



## CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



### JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job title</b>	Senior Verger
<b>Location</b>	Christ Church
<b>Department</b>	Cathedral Office
<b>Salary</b>	University Scale Grade 3 Salary £22,681 per annum plus a housing allowance £8,640 per annum.
<b>Hours</b>	37.5 hours per week
<b>Contract type</b>	Permanent
<b>Responsible to</b>	Reports to Operations Manager
<b>Application deadline</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 Noon
<b>Vacancy reference</b>	SV
<b>Additional information</b>	This is a full-time position that cannot be held concurrently with any other substantive post without the explicit permission of the Human Resources Director.  This post is subject to a six-month probationary period.

### Christ Church Cathedral

Oxford's cathedral has a unique dual role in the Church of England. Christ Church Cathedral is the College Chapel as well as the cathedral church for the Diocese of Oxford, and welcomes worshippers from Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and beyond.

The site has been a place of worship for more than a thousand years. A monastery was founded here early in the eighth century by St. Frideswide. Records show Henry I granted a charter to an Augustinian priory in 1122. Although no evidence of the earlier buildings remains, parts of the 12th-century structure are still visible in the Cathedral today.

Wolsey suppressed the priory in 1524 and work began on the building of Cardinal's College – with part of the west end of the church removed to make space for Tom Quad. After Wolsey's fall, the college was re-designated as 'King Henry VIII's College'. In 1546, the priory church became both the cathedral for the newly formed Diocese of Oxford, and the chapel of the new college of Christ Church.

Today, Christ Church is one of the largest of the Oxford colleges and has evolved over five centuries. Its junior members, both undergraduate (over 400) and graduate students (over 200), cover almost all the major academic disciplines in the Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, as do its senior academic staff (around 60). It aims at academic excellence and individual fulfilment in a friendly, tolerant and mutually supportive environment. The head of Christ Church is the Dean, while the College's academic functions are overseen by the Senior Censor. More general information about Christ Church may be obtained at <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral>.



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Christ Church now invites applications from suitably experienced candidates to join the Cathedral team.

### Role of the Senior Verger:

The Senior Vergers and Vergers, working collaboratively together in the Operations team, play a vital part in ensuring the highest standards of delivery to the Cathedral as a house of worship, learning, the arts, and hospitality.

Under strategic direction and leadership from the Operations Manager, this role is to confidently, professionally, and efficiently deliver all practical aspects of the department's expanding portfolio of key operational outputs, including:

- Preparation and running of all events/services
- Welcome duties
- Duty management
- Health & Safety
- Liaison
- Logistics.

The Cathedral is open every day throughout the year from early mornings to late evenings and an operational presence is maintained at all times. The Operations team work flexibly throughout any given week and throughout the year. Covering Sundays, Bank Holidays, Festival days (e.g. Diocesan Services, Christmas and Easter) as duty Verger. The Post-holder must be able to confidently take responsibility for delivery of all services and events.

The expanding range of events at the Cathedral require the Operations team to provide: flexibility, excellent communication, collaborative 'hands on' working, a 'can do' attitude, superb attention to detail, consistent accuracy of delivery, and a keen eye for presenting the building to the highest standards.

Appreciation and acceptance of the wide-ranging and flexible nature of the role and people you'll meet is essential. In return, the Cathedral offers a generous benefits package and the chance to develop new skills.

### **Key Relationships**

The Vergers form the main part of the Operations department and report directly to the Operations Manager. Vergers have day to day key relationships with the Clergy, Precentor, Volunteers & Visitor co-ordinator, musicians, administration and communications teams.

### **Main Duties and Responsibilities (non-exhaustive)**

#### **Preparation and Running of all services**

The post-holder will:

1. Be on duty, as directed by the Operations Manager and, in accordance with the operations rota, cover Sundays, Bank Holidays, festival days (including Christmas and Easter), and other important occasions as specified in the rota policy.
2. In rotation, participate in and run all core services as lead Verger unsupervised including all main Sunday services.
3. Under the direction of the Operations Manager, complete assigned duties and tasks to prepare for all aspects of Cathedral worship assisting colleagues where required according to the 'Verger Routines' manual. Ensure the smooth, consistent and accurate running of services, and consistently 'put away' properly afterwards.
4. Action briefing minutes, and rubric notes for the smooth running of services under the direction of the Operations Manager or Precentor.



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5. Undertake the printing of material such as services booklets, readings, ORDOS, as directed by the Precentor or Liturgy office.
6. When on duty, undertake wardrobe set up (including linen management & dry cleaning) ensuring that correct robes and linens are prepared for clergy and that correct seasonal/festival changes are set up, such as altar frontals and falls etc.
7. Report stock levels and restock approved consumables as required.
8. Set up and operate all staging, AV, lighting, electronics, communication, broadcasting, extra sound equipment etc. as required.
9. Ensure video recording of all sermons and undertake occasional broadcasting of services as directed by the Operations Manager according to the rota (training provided).
10. Liaise with, brief, lead and oversee service volunteers (e.g. stewards, servers) when leading services. Set up any equipment required (e.g. thuribules, coat rails).
11. Ensure donation monies are recorded/stored according to cash handling procedures.
12. Provide stewarding for congregations in the absence of appropriate volunteers.
13. Secure and maintain silverware e.g. Communion plate.
14. Participate in the ceremonial aspects of services, carrying the Verge in procession, and directing clergy, VIP's, guests etc. in services when required.
15. Ensure the service registers are properly completed.
16. Deputise for the responsible Verger in the completion of Baptism & Confirmation registers and cards, weekly evensong readings, missal inserts etc. in their absence.

**Welcome:**

The post-holder will:

1. Be a vital part of the Cathedral community delivering outstanding welcome to all worshippers and visitors equally,
2. Demonstrate, diplomacy, tact and calm at all times as an ambassador for the Cathedral.
3. Be clean, well groomed, and smartly presented in the provided operations uniform at all times, wearing the cassock and gown during all services.
4. Maintain a keen eye and take responsibility for the presentation of the building, minimising clutter and proactively maintaining a tidy workspace free from unnecessary items, furniture, rubbish or technical equipment
5. Brief all visiting clergy and, with direction from the Liturgy Administrator; meet, greet, and brief all visiting choirs when on duty ensuring a positive welcome.
6. Be present for fellowship events (congregational and volunteer) when on duty e.g. receptions, post-service refreshments, coffee mornings, socials etc. as part of the wider congregational



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community and take time to build relationships to foster strong links with partner stakeholders e.g. civic dignitaries, other parishes, diocese etc.

7. Have a concern for the safeguarding, welfare, and working arrangements of colleagues, volunteers, worshippers and others in accordance with established Cathedral policies.
8. Be the first point of resolution for members of the public if complaints are raised, acting in a friendly tactful and helpful manner and, when necessary, referring/escalating an issue to senior managers.
9. Polity clear and close the Cathedral according to the diary ensuring that choir rehearsals are undisturbed.

### **Duty Management:**

The post-holder will:

1. Work shifts flexibly across the week according to their rota. Duty manage the Cathedral, Priory Rooms, Chapter House etc. supervising the building, personnel and security for all activities and acting as House Manager during events (e.g. concerts).
2. Under the direction of the Operations Manager, be responsible for the correct opening and closing as a responsible Cathedral key-holder.
3. Carry out a full sweep of the Cathedral at the start of each shift. Immediately action any areas of concern.
4. When on duty, be present on the Cathedral floor, regularly patrolling the Cathedral ensuring that all chapels, sanctuaries altars and shrines are kept in good order, clean, and clear.
5. Be aware of building systems and report maintenance issues to the Operations Manager.
6. Ensure all info screens are switched on during public opening and displaying correct information.
7. When in charge of services/events: confidently supervise and brief internal and external staff.
8. Maintain and replenish all candle stands throughout visitor opening hours.
9. Ensure items of lost property are stored and logged correctly according to the lost property policy.

### **Health and Safety:**

The post-holder will:

1. Be familiar with and a champion of the Cathedral Health & Safety and, safeguarding policies ensuring that conditions of work and areas accessible to all are kept in compliance for visitors to the Cathedral (community, visitors and children) in line with Chapter policies and as witness of the Gospel message.
2. Work with the Operations Manager to ensure that the Cathedral is kept in safe order, that appropriate action is taken to mitigate against accidents, that hazards are reported and contribute to the understanding and delivery of risk assessments.
3. Be responsible for ensuring the Cathedral is kept in safe working order, spot H&S issues before they occur, monitor H&S issues according to the risk assessments, and take appropriate action. Never assume it's someone else's responsibility e.g. cable covers, trip hazards, etc. and action H&S issues immediately.
4. Be the responsible 'fire marshal' responsible for leading the safe evacuation of the Cathedral, Chapter House, Priory rooms etc. Be responsible for extremely high standards of fire awareness, and the primary first aider (including Physical and Mental Health) when on duty



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5. Lead, manage and respond correctly to all incidents and be knowledgeable about the various different types of likely emergency situations and delegated responsibilities including accident reporting.
6. Undertake manual handling and working at height tasks, ensure all first aid equipment is maintained and stored in accordance with best practice and liaise with the College Nurse on restocks.
7. Comply with College licensing policies as they apply to the Cathedral
8. Ensure all equipment and storage areas are kept tidy and in a safe condition.

**Liaison**

The post-holder will:

1. Liaise on a daily basis with the volunteer and visitor staff to ensure daily activities are carried out seamlessly and to a very high standard, identifying any special visitor groups issues. Meet and greet as required.
2. Attend the Liturgy, Operations, and Verger meetings.
3. Provide briefing to all stewards and volunteers for events with information about services and events and particularly in relation to logistical operations and H&S considerations. Liaise with events staff about opening the Cathedral and any specific event or audience requirements.
4. Liaise with Porters and Custodians regarding daily visitors, special groups etc
5. Support the Operations Manager in the delivery of internal and external events.
6. Be knowledgeable about an event taking place in the Cathedral according to the event sheet and able to answer queries from event stakeholders
7. Attend and contribute to regular department and other planning meetings as required.
8. With the other senior Vergers and the Operations Manager, collaboratively contribute to the updating of the 'Verger Routines' document ensuring that it is kept up to date at all times.

**Logistics:**

The post-holder will:

1. Oversee (as required) concerts, conferences and other miscellaneous extra events as Event Supervisor when on duty as directed by the Operations Manager.
2. Action all practical aspects of an event set up where required on the day including seating, staging, lighting, sound etc. across the Cathedral site (Cathedral, Priory Rooms, Chapter House etc.) and restore back to normal afterwards.
3. Working across the Cathedral, ensure that the Cathedral is set up for large events (liaising with external contractors including audio-visual, staging etc.) and that relevant H&S practices are followed; alerting the Operations Manager to any issues that need addressing, particularly relating to the care of the fabric, liturgical furniture and presentation.
4. Set up and oversee broadcasting equipment during the day e.g. ensuring equipment is secure and not left in public areas.
5. Assist in the delivery of the Cathedral's events programme of performing arts, conferences, hospitality, community engagement and exhibitions, coordinating and participating in the setting up and down of the Cathedral including 'backstage' facilities, green room, etc. according to the function sheet.
6. Ensure that choir rehearsals undisturbed by unnecessary furniture movement.
7. Facilitate access to the Cathedral according to the event sheets for 'get in'/'get out'.



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**Selection Criteria/Person Specification**

Essential

- In sympathy with the ethos and mission of the Cathedral
- Ability to manage the pressure of simultaneous events working as a self-starting/motivated, collaborative, honest, trustworthy and reliable team member with a positive attitude and excellent attention to detail
- Responsible and accountable with the ability to inspire confidence in others.
- Willingness to embrace change, showing a keenness to develop new skills.
- Demonstrates an ability to work with a diverse set of stakeholders with courtesy, professionalism and respect.
- Demonstrates the ability to work in a disciplined and focus approach to work, able to triage workflow, take notes, retain and absorb new information and action requests in a timely manner.
- An effective team player able to give and take instruction/direction, manage expectations and to lead when required.
- Demonstrate an ability to work dynamically, independently, efficiently and flexibly across multiple spaces.
- Physically able to undertake manual handling tasks as required, including Sound Equipment, Howe Chairs, Frontals, Access equipment etc.
- Develop Knowledge of health and safety policies and procedures.
- Experience of similar front-facing roles e.g. customer services, events, guiding etc. in a religious, heritage, educational or tourism environment or demonstrable relevant experience.
- Experience of working with all standard IT software, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- Available to work evenings, Bank Holidays and weekends as necessary for events, openings, talks etc.

Desirable

- Understanding of safeguarding issues and practices.
- Knowledge of networked livestreaming equipment, patching and set up.
- Previous experience as a Verger.
- Experience of live performing arts, event production or running the technical aspects of live events.
- Experience of duty management.
- Experience of working with Livestreaming platforms and using Adobe suite and Artifax.
- Knowledge of the Church of England.
- Understand safeguarding issues and practices.
- First aid and manual handling training.

**Further Particulars**

**The Verger will be a member of Christ Church Cathedral staff.**

**Appointment:** This post is available for an immediate start.



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- Working Pattern** 37.5hrs over 5 shifts per week (not including an hour for Lunch) Monday to Sunday throughout the year according to the rota policy during operating hours.
- The operations rota is set in two-month blocks and shifts/days off are flexible depending on activity levels in the Cathedral, Annual Leave etc. but do follow a predictable weekly baseline pattern.
- Senior Vergers are expected to be present on Wednesdays (meeting day) and Sundays in addition to bank holidays, principle festivals of the church (e.g. Easter, Christmas), and late evenings for concerts. Overtime given as Time off in Lieu
- Training:** Training will be given on the following. First Aid, Fire Marshall, Mental Health, Livestreaming, Adobe, Artifax etc.
- Salary** £22,681 per annum plus £8640 per annum housing allowance with annual non-discretionary increments.
- Annual Leave** 25 days rising to 30 days after 2 years (excluding bank holidays).
- Pension** The successful candidate will be entitled to enrolment in the Oxford Staff Pension Scheme. Further information:  
<https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/epp/pensions/schemes/osps>
- Meals** Lunch is provided free of charge to staff working more than 6 hours per day when the kitchens are open in the staff dining room.
- Probation & Notice period:** During the initial probationary period of six months, notice will be one week. Subject to satisfactory completion of probation, the notice period will be three months.
- 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 appointment at Christ Church Cathedral is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check at enhanced level. Where applicable screening will include:
- Eligibility to work in the UK;
  - Qualifications;
  - References;
  - Criminal record checks via Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The successful applicant will be required to complete the relevant Church of England safeguarding training.

### How to Apply

To apply for this position please complete provide the documentation listed below, no later than the deadline of **12 noon 20<sup>th</sup> of November**. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

Application documents should include:

- A letter of application addressed to the Operations Manager stating your interest in the role, and explaining how you meet the criteria in the Person Specification, set out above, using examples of your skills and experience; and
- A CV, including the names and contact details of three referees. References will be taken up only for the successful candidate.
- The Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.



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Applications should be emailed to [recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk)

If you would like an informal discussion regarding the role, please contact Joseph Denby, Operations Manager at [joseph.denby@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:joseph.denby@chch.ox.ac.uk).

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out in the job description, and applicants should ensure that their applications explain how they meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of their skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependents).

Christ Church is committed to fairness, consistency and transparency in selection decisions. Members of the selection panel will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity, fair selection and the risks of bias. Applications are particularly welcome from black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in College staff.

Interviews for the position are expected to take place on 30<sup>th</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> of December.

### **If you need help**

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact [recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk). All enquiries will be treated in strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

### **Important Information for Candidates**

#### Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to Christ Church as part of the job application process will be used only for the purposes of determining suitability for the post and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the Christ Church Privacy Notice available at: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/privacy-policy>.

Due to the large volume of recruitment that Christ Church administers we are unable to provide feedback to non-shortlisted applicants.

#### Christ Church's policy on retirement

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in non-academic posts have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

#### Equality of opportunity

Christ Church is committed to equality of opportunity. It is our policy and practice that entry into employment and progression within employment will be determined only by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post and the relevant salary scale. No applicant or member of staff will be treated less favorably than another because of their age, disability, ethnicity, marital or civil partnership status, parental status, religion or belief, gender, or sexual orientation.