ACCOMMODATION OFFICER

General Background: (see also www.fitz.cam.ac.uk)

Fitzwilliam College is an open, friendly and diverse academic community of some 900 people, including undergraduates, graduates, Fellows and staff, set in outstanding grounds close to the University sites in West Cambridge and within easy reach of the University Library and faculty sites. It is one of the 31 colleges of the University and is a large community with around 475 undergraduates, 275 graduate students, 55 Fellows and around 120 staff.

Dedicated to the pursuit of education, learning and research, the main activities of the College include the recruitment of undergraduate and post-graduate students from all over the world, provision of small group teaching for undergraduate students, and all of the diverse activities involved in the provision of a supportive and enriching learning environment for all its members. The College maintains close relationships with a community of over 10,000 alumni, who give vital support financially, and in other ways. Supporting its educational activities, Fitzwilliam runs a thriving conference and catering business with an annual turnover of approximately £1.8m, hosting over 150 conferences a year, many of which are residential; academic related functions are a regular feature of College life during Term.

The College estate consists of the main site between Storey’s Way and the Huntingdon Road, comprising 392 study bedrooms (of which 174 are fully en-suite), the main Hall building and the Grove which provide the social facilities of the College, a modern 250 seat Auditorium and smaller 50 seat theatre along with a number of seminar rooms and teaching facilities. Fellows are provided with office space, and a small number live in rooms within the College. There are three squash courts and a student gym on site.

The remainder of the accommodation (240 rooms for post-graduates and undergraduates) is provided in 25 houses and hostels, each housing between 4 and 37 students, which are (with one exception) within a short walking distance from College. The Master’s Lodge, the playing fields, the College boathouse and two commercial properties (which are under professional management) complete the estate.

Accommodation Officer

The Accommodation Officer has administrative responsibility for the allocation of all residential rooms in College and its external properties. The post-holder reports directly to the Accommodation and Housekeeping Services Manager and is expected to collaborate and have a close liaison with the Tutorial Office, Accommodation and Housekeeping, Maintenance, Accounts and the Porters departments. The post-holder works in the Accommodation and Housekeeping office environment and has frequent interaction with students, Fellows and other members of staff.

The pastoral support given to all types of student through the tutorial system is a core characteristic of the Cambridge University system. Each student is allocated a Tutor, normally a Fellow of the College, who is responsible for the ensuring that all the available support that can help a student to succeed at Cambridge is provided. The Accommodation Officer, working closely with the Tutors and Tutorial Office plays a vital role with the Tutors and Tutorial Office in making sure that living conditions are optimised for each student.
The post-holder is also responsible for ensuring that the income from the rooms stock is maximised through visitor lettings, and may also become involved in property transactions, such as renting additional accommodation if needed, from time to time. A full job description is attached.

The College has just conducted a review of the accommodation management software and, after an extensive evaluation, is in the process of transferring to a system provided by Accurate Solutions Ltd to manage room allocation. The successful candidate will therefore be joining the College at a pivotal moment, and will have the opportunity ensure that the College gets best use out of the new system.

Required Skills and Experience

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate the following skills and experience:

- Excellent organisational skills, including the ability to effectively manage a large volume of email correspondence
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to be persuasive, patient, tactful and diplomatic, even under pressure
- A strong service ethic, combined with the empathy necessary to interact with students and tutors in sensitive situations
- Excellent office skills, with a high level of computer literacy and familiarity with Microsoft Office especially Excel, and maintaining and updating online information
- Familiarity with accommodation management systems or willingness to learn
- Ability to cope with a varied and demanding workload
- Ability to work systematically and accurately with great attention to detail at all times
- Experience of property management, including lettings, would be an advantage

Conditions of Employment

The Accommodation Officer is a full-time post, working 36.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday, with an unpaid lunch break of half an hour each day. Exact working times will be mutually agreed with the successful candidate. The Accommodation Officer will be appointed for an initial probationary period of six months, after which notice of one month on either side may be given.

The salary range for this position is £25,354 to £27,031 per annum, according to skills and experience. The College also offers annual leave entitlement of 33 days (including public holidays), enrolment into a contributory Group Personal Pension scheme, a discretionary bonus scheme, free lunch on duty and car parking on site subject to availability.

Application procedure

Further particulars and an application form are available to download from:-
www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/vacancies or by telephoning Sarah Rowland Jones on 01223 761050. Applications should reach Mrs Sarah Rowland-Jones, HR Officer, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge CB3 0DG, e-mail hr@fitz.cam.ac.uk not later than midday on Monday 13 January 2020. Applicants should provide a covering letter and a completed application form. Interviews are planned to take place on Friday 24 January 2020.

The College values diversity and is committed to equal opportunities in the recruitment of its Fellows, students and staff.

In applying for this vacancy, you will provide personal data which the College will process in accordance with its data protection obligations and its Data Protection Policy: https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/about/official-information/data-protection
Job Description

Job Title: Accommodation Officer

Reporting to: Accommodation & Housekeeping Services Manager

Department: Accommodation and Housekeeping

Purpose of the role

The Accommodation Officer has administrative responsibility for the allocation of all residential rooms in College and its external properties with close liaison with the Tutorial office, Accommodation and Housekeeping, Events, Maintenance, Accounts and the Porters departments.

Main Duties

1. Act as administrator of the accommodation management system
   • To authorise user permissions for set up and maintenance by IT
   • Train relevant staff members across all departments on the use and understanding of the system
   • To continually update system with contract changes and room movements
   • Maintain room attributes with assistance from Colleagues in Accommodation & Housekeeping
   • Identify improvements required to the system and liaise with the system provider, when required
   • Supply overview of accommodation availability as required by other college staff
   • Liaising with tutorial office and students

2. Manage accommodation
   • Maintain accurate current and future view of the accommodation status across the College and the College offsite accommodation.
   • Assist in the annual room inspection process
   • Confirm provisional accommodation reservations made by departments and/or visitors.
   • Maximise income from the accommodation stock by managing letters to academic visitors
   • Liaise with Tutorial and Graduate Officers on specific requests from students that relate to financial, medical and welfare aspects, which directly impact on their accommodation needs. Provide the administrative support for these requests/changes
   • Assist the Housekeeping Manager with the running of ROTA (Request for Out of Term Accommodation)
   • Support the Tutorial Office with graduate students’ summer vacation room movements and leaving dates to enable rooms to be let to visitors
   • Co-ordinate the movement of graduate students into their balloted rooms for the start of the new academic year
   • Support the Tutorial Office with planning room ballots and allocate rooms according to the results.
   • Preparation and management of student room contracts

3. Manage visitors
• Maximise accommodation yield at all times
• Identify availability of rooms for visitors
• Receive contact from departments/fellows/alumni and adhoc visitors and respond swiftly
• Respond efficiently to high volume of visitor enquiries during the summer months in order to secure bookings
• Allocate rooms, communicate rents and ensure rental agreements signed.
• Close liaison with Housekeeping Department over visitor arrivals
• Liaise with accounts regarding visitor invoices
• Communicate relevant details to the accommodation and housekeeping, porters and accounts departments about the relocation of visitors as required.
• Make sure visitor has left and signed key back.

4. Planning and communication
• Assess room availability for the forthcoming academic year in the light of undergraduate and graduate student admissions cycles
• Propose and advise the Bursar and Domestic Bursar in identifying and securing additional accommodation as needed.
• Assess room availability for conference use in the vacation periods.
• Liaise with the Bursar on individual room rents.
• Liaise closely and constantly with the Tutorial and Conference offices to keep abreast of changes
• Regular and ad hoc reporting of room usage to the Bursar (for College Committee)
• Regularly assist Housekeeping staff with sending communications to students via the accommodation management system on matters relating to accommodation
• Assist the Bursar/Domestic Bursar in completing surveys on room information
• Responding to issues raised by tutors and students
• Responding to requests from students for landlord references, confirmation of residency

5. Compliance
• To comply at all times with the requirements of the College Health and Safety policy and positively contribute to maintaining a safe working environment.
• To maintain the highest standards of confidentiality in line with College policies and the Data Protection Act 2018.
• To monitor compliance with regulatory standards applicable to student accommodation, and work with the Accommodation and Housekeeping Services Manager and the Domestic Bursar to ensure that the requisite standards are implemented.

6. Other responsibilities
To undertake any other reasonable duties arising as directed by the Accommodation and Housekeeping Services Manager or Domestic Bursar.
## Person Specification

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**Skills, Experience**

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- Excellent administrative skills with great attention to detail and a strong ability to prioritise
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**Knowledge, Experience**

- Experience of the College/University environment
- Experience in a similar role (e.g. student accommodation, hospitality or facilities management)
- Relevant experience of commercial property management and regulations associated with the Housing Act 2004
- Negotiation skills
- Relevant professional qualifications
- Experience of working on projects

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