Assistant to the Bursar

St Peter’s College

St Peter’s College, part of Oxford University, is a thriving and ambitious college engaged in a period of constructive and significant development. We have around 570 undergraduate and postgraduate students, 65 Fellows and Lecturers actively engaged in teaching and research, and 85 administrative and domestic staff. A friendly and tight knit community, St Peter’s is one of the colleges that is most closely integrated into the City centre, within easy reach of shops, restaurants and transport links. For further information see: www.spc.ox.ac.uk

The Role

The College wishes to appoint an Assistant to the Bursar for the forthcoming Michaelmas term. This is a key role in the College, with the quality of the post holder’s administrative, planning and secretarial support essential to the Bursar’s effectiveness across the broad range of his responsibilities.

The Bursar attends all the key College committees as well as Governing Body, so an important element of the job is ensuring that papers, agendas and briefing notes for it and all the associated committees are organised in a timely and efficient manner. The Assistant to the Bursar is the chief conduit through which information flows to members of the College, and co-ordinates the implementation of new initiatives where required.

The post holder will need to become fully conversant with the College’s organisational structure, statutes, policies and procedures, as well as a wide range of external policy initiatives and documents.

In providing high-level secretarial support, the post holder will fully understand the Bursar’s calendar and meeting schedule (within both the College and University, as well as beyond Oxford), and will anticipate and meet the Bursar’s needs.

The post is ideal for someone who is motivated, organised, pro-active, and able to work autonomously in a fast-paced, professional environment.

The post holder will be expected to build and maintain close and effective working relationships at all levels, and especially to build a relationship of trust with the Bursar, Assistant to the Master, and the Fellows’ Secretary.

Strong interpersonal and communication skills are absolutely essential: the post holder will be in regular contact with all College departments, as well as fellows, students, academic visitors, alumni and prospective donors, as well as third parties within the collegiate University and beyond.

The Bursar’s Assistant will also act as Project Administrator for our new major building project.
Specific Responsibilities

Providing high quality administrative support for the Bursar. These duties will comprise, among other tasks:

Administrative support

- Devising, maintaining, and operating effective and efficient administrative systems to support all aspects of the Bursar’s role, both within and outside of the College. Ensuring the Bursar has all the necessary information to prioritise his time and focus his attention appropriately.
- Management of the Bursar’s diary, appointments and travel arrangement.

Communications support

- Acting as the primary contact point between the Bursar, members of the College and external parties. This will require filtering and prioritising enquiries as appropriate, and taking and passing on messages to College members where required.
- Keeping a constant eye on the Bursar’s inbox. Dealing with postal, electronic and telephone communications, dealing appropriately with enquiries, or redirecting as required.
- Drafting responses / correspondence for and on behalf of the Bursar. These will sometimes involve matters requiring confidentiality.
- Managing visitor appointments, welcoming them and arranging facilities for meetings.

Governance support

- Supporting the work of committees or other meetings for which the Bursar attends, preparing and distributing agendas and relevant papers, minute taking, and associated activities.
- Maintaining an awareness of relevant University and Conference of Colleges procedures.
- Provide advice and general direction on process for staff, students and fellows in respect of College activities within the Bursar’s remit.

Other tasks for the Bursar

- Managing confidential information and records.
- Taking minutes or notes for meetings.

Supporting the College’s broader administrative needs. These duties may include:

- Taking administrative responsibility from time to time for various processes that fall across College departments.
- Providing administrative support for specific committees or working groups, maintaining records and communicating decisions to appropriate parties for action.
- Acting as a first point of contact for College enquiries, dealing with some immediately, and directing others to the appropriate people.
- Undertaking ad hoc small projects to support the work of the Bursar and other senior College Officers, including:
- Collating and authoring briefing documents.
- Developing presentation materials in a variety of formats.
Project administration responsibilities, in more detail:

- Providing an effective project administration support function to the Project Manager
- Assisting the Bursar and Project Manager in the preparation of clear, accurate and easily interpreted agendas, supporting papers and reports for the Castle Hill Project Steering Committee
- Responsibility for producing minutes for the Castle Hill House Project steering committee
- Collating and managing project information and contracts using electronic document management systems
- Maintenance of electronic filing systems for technical drawings and all project related information

The role requires significant exercise of discretion, and a proactive approach to work given the sometimes-significant pressures on the Bursar’s time. You will be prepared to work flexibly in relation to the different pressures of the role, and to undertake other duties from time to time as required by the Bursar.

The Person

- A good general level of education
- Significant evidence of previous experience in a high-level administrative role.
- Scrupulous attention to detail.
- Ability to multi-task and prioritise, planning own workload to fit around the needs of the Bursar.
- Ability to take complex minutes and notes accurately.
- Excellent diary management and general organisational skills.
- Experience of committee work, in particular the ability to draft committee agendas, minutes, and related papers.
- Excellent verbal and written English skills, with the ability to draft clear, detailed, and precise briefings and communications.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with demonstrable ability and confidence to engage with people from a wide constituency, both within and outside College.
- Tact, diplomacy, and discretion. The successful candidate must be able to deal sensitively and discreetly with confidential information.
- Ability to use initiative and work largely independently on a self-managed basis, once directed.
- Ability to work well under pressure.
- Excellent office application IT skills, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Willingness to work flexible hours on occasion as work demands.
- Experience of working in an Oxford College or comparable environment (desirable but not essential).

Terms and Conditions

Appointment The appointment will be subject (i) to the provision of an original document which indicates your right to work in the UK.

Salary Appointment will be in the range of £24,000 to £26,500 per annum (pro rata) depending on experience.
Contract: The role is for the period 16th September to 18th December 2019. It is possible that the temporary vacancy that we are seeking to fill becomes a permanent vacancy, which the post holder will be well placed to fill.

Meals: Free lunch is provided in College when on duty, when kitchens are open.

Hours of Work: The post is available on a full-time basis. Full-time administrative staff of the College are expected to work a nominal 35-hour week.

How to Apply:

Applications consisting of a covering letter and CV stating the names and postal and email addresses of two referees, together with a Recruitment Monitoring Form, should be sent by email to the HR Manager, Graham Stowell, at the following address: human.resources@spc.ox.ac.uk.

The College will assume that it can approach referees at any stage of the application process unless candidates indicate to the contrary. Any such restriction should be clearly stated alongside the details of the relevant referee(s).

If candidates prefer to send their application by mail, it should be addressed to:

Graham Stowell
HR Manager
St Peter’s College
New Inn Hall Street
Oxford
OX1 2DL.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is 12.00 noon on Monday 26 August 2019.

Data Protection:

All data supplied by applicants will be used only for the purposes of determining their suitability for the post, and will be held, as defined in the General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the College Policy on Data Protection as amended from time to time.

St Peter’s is an equal opportunities employer.