

JOB DESCRIPTION

Vacancy reference:	SRF43205
Post Title:	Curator of University Art Collections
Grade:	Grade 7
School/Department:	University Museums and Special Collections Services
Reports to:	Head of Curatorial and Public Engagement, Associate Director, UMASCS
Responsible for:	Collections Officer

Purpose

To be responsible for promoting, caring for and developing the University of Reading's Art Collection as a research, teaching and public collection. In consultation with colleagues, the Curator will ensure the art collections contribute as fully as possible to programmes linked to the University's strategies for teaching, research, and cultural engagement, including loans and other forms of exhibition and display. One of the key development priorities for the University Art Collection connects to the University's Public Art Programme. The post-holder will play a leading role in managing this programme. They will use their professional expertise to inform the commissioning process, including brief design and artist selection, in accordance with identified priorities in the Art Collection Development Policy. They will maintain oversight of commissions during development and delivery, with responsibility for management and promotion of permanent artworks produced as part of the University Art Collection.

Main duties and responsibilities

- To be responsible for the collections' management of the University art collections to Spectrum 5.0 standards, including all strategy, policies and procedures, with a view to achieving accreditation within the agreed timescale (the collection currently holds Working Towards Accreditation status).
- To lead on collections development for the Art Collection, in accordance with the Art Collections Development Policy, and advise on fine art acquisitions across University collections.
- To promote and support access to the University Art Collection for use in University teaching and learning (including developing and/or delivering collections-based sessions in collaboration with academic colleagues) and to support the Collection's use in research or other functions linked to the University's strategies for teaching, research, and cultural engagement.
- To act as a standing member of Public Art Steering Group with input into the Public Art Programme's brief design, and artist selection and oversight of project development and delivery. The Curator will be responsible for management and promotion of physical artworks produced via the Public Art Programme on an ongoing basis as part of the University Art Collection.
- To develop and deliver plans for effective audience engagement with the Art Collection, both physical and online via the Collection's website and social media channels.
- To curate temporary exhibitions, including via external partnerships and loans.
- To be responsible for developing and implementing effective strategies that provide public access to the collection through a programme of display that will include continuing the redisplay of major university buildings, such as the Main Library, and to identify suitable spaces across the University campuses for the promotion and display of the Collection.

- To lead on the development of the Collection and its activities including for acquisitions, project work and audience development activity through regular applications to grant giving bodies and with network of private supporters.
- To oversee the operation of the Art Collection Study Room, in co-ordination with the Collections Officer.
- To undertake and contribute to any other curatorial duties and UMASCS' programmes deemed necessary and reasonable by the Director of University Museums and Collections Services.

Supervision received

Senior UMASCS colleagues

Supervision given

Line manager of Collections Officer

Contact

Contact with colleagues and students in academic schools and departments, the University Library and other University services and administration, members of the public and external institutions, researchers, academics and students

Terms and conditions

Full time post

This document outlines the duties required for the time being of the post to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list and the line manager may vary duties from time to time which do not change the general character of the job or the level of responsibility entailed.

Further particulars

University of Reading Art Collection

The University of Reading Art Collection comprises around 1000 works of painting, drawing, sculpture and graphic art, including many pieces of national and international significance. Based at the former St Andrews Hall, alongside the Museum of English Rural Life and University's Special Collections, we host visitors by appointment in our dedicated Art Collection Study Room and works from the collection are on public display across the campus. For more on the University of Reading Art Collection, visit <https://collections.reading.ac.uk/art-collections/>

One of the key development priorities for the University Art Collection connects to the University's Public Art Programme. The University is committed to commissioning high quality public art on campus, and on

other spaces linked to the University, supported by a 1% contribution from major capital projects (construction projects with a value of over £1m).

University Museums and Special Collections Services (UMASCS)

UMASCS is part of the University Library and Collections Service (ULCS) whose other constituent unit is the University Library with whom there is close collaboration and some joint working.

UMASCS is based at St Andrew's Hall, which houses the Museum of English Rural Life and the Special Collections Services, situated at the University's London Road campus. In recently re-furbished premises that attracted major funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Service offers excellent research and user facilities for the museum, library and archive collections and a dedicated BS 5454 store, completed in 2006.

UMASCS is responsible for the management of archive and library collections encompassing three Designated collections and other archive holdings built up around areas of specific academic interest to the University of Reading. These include the nationally recognised archive collections of the Museum of English Rural Life, the Samuel Beckett archive and the British book publishing archive.

UMASCS have recently taken on curatorial responsibility for the University of Reading art collection. This includes a selection of commissioned and donated institutional works, material acquired as part of the Museum of English Rural Life or for History of Art teaching purposes, high quality prints and original works that appear to have been acquired from the former Arts Council loan collection, and miscellaneous works linked to former students, colleagues and benefactors.

Date assessed: Sept 2022 KAF

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	School/Department
Curator of University Art Collections	University Museums and Special Collections Services

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Skills Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent oral and written communication skills • IT skills – competence in MS Office (esp. Word and Excel), databases, internet, email, digital assets (e.g. images) • Experience of using collections database systems • The ability to build and maintain highly effective internal and external partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with web content management and design software • Social media
Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good honours degree in a relevant subject (e.g. art, history of art) (first or second class) • Relevant professional qualification (in museum studies) or equivalent work experience/ responsibility at this level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher degree in Art History or a related discipline
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject knowledge relevant to the University Art Collection • Knowledge of computerised documentation • Knowledge of museum conservation and collections care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specialist knowledge of modern and contemporary British art, history and visual culture
Relevant Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with and of cataloguing art collections • Experience of handling artefacts in a museum environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of object-based teaching within a HE setting • Experience of commissioning artworks and working with contemporary artists

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of planning and developing exhibitions and public displays • Experience of object-based teaching with diverse audiences • Experience of supervising volunteers • Experience of developing and delivery of public engagement activity • Experience of managing a budget • Experience of team and project-based working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of preparing bids for external funding
Disposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to high standards of collections management and care • Commitment to excellent user services • Self motivation/self starter • Approachable • Calm under pressure • Accurate and attentive to detail • Ability to work to and meet deadlines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to undertake work in a variety of locations, e.g. in museum stores, office-based environments, and meetings both within and outside the University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid full driving licence

Completed by: KAF	Date: Sept 2022
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