

Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Conservator of Life Sciences
Division	Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM)
Department	Oxford University Museum of Natural History
Location	Museum of Natural History, Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PW
Grade and salary	Grade 6 £28,660 - £34,189 per annum
Hours	Full time 37.5 hours per week (Part-time, min 0.6FTE, would be considered)
Contract type	Permanent
Reporting to	Head of Life Collections
Vacancy reference	138754
Additional information	

Overview of the role

A Conservator is required to work across the Life Collections of Oxford Museum of Natural History. The postholder will also coordinate Integrated Pest Management and Environmental Monitoring across the Museum and off-site stores, and contribute to professional training and public engagement programmes.

Responsibilities/duties

General duties

- Liaising with and providing advice and support to museum staff on conservation issues
- Provision of expertise and training to Museum staff, as required
- Dealing with enquiries from researchers and the public about specimen conservation
- Research conservation issues relating to Museum's collections and building
- Deliver public engagement in-line with Museum activities
- Training & supervision of staff
- Record keeping for conservation activities to produce object histories and for reporting purposes (ACE, Research England, etc.)
- Represent the Museum of Natural History on national committees
- Management of COSHH procedures within OUMNH
- Member of the OUMNH Public Engagement Group and the GLAM Conservation Group

Collection duties

- Development of preventative conservation programme for collections space across Life Collections
- Lead and develop collection-based remedial and preventative treatments across Life Collections
- Lead on collections care and conservation policy and planning across collections
- Conservation of spirit collections
 - Including conservation audits and remedial conservation
- Condition reports and advice for loans and teaching specimens
- Systematic improvements to collections stores including:
 - Spot-checking collections
 - Collections audits/assessments
 - Development of improvement projects, including grant applications and volunteer opportunities
- Remedial conservation of life sciences specimens, as required
- Recording keeping of conservation activities in collections (e.g. of specimen repair, fluid replacement records)
- Management of Health & Safety within the Conservation Laboratory
- Management and leadership of conservation projects from project design, through grant applications, to project management and reporting to funders
- Management and training of interns, work placements and volunteers

Integrated Pest Management

Maintain and develop a museum-wide IPM programme including:

- Regular pest trapping, writing and sharing of associated data/reports
- Spot-checking collections and freezing/treating collections as required
- Management and maintenance of freezers
- Management of quarantine spaces
- Develop staff training in IPM and pest identification

Environmental Monitoring

Maintain and enhance the environmental monitoring system including:

- Update and maintain telemetric system
- Calibration for telemetric system and Tiny Tags
- Publish data, produce reports and maintain accessible records, including analysis and interpretation of data
- Develop staff training in use of environmental monitoring software

Public Gallery

- Maintenance of Life Collections on display (including remedial conservation of specimens, cleaning, and general upkeep of display cases)
- Assisting in the development and construction of new displays
- Installation of specimens in new displays (including remedial conservation, repair and preparation of specimens)
- Assist with specimen preparation for exhibitions and ensuring cases are suitable:
 - Ordering and testing construction materials
 - Installation and de-installation

Selection criteria

Essential

- Degree in a relevant field
- Postgraduate qualification in museum conservation (or equivalent experience)
- Track record of biological material conservation
- Experience of the conservation of spirit preserved material
- Good IT skills: in particular MS Office, Adobe products, environmental monitoring software (e.g. Darka Heritage), collections management software (e.g. Axiell EMu)
- Knowledge of best practice across the heritage sector
- Experience of maintaining an IPM programme
- Knowledge of Spectrum standards
- Knowledge of environmental monitoring principles and practice

Desirable

- A demonstrable interest in and enthusiasm for historical natural history collections will be an advantage.
- Attention to detail
- Good organisational and time management skills
- Good interpersonal skills; ability to relate to a wide range of people
- Self-motivated and able to work without close supervision
- Enthusiastic, reliable, and flexible in approach
- Knowledge of COSHH processes

The postholder will be trained in the Health and Safety procedures relating to the safe use of formalin and industrial methylated spirit, and in manual handling in relation to the movement of specimens.

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. Income from external research contracts in 2016/17 exceeded £564m and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 companies created to date. 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

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 Print & Digital. 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 pillars, and internal decoration that has a strong association with the Pre-Raphaelite movement.

The Museum is one of the most visited science museums in the UK with over 750,000 visitors per year, including over 37,000 school visitors, making it the most popular non-national science museum in the UK and the second most visited university museum in the world (behind the Ashmolean). The public engagement team have a national reputation for excellence and innovation, and offer a wide range of programming to a diverse audience base from under 5s through to older learners. The public engagement team works closely with the collections, research and operations teams to deliver the museum's ambitious strategic plan.

The museum programmes a series of contemporary science and society exhibitions. This series aims to connect the research power of academic departments with the University of Oxford with the very large audiences visiting the museum. This connection between research and the public is enabled by the third distinctive ingredient – the multiple award-winning public engagement team of the museum, in partnership with public engagement officers embedded within the departments. Together, these three components provide the University of Oxford with a unique combination of capabilities and opportunities for public engagement in research. Each inter-disciplinary exhibition is based around a theme relating to the science of the natural environment that aims to draw together different strands of research from across the academic divisions, preferably in an area that has societal relevance or controversy, and aims to make complex concepts and datasets accessible to the general public in a balanced but authoritative way.

Earth Collections. There are in excess of 350,000 fossil specimens in the museum, including over 4,700 type and figured specimens. Of particular importance are the Early Palaeozoic invertebrates, the Jurassic vertebrates (including dinosaurs and marine reptiles) and Lyell's Tertiary molluscs. The collections also include around 33,000 minerals, meteorites and gemstones, and 100,000 petrological specimens of worldwide provenance.

Life Collections. Five million entomological specimens, with 30,000 catalogued types, constitute a globally leading entomology collection. They include major historic British collections, and foreign collections covering most orders, but are particularly strong in Old World butterflies, cockroaches and bees. There is also the important Pickard-Cambridge spider collection. The other zoology collections contain an estimated 300,000 specimens, including over 1,000 type and figured specimens. Most important are the worldwide collections of mammals, birds, and crustaceans, and internationally significant collections of other marine invertebrates. The Life Collections include historically and scientifically important material collected by the Tradescants, Darwin, Wallace and Livingstone. Only a small part of the collections is on public display in the museum court, and the majority of specimens are held in a variety of onsite and offsite stores.

Print & Digital. The archives contain internationally important material relating to the development of natural history, particularly geology and entomology, from the Enlightenment through the 19th century and into the 20th.

Current research within the museum includes is centred on four themes: animal origins, arthropod evolution, digital morphology, and heritage, culture & society. Related collections-based research is also undertaken in the nearby Department of Earth Sciences (www.earth.ox.ac.uk), the Department of Zoology (www.zoo.ox.ac.uk) and the School of Archaeology (www.arch.ox.ac.uk).

The collections are intensively used by the UK and international research communities, and in a typical year the Museum lends 5,000-9,000 objects to global institutions for research, whilst receiving 100 research visits and answering 450-500 research enquiries.

For more information please visit: <http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk>

Gardens, Libraries and Museums Division

GLAM comprises the Bodleian Libraries, four museums (Ashmolean, History of Science, Natural History, and Pitt Rivers), and the Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum. These are the major collections of the University and comprise one of the finest groups of university collections anywhere globally, collectively attracting over 3 million visitors per year. Whilst in their own way they provide services to the academic community (and others), they are also directly engaged in the academic endeavour of the University, including research and teaching.

The academic departments of the University are divided into four divisions: Humanities; Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences; Medical Sciences; and Social Sciences. The collections as a group have strong connections with all of the academic divisions.

For more information please visit: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/glam/>

How to apply

Before submitting an application, you may find it helpful to read the 'Tips on applying for a job at the University of Oxford' document, at www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/supportandtechnical/.

If you would like to apply, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously. Please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will also 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

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

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

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 departments.

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)

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk. Further help and support is available from [www.ox.ac.uk/about the university/jobs/support/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/support/). To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will be notified of the progress of your application by automatic emails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** regularly to ensure that you receive all emails.

Important information for candidates

Pre-employment screening

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This will include right-to-work, proof of identity and references. We advise all applicants to read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at:

www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an employer justified retirement age for all academic and academic-related posts (grade 6 and above), for which the retirement date is the 30 September immediately preceding the 68th birthday. The justification for this is explained at:

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/revisedejra/revaim/.

For **existing** employees any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/revisedejra/revproc/

There is no normal or fixed age at which **support staff** in posts at **grades 1–5** have to retire. Support staff may retire once they reach the minimum pension age stipulated in the Rules of the pension scheme to which they belong.

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

Training and Development

A range of training and development opportunities are available at the University. Further details can be found at www.ox.ac.uk/staff/working_at_oxford/training_development/index.html.

For research staff only: Support for Research Staff

There is a particularly wide range of support for career development for research staff. Please visit: www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers to find out more.

Pensions

The University offers generous occupational pension schemes for eligible staff members. Further details can be found at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/epp/pensions/pensionspolicy/.

Information for international staff *(or those relocating from another part of the UK)*

A wealth of information is available on the University's International Staff website for staff who are relocating to Oxford from abroad, at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/international/.

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The Newcomers' Club is aimed at helping partners of newly-arrived visiting scholars, graduate students and academic members of the University to settle in and to meet people in Oxford.

Transport schemes

The University offers a range of travel schemes and public transport travel discounts to staff. Full details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/ourservices/travel/.

University Club and University Sports Facilities

The University Club provides social, sporting and hospitality facilities. It incorporates a Club bar, a cafe and sporting facilities, including a gym. See www.club.ox.ac.uk for all further details.

University staff can use the University Sports Centre at discounted rates, and have the chance to join sports clubs. Please visit www.sport.ox.ac.uk/oxford-university-sports-facilities.

Childcare and Childcare Vouchers

The University offers quality childcare provision services at affordable prices to its employees. For full details about the services offered, please visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/. **NB: Due to the high demand for the University's nursery places there is a long waiting list.**

The University also offers nursery fee payment schemes to eligible staff as an opportunity to save tax and national insurance on childcare costs. Please visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare.

Disabled staff

The University is committed to supporting members of staff with a disability or long-term health condition and has a dedicated Staff Disability Advisor. Please visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/staff for further details.

BUPA - Eduhealth

Bupa Eduhealth Essentials private medical insurance offers special rates for University of Oxford staff and their families www.eduhealth.co.uk/mini-site/.

All other benefits

For other benefits, such as free entry to colleges, the Botanic Gardens and staff discounts offered by third party companies, please see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/benefits/.