



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## Further Particulars for the post of Executive Assistant

September 2024



## Letter from the Hiring Manager

**Dear Prospective Candidate,**

Thank you for your interest in the role of Executive Assistant within the Bursary team, here at St John's College, Cambridge. In this candidate information pack we outline the purpose and scope of the role and what we're looking for in a candidate. If you're new to the world of higher education or the University of Cambridge and its colleges, I hope this document will give you a sense of what it's like to work here.

The role will involve supporting me in my role as Senior Bursar (CFO) as well as providing some support to other professionals within the team who manage our investments. It will also involve helping to oversee and manage the flow and execution of business within the team so we run as efficiently as we can. The job will afford an opportunity to become involved with investments of the College (including our work around sustainability and our pathway to 'net zero'), and with College finances and human resources, which are all functions that report into the Senior Bursar role. However, there is a wide range of other things that I am involved in including governance, risk management, supporting the College's fundraising efforts, charitable giving, debating a wide-range of issues with other College Officers, intercollegiate and University committees, and so on, and so there will be plenty of variety. There will also be plenty of opportunity to help improve the way we do things.

If appointed, you will join a friendly team of five in the Bursary, which is co-located with the four person HR team. The Finance team is currently located elsewhere on the main College site but you will have plenty of interaction with them too. You will deal with a large variety of people within the College as well as a lot of external parties including property advisers, investment consultants, fund managers, bankers, lawyers, alumni, bursars at other colleges and University officers.

If the opportunity interests you and you think you have the skills and experience set out in this candidate pack, then we would very much welcome your application

Best wishes,

Chris Ewbank  
Senior Bursar



## An overview of St John's College, Cambridge

### An inspiring place in which to work

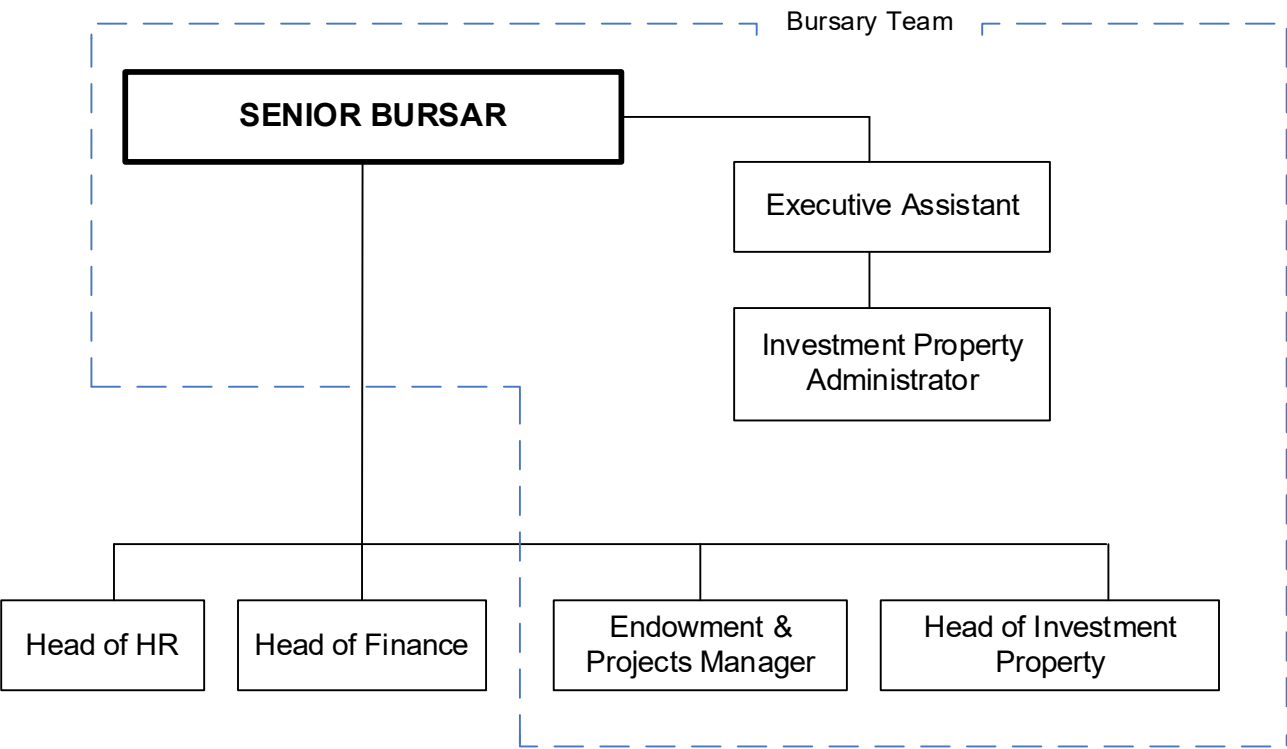
St. John's College was founded in 1511 by Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of King Henry VII. It is one of the largest of the University of Cambridge's 31 colleges and has around 155 Fellows, about 550 undergraduate and 300+ postgraduate students, 250 staff and some 13,000 alumni worldwide. The College is a highly international community with some 20% of its undergraduates, over 50% of its postgraduate students, and many of its faculty coming from overseas.

The buildings and grounds of St John's are a magnificent environment in which to work, but it is the people of St John's who give the place its unique identity and it is a friendly, warm, and welcoming place.

You can read much more about St John's on the College's website: [www.joh.cam.ac.uk](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk).



Bursary Office Organisational Chart



## Job Purpose

- To provide high-level executive and administrative assistance and support to the College's Senior Bursar (CFO), as well as supporting other team members.
- To oversee administrative provision within the Bursary and help to oversee and manage the flow and execution of business within the team.

## Principal Responsibilities

### Executive Administrative Support

- Provide comprehensive executive and administrative support to the Senior Bursar in discharging their portfolio of responsibilities which includes oversight of the Endowment (comprising significant property and securities portfolios, currently valued at c. £790 million), Finance and HR.
- Act as a primary point of contact for the Senior Bursar, developing good working relationships with key individuals, both internal and external.
- Manage the Senior Bursar's diary, work schedule and commitments.
- Proactively manage incoming communications, some of which will be confidential, prioritising action to be taken, answering routine and some other matters on their behalf, and identifying matters that should be forwarded to relevant colleagues.
- Make administrative decisions on behalf of the Senior Bursar in their absence and keep the Senior Bursar apprised of action taken on their behalf.
- Provide some administrative support to the Head of Investment Property and Endowment and Projects Manager in the Bursary team.

### Business Co-ordination

- Maintain oversight of business going on within the Bursary and liaise with colleagues to ensure that business is taken forward and dealt with efficiently.
- Anticipate upcoming issues and priorities, follow-up on actions required, taking ownership of resolving issues where possible, and balancing competing demands and deadlines.

### Meeting support, research, projects and travel

- Act as secretary or coordinator for relevant committees, preparing agendas, briefing notes and presentations, and managing the collation and distribution of papers.
- Attend meetings (with or without the Senior Bursar), take part in discussions, take minutes, track and follow-up on actions.
- Manage projects, researching, collating and presenting information, analysing data and liaising with other participants.
- Organise events such as meetings, seminars, etc. and manage arrangements for visitors.
- Manage travel arrangements and itineraries, booking trains/flights, etc.

### Investments

- Assist with the administration of the College's investments.

- Maintain an internal database of all investments and ensure up-to-date information is available on them, and organise and maintain electronic and hardcopy records for all investments.
- Assist in dealing with routine correspondence and enquiries from the College's investment consultant and investment managers, resolving queries and providing information, and monitoring capital call notices.
- Assist in the management of the College's trust funds, including monitoring that new fund creation procedures are followed and that information on new funds is collated.
- Develop a good knowledge and understanding of the College's property investment records (which comprise a 'terrier', a property database, the Bluebox property management software and ARCGIS digital mapping) to facilitate oversight of the Investment Property Administrator's work, substituting for them as necessary, and identifying organisational improvements.
- Assist with administrative matters relating to the College's insurances.

### **Risk Management**

- Oversee and update the College's operational and strategic risk registers, based in excel or a specialist software package.
- Liaise with College Officers and department heads to ensure that risk register entries are regularly reviewed and kept up-to-date.

### **Office administration**

- Maintain and organise the Bursary filing and administrative systems and look at ways these can be improved and modernised.
- Provide office management support.
- Prepare and manage budgets, agree them with Finance and review management accounts.
- Line manage the Investment Property Administrator (though much of their day-to-day work will come from the Head of Investment Property).

The accountabilities of the role are wide-ranging and the post-holder will have to continually assess current and prospective work to ensure that priorities are addressed and deadlines, often months ahead, are properly taken into account in work planning.

This outline of key responsibilities is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of responsibilities. The College is constantly evolving and the nature of the role may evolve and be adapted as required to meet the ongoing needs of the College.

## Person Specification

Set out below are the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge that are the minimum essential requirements for the role or are desirable additional attributes.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree/Level 6 qualification or equivalent level of relevant experience</li> <li>Significant relevant work experience gained in a senior administrative role</li> <li>Strong IT skills including Microsoft Office (and including intermediate Excel skills), databases and the use of technology to maximise efficiency, with the ability to master new IT packages/ databases as required</li> <li>Experience in reviewing, developing and improving administrative processes and systems</li> <li>Experience of researching and writing reports, presentations, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PA or Executive Assistant experience</li> <li>Experience with, or interest and ability to learn about, investments</li> <li>Experience of managing one or more administrative staff</li> </ul>
Skills, Abilities and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent organisational and forward planning skills, able to anticipate and react flexibly and prioritise competing demands, with a strong sense of personal responsibility</li> <li>Proactive, able to work using own judgement and initiative</li> <li>Ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines</li> <li>Excellent verbal and written communication skills with a strong command of written English</li> <li>Strong numeracy, accuracy and attention to detail</li> <li>Analytical and enquiring mind to challenge and resolve problems and support continuous improvement</li> <li>Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build rapport with others</li> <li>Discretion and diplomacy in dealing with confidential information and sensitive issues</li> <li>Good teamwork and team management skills</li> </ul>	

## Terms & Conditions

Post: Executive Assistant

Length of post: Permanent

Hours of work: 36.25 hours per week, with flexibility on exact working hours. There may also be flexibility to work on a substantial part-time basis of at least c.25 hours per week (c. 0.7FTE) and to work reduced hours during University vacation periods.

Salary: Between £41,944—£47,208 p.a. (depending on experience), pro rata for part time

Location: The role is based primarily at St John's College in Cambridge, though, there may be some opportunity to work remotely for a limited portion of the hours.

Contractual benefits include:

- Membership of a Defined Contribution Pension Scheme after a qualifying period
- Additional Christmas salary payment
- Annual leave of 36 working days (inclusive of Bank Holidays) pro rata for those not working a 5-day week

Other benefits include:

- Free lunch in the College's Buttery Dining Room (subject to a monetary limit)
- Access to a private healthcare scheme currently provided by BUPA after a qualifying period
- Access to a 'cash plan' healthcare scheme currently provided by Simplyhealth which provides some financial assistance towards the cost of everyday health expenses such as sight tests or dental check-ups after a qualifying period
- Free car parking close to the College (subject to availability)
- Free use of an on-site Gym
- Free life cover

Read more about the benefits of working at [St John's](#).

The appointment will be subject to an initial probationary period of nine months during which the appointment may be terminated by one month's notice on either side. Following the successful completion of the probationary period, the period of notice is three months on either side.



## Recruitment Process

The deadline to apply is **9.00 am on Wednesday 30th October 2024**.

**We will be interviewing candidates as applications come through and therefore reserve the right to close this vacancy early if a suitable candidate is found. Early applications are encouraged.**

Please include in your application:

- A fully completed application form
- A covering letter summarising why you believe yourself to be suitable for the role and why the role appeals to you
- A full and up to date c.v.

Applications should be sent:

by email to: [recruitment@joh.cam.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@joh.cam.ac.uk)

or by post to: HR Department, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP

In applying for this role, you will provide personal data which the College will process in accordance with its data protection obligations and its Data Protection Policy. Further information is available on the College website (<https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/data-protection>)

**Bursary Office  
St John's College  
Cambridge CB2 1TP  
United Kingdom**

Registered charity number 1137428

