



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Service Assistant (Apprentice)	Duration	Permanent
Division	Collections	Hours/FTE	1.00 FTE
Dept	Research, NAL and Archives	Salary	Band 7
Reports to	Librarian (Systems and Services)	Direct Reports	No direct reports

Context

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design. Its main library is the National Art Library (NAL), one of the world's foremost art libraries, open to everyone. The Library is responsible for over 900,000 printed and manuscript items, including works collected to exemplify the art and design of the book and publishing. Current acquisitions are around 2,000 books, catalogues etc., 500 subscriptions and a range of full text electronic resources. Holdings also include major bequests of literary and historical books and manuscripts, children's books and the Royal Photographic Society library. The V&A's departmental libraries are included in the catalogue. The NAL also functions as the V&A's curatorial department of the art of the book.

Since its founding, the National Art Library has embraced a spirit of openness, welcoming all users; current users number in excess of 25,000. While serving the museum staff and students is a critical role for the National Art Library, it also supports a diverse array of external users, including students of all kinds, art market professionals, artists, designers and art historians, as well as more general visitors. The library also plays an important role supporting wider V&A programming, contributing exhibitions and displays and serving as a venue for event programming.

In 2021 the NAL and V&A Archives were merged under the V&A Research Institute to create a new department, responsible both for leading and undertaking research and research-led postgraduate programmes, and facilitating and enhancing access to the V&A's archival and library research resources.

Main Purpose of job

This is one of a number of Service Assistant (Apprentice) roles whose purpose is to support all aspects of the operation within the National Art Library. The Service Assistants will work across the two teams in the National Art Library, one focused on developing the collections and maximizing their use for research and storytelling, the other on the delivery of library services to a diverse group of users.

The Service Assistants will work behind the scenes of the library and front of house, interacting with users. They will support the development of the library working under supervision to support the processing of acquisitions and updating the catalogue. They will play an essential part in the delivery of the Department's services to the public, responding to enquiries, retrieving material, preserving and re-storing library items and providing invigilation services in the National Art Library. Service Assistants also undertake clerical and administrative tasks to support the delivery of services.

In short, this is a wide-ranging role in which the incumbents will develop skills in all aspects of librarianship. Whilst learning on the job, postholders will undertake the Apprenticeship in Libraries, Archives & Information Services at either Level 2 or Level 3.

Key Responsibilities

Developing and managing the National Art Library and related collections
Developing understanding of NAL collections management processes
Developing knowledge of NAL collections through day-to-day handling of objects
Supporting the processing of acquisitions as required
Developing knowledge of documentation in the department; working under supervision to undertake data entry and cataloguing as required
Supporting colleagues in ensuring library holdings are held safely
Taking part in the physical reorganization of the collections, including moving stock to new locations or creating additional storage space
Preparing objects for loan and display as required

Supporting audit, retention, storage and disposal projects, including searching for 'Not in Place' books
Deepening knowledge through the utilization of the collections as a research asset
Developing understanding of scholarship in the field of NAL's collections
Supporting the provision of information literacy skills and other training, as required, including monitoring group visits
Ensuring access to collections and knowledge and resources related to the V&A's collections is optimized through an array of onsite and online services and facilities
Working under supervision to deal with enquiries; assisting internal and public access to the collections
Retrieving, delivering and returning to storage library items and objects from the Archives and prints and drawings collection requested by internal and external service users
Participating in onsite information and delivery services on occasion, providing quality front-line reader experience and invigilation as required
Contributing to the development of the digital NAL service as required
Creating reproductions from books and microform material in response to requests from the public
Establishing and nurturing collaboration and partnerships internally and externally
Supporting partnerships needed to expand users' access to knowledge and resources
Developing programming and outreach, and working with colleagues across the museum to ensure that the NAL plays its part in the educating, enriching and enthralling audiences of all kinds
Participating as required in any programming that features any aspects of NAL's collection
Contributing content, as required, to V&A's intranet, website and social media accounts and any other promotional and outreach activity
Innovating services
Understanding museum policies, strategies and priorities; developing awareness of developments and changes in the wider museum community
Understanding the suite and scope of museum projects and public programmes and contributing as required
Team playing and achieving
Assisting with the supervision of any volunteers or interns supporting the NAL to ensure their contribution is focused and recognised
Ensuring familiarity with relevant legislation (Access, health and safety, GDPR, FOI) and committing to good practice and adherence to V&A policy
Undertaking projects or responsibilities as delegated by senior colleagues which will change from time to time

The above job description is intended to be an outline of the duties and responsibilities for this role. This is not exhaustive, and it is likely to change over time. You may be expected to undertake other duties that are commensurate with this role

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Specific	Essential requirements
	Knowledge of, or interest in, libraries and book collections
	Knowledge of, or interest in, the V&A and its collections
	An interest in current technology in relation to information provision
	Demonstrable ability to handle books, prints and other materials confidently and carefully
	Good communication and interpersonal skills including the ability to work well in a team and to give helpful information to a wide range of people
	Basic numeracy and computer literacy; data entry experience
	Time management skills with the ability to prioritise urgent tasks and to work quickly and accurately even under pressure

Core Skills	Basic standard of literacy and ability to perform straightforward numerical/financial transactions
	Experience of communicating clearly, with the ability to adapt your communication style for different groups
	The ability to use MS Office and other relevant IT systems as appropriate for the role
	Demonstrates flexibility and the ability to manage multiple tasks
Behaviours	Respects others' expertise, time, perspectives and contribution.
	Takes responsibility for delivering on actions, achieving high-standards and learning from mistakes
	Open to change , new ideas and suggestions; looks for opportunities for improvement and self-development
	Works with others , including outside their own department, in a collaborative, understanding, and engaging way.
Desirable	Willingness to learn new skills, especially those relating to the preservation and storage of objects
	Knowledge of, or interest in, the V&A and its collections
	Experience of handling works of art/books
	Experience of using word processing packages and/or library catalogues