



St John's College
Oxford

COLLECTIONS SUPPORT OFFICER

FURTHER PARTICULARS

ABOUT THE POST

St John's College holds significant historic and modern collections of paintings, silver, textiles, sculptures, artefacts, furniture and ceramics.

Working within the Libraries and Archives team, the primary responsibility of the Collections Support Officer is to care for the College's historic art collections in co-ordination with the responsible College Officers, work with specialist conservators, document and catalogue the collections, and ensure safe object handling, storage and display. The postholder reports to the Head of Libraries and Archives.

The Collections Support Officer will not be responsible for the College's collection of rare books and manuscripts, which are cared for by other members of the Libraries and Archives team, but will be involved in invigilating researchers using them.

The role provides an excellent opportunity for someone with a love of art and history and an eye for detail, who is interested in a career in the heritage sector. The role is about looking after a historic collection of an Oxford college, in use and on display across a variety of spaces in a thriving academic institution, but also made accessible to the wider public on regular occasions. The College is engaged in an active programme of documenting, maintaining and restoring its collections, and making them accessible online and through academic publications.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The postholder's primary responsibility is to support the Keeper of Pictures and the Keeper of Silver and Textiles (the College's academic officers sharing the responsibility and academic direction for the historic collections) in the work of documentation, maintenance, conservation and presentation of the collections. The duties will include:

Collections management

- Maintain and update the College's internal collections' database, using Epexio cataloguing software.
- Ensure detailed object histories, valuation, provenance and condition reports are meticulously logged.
- Maintain and update the College's entries on the national collection databases St John's participates in, including Art UK and Watercolour World.
- Contribute to the presentation of the College's collections online, including on the College's website.
- Take part in the annual checks of the collection and in supporting quinquennial conservation and valuation surveys.
- Research the collections to enhance historical understanding and to support the creation of compelling interpretation materials (signage, digital content, exhibition catalogues).
- Plan and execute permanent and temporary displays, including during the termly exhibition of the Laudian Vestments and the Oxford Open Doors weekend in September.

- Provide support in the administration of image requests.
- Provide support for researchers visiting the collections.
- Support the Libraries and Archives teams in supervising researchers using Library special collections.

Object handling, storage and display

- Safe handling and mounting: ensure best-practice handling methods are used.
- Storage optimisation: work towards developing the best practice in the College's art collection storage.
- Implement rotation schedules for light-sensitive textiles and works on paper to prevent fading.

Collections care and preventative conservation

- Environmental monitoring: ensure the adherence to agreed environmental controls (humidity, temperature, lux and UV levels tailored to different levels for items on display).
- Pest management: oversee compliance with protocols, particularly protecting historic textiles from moth, beetle and silverfish damage.
- Conservation: where appropriate, perform minor non-invasive cleaning of objects in the collection as agreed with the College's conservation advisers.
- Liaison with specialist conservators: manage relationships with external specialised conservators for restoration projects and collection maintenance and support their site visits.
- Risk management: maintain and update a salvage and disaster recovery plan for the historic collections.

There will be opportunities to conduct research into items in the collection, as agreed with the Keepers of Pictures and of Silver and Textiles.

Key internal working relationships: Keeper of the Pictures; Keeper of Silver & Textiles; Libraries and Archives team; Communications team; President's Office; Works Office; members of College, including academic and professional staff and students.

Key external working relationships: conservators; college insurance underwriters; specialists in paintings, silver, ceramics and textiles; visiting researchers; exhibition staff in museums and galleries.

PERSON SPECIFICATION AND CRITERIA

Requirements	Essential (E)/ Desirable (D)
Candidates/Postholders will be expected to demonstrate the following:	
Education	
Educated to degree level or above	E
Qualification in museum studies, art history, conservation or a closely related field or equivalent professional experience	D
Experience	
Demonstrable experience of working directly with mixed-material historic collections (specifically fine art, metals and textiles)	E
Knowledge	
Awareness of practical issues in art conservation, and knowledge of international conservation ethics and standards	D

Experience of working with collection or archival software (familiarity with Epexio archival software will be an advantage)	E
Skills and abilities	
Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to work as part of a team	E
Excellent communication skills, including excellent spoken and written English and confidence in dealing with people in person and by email/phone	E
Demonstrable writing skills and evidence of ability to translate complex historical or conservation concepts into engaging narratives	E
Excellent organisational skills, including the ability to work flexibly to tight deadlines and to prioritise effectively to achieve the desired outcome	E
Willingness to learn and improve own knowledge and understanding as well as an ability to use existing knowledge and experience effectively	E
Exceptional attention to detail in both physical object inspection and data logging	E

Summary of Terms and Conditions of Employment:

COLLECTIONS SUPPORT OFFICER

Department	Libraries and Archives
University Grade	5

This summary is given as a guide and is not intended to form part of an individual's contract of employment.

Salary

Appointment will be Grade 5 of the University's salary scale for non-academic staff, currently £32,108–£37,338 inclusive of the Oxford University weighting, with a discretionary range up to £40,514 depending on experience. Salaries are reviewed annually in line with the pay award for other salaried administrative staff.

Contract

The job is offered on a Permanent basis.

Hours of Work

Normal office hours are 35 hours per week. Normal hours of work are 9:00am to 5:00pm, with an hour for lunch. Some flexibility will be required according to the demands of the workload. Time off in lieu will be given for extra hours worked.

Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement is 38 days, which includes 8 public holidays and 5 fixed days to be taken at Christmas, when the College is closed. The holiday year begins on 1 January and ends on 31 December.

Meals

The post-holder is entitled to free lunches in Hall on days they are working at the College site. The College also provides free tea, coffee and water during the working day.

Pension

The post-holder will be automatically enrolled into the contributory St John's College Staff Pension Fund from the commencement date of the appointment. Contributions will be payable in equal monthly instalments in arrears.

Probationary and Notice Periods

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period, during which time the notice period will be one week on either side. Once the appointment has been confirmed, the notice period on either side will be three months.

Hybrid Working

St John's operates a hybrid working scheme for administrative staff. After the initial probationary period the post-holder will be able to work from home for up to one day per week in term time and up to two days per week in non-term time.

Other

St John's College will pay for relevant training, conference attendance etc., to enhance work performance and encourage professional development. St John's staff may also make use of the College's gym.

Appointment Procedure

To apply, please send a full CV as well as a cover letter and the names and contact details of two referees, preferably as a single PDF document by email to vacancies@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

The closing date for applications is close of business Wednesday 23 September.

It is anticipated that interviews will be held in the week commencing 5 October.

The appointment will be subject to (i) the provision of an original document which indicates your right to work in the UK, and (ii) the completion of an initial probationary period.

Data protection

All data supplied by applicants will be used only for the purposes of determining their suitability for the post and will be held in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, General Data Protection Legislation and the College's Data Protection Policy and recruitment monitoring process.

Equality of Opportunity

St John's College is committed to providing equality of opportunity and avoiding unlawful discrimination. The policy and practice of the College requires that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment and that entry into employment with the College and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of his or her sex, marital status, sexual orientation, racial group, age or disability