



The  
 Fitzwilliam  
 Museum  
 CAMBRIDGE



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# Assistant Conservator (Manuscripts and Printed Books)

**Salary: Grade 5**

£32,546 - £35,116

**Contract:**

Fixed Term (1 year)

**Location:**

Cambridge

**Faculty / Department:**

Fitzwilliam Museum

**Responsible to:**Senior Conservator  
(Manuscripts and Printed Books)**Working Pattern:**

Full Time, Monday – Friday

**Purpose of the role**

The Assistant Conservator works as a member of a small, dynamic team to ensure the long-term preservation of the internationally significant manuscript and printed book collections of the Fitzwilliam Museum and make them accessible for the purposes of study, research, exhibitions, and the benefit of future generations.

Under the supervision of the Senior Conservator, the role-holder undertakes conservation work on bindings, paper and parchment, and gives preservation and handling advice as required. Typical material for treatment includes medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts, non-western manuscripts, fine printed books dating from the 15th to the 21st century, manuscript and printed music, literary autographs and archival material. The role holder will contribute to ongoing research through their practice of excellent interventive treatments and preservation measures.

The manuscript and printed book conservation team also provides 600 hours of commercial conservation services to Trinity College annually. While the Senior Conservator is responsible for providing book and archive conservation work to Trinity College, they may delegate some projects to the Assistant Conservator, who will carry out treatments agreed between the Senior Conservator and the Fellow Librarian of Trinity College under the Senior Conservator's supervision.

The role holder maintains good quality photographic and written records of all conservation treatments carried out on the Museum's and Trinity College's objects.

Other responsibilities include installation and de-installation of bound and archival material in displays and exhibitions, condition checking of incoming and outgoing loans, loan couriers, working closely with the Collections Team in preparation for exhibitions and displays.

In addition, the role holder may occasionally assist with teaching and supervision of conservation interns, students and volunteers.

The role holder will have relevant experience of carrying out complex book conservation treatments to the highest standards with great attention to detail. A can-do attitude, flexibility, good communication skills, and ability to work respectfully in a small team in a small workshop are a must.

The role holder is eligible to act as Duty Conservator during events, as agreed and on an occasional basis.

**Main duties and responsibilities**

<b>1</b>	Practical and/or preventive conservation of historic manuscripts and printed books for the Fitzwilliam Museum and its clients, particularly Trinity College. The role holder works on heritage of unique and international significance, under the supervision of the Senior Conservator (Manuscripts and Printed Books)
<b>2</b>	The Assistant Conservator may assist senior colleagues in project management tasks, for example for exhibition delivery.
<b>3</b>	Supervise students, interns, apprentices and other trainees on daily tasks, according to an agreed timetable.
<b>4</b>	Research: Carry out technical investigation of objects and works of art as part of conservation treatment; contribute to research projects led by others within own area of work. The role holder may contribute to publication and dissemination of research in written and oral form.
<b>5</b>	Advocate for care of collections internally and externally whenever appropriate; respond to internal and external conservation and research enquiries in own area of work.
<b>6</b>	Outreach: May co-organise and deliver outreach activities with others. Contribute to outreach activities in person and online, including events, blogs and social media posts.
<b>7</b>	On call duties: The role holder is eligible to act as Duty Conservator for events, on a voluntary basis.

## Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
<b>Specialist knowledge and skills</b>		
Demonstrable knowledge of bound printed books and manuscripts, of paper and parchment material, and of the techniques used in their conservation	✓	
Demonstrable high level of manual dexterity and intuitive skills	✓	
Demonstrable understanding of conservation ethics and ability to balance preservation and conservation with the needs of objects and collections actively used for research, teaching and display,	✓	
Demonstrable knowledge of chemistry and analytical techniques		✓

Demonstrable knowledge of COSHH regulations, Health and Safety requirements and use of risk assessments		✓
High degree of IT literacy and use of collections management systems in a conservation context		✓
Understanding of the particular needs of collections and collections users in a university context		✓
<b>Interpersonal and communication skills</b>		
A practical, 'can do' approach focused on finding solutions which balance the needs of preserving the material with reasonable use of the collections	✓	
A mutually flexible, supportive and collaborative team-working style combined with professionalism, respect for others, tact, discretion and fair judgement	✓	
Ability to develop effective working relationships with colleagues and external contacts	✓	
Effective communication and influencing skills, both written and oral; able to communicate complex specialist information to colleagues at all levels	✓	
Willingness to deliver a range of outreach activities in different media e.g. lunch-time talks, behind-the-scene tours to a wide range of audiences, blogs/social media posts etc	✓	
Ability to write papers for conferences and conservation journals and practical case studies	✓	
<b>Experience</b>		
A current, demonstrable and track-record of practical experience conserving bound material, preferably in collections comparable to those in the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Wren Library	✓	
Experience of assisting with teaching and supervision of interns, volunteers and/or work experience students		✓
Proven skill in managing own work-flow to deadlines	✓	
<b>Qualifications</b>		
A relevant conservation qualification or equivalent experience	✓	
Working towards professional accreditation through ICON		✓
<b>Additional Requirements</b>		
Occasional out-of-hours working providing duty conservator cover for events, on a voluntary basis		✓

# Our Working Together Agreement

The Fitzwilliam Museum is committed to fostering a positive workplace culture, and our Working Together Agreement was coproduced by staff to describe our desired ways of working together. We use these as a set of internal values, behaviours and professional expectations.

- People are our priority, and we look after each other
- We are friendly, considerate and kind to each other, in person and in writing
- We go out of our way to help each other
- We consider the impact of our actions and decisions
- We celebrate and value diversity
- We give and receive feedback with generosity
- We strive to be great at what we do
- We are interested in listening and learning from each other
- We respect and trust each other's diverse experience and expertise and make space for collaboration
- We spend time together face-to-face to build strong relationships
- We are open and transparent about our work
- We are open to change and growth
- We communicate with focus and purpose in a range of ways
- We set clear work boundaries, negotiate constructively and are accountable for our work and behaviour

# The Fitzwilliam Museum



**The Fitzwilliam Museum was founded in 1816 and opened to the public in 1848. Today, it houses over half a million artworks and objects, spanning over ten thousand years, principally from Europe, North Africa and Asia. The Museum has an international reputation for excellence in research, exhibitions, learning and public engagement. As well as being the principal museum of the University of Cambridge, the Fitzwilliam is one of the largest cultural providers in the region, welcoming between 350,000 and 450,000 visitors a year, pre-COVID. It is also the lead partner of the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM), the Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation consortium of the University Museums and the Botanic Garden.**

## About the Fitzwilliam Museum Collections

From antiquity to the present day, the Fitzwilliam houses a world-renowned collection of over half a million beautiful works of art, masterpiece paintings and historical artefacts.

Further information about the Fitzwilliam Museum and its collections can be found at <https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/>

# Terms of Appointment

## Tenure and probation

The appointment will be made on a Fixed-Term basis. Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.

## Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The hours of work for the position are 37 hours per week, working five days Monday – Friday.

## Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme) – a hybrid pension scheme. For further information please visit:

[www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk](http://www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk)

## Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 41 days inclusive of public holidays. For part-time employees, annual leave will be pro rata'd based on days worked.

## General information

### Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working for us. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon you gaining it.

## Health declaration

Once an offer of employment has been made the successful candidate will be required to complete a work health declaration form.

## Qualifications

The person specification for this position lists qualifications that are essential and/or desirable. Please note that if you are offered the post you will be asked to provide your relevant original certificates of these qualifications.

**References** - offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

## Screening Checks:

This role requires a standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. Any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of these checks whether an outcome is satisfactory will be determined by the University

## Equality and Diversity

The University actively supports equality, diversity and inclusion and encourages applications from all sections of society.

applications from individuals with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring fair treatment throughout the recruitment process. We will make adjustments to enable applicants to compete to the best of their ability wherever it is reasonable to do so and, if successful, to assist them during their employment. Information for disabled applicants is available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/staff/disabled/>

We encourage you to declare any disability that you may have, and any reasonable adjustments that you may require, in the section provided for this purpose in the application form. This will enable us to accommodate your needs throughout the process as required. However, applicants and employees may declare a disability at any time.

## Working Conditions

Office based. Some travel to similar sites may be required. Normal health and safety requirements will be followed.

# The University

**The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful universities. We are a renowned centre for research, education, and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society. The University is consistently ranked amongst the top universities in the world. Our affiliates have won more Nobel Prizes than any other University.**

Our sustained pursuit of academic excellence is built on a long history of world-leading teaching and research within a distinctive collegiate system. For eight centuries our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our principal goal is to remain one of the world's leading universities in an increasingly competitive global higher education sector. Today the University of Cambridge is at the centre of a cluster of over 4,300 businesses employing 58,000 people.

Our capital investment projects include academic and commercial growth at both the West Cambridge Innovation District, and the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. Eddington, in North West Cambridge, is a mixed-use development including key worker housing for staff, a community centre and a new primary school, managed by the University. Through these projects, the University is deeply embedded in, and committed to serving, our local community. These are all conspicuous signs of a University that is not only adapting to new needs, but also anticipating the future.

Our mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Our core values are:

- freedom of thought and expression; and
- freedom from discrimination.



# About Us

**The University is one of the world's leading academic centres. It comprises 150 faculties and departments, together with a central administration and other institutions. Our institutions, museums and collections are a world-class resource for researchers, students and members of the public representing one of the country's highest concentrations of internationally important collections.**

The University has an annual income of £2 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £500 million per annum and continues to grow.

The Colleges and the University remain committed to admitting the best students regardless of their background and to investing considerable resources both in widening access and financial support. The 31 Colleges are self-governing, separate legal entities which appoint their own staff. Many academic staff are invited to join a College as a Teaching Fellow, which provides a further social and intellectual dimension. The Colleges admit undergraduate students, provide student accommodation and pastoral support and deliver small group teaching for undergraduates.

The University awards degrees and its faculties and departments provide lectures and seminars for students and determine the syllabi for teaching.

Our instinct for seeking out excellence and setting up enduring and mutually beneficial collaborations has led us to establish strategic partnerships across the globe. Whether it is the successful Cambridge-Africa Programme involving universities in Ghana, Uganda and elsewhere on the African continent; or the close association with the government of India to pursue new research in crop science; or the creation, with Germany's Max Planck Institutes, of a Cambridge-based centre for the study of ethics, human economy and social change – international partnerships are now an inextricable part of the University's make-up.

“Cambridge graduates and researchers have made – and continue to make – a colossal contribution to human knowledge and the understanding of the world around us. Their work touches on the lives and livelihoods of everyone from patients diagnosed with life-threatening diseases, to residents of areas critically affected by climate change, to children growing up in conflict zones. It has a lasting impact on our society, our economy and our culture: the world is truly a better place thanks to their efforts.”

*Stephen Toope, Vice Chancellor 2019*



# Working at the University

**Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 23,000 students and over 16,000 staff from all walks of life and corners of the world.**

The University continually explores strategies to attract and retain the best people. It is committed to supporting its staff to achieve their best. We are a fair, diverse and inclusive society and we believe our staff are our greatest asset. There is strong commitment to developing institutional leadership and supporting and encouraging staff development at all levels.

We offer a variety of roles including academic, research, professional, managerial and support roles. We also offer extensive benefits and excellent learning opportunities within a stimulating working environment.

The University's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is expanding further to the north west of Cambridge including investing in affordable homes for University key workers and community facilities. Even with our continued development, the University remains within walking or cycling distance across the campus. The University is a major partner on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and we continue to redevelop our historic city centre sites demonstrating our determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.



## Equality & diversity

The University has built its excellence on the diversity of its staff and student community. We aim to be a leader in fostering equality and inclusion, and in promoting respect and a sense of belonging for all. We encourage applications from all sections of society. All appointments are made on the basis of merit. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity groups, including the Women's Staff Network, Race Equality Network and LGBT+ Staff Network. More details are available here:

<http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The University has a bronze Race Equality Charter award, with a framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. Furthermore, the University's silver Athena swan award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting gender equality.

# Living in Cambridge

**Cambridge is rich in cultural diversity. From beautiful University and College buildings, museums and art galleries, quaint gardens and punts on the River Cam, to a vibrant restaurant and café scene, our employees are surrounded by the wonderful features of this unique city.**

You can find a wide-range of high street shops and 3 shopping centres, with independent alternatives at the historic market and nestled within the passageways in the city centre. You will find a cinema, bowling alley, a nightclub and various live performances at the Cambridge Leisure Park, with further entertainment options at the Corn Exchange, Arts Theatre and the ADC Theatre. Further information can be found on the Visit Cambridge website.

If you prefer the faster pace of life, London is a 45 minute train journey away. For those travelling from overseas, Stansted Airport is just 45 minutes away and Heathrow Airport under 2 hours away. The University is a short distance from a host of other attractions such as Ely Cathedral, Newmarket Races and various wildlife parks and stately homes. Cambridge is also within easy reach of the beautiful Broads and coastlines of Norfolk and Suffolk.

## Accommodation Service

The University Accommodation Service helps staff, students and visiting scholars who are affiliated to the University in their search for suitable accommodation in Cambridge. The dedicated accommodation team can provide access to a wide range of University-owned furnished and unfurnished properties, and has a database of private sector accommodation available for short and long-term lets. For further information and to register with this free service please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/>



# What Cambridge can offer

**We offer a comprehensive reward package to attract, motivate and retain high performing staff at all levels and in all areas of work.**

The University offers a wide range of competitive benefits, from family leave entitlement, to shopping and travel discount schemes. Our generous annual leave package contributes to the positive wellbeing of our University employees. Sabbatical leave enables academics to focus on research and scholarship, whilst still maintaining their full salary. The University also has a [career break scheme](#) for academic and academic-related staff, with additional flexible working policies for all other staff.

## Pay and benefits

The University salary structure includes automatic service-related pay progression in many of its grades and an annual cost of living increase. In addition to this, employees are rewarded for outstanding contribution through a number of regular pay progression schemes. The University offers attractive pensions schemes for employees, with an additional benefit of a salary exchange arrangement providing tax and national insurance savings.



## CAMbens employee benefits

The University offers employees a wide range of competitive benefits, known as CAMbens. CAMbens offers something for everyone across a range of categories, including:

- Financial Benefits, including shopping discounts (both local and national) and a Payroll Giving scheme;
- Travel Benefits, including Cycle to Work, discounts on train season tickets and interest-free Travel to Work loans;
- Family Friendly and Lifestyle Benefits, including support with childcare and family friendly policies;
- Health and Wellbeing Benefits, including a University Staff Counselling Service, discounts at the University Sports Centre, and other local gyms, and healthcare schemes.



# What Cambridge can offer

## Family-friendly policies

The University recognises the importance of supporting its staff. We have a range of family-friendly policies to aid employees' work-life balance including a generous maternity, adoption and shared parental leave entitlement of 18 weeks full pay, and paid emergency leave for parents and carers.

Other family-friendly support includes:

Our highly regarded workplace nurseries, a childcare salary exchange scheme and a high quality holiday Playscheme may be available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities (subject to demand and qualifying criteria). Further childcare information can be found here:

<https://www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The [Newcomers and Visiting Scholars Group](#) is an organisation within the University run by volunteers whose aim is to help newly arrived wives, husbands, partners and families of Visiting Scholars and members of the University to settle in Cambridge and give them an opportunity to meet local people. The Postdoc Academy supports the postdoctoral community within Cambridge. Further details are available here: <https://www.postdocacademy.cam.ac.uk/>

## Your wellbeing

The University's Sport Centre, Counselling Services and Occupational Health are just some of the support services available to University employees to promote their physical and mental wellbeing. The University delivers The Festival of Wellbeing annually, which is a programme of stimulating talks and activities, which aim to promote wellbeing and good mental and physical health. The University also hosts the [Cambridge Festival](#), which is a great opportunity to get your first taste of public engagement, through volunteering, supporting hands-on activities or proposing a talk.

## Development opportunities

We support new employees to settle in through various activities as well as supporting their professional and career development on an ongoing basis. Our Personal and Professional Development (PPD) team provide development opportunities for all University employees, including face-to-face sessions, online learning modules and webinars. All employees also have unlimited access to LinkedIn Learning to support their development. Both new and existing employees can undertake funded Apprenticeships, which lead to a range of vocational and professional qualifications. We offer reduced staff fees for University of Cambridge graduate courses and the opportunity to attend lectures and seminars held by University departments and institutions. A range of University training providers also offer specialist learning and development in their own areas e.g. teaching and learning, digital literacy, finance, health and wellbeing, safety.



# How to apply

Applications should be submitted online via the University of Cambridge jobs page [www.jobs.cam.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.cam.ac.uk) by clicking “Apply online” in the job advert. You will need an email address to register for our online system.

Conversations about flexible working are encouraged at the University of Cambridge. Please feel free to discuss flexibility prior to applying (using the contact information below) or at interview if your application is successful.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:  
Monika Stokowiec – [ms2608@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ms2608@cam.ac.uk)

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact [HR@Fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk](mailto:HR@Fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)

The closing date for applications: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025 (midnight)

The interview date for the role: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025