

Job Description

Job title	Archives and Local Studies Assistant
Directorate	PLACE : Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Division	Culture and Community
Range	MPR 3
Reports to	Archives Centre Manager

Main purpose of the job:

To provide an effective Archives and Local Studies Services through research, retrieval and assisting the public in making full use of the resources held at Medway Archives Centre and to deal with written, telephone, and face to face enquiries relating to Medway's history and heritage.

To assist with the day to day running of the Medway Archives Centre and to deliver and assist with events as required. To retrieve materials for researchers and carry out research on a wide range of archives and local studies topics. To maintain a strong working knowledge of local history, people, and events relating to Medway.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [vision and values](#) of the Council.

Accountabilities and outcomes:

Deliver a broad range of frontline customer service activities for the Medway Archives Centre and other council services, and respond to customer enquiries from a diverse range of residents and visitors across a range of formats in order to ensure that customers can access archives with a consistently high level of service.

Provide a vibrant, welcoming and open research service, including carrying out remote researching, retrieving and preparing relevant materials for appointments (including greeting, registering, and invigilating researchers) in order to ensure both access to and safeguarding of archive materials.

Deliver a wide range of archives and local studies events and outreach activities for all ages and groups in order to encourage public engagement with archives and local studies.

Support senior colleagues in the care of the collections held at Medway Archives through carrying out basic preservation and repackaging work in order to ensure the continued integrity of the archive collections.

Carry out retrievals of archive materials utilising specialist working at height equipment and appropriate manual handling techniques in order to ensure the integrity of archive material when carrying out retrievals.

Maintain a working knowledge of current developments in the heritage field relating to Archives collections to ensure that a high level of customer service is offered to all Archives customers.

Levy fees and charges from the public and carry out banking and other financial processes with a high degree of accuracy in order to ensure that payments for council services are rendered accurately and correctly.

Publicise and actively promote Medway Archive Centre services, collections and stock in order to promote the service and expand the customer base.

Assist in the training of new staff and volunteers.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Organisation:

This role reports to the Archives Centre Manager.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees and volunteers.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

Working Style:

FIXED - The post holder will be permanently based at Medway Archives Centre, although they may be expected to work at any location across Medway.

Person specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

Qualifications

Level A

- Emergency Salvage training
- Hugo Lift training
- A good standard of general education with a minimum of 5 GCSEs or equivalent level 2 qualification, including Maths and English at grade 4-9
- Two A levels or equivalent level 3 qualification in relevant subjects i.e. History, Politics, or Humanities

Level B (in addition)

- Continued CPD to support service delivery and expansion

Level C (in addition)

Knowledge

Level A

- Basic knowledge of how to conduct research
- Working knowledge/experience of an archive or local authority archive
- Working knowledge of copyright and data protection
- An awareness of confidentiality, GDPR Legislation and Data Protection procedures.
- An awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion

Level B (in addition)

- Broad knowledge of what resources are available in an archive
- In depth knowledge of the history, people, and places of the Medway Area

Level C (in addition)

- In depth knowledge of the running of a local authority archive and local studies centre sufficient to deputise for the Medway Archives Centre Manager in their absence
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Experience

Level A

- Experience of working in an archive or heritage workplace or other customer led environment (e.g. retail, doctors' surgery, hospitality)
- Experience of researching and writing to a degree level

Level B (in addition)

- Demonstrable experience of handling an archives/local studies enquiry from beginning to end (i.e. booking customers or assisting with use of the catalogue)
- Demonstrable experience of opening and closing Medway Archives Centre including opening and closing the till and securing the premises.

Level C (in addition)

- Demonstration of specialising in a particular aspect of archives and/or local studies (i.e. digitization, conservation, or area of knowledge, etc)
 - Experience in handling sensitive issues with care (i.e. death or adoption)
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Skills

Level A

- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel, Teams and Outlook
- Able to use judgement and creativity to assess situations and solve varied problems and/or develop short term plans
- Able to work at height and to manoeuvre archive material using the correct equipment with assistance if required as a reasonable adjustment.
- Able to assist the Medway Archives Centre Librarian in the execution of events
- Able to carry out simple retrievals in both the strong room and search room
- Able to list and index items per the requirement of the archivist and/or the librarian
- Good team working skills
- Able to research and write to an undergraduate degree level
- Able to carry out tasks requiring a high degree of accuracy such as levying fees and charges and banking.

Level B (in addition)

- Able to write with a high degree of accuracy and engagement for a variety of audiences
- Able to convey complex ideas and concepts both written and verbally
- Able to assist the Medway Archives Centre Librarian in the planning of events
- Able to identify items that may be unfit for production and/or be subject to a closure period and refer to the archivist.
- Able to instruct others on how to carry out family history research
- Able to invigilate volunteers and researchers on the handling of archives

Level C (in addition)

- Able to run an event in the absence of the Medway Archives Centre Librarian
- Able to deputise for senior staff in the event of an emergency (i.e. sickness)
- Able to provide training, support and guidance to colleagues at all levels.
- Able to identify tasks that could be carried out by volunteers
- Able to identify items that are unfit for production or subject to a closure period
- Trusted ability to write accurately and for a public audience (i.e. for social media, web, or for other places of public consumption)
- Able to recognise potential pests and mould
- Able to train volunteers and researchers on the safe handling of archives.
- Adopts a proactive, positive, enthusiastic approach to customer service, anticipating customer need and acting beyond main scope of role to assist customers
- Actively reviews and reflects on work output of the team and identifies opportunities for service improvement
- Actively seeks out opportunities for growth, development and skills improvement
- Prioritises customer experience improvement, identifying ways to improve service offers and making recommendations to senior officers for implementation

