



NOTE: This job description does not form part of the employee's contract of employment but is provided for guidance. The precise duties and responsibilities of any job may be expected to change over time. Job Holders should be consulted over any proposed changes to this job description before implementation.

Job Title: Menswear Archive Assistant Curator

Reports to: Menswear Archive Curator

Grade: NG3

Purpose: To support the provision of an effective professional curatorial service, with particular emphasis on facilitating access and discoverability of the Westminster Menswear Archive collection.

Principal Accountabilities

1. Assist the day-to-day service provision, including arranging appointments, answering enquiries, assisting and supervising researchers and visitors.
2. Carry out collections management processes and accessioning procedures following national and international standards and best practice to facilitate identification, access and retrieval.
3. Enter descriptive data into the University's archival management system AtoM, following national and international standards and best practice to facilitate the discoverability of the Westminster Menswear Archive collection; and to contribute to the departmental procedures manual in relation to the use of AtoM.
4. Ingest digital records into Archivematica (Arkivum-Perpetua), the University's digital records preservation system.
5. Support a range of outreach activities including presentations, tours and organising exhibitions (including online).
6. Assist in collection care and preservation procedures, including pest management and environmental monitoring.
7. Supervise work placement students and student interns under the direction of the Menswear Archive Curator.

8. Perform general administrative and organisational duties, including keeping visitor statistics, liaising with other University departments and colleagues including the library, estates, and technicians.
9. Keep up to date with developments in curatorial and collections management practise (CPD) and actively maintain appropriate professional contacts.
10. Carry out any other duties as appropriate within their competence as may be required by the Menswear Archive Curator.

Context

Student and Academic Services (SAS) provides professional, efficient and consistent researcher and student-focused support and services across the University's main sites in the West End and at Harrow. It leads on professional support for a wide range of governance, research, learning, and wellbeing interventions that enhance the experience of students, colleagues, and alumni throughout their relationship with the University.

SAS is a large and complex Directorate, organised into six clusters:

- Business Operations
- Employability and Graduation Success
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement
- Library and Archives Service
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Student Support and Residential Life

The Library and Archives Service comprises around 50 people, working in the following teams:

- Academic Engagement and Learning Development
- Content and Digital Services
- Customer Services
- Development and Planning
- Library Operations and Services
- University Records and Archives

Since 1994 University Records and Archives has provided a professional archive and records management service to collect and preserve records, the corporate memory of the University, created by the University and its predecessors in order to make them accessible to students, colleagues, and the general public for use both now and in the future. University Records and Archives is the central point of information about the University's history and answers enquiries from students, colleagues, and the wider community. The team oversees the University's current recordkeeping and assist departments in managing their records efficiently and in accordance with legislative requirements and good practice. The post holder will be part of a small team (c.5 people) of qualified professionals with expertise across archives, museums, and records management.

The archive collections comprise over 1,000 linear metres of historic records dating back to 1838; together with as several deposited collections of teaching and research interest, including architecture, town planning, Chinese visual culture, and the Westminster Menswear Archive (comprising over 85 linear metres of hanging garments). The collection includes approximately 40,000 photographs, glass plates and slides, over two-thirds of which are digitised. The online catalogue comprises over 50,000 individual records and over 20,000 digital objects. Online resources include the digitised Polytechnic

Magazines 1879-1960, Oral History Project, Archigram Archival Project and the China Visual Arts Project Archive. Since 2010, University Records and Archives has been running an oral history programme which aims to capture the memories and experiences of former colleagues and students. Details of holdings can be found [here](#).

There has been considerable investment in the archive space with strong-rooms which provide secure and environmentally monitored storage which is fit for purpose and of a high standard, and a dedicated reading room for researchers. University Records and Archives arrange and catalogue the archive holdings in accordance with international cataloguing standards to facilitate access and retrieval, using specialist archival management system, AtoM. Since July 2016 the team has been actively dealing with digital records, with the procurement of Arkivum 100 storage and the implementation of the Arkivum-Perpetua product which integrates the storage with Archivematica (a web and standards-based open-source application which allows the preservation of long-term access to trustworthy, authentic and reliable digital content). In 2017/18 University Records and Archives was the recipient of a grant award by Jisc as part of the Research Data Shared Service (RDSS) Digital Preservation – Records and Archives Management Pilot Programme, for which the final report can be found [here](#).

University Records and Archives is an active, customer-focused service. The team deals with enquiries, accommodates visits by researchers from within and beyond the University and supports a number of outreach activities by means of contributing to publications and exhibitions, and by giving talks and training sessions to groups of colleagues, students, and external visitors.

The University is committed to managing its records efficiently and effectively regardless of format or media. University Records and Archives leads on this activity by promoting best practice and offering advice and training on legal and technical developments in relation to good recordkeeping and records management. The team manages a comprehensive records retention schedule programme which is used in conjunction with off-site specialised records storage facilities (provided by external supplier), including retrieval of records, transport, storage and destruction of hard copy records. They work closely with departments to create retention schedules, select records for transfer to off-site storage, and review records for destruction. They also advise and assist in the management of current paper records on-site in the institution.

Increasingly the University is becoming more reliant on born-digital records. The University Records and Archives team works closely with Information Systems and Support (ISS) colleagues to ensure the robustness of our systems and IT infrastructure with regard to electronic record-keeping. Since 2017, the University has implemented Microsoft O365 as its strategic communications and electronic document management platform. The University Records and Archives team continues to work to help deliver the cultural change necessary to improve the way colleagues create, collaborate on and manage their records.

The primary role of the Assistant Curator is to assist in the day-to-day delivery of an effective curatorial service. The post holder will support access and discoverability of the Menswear Archive collection.

The post holder will be expected to foster cross-team project working and to deliver a culture of sharing knowledge and information across the University. They will work closely with the Senior Archivist and the Senior Digital Archives and Records Management Specialist, and colleagues across SAS and the wider Professional Services. A key relationship is with colleagues in the College of Design, Creative and Digital Industries (DCDI), in facilitating and supporting access to the Menswear Archive by students in the Department of Fashion.

The post holder will be expected to build and maintain networks and go 'out and about' in the University making contacts and promoting the services. The post holder is also encouraged to develop relationships with other curators and collections within the professional community, both within and outside UK Higher Education.

The Library and Archives Service makes a significant contribution to the University's key metrics, including the NSS, TEF, KEF and REF, and supports the University in meeting its statutory obligations in relation to information compliance.

SAS is committed to developing the skills and capabilities of its colleagues through a proactive programme of staff development. The post holder is expected to engage in personal development and to be a role model to all members of the team. Support towards Associateship of the Museums Association or similar would be given.

DIMENSIONS:

University Records and Archives manage two sites: the Westminster Menswear Archive at Harrow and the University Archive at Little Titchfield in the West End. This post will be based at Harrow, but all SAS appointments are made on the understanding that colleagues will serve at any of the service points should the need arise.

This post holder has no line management responsibility but is expected to supervise student interns under the direction of the Menswear Archive Curator and is also expected to contribute to wider training and development of colleagues and students.

The post holder is not responsible for a budget. They may have responsibility for the maintenance of statistics and other associated financial records under the direction of the Menswear Archive Curator.

The University requires all post holders to have an understanding of individual health and safety responsibilities and an awareness of risks in the work environment together with their potential impact on both individual work and that of others. The post requires a considerable amount of lifting and carrying of garments, archives, boxes, etc. and the handling of loaded garment rails. Carrying items up and down stairs may sometimes be necessary (lifts are usually, but not always, available). Climbing ladders in the strong rooms to lift boxes down from higher shelves will be necessary. For this reason, the University's course in manual handling techniques is mandatory unless this training has been completed elsewhere to the timescale and standard required by the University. In addition, the post-holder will be required to work in some basement areas with minimal support.

Normal working hours for the Assistant Curator are 9:30am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday. The post holder may sometimes be required to work outside of normal hours in response to user or service expectations, particularly in relation to promotional and outreach activities.

Prepared by: Elaine Penn, Head of University Records and Archives
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PERSON SPECIFICATION:

	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to at least GCSE level (or equivalent) in English and Maths. • Demonstrable experience and practice may be acceptable in place of formal qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified, or working towards a recognised post-graduate qualification. • A relevant degree or equivalent practical experience that demonstrates relevant levels of knowledge and skills for the role (as outlined in this job description and person specification).
Training and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and interest in current issues relating to the Westminster Menswear Archive such as curatorial practice, collections management, teaching collections, object-based learning, fashion archives. • Experience of using a broad spread of IT software, including collection management systems and Microsoft O365. • Experience of supporting engagement activities including creating and delivering presentations and organising exhibitions (including online). • Administrative experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in the provision and support of curatorial or collections management services. • Use of AtoM and Archivematica. • Knowledge of best practice standards in collections management. • Experience of working in the UK Higher Education sector.
Aptitude and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong verbal and written communication skills. • Demonstrable ability and enthusiasm to articulate and convey the key elements of the Menswear Archive to different audiences. • Meticulous organisational ability, accuracy and attention to detail. • Ability to prioritise, organise, and solve problems in a busy environment where there may be unexpected and competing deadlines. • Ability to work with minimal supervision, based on experience and knowledge of procedures. • Ability to deal courteously and professionally with a wide audience (including industry, researchers, colleagues and students). • Proven capacity to work well in a team and have good working relationships with colleagues. • Flexible and creative approach to work and a willingness to undertake a complex variety of tasks. 	
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven commitment to delivering excellent customer-focused services. • A curiosity and willingness to learn and develop. • Patience and persistence in problem solving. • Fully committed to contributing to a stimulating working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable. 	

Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexibility to work out of hours on occasion to meet user or service expectations.• Mandatory manual handling training.
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