Museum of
Natural History
University of Oxford

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Job Description

Job title	Visitor Experience Assistant
Division	Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM)
Department	Oxford University Museum of Natural History
Grade and salary	Grade 2: £26,909 per annum, pro rata
Location	**Oxford University Museum of Natural History**
Hours	Two part-time posts: 19.5 hours per week, 9.30-17.00, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 26 hours per week, 9.30-17.00, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
Contract type	Casual, 14 Dec 2026 – 7 March 2027
Reporting to	Visitor Experience Manager
Additional information	You are required to submit a CV and a supporting statement with your application, outlining how you meet each of the selection criteria for the role. Please send applications to Himal Govind – Himal.govind@oum.ox.ac.uk by 12 noon on Tuesday 1st December.

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	Please contact the recruitment team if you require the job description in an alternative format.
Closing date	12.00 midday GMT/BST, Tuesday 1st December

The role

Introduction

The Museum of Natural History is seeking two seasonal casual staff members to join the Visitor Experience team to cover the period 14 December 2026 to 7 March 2027, providing additional support to the team during the Christmas holidays and additional artwork-related invigilation requirements in the early part of 2027.

The Visitor Experience team is the welcoming face of the Museum of Natural History and an integral part of the visitor experience and the Museum's visitor giving income stream. The Visitor Experience Assistants (VEAs) are a close-knit team, working together to ensure a high level of customer care in their welcome and wider communication with Museum's 850,000+ annual visitors, providing information and requesting donations which support the Museum's activities.

The post-holder must have experience of working in visitor-facing roles, either at a museum, gallery or heritage site, at a reception, or in another customer-focussed environment. The VEA position requires excellent interpersonal skills, a professional attitude and a flexible approach to the role. The Museum is a vibrant and busy working environment and the Visitor Experience team is required to be approachable and adaptable.

If working weekends, the post-holder will be required to stay on site over lunch to assist with emergency procedures if needed (this is regarded as paid-time).

Responsibilities

Reception and welcome

- Acts as a first point of contact for all visitors to the Museum, providing an excellent welcome and ensuring a high standard of customer service
- Helps support the Museum by encouraging donations and the sale of visitor guides and other products
- Provides a helpful, informative and efficient service to all visitors and staff while resolving any issues in a calm and diplomatic manner
- Liaises with education staff and volunteers and act as the first point of contact for weekend volunteers
- Refers external enquiries to the relevant section of the Museum, including phone enquiries
- Works in partnership with neighbouring departments, including the Pitt Rivers Museum
- Ensures the Museum is always presented at its best, including keeping areas clean and tidy, identifying and dealing with trip and slip hazards and ensuring visitor guides and leaflets are kept well-stocked.

Security and safety

- Interprets and enforce the Museum's policies in a sensible and sensitive but firm manner and uses judgement on challenging individuals or groups under the Museum's policies
- The post-holder is expected to be a nominated first-aider, first-aid training will be provided
- Play a role in evacuating visitors safely from the Museum should an emergency arise
- Is responsible for opening and closing the building at the start and end of each day
- Remains aware of all people entering the Museum (visitors, Museum staff, University staff and students, contractors)
- Carries out regular patrols of the building
- Liaises with the University's central security team, including on car parking matters.

Other

- Undertakes event duties required by conference and reception organisers under the direction of the Events Manager
- Moves furniture and sets up rooms/areas, sets up AV equipment when necessary
- Observes and reports faults and defects in the fabric, services and decoration of the building to the Building Manager
- Records and processes object identification enquiries
- Records visitor numbers from the electronic visitor counter
- Occasional cash counting duties

The post-holder will be required to work on bank holidays, and to participate in an annual development review. The successful candidate will be willing to undertake all necessary training identified, and to perform any other duties that may be required commensurate with the grade of the job.

The Museum of Natural History reserve the right to make reasonable amendments to the job description in consultation with the post-holder at any time.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Excellent customer service and interpersonal skills and ability to communicate with a wide range of people
- The ability to remain calm under pressure and use sound judgement to make decisions in a busy environment
- A confident and proactive manner to asking for visitor donations and making conversions to Gift Aid when appropriate
- Experience of working in a busy visitor attraction, heritage site or retail environment
- Experience of working successfully in a team and with a wide range of people
- Reliability and good time-keeping skills
- Experience/understanding of health and safety, security and housekeeping issues
- Ability to lift and move furniture, signs and AV equipment

Desirable selection criteria

- Responsibility for dealing with building security in a previous role
- An interest in the Museum of Natural History and its Collections
- Second language skills
- IT skills

Pre-employment screening

Standard checks

If you are offered the post, the offer will be subject to standard pre-employment checks. You will be asked to provide: proof of your right-to-work in the UK; proof of your identity; and (if we haven't done so already) we will contact the referees you have nominated. You will also be asked to complete a health declaration so that you can tell us about any health conditions or disabilities for which you may need us to make appropriate adjustments.

Please read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures at: https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks

Hazard-specific / Safety-critical duties

This job includes hazards or safety-critical activities. If you are offered the post, you will be asked to complete a health questionnaire which will be assessed by our Occupational Health Service, and the offer of employment will be subject a successful outcome of this assessment.

The hazards or safety-critical duties involved are as follows:

- Work in hot or cold environments
- Regular manual handling

Additional security pre-employment checks

This job includes duties that will require additional security pre-employment checks:

- A satisfactory basic Disclosure and Barring Service check due to access to Museum Collections

About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, and in recent

years we have spun out 15-20 new companies every year. We are also recognised as leaders in support for social enterprise.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Oxford University Museum of Natural History was opened in 1860 and houses the University's extensive scientific holdings of natural history, which are used for research, teaching, and public engagement with science. The holdings are currently organised into three collection areas: Earth, Life, and the library and archives. The Museum is 'Designated' by Arts Council England as having collections of national and international importance, and these comprise around 7 million specimens that are second in importance only to the national collections. The building, which is Grade 1-listed, is regarded as one of the finest examples of Victorian architecture in Britain, with its glass roof supported by iron columns, and internal decoration that has a strong association with the Pre-Raphaelite art movement.

The Museum is one of the most visited science museums in the UK with over 800,000 visitors per year, including over 40,000 school visitors, making it the most popular non-national science museum in the UK and the second most visited university museum globally (behind Oxford's Ashmolean Museum).

The Museum places equity in science at the core of its ethos and is an Athena SWAN Silver Award holder.

For more information about the museum, please visit: www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk.

Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM) Division

The Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM) group includes the providers of the major academic services to the divisions, and also departments with responsibilities including, but extending beyond, the immediate teaching and research needs of the University. The collections embodied within these departments are an essential part of the University's wider nature and mission. They are part of its heritage as the country's oldest University and now form a resource of national and international importance for teaching, research and cultural life; they also make a major contribution to the University's outreach and access missions.

For more information please visit: https://www.glam.ox.ac.uk/home

How to apply

You will be asked to upload a CV and a supporting statement. The supporting statement must explain how you meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants).

Please send applications to Himal Govind – Himal.govind@oum.ox.ac.uk by 12 noon on Tuesday 1st December.

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

As part of your application you will be asked to provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

Please note that if you do not upload a completed supporting statement and a CV, we will be unable to consider your application for this role.

All applications must be received by **midday** UK time on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

References

Please give the details of two people who have agreed to provide a reference for you. If you have previously been employed, your referees should be people who have managed you for a considerable period, and at least one of them should be your formal line manager in your most recent job. Otherwise they may be people who have supervised you in a recent college, school, or voluntary experience. It is helpful if you can tell us briefly how each referee knows you (e.g. 'line manager', 'college tutor'). Your referees should not be related to you.

Your referees will be asked to comment on your suitability for the post and to provide details of the dates of your employment; and of any disciplinary processes which are still considered 'live'. We will only take up references at offer stage.

Information for priority candidates

A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment because they have been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing department(s).

If you are a priority candidate, please ensure that you attach your redeployment letter to your application (or email it to the contact address on the advert if the application form used for the vacancy does not allow attachments).

If you need help

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at: https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-faqs

Non-technical questions about applying for this job should be addressed to Ellie Talbot, Visitor Experience Manager – ellie.talbot@oum.ox.ac.uk

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our online recruitment portal to confirm receipt of your application. Please check your spam/junk mail if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to the University as part of the job application process will be processed in accordance with the GDPR and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the University's Privacy Notice for Job Applicants at: https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for very senior research posts at **grade RSIV/D35 and clinical equivalents E62 and E82**, which with effect from 1 October 2023 will be 30 September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.

For **existing** employees on these grades, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at other grades have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Entry into employment with the University 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. No applicant or member of staff shall be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, travel discounts, and a variety of professional development opportunities. Our range of other employee benefits and discounts also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for all University staff. The University Club offers social, sporting, and hospitality facilities. Staff can also use the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool. See www.club.ox.ac.uk and https://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/.

Information for staff new to Oxford

If you are relocating to Oxfordshire from overseas or elsewhere in the UK, the University's Welcome Service website includes practical information about settling in the area, including advice on relocation, accommodation, and local schools. See https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/

There is also a visa loan scheme to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependents. See https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme

Family-friendly benefits

With one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector, and a range of flexible working options, Oxford aims to be a family-friendly employer. We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities. The service offers a free telephone advice line, and the ability to book emergency back-up care for children, adult dependents and elderly relatives. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care.

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries.

For full details, including how to apply and the costs, see https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/

Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. For further details, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, see https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including the Oxford Research Staff Society, BME staff network, LGBT+ staff network and a disabled staff network. You can find more information at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is an organisation run by volunteers that aims to assist the partners of new staff settle into Oxford, and provides them with an opportunity to meet people and make connections in the local area. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.