

The University of Manchester

Job Description

Job title:	Conservator
Reports to:	Collection Care Team Leader
Organisation unit:	University of Manchester Library: Curatorial Practices
Date:	January 2021
HERA:	MAPPS-UML-CP-C&D-E (316, Grade 4)

Overall purpose of the job:

- To assist in a wide range of preservation and conservation procedures as part of the Collection Care team, including advising and training staff and researchers in the use of library materials, advising on the suitability of items for exhibition and loan, and liaising with colleagues across the University

Key responsibilities:

- To contribute to an environment that values and celebrates the diverse nature of the University of Manchester's population and to take positive steps to achieve equality in the workplace and to both meet and exceed our obligations under equality legislation
- To carry out a range of Collection Care conservation activities e.g. to research, devise and implement conservation treatments to Special Collections items such as printed books, manuscripts, archives, maps and visual collections and to advise and train curatorial staff on their care
- To carry out a range of Collection Care preservation activities e.g. managing and evaluating environmental monitoring systems, developing and maintaining and evaluating integrated pest management programmes, to devise and undertake collection surveys, carry out repairs to modern lending collection, to initiate and implement box-making and rehousing programmes
- To document and prepare items for exhibition and external loans by assessing, condition checking, carrying out remedial work as appropriate, and to advise curatorial and library staff as appropriate
- To devise and construct display solutions and mounts and install/de-install exhibitions and to advise curatorial and library staff on the safe display of collection items
- To understand and comply with University health and safety policy and statutory requirements, especially COSHH regulations

- To maintain an up-to-date awareness of professional standards and techniques, and to undertake research into all aspects of preservation and conservation
- To keep accurate records and documentation associated with Collection Care work
- To plan and carry out condition surveys at item or collection level, as required, and to assist in assessing the conservation priorities of the various collections
- To assist in maintaining and developing the Library's collection disaster plan, to participate in disaster planning training and prevention measures, and to assist, or lead, as required in collections disaster response and recovery processes
- To assess personal training and development needs and undertake appropriate training, including working towards accreditation
- To supervise Collection Care/Conservation students, interns and volunteers
- To work as part of the overall Collection Care team
- To meet agreed personal and departmental performance targets and to collect and collate both quantitative and qualitative information
- To represent the University Library at internal and external meetings and to become involved in external professional networks and groups relating to Curatorial Practices
- To take an active approach to continuing professional development
- To be responsible for compliance with and the embedding of University policies, procedures and requirements - in particular those relating to health and safety; equality, diversity and inclusion; and information governance
- Such other duties as may reasonably be associated with the grade and a role of this nature
- To work at any Library site as required
- To be flexible in relation to hours of work as may be reasonably requested from time to time
- To wear supplied Library branded clothing during defined promotional activities and special events
- To understand the specific context within which the role operates and how it relates to the wider University goals and business processes, in order to facilitate informed decision making
- To ensure the working environment reflects the University's and Library's values

Person Specification:

Essential knowledge, skills and experience:

- A recognised qualification in book and paper conservation and/or relevant experience
- Working experience of book, paper or preventative conservation
- Knowledge of book, print, drawing, parchment and/or photographic preservation and conservation
- Proof of manual dexterity
- Good interpersonal skills
- Excellent oral and written communication skills and ability to communicate across teams and levels
- Ability to multitask and self-manage multiple projects
- IT literacy
- Ability to deliver high quality work to agreed timetables

- Ability to work as part of a team
- Excellent organisational and prioritising skills
- Attention to detail
- Flexible attitude to all aspects of the work
- Self-motivation and ability to work on one's own initiative

Desirable skills, knowledge and experience:

- Good general level of education with knowledge of organic chemistry to at least 'O' level/GCSE standard
- Knowledge of Health and Safety regulations
- Knowledge of Disaster plans
- Experience of working with a variety of materials Familiarity with disaster plans, computers and COSHH regulations