



TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

Further Particulars for the role of Library Desk Supervisor

March 2026

Further Particulars

Trinity College, founded in 1546 by Henry VIII, is the largest College in the University of Cambridge, with some 700 undergraduates, 300 graduate students, over 180 Fellows and around 350 non-academic staff. With a history that includes Newton and Byron, the College excels academically in the sciences and the arts. It attracts students and scholars from around the globe and provides an environment in which they can flourish.

The Library occupies four buildings, but is run as a single organisation:

- The Wren Library, completed in 1695, houses some 80,000 older books and serves as the reading room for special collections as well as being open to tourists daily
- The College Library is adjacent to the Wren Library and provides around 100 seats for students. Together with a basement store, this building houses more than 200,000 books
- A separate Law reading room provides books and study space for Law students
- The Muniment Room houses the College's Archives, dating from the twelfth century to the present day

The modern manuscripts are catalogued online using AtoM (archives.cam.ac.uk). A fair proportion of our finding aids, in the form of paper lists and card indexes, are, however, not yet online. Historical lists of parts of the College archives exist, but the compilation of a comprehensive catalogue has only recently been begun. This will eventually be presented online using AtoM.

The printed books are catalogued online using Folio as the ILS, as well as in the University's online catalogue, iDiscover, and in appropriate specialist catalogues (ESTC, LibraryHub, etc.). Descriptions of the 1250 medieval manuscripts, catalogued by M. R. James in 1901-3, are available online, and modern manuscripts and archives are catalogued using the AtoM system. The Wren Digital Library provides images of more than 1000 complete volumes, and its continued expansion and development will be a major project for the Library in coming years.

The College Library is open to members of the College between 8 am and 1 am daily in term-time, with slightly reduced hours in the vacation. The Sub-Librarian prepares a rota of library staff and evening supervisors who staff the main desk throughout the opening hours. A self-issue borrowing system has been introduced in recent years.

The Wren Library is open to Fellows, and to visiting researchers applying to consult special materials, from 9 to 5 on weekdays. The study desk can accommodate up to six researchers each day, and is invigilated at all times. The Wren is open to tourist visitors between 12 and 2 on weekdays, and on Saturday mornings in Full Term, and two Custodians are present for this period to oversee the visitors. There are around 35,000 visitors each year during this time, and several thousand more attend separate tours at other times of day, including special interest groups, schools visits and VIP visitors to Cambridge, for whom a visit to the Wren Library is often included as a memorable part of their trip. These tours are generally led by the Sub-Librarian or the Librarian.

The Library's staff comprise the Librarian, Sub-Librarian, a Senior Assistant Librarian, an Assistant Librarian, the Digitisation Services Manager, a Rare Books Cataloguer, a Graduate Trainee Archivist, a Graduate Trainee Librarian, five Library Assistants (full-time or part-time), a Collections Care Assistant the College Archivist and two Assistant Archivist, two Wren Custodians, and there are two part-time Cleaners. In addition, there are a number of Desk Supervisors who cover the Enquiry Desk out-of-hours. We also work with two conservators at the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Job Description

Job Title: Desk Supervisor

Department: College Library

Reports to: Sub - Librarian

Purpose of role: To supervise the Library during extended opening hours. To act as a security presence at the Library entrance, to answer enquiries from Library users, and to assist with any circulation issues. The Desk Supervisors form a team who collectively staff the Library during extended opening hours. Each supervisor is allocated a shift(s) at the start of the term which it is their responsibility to cover; shifts can be covered or swapped where necessary during the term.

Key accountabilities:

- Control access to the Library by confirming that Library users are members of the College and by explaining to any external visitors trying to gain access that the facilities are used by Trinity members only. To admit those who have forgotten their university cards or permitted visitors to Wren.
- Provide assistance with any enquiries from Library users either in person or by phone, including: using the catalogue and finding books, printing and photocopying, provision of stationery items and the key for access to the basement, noting any unresolved issues (including maintenance) for the Assistant Librarians to deal with the next day.
- Provide circulation help to users, including for any items requiring manual issue and checking them on return – (items which are not electronically tagged such as DVDs, board games etc.) and sorting returned books on the shelving trolleys, noting any unresolved issues for attention by the Assistant Librarians.
- Record numbers of Library users during each shift.
- Monitor behaviour of library users, reminding the users of library rules as required (including 'phone use and food), requesting assistance from the Porter's Lodge should there be any unacceptable/unusual behaviour.
- Conduct opening up or closing down procedures (dependent on the shift), by collecting or returning keys to the Porter's Lodge, opening/closing windows and doors, turning power on/off, turn lights on/off, log on/off desk computer, turning photocopier on/off, acting as a fire marshal in the event of a fire alarm (in accordance with College training as provided), ensuring the safety and security of the Library and notifying the Porter's Lodge of any concerns.
- Complete administrative library tasks (typing, book processing, checking of lists) as directed by the Sub-Librarian.
- Greet visitors and direct visitors to the Wren Library where applicable (Saturday mornings only).

The College reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the duties and requirements in the job description, which may be necessary to meet the changing needs of the role or to reflect the latest technology or best practice.

This vacancy is specifically for a term-time shift on Wednesday evenings from 8.30-1.15am.

Person Specification

Essential:

Knowledge and experience

An interest in library service provision

Awareness of the importance of good customer care and a commitment to providing an excellent quality of service to all Library users

Experience of working both in a team and independently

Confident computer user

Personal characteristics

Excellent written and verbal communication skills

Flexible and innovative approach to problem-solving

Ability to prioritise workload and to work under pressure in a busy working environment

Accuracy and attention to detail in work which may be routine and repetitive

Reliability and punctuality

Physically able to lift and carry heavy books/collection items, and moving heavy book trolleys

Desirable:

Qualifications

Educated to A Level or equivalent

Knowledge and experience

Experience of working in a library

Desk supervisor shifts:

During term:

Between 5pm-1.15am on weekday evenings (shifts- 5pm – 8.30pm and 8.30pm – 1.15am), or

Between 9am-1.15am on Saturdays and Sundays (shifts - 9am – 5pm, 5pm – 8.30pm and 8.30pm – 1.15am).

Staff must work a minimum of 3 hours per week or 13 hours per month during term time.

Outside term:

Between 5-8pm on weekdays, and between 9am-8pm on Saturdays and Sundays

Employment Details

Contract Type:	Permanent, starting from w/b 27 April 2026
Rate of Pay:	£13.10 p/h standard £14.34 p/h enhanced (shifts after 8.30pm)
Hours:	Rota basis – please see above
Holiday:	Equivalent to 33 days including 8 public holidays (pro rata for part-time staff).
Probationary Period:	Six months.
Meals:	A meal is provided to any member of staff working more than 6 hours in one day.
Pension Scheme:	A pension scheme, which complies with the requirements of the Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes Regulations for auto-enrolment, will be available after three months' service. All staff will become members unless they choose to opt out.
Private Health Care:	The College provides free health care currently through membership with Aviva. Membership of a dental care scheme is also available. Staff can join the schemes after successful completion of their probationary period, subject to certain limitations. This is a taxable benefit.
Gym:	Membership of the College gym is available for a modest fee. Inductions are compulsory.
Travel:	The College cannot provide car parking for its entire staff, and many use Park and Ride sites or cycle. There is a tax-free benefit allowing you to spread the cost of a new bike, including either a pedal bike or an e-bike, and equipment for it, over 12 months, maximum limits apply.
Employee Assistance:	The College also provides access to a free and confidential telephone and web-based information and support service that puts staff in touch with caring and professional consultants and counsellors.
Sports & Social Club:	The Trinity College Staff Sports and Social Club, run by a committee of staff, offers regular outings to places of interest, and organises functions including a Christmas event.
Health and Safety:	All staff must adopt a responsible attitude towards health and safety and to comply with any procedures as required by the College in order to ensure the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and any other persons that may be affected by their actions. They must be prepared to undertake any training provided in relation to health and safety or which is identified as necessary in relation to their work.

To Apply

Applicants should complete the College application form, explaining their reasons for applying and outlining their suitability for the role with specific examples of how they meet the requirements. Please do **not** include a CV or covering letter. The Equal Opportunities monitoring form should also be included.

Applications should be sent to jobvacancies@trin.cam.ac.uk to arrive no later than 9am on Monday 30 March 2026. Interviews will likely take place on Wednesday 8 April or Monday 13 April 2026.