

Job description

Job title:	Assistant Archivist (temporary)
Grade:	3a
Department:	Library and Archives
Responsible for:	n/a
Accountable to:	Archives Manager

Job summary

The Archives service is part of the RCS England Library and Archives department, which exists to support the professional and clinical information needs of RCS England Members and Fellows, trainees, and examination candidates, based in the UK and internationally, via the provision of an extensive range of information services and resources.

The Archives Team is responsible for the professional management and development of the College's institutional archive collections and deposited archives collections, and for providing a variety of support services that facilitate access and engagement with these collections by RCS Members and Fellows, College staff, and external academics, researchers, and the general public.

The Archives collections include deposited collections of archives and manuscripts relating to medicine and surgery dating from the 16th to 20th centuries, including hospital records, correspondence, personal papers, diaries, lecture notes, and case notes. The collections also include the institutional archives of RCS England, which incorporates official records of the College that are no longer in active use but are of historical significance, such as charters, minutes, examination records and architectural plans.

The Assistant Archivist is a key member of the Archives Team and has responsibilities for the leadership and delivery of a range of high-quality, customer-focused, and collaborative archives-focused activities, as well as for providing support to the Archives Manager for the planning and delivery of the Archives Service more broadly.

Specifically, the Assistant Archivist is responsible for leading on the delivery of the archive Research Room and enquiry services and for cataloguing the institutional archives of the College. The post holder is also responsible for providing support to the Archives Manager on a variety of collections planning and management activities and will have the opportunity to assist in digital records management using SharePoint.



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The post holder's core responsibilities are as follows:

1. To lead the on the delivery of archive enquiry and research services to Members, Fellows, RCS staff, academic researchers and members of the public.
2. To catalogue the institutional archives of the College to professional ISAD(G) standard using Axiell Collections archives cataloguing software.
3. To collaborate with the Library team on engagement activities to support College events, including occasional evening and weekend working.
4. To support the Archives Manager in collections management activities with due regard for preservation, statutory obligations and best professional practice.

Specific duties and responsibilities

1. Research Room and Enquiry Services

- To be responsible for the operational management and delivery of the archives Research Room and enquiry services.
- To review document retrieval processes to ensure efficient handling of requests.
- To assist and supervise researchers in the staff and public Research Room for up to 2 days per week, booking appointments, advising on available research material, retrieving and re-shelving material, helping customers engage with the collection through appropriate exploitation of catalogues and other access tools, and ensuring security of the collections is maintained.
- To act as the principal point of contact for enquiries to the archives team, including management of the archives shared inbox, and to refer requests to the Archives Manager, Library Team and Museum staff as appropriate
- To process enquiries, reprographic requests and permissions to publish from internal and external researchers in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Public Records Acts 1958 & 1967, ethics and College policy.
- To manage access to sensitive medical records under the guidance of the Archives Manager.
- To answer enquiries for Members and Fellows, including in depth research as appropriate.
- To undertake in depth research for RCS Eng directorates to support business activities across the College, for example Development and External Relations.
- To deliver a paid research service for Family History researchers. To be responsible for planning and completing research and overseeing the collection / accounting of charges received.
- To report KPIs for operational and governance purposes.



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2. Collections Management

- To arrange and catalogue series of corporate records dating from 1745-present, as directed by the Archives Manager, to the international standards ISAD(G), ISAAR (CPF) and others as applicable, in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018
- To accession new archival records in accordance with professional and internal standards
- To develop other research aids, including subject source lists

3. Engagement

- To work with the Library team to plan and deliver of talks, displays, exhibitions and special events, including occasional evening and weekend working.
- To write collections based articles for College publications.

4. General

- To support the Library and Archives team generally, as necessary and as directed by the Director of Library and Archives and the Library Management Team
- To deputise for the Archives Manager and attend any necessary meetings as appropriate
- The post holder is responsible for their own continuing personal and professional development and for keeping their skills and knowledge up to date
- Any other duties appropriate to the grade may be assigned by the post-holder's line manager from time to time, including requests for voluntary assistance for compliance related activities e.g. Fire Warden duties, Health and Safety, GDPR compliance etc.
- The post holder may be required to work out of normal hours to support departmental or college related events and activities (e.g. courses support).
- The post-holder is responsible for compliance with legal and regulatory requirements in respect of equality and diversity, data protection, copyright and licensing, security, financial and other RCS Eng policies, procedures and codes as appropriate

This job description will be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and may include other duties and responsibilities as may be determined. It is not intended to be rigid or inflexible but should be regarded as providing guidelines within which the individual works.

March 2024

Person specification



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	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A first degree• Postgraduate qualification in archives, museum studies or equivalent experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member of the Archives and Records Association, working towards Registered status
Experience and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant experience of working in an archives setting.• Significant experience of delivering customer-focused archives enquiry and reading room services.• Ability to work independently, applying policies and procedures and using initiative to take decisions appropriately.• Ability to manage a varied workload effectively.• Experience of archival collections care including document handling.• Experience of archival arrangement, cataloguing and data entry.• Experience of contributing to the delivery of engagement activities, for example displays, exhibitions and collections based workshops.• Attention to detail• Analytical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience of working in a corporate or specialist repository archives setting.• Experience of cross-domain working with Library and/or Museums teams.• Knowledge of the history of surgery and/or natural history.
Technical competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High level of computer skills in a Microsoft Office environment.• Experience using spreadsheets and archive collection management systems such as Adlib or CALM.• Manual handling – Ability to undertake manual handling tasks, to include lifting boxes and retrieving / re-shelving boxes and other items from/ to high shelves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of ISAD(G), NCA Rules, ISAAR (CPF) and other international standards in the production of archival descriptions.• Experience using Adlib/Axiell Collections archives management system.



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People and interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• User-focused attitude to service delivery and a commitment to service quality.• A flexible and collaborative approach to duties as part of a small team.• Excellent communication and interpersonal skills and ability to liaise with a wide range of colleagues and professional contacts, both within and outside the organisation..• Ability to promote team values actively, including accepting and promoting agreed standards, encouraging and supporting other team members and supporting management in achieving agreed goals.	
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The post holder will also need to demonstrate the following values:

Collaboration	We embrace our collective responsibilities working collaboratively and as one college.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work together, using our collective expertise and experience to effect positive change• We are open, honest and transparent, straightforward in our language and actions, acting with sincerity and delivering on our commitments• We take our responsibilities to each other, to patient care and to the environment seriously and we act with this in mind across our work
Respect	We value every person we come into contact with at the College as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life, and seek to understand and meet their physical and wellbeing needs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We treat everyone we meet with kindness and integrity and we seek to promote these behaviours in others• We actively seek a range of views and experiences across our work, and we listen to, and make everyone feel, a valued part of the team
Excellence	We aspire to excellence and success. We share learning from our experiences, apply feedback into practice, and commit to continual improvement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work hard to be the best at what we do, recognising and celebrating effort and achievement, and reflecting on our work, so we can learn and improve• We value and invest in research, education and training to drive excellence and put improvements in surgical practice, dentistry and patient care at the heart of our work• We always seek to learn and discover more, valuing knowledge and scientific evidence, basing our decisions on insights, fact and experience

The Royal College of Surgeons of England is an Equal Opportunities Employer. We are open to all talent and we actively ensure that all qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regards to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.



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