

The University of Manchester

Job Description

Job title:	Senior Conservator
Reports to:	Collection Care Manager
Organisation unit:	University of Manchester Library: Curatorial Practices
Date:	January 2021
HERA:	MAPPS-UML-CP-C&D-D (344, Grade 5)

Overall purpose of the job:

- To assist in a wide range of preservation and conservation procedures as part of the Collection Care team
- To take lead responsibility EITHER for managing requests for the loan of Special Collections materials to external venues in the UK and abroad, OR for developing and implementing passive conservation measures across Library sites, including environmental monitoring and integrated pest management

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 exhibitions and external loans purposes, and to advise curatorial and library staff as appropriate
- 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 assist research into all aspects of preservation and conservation

- To keep accurate records and documentation associated with the conservation/preservation work
- EITHER To lead the process for managing requests for the loan of Special Collections materials to external venues in the UK and abroad, including liaising with Special Collections curators and managers, external venues, insurance agents and courier firms;
- OR To take lead responsibility for developing and implementing passive conservation measures across several Library sites, including environmental monitoring and integrated pest management
- 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 act as Collection Care Team Leader back-up when necessary
- To maintain and improve personal craft and manual skills
- To work as part of the overall Collection Care Team
- To establish and nurture highly effective relationships with Library colleagues, in order to achieve shared objectives
- 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 participate in a rota to cover evenings and weekends
- 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
- An accredited conservator, or working towards accreditation
- Working experience of book and paper conservation
- Experience as a practising conservator with books or paper
- Knowledge of issues around leading and supervising a team

- The ability to work with various materials
- Proof of manual dexterity
- The ability to communicate well across levels.
- Good interpersonal skills
- The ability to write concise and accurate reports
- Good IT skills
- Able to work to a high standard under tight deadlines
- Able to work as part of a team
- Able to be a participating member at staff meetings
- Good organisational and prioritising skills
- Attention to detail
- Flexible attitude to all aspects of the work
- Self-motivated and able to work on own initiative

Desirable skills, knowledge and experience:

- Good general level of education with knowledge of organic chemistry to at least 'O' level/GCSE standard
- Familiarity with disaster plans, computers and COSHH regulations
- Experience of working as a member of a team
- Knowledge of book, print, drawing, parchment and photographic preservation and conservation.
- Wider interest in preservation issues