

**Role Title: Conservator**

**Reporting to: Head of Collections Care**

**Full Time Salary: £37,827 per annum**

**Location: Edinburgh**

**Role purpose:**

This is a specialist role, which works at the operational level to support delivery of the Collections Management department’s strategic plans and goals.

Working within the wider Collections Care team, the Conservators are responsible for delivering a programme of specialist treatment to the Library’s physical collections of books, documents, ephemera, and objects to ensure preservation of, and access to, the collections

They also support the Library’s programme of events, exhibitions, and loans, in conjunction with the Conservation Exhibitions Officer and Loans Registrar, and liaison with curators and Public Programming staff.

They work with a wide range of Library staff to ensure that the physical collections are maintained and cared for to required standards while working within the available resources.

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

* provide specialist guidance, assistance, and advice on all aspects of conservation to library staff and readers to ensure that practices and conditions do not present unacceptable risks to collection items
* produce clear and accurate treatment proposals and discuss the details and implications of treatments as appropriate with the Head of Collections Care and curatorial staff with the aim of making good evidence based decisions about treatment strategies
* carry out a range of conservation treatments on a wide range of library collection materials, which will necessitate managing projects and work-flow, assessing and prioritising resources as necessary, and liaising with other team members as required to ensure the smooth working of the team
* undertake surveys, produce condition reports for items from the collections and maintain records of conservation treatments including photographic records
* carry out routine and, if needed, specialist testing and research to determine the most appropriate treatments for collection items
* lead the development and application of innovative treatments for collection items
* prepare items for exhibition by carrying out remedial treatment and mounting as required
* support the programme of loans to other institutions for display by preparing items for transport and display, and by carrying out condition assessments, couriering, installing and de-installing loan items
* support the Library’s in-house digitisation programme by assisting the Digitisation Conservator with survey and treatment work
* maintain and develop skills and knowledge in preservation, conservation and exhibition techniques through continuing professional development and training, and share this knowledge through appropriate channels, including contributions to meetings, conferences, publications, and blogs
* supervise and train other Collections Care staff, project staff, students and interns as required in good preservation and conservation practice
* contribute to a programme of training for collections staff and staff from outside organisations in good practice in handling collection items and in disaster response procedures
* support outreach activities, including visits and tours to the Conservation Studio, in order to promote the Library’s collections care work
* provide support and assistance to the disaster response team in the event of an emergency affecting library materials and carry out remedial action and treatment to damaged items
* comply with Library and departmental guidelines on health and safety, and carry out risk and COSHH assessments
* participate in the Duty Conservator rota, acting as a first point of contact for ad hoc requests for conservation advice and support by carrying out priority interventions required for immediate on-site access such as bolt-cutting

**Core Competencies**

**Delivering Results (Core)** – Take personal responsibility for achieving the right results for the Library

**Customer Focus (Core)** – Understand and, within our capability, meet actual and potential internal and external customers’ needs

**Collaborative Working (Core)** – Working together effectively to achieve common goals through sharing skills, knowledge, and information. Collaborating with others to improve services and reduce costs

**Person Specification:**

**Skills, abilities, and knowledge:**

**Essential**

* Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to explain complex issues to a wide range of audiences and to convey information in an engaging and effective way
* Ability to gather, analyse and present information clearly and accurately for the purpose of recording, planning, and reporting conservation treatments
* Excellent interpersonal skills, with ability to build positive working relationships to engage staff at all levels across the Library and to work effectively with external stakeholders
* Good problem-solving skills, combined with an ability to make evidence-based decisions
* Good general ICT literacy, including familiarity with digital photography
* Ability to work independently without close supervision, to be self-motivating and to act with judgement and initiative
* Organisational ability, with the capacity to deliver planned work to deadlines with the flexibility needed to respond to new demands
* Ability to play a positive role in teams and to motivate and encourage colleagues and other stakeholders
* Detailed knowledge and experience of high-level conservation treatments on book, paper, and related materials
* Awareness of the role of national and research libraries, the needs of their users, and the wider collections care environment, sectoral standards, and ethics
* A degree in a relevant subject or equivalent experience

**Desirable**

* Membership of the Archives and Records Association (ARA) or ICON (Institute of Conservation),
* Icon Accreditation (ACR) or a commitment to working towards this
* driving licence

**Personal qualities**

**Essential**

* Enthusiasm and respect for historical and nationally significant collections
* Strong customer-focus with a desire to achieve consistently high standards of service
* Commitment to supporting the Library’s strategy and vision
* Consistently positive attitudes towards change and innovation

**Experience**

**Essential**

* some experience of working in a conservation or similar role in an archive, library, or similar organisation

**Desirable**

* Experience of working with exhibition and loan of library and archive or similar heritage collections

**Further Information:**

We encourage applications from people who belong to marginalised communities particularly people of colour, those from a working class background, disabled and LGBTQ+ people.

Applications to be submitted via our recruitment site:

[http://www.the Library.engageats.co.uk/Welcome.aspx](http://www.nls.engageats.co.uk/Welcome.aspx)

Applicants are asked to provide a written statement saying how their skills match the person specification and demonstrate the value and relevance of their experience to the post.

**Selection Procedures:**

The applicants who meet the criteria based on the job description and the person specification and who demonstrate this in their written statement will be selected for interview**.**

Please note that the successful candidate will be subject to Basic Disclosure Scotland security clearance.