterns; colour; shapes; non figurative? pattern; colourful; shapes; octagons; geometric designs; arabesque; lotus; colourful scrollwork; detailed; deep, rich colours; floral; symmetry; order; design; lost designs; blue intricate designs; animals; repeating patterns; blue and white motifs; love motifs; richly decorated; traditional motifs; decorative motifs; spatial design; non human representations; mathematics as art; restricted in concept]

11. **Forms of art** [rugs; carpets; costumes; handicrafts; poetry; clothing; the music from Islam; tiles; ceramics; woven carpets; tiles; dresses; calligraphy; wooden lattice; mosaics; calligraphy; inscriptions; decorative arts; silver jewels; blue tiles; glass; textiles; household implements; metalware; tapestries; carvings]

12. **Comments on exhibition layout and interpretation** ["Pakistani art and craft work is not there"; "the objects reach to us"; "I'm disappointed because there are only 5 countries represented"; "it needs more lighting"; "there is lack of Islamic contribution to Europe"; educational; repeat visit]

Appendix VI: PMM Analysis Table

Visitor #	Extent (# of words/ phrases)	Breadth (# of concepts)	Depth	Mastery (holistic)
1. W, 65+, white, museum guide	4	(1) design parameters (x4)	list of design features of Islamic art; thinking in terms of colour, patterns and design / 3	some knowledge of Islamic art in terms of its design features / 3
2. W, 25-34, white, printing engineer	5	(4) place and environment; people, feelings, relationships; religion and religious art (x2); forms of art	taxonomy of Islamic art in term of its forms; abstract and stereotypical ideas: mysterious world, dirty cities; connection with religion / 3	a moderate understanding of Islamic art through its possible forms and religious influences; obvious references in the exhibition: people praying as shown in mosques interactive / 3
3. W, 60-65, Asian, retired	8	(5) place and environment; history and culture (x3); religion and religious art (x3); forms of art(x2); exhibition comments	taxonomy of Islamic art; some knowledge of Islamic history; reference to specific periods; questions: how Islamic empire extended from the time of Caliphs / 4	Islamic art intertwined with religion and historic past / 4
4. M, 18-24, white, media sales	14	(6) place and environment (x5); history and culture (x4); influences;	relation to Muslim present; relation between east and west; historical knowledge based on own studies: Genghis Khan took over the world and unified Arabs; nostalgia: many Muslims look back at Glory Age / 4	broad though not very deep understanding of Islamic art / 4

		religion and religious art; design parameters (x2); forms of art		
5. M, 18-24, white, concept developer	6	(4) history and culture (x2); personal associations and interests; religion and religious art; forms of art (x2)	expression of personal feelings and associations: travelled to Islamic countries and found people friendly and open-minded; list of forms of art; present relations with the west and political connotations: if we do understand the culture better we could come to better solutions; art intertwined with religion / 4	understanding of Islamic art as vital part of Islamic life / 3
6. M, 25-34, Ethiopian, drug company	1	(1) personal associations and interests	no mention of Islamic art and its content at all; feels people are ignorant about Islam and that more education is needed / 1	no demonstrated knowledge of Islamic art / 1
7. W, 18-24, white, student	4	(2) aesthetics – appreciation (x3); exhibition comments	main reference to collection and exhibition design rather than Islamic art as itself / 3	basic understanding of Islamic art based on art forms, shapes and colours / 3
8. W, 35-44, white, aid worker	13	(8) place and environment (x4); politics and power; influences; people, feelings, relationships (x3); personal associations and interests; religion and religious art; architecture (x2); design	reference to places and current politics: Taliban; close relation between art and religion; abstract ideas about influences on European art; personal associations; questions: is Islamic art figurative? / 3	basic understanding of Islamic art and its content expressed mainly by citing names of mosques / 2

		parameters		
9. W, 45-54, white, quality control scientist	5	(3) influences; design parameters (x2); art forms (x2)	list of concrete terms and ideas; associations with modern art and media; personal associations / 3	knowledge of Islamic art mainly through its patterns, colours, forms and influences in different media / 4
10. W, 45-54, white, manager	6	(4) place and environment; influences; design parameters (x2); art forms (x2)	list of concrete themes, objects and ideas; personal associations; aesthetic appreciation; obvious links to what she saw / 4	knowledge of Islamic art and its content obviously linked to the exhibition themes / 4
11. W, 65+, educational analyst	4	(2) influences; exhibition comments (3)	focuses on what misses from the gallery and not what Islamic art might represent - was not prompted to expand on his views / 1	focuses on problems noted in the gallery / 1
12. M, 55-59, Malaysian, advertising consultant	22	(8) place and environment (x3); personal associations and interests; religion and religious art; architecture (x3); aesthetics – appreciation (x6); design parameters (x3);forms of art (x5)	list of both abstract and concrete vocabulary; use of special terms; aesthetic appreciation of Islamic art; personal associations / 5	good understanding of the diversity of Islamic art expressed through various art forms and design parameters / 5
13. M, 35-44, white, director of design	8	(2) people, feelings, relationships (x4); religion and religious art (x2);	basic reference to Islam as faith and religion; differences with Christianity; Muslims' ethos and need for westerns to understand them deeply / 2	not enough knowledge or understanding of Islamic art / 2

		design parameters (x2)		
14. M, 25-34, white, research student	5	(3) personal associations and interests; design parameters (x3); art forms	references to possible links between Egypt and Middle East: personal interest / 2	some knowledge of Islamic art through art forms and design patterns / 2
15. W, 45-54, white, nurse	3	(1) design parameters (x3)	not much expansion / 1	very limited understanding concentrated on a few design characteristics / 2
16. W, 35-44, Canadian aboriginal, technology	3	(3) politics and power; people, feelings, relationships; religion and religious art	not much expansion - basic reference to Islam as way of life and not as art: women are treated badly, use of special term shah but without expanding / 2	no indication of enough knowledge or understanding of Islamic art / 1
17. W, 25-34, Malaysian, teacher	9	(5) politics and power (x2); religion and religious art; architecture; design parameters (x4); art forms	list of abstract and concrete concepts; reference to relation between politics and art: to show wealth and power; links between design patterns and art / 3	seemed to have gained an understanding of Islamic art which was linked to abstract concepts such as politics and religion / 4
18. M, 60-65, white, writer	10	(5) history and culture; religion and religious art (x2); design parameters (x3); forms of art (3); exhibition comments	list of concrete concepts / 3	understanding of Islamic art through art forms and patterns and through its relation to religion / 3

19. M, 65+, white, engineer	2	(1) people, feelings, relationships (x2)	more questions than knowledge and understanding: where do the patterns come from; list of some concrete concepts / 1	very limited understanding, concentrated on a few art forms / 1
20. M, 65+ white teacher	13	(6) politics and power; history and culture (x2); people, feelings, relationships; religion and religious art (x2); design parameters (x3); forms of art (x5)	knowledge of Islamic history and culture indicated by use of specific terms and reference to historic personalities and Islamic features / 4	understanding of Islamic art through art forms and design as well as through people, history and culture / 4
21. M, 55-59, Afro-Caribbean, lecturer on drama	2	(1) aesthetics-appreciation (x2)	list of same abstract concepts: beautiful, done by a spirit; not much expansion / 1	basic appreciation of Islamic art from the aesthetic point of view / 1
22. W, 25-34, white, photographer	6	(4) history and culture; aesthetics-appreciation; design parameters (x2); forms of art (x2)	abstract reference to differences with other cultures in terms of language, art, culture; some understanding of design parameters / 3	aesthetic appreciation; some understanding of design features; link with history / 3
23. M, 18-24, white, student	3	(2) place and environment (x2); forms of art	not much expansion; personal and simplified associations; not deep understanding / 1	limited understanding of Islamic art / 1
24. M, 45-54, white, Printing company	2	(1) design parameters (x2)	list of concrete ideas / 2	basic understanding of Islamic art focused on some design characteristics / 2

25. W, 45-54, white, social worker	14	(3) religion and religious art; design parameters (x7); forms of art (x4)	list of concrete ideas but not much expansion / 2	understanding of Islamic art through its design characteristics; art forms and relation to religion / 4
26. M, 60-65, white, consultant	3	(1) forms of art (x3)	list of concrete ideas and different art forms; use of some special terms for specific art forms / 3	understanding of Islamic art through its different art forms / 3
27. M, 45-54, white, art dealer	4	(3) architecture; aesthetics – appreciation; design parameters; forms of art	reference to difference with western art; list of concrete ideas / 3	understanding of diversity and plurality of Islamic art / 3
28. M, 35-44, Persian, insurance company	3	(1) aesthetics- appreciation (x3)	list of concrete ideas about design features of Islamic art that lead to its aesthetic appreciation / 3	aesthetic appreciation through understanding design characteristics / 3
29. M, 25-34, white, consultant	8	(6) politics and power; history and culture; influences; religion and religious art; design parameters; forms of art (x3)	use of special terms; list of concrete ideas / 4	understanding of diversity and plurality of Islamic art and its religious and historical influences / 4
30. W, 65+ white, theologian	8	(4) politics and power (x2); religion and religious art; aesthetics-	list of concrete and specific ideas in relation to the design characteristics of Islamic art; reference to the political dimensions of Islamic art to demonstrate wealth and power; comparison with European art where someone is more free to express himself / 5	good understanding of Islamic art and its political and religious influences / 5

		appreciation (x2); design parameters (x3)		

Appendix VII: Knowledge Hierarchy Assessment Model

1 − **(No or some awareness and an interest)** Visitors may know nothing or just some information about Islamic art from previous exposure, and although they may know very little, they are interested in finding out more. However, they are unable to make any links or to overcome stereotypes.

2 − **(Basic information, though often very general and sometimes incorrect)** Visitors have some understanding of Islamic art and are interested in learning more about one or more aspects of it. However, their ideas are often superficial, broad, incomplete, or incorrect. These visitors are also unable to create links or to overcome stereotypes.

3 − **(Basic, though correct, information and an understanding of the main message of the gallery)** Visitors have a basic (and correct) understanding of Islamic art's beauty and diversity (main message of the gallery). They are able to make basic links but they can not demonstrate a deep and sophisticated understanding of Islamic art and its thematic variations.

4 − **(More sophisticated understanding)** Visitors have a more sophisticated understanding of the diversity of Islamic art and its thematic variations. They are able to communicate some specialised terms and to make connections between different concepts

5 − **(Sophisticated and in-depth understanding of all the main messages of the gallery)**

Visitors have a sophisticated, in depth, and accurate understanding of Islamic art and its thematic areas as presented in the gallery. They are able to make links between different concepts, to challenge stereotypes, to articulate their ideas, and to expand on themes presented in the gallery.

Appendix VIII: Knowledge Hierarchy

Visitor #	Knowledge Hierarchy
1. W, 65+, white, museum guide	no understanding of themes; some understanding of design parameters but unable to make links or to overcome simple and stereotypical views / 1
2. W, 25-34, white, printing engineer	basic understanding of the relationship between art and religion; stereotypical views / 2
3. W, 60-65, Asian, retired	general and vague understanding of the diversity of Islamic art and the importance of religion in shaping art / 2
4. M, 18-24, white, media sales	understanding of links and influences from around the world; reference to relation with religion and poetry but no demonstration of understanding those links on a deeper level / 3
5. M, 18-24, white, concept developer	very general understanding of the relationship between art and religion; challenged stereotypes because of personal previous experience; reference to some art forms / 2
6. M, 25-34, Ethiopian, drug company	aesthetic appreciation; expressed interest in finding out more / 1
7. W, 18-24, white, student	basic understanding of the diversity of Islamic art along with some basic knowledge of design parameters / 2
8. W, 35-44, white, aid worker	basic understanding of the content of Islamic art; influences on European art; links to religion and court life but no evidence of making connections between the above / 3
9. W, 45-54, white, quality control scientist	basic understanding of the diversity of Islamic art along with some basic knowledge of design parameters / 2
10. W, 45-54, white, manager	aesthetic appreciation; basic understanding of various influences; link to personal interests; reference to carpets and ceramics but without making associations with specific styles / 3
11. W, 65+, educational analyst	information from previous exposure; criticism of the gallery / 2
12. M, 55-59, Malaysian, advertising consultant	aesthetic appreciation; a more sophisticated understanding of diversity of Islamic art; specialised terms; connections between art and poetry / 4

13. M, 35-44, white, director of design	understanding of importance of religion in daily life and culture; understanding of some basic design parameters / 2
14. M, 25-34, white, research student	challenged stereotypes: representation of people in art; art forms and design parameters / 2
15. W, 45-54, white, nurse	very basic understanding of art forms and design parameters / 1
16. W, 35-44, Canadian aboriginal, technology	knowledge from previous exposure / 1
17. W, 25-34, Malaysian, teacher	links between art and wealth and power; links between art and religion; understanding of design parameters / 3
18. M, 60-65, white, writer	understanding of design parameters; links with religion / 3
19. M, 65+, white, engineer	very basic knowledge but interest to find out more / 1
20. M, 65+ white teacher	aesthetic appreciation; understanding of diversity of Islamic art; some specialised terms; knowledge derived both from the exhibition and personal experience but no obvious links between themes and concepts / 3
21. M, 55-59, Afro-Caribbean, lecturer on drama	aesthetic appreciation of Islamic art / 1
22. W, 25-34, white, photographer	basic and general information; aesthetic appreciation; some knowledge of design parameters / 2
23. M, 18-24, white, student	very stereotypical ideas / 1
24. M, 45-54, white, Printing company	very basic information and understanding of design parameters / 2
25. W, 45-54, white, social worker	aesthetic appreciation; understanding of art forms; challenged stereotypes: representation of animals; links between art and religion; ceramics as tableware; understanding of design parameters / 4
26. M, 60-65, white, consultant	basic understanding of art forms; understanding of different periods and styles but not able to distinguish between / 3
27. M, 45-54,	aesthetic appreciation; basic understanding of diversity of

white, art dealer	Islamic art / 2
28. M, 35-44, Persian, insurance company	aesthetic appreciation; basic understanding of design parameters; stereotypical ideas / 2
29. M, 25-34, white, consultant	China influences; links with court life and religion; references to art forms and design parameters / 4
30. W, 65+ white, theologian	aesthetic appreciation; some stereotypes: no portrayal of anything human; links with religion; Islamic art seen as expression of wealth and power; geometric principles / 3

References

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