



University of Oxford Department of Computer Science

Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Personal Assistant to the Head of Department of Computer Science
Division	MPLS
Department	Computer Science
Location	Wolfson Building, Parks Road, Oxford.
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £27,057-£32,277 p.a.
Hours	Full Time
Contract type	Permanent
Reporting to	Professor Michael Wooldridge
Vacancy reference	119724

Introduction

The University

The University of Oxford is a complex and stimulating organisation, which enjoys an international reputation as a world-class centre of excellence in research and teaching. It employs over 11,000 staff and has a student population of over 22,000.

Our annual income in 2013/14 was £1,174.4m. Oxford is one of Europe's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities: income from external research contracts exceeds £478.3m p.a., and more than 80 spin-off companies have been created.

Oxford is a collegiate university, consisting of the central University and colleges. The central University is composed of academic departments and research centres, administrative departments, libraries and museums. There is a highly devolved operational structure, which is split across four academic divisions, Academic Services and University Collections and University Administrative Services. For further information, please see:

www.ox.ac.uk/staff/about_the_university/new_to_the_university/structure_of_university.

For more information please visit <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about>

The Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences Division (MPLS)

The Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division is one of the four academic divisions of the University. Oxford is widely recognised as one of the world's leading science universities. The disciplines within the MPLS Division regularly appear at the highest levels in world rankings. In the results of the six-yearly UK-wide assessment of university research, REF2014, the MPLS division received the highest overall grade point average (GPA) and the highest GPA for outputs. We received the highest proportion of 4* outputs, and the highest proportion of 4* activity overall. More than 50 per cent of MPLS activity was assessed as world leading.

The MPLS Division's 10 departments and 3 interdisciplinary units span the full spectrum of the mathematical, computational, physical, engineering and life sciences, and undertake both fundamental research and cutting-edge applied work. Our research addresses major societal and technological challenges and is increasingly focused on key interdisciplinary issues. We collaborate closely with colleagues in Oxford across the medical sciences, social sciences and humanities, and with other universities, research organisations and industrial partners across the globe in pursuit of innovative research geared to address critical and fundamental scientific questions.

MPLS is proud to be the home of some of the most creative and innovative scientific thinkers and leaders working in academe. Our senior researchers have been awarded some of the most significant scientific honours (including Nobel prizes and prestigious titles such as FRS and FR.Eng) and we have a strong tradition of attracting and nurturing the very best early career researchers who regularly secure prestigious fellowships. The Division is also the proud holder of eight Athena Swan Awards (4 Silver and 4 Bronze) illustrating our commitment to ensure good practice and to encourage women in science at all levels in the division.

We have around 6,000 students and play a major role in training the next generation of leading scientists. Oxford's international reputation for excellence in teaching is reflected in its position at the top of the major league tables and subject assessments. MPLS academics educate students of high academic merit and potential from all over the world. Through a mixture of lectures, practical work and the distinctive college tutorial system, students develop their ability to solve major mathematical, scientific and engineering problems.

MPLS is dedicated to bringing the wonder and potential of science to the attention of audiences far beyond the world of academia. We have a strong commitment to supporting public engagement in science through initiatives including the Oxford Sparks portal (<http://www.oxfordsparks.net/>) and a large variety of outreach activities; these are crucial activities given so many societal and technological issues demand an understanding of the science that underpins them. We also endeavour to bring the potential of our scientific efforts forward for practical and beneficial application to the real world and our desire is to link our best scientific minds with industry and public policy makers.

For more information about the MPLS division, please visit: <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/>

Department of Computer Science

The Department of Computer Science was established in 1957, making it one of the longest-established Computer Science departments in the country. It is one of the UK's leading Computer Science Departments (ranked first in a number of international rankings). The Research Excellence Framework (REF) in December 2014 resulted in 74 members of the Department having 53% of their research activity ranked in the top category of 4* (world-leading). Overall, we received an average of 3.34 across the department (3* being internationally excellent). A significant majority of the Department are active in externally sponsored research, with both government and industrial funding. At present there are 69 members of academic staff and almost 100 research staff.

The Department has close links with government, industry, and other departments within the University. Among the latter are Mathematics, Engineering, Physics, Statistics and a number of life sciences departments. The Department is housed across multiple sites within the University's South Parks Road Science area, facilitating strong collaborative links with research groups and institutes in closely allied areas (including the Oxford Internet Institute and the Oxford e-Research Centre). This is an essentially inter-disciplinary activity which is at present attracting major funding from a number of sources. At present the Department holds over £50m in external research contracts.

Research in the Department is currently managed in seven themes:

- *Programming Languages and Software Engineering* (led by Professor Jeremy Gibbons, and including Professor Jim Davies) works on a wide variety of areas including model-driven development, functional programming, and static analysis;
- *Security* (led by Professor Bill Roscoe) specialises in cybersecurity (Professor Sadie Creese leads a new Cybersecurity Centre), protocol analysis, trusted computing, networking, and human-centred computing;
- *Automated Verification* (led by Professor Marta Kwiatkowska) covers probabilistic and software model checking (Professor Daniel Kroening), time and concurrency (Professor Joel Ouaknine, Professor James Worrell, and Professors Roscoe and Lowe), and hardware (Professor Tom Melham);
- *Computational Biology* (led by Professor David Gavaghan, and including Professors Kevin Burrage, Helen Byrne, and Blanca Rodriguez) is one of the world's leading groups building computational models of biological systems, and is particularly well-known for its work on the heart;
- *Foundations, Logic and Structures*, (leader Professor Samson Abramsky) which includes groups working on quantum information and computation (Professors Samson Abramsky and Bob Coecke), game semantics and verification (Professor Luke Ong), and constraints (Professor Peter Jeavons);
- *Information Systems* (led by Professor Ian Horrocks, and including Professors Michael Benedikt, Nando de Freitas, Boris Motik, Georg Gottlob, and Michael Wooldridge) has groups working on databases, knowledge representation and reasoning, multi-agent systems, and computational linguistics (Professor Stephen Pulman);
- *Algorithms* (led by Professor Leslie Ann Goldberg, and including Professors Paul Goldberg and Elias Koutsoupias) covering computational complexity, algorithmic game theory, and constraint satisfaction.

For more information please visit: <http://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/>

Summary of the University's Equal Opportunities Policy

The policy and practice of the University of Oxford require that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Job description

Overview of the role

The PA is responsible for the management of the administrative office, in support of the Head of Department (HOD) of Computer Science, including responsibility for a range of processes. Some duties may require working directly with the Departmental Administrator.

This role is at the hub of the department and requires patience in dealing with enquiries, the ability to juggle the many and varied demands made by the academic and research staff and the language skills to be able to draft long and complex documents and letters when required. Personal initiative, excellent interpersonal skills and telephone manner are also required as the post-holder is expected to act independently within broad guidelines. The ability to prioritise work for maximum efficiency is essential. The PA to the Head of Department is also responsible for line management of the 7 departmental PAs, who provide secretarial and administrative support across the academic community, including research groups, within the department. Owing to peaks and troughs across the team, the PA will be responsible for developing inter-group working, so as to cover the many and varied activities which the PAs carry out. Effective management skills, with the ability to motivate, guide and develop others will also be key qualities of the PA to HOD.

Responsibilities/duties

1. To manage the Head of Department's diary – use initiative to make considered judgments when juggling the demands placed on the HOD's schedule, by way of booking and making changes to meetings as necessary, ensuring that HOD is aware and prepared for appointments by way of summary, reminders, priorities/key points and relevant documentation.
2. To co-ordinate the administrative arrangements for a range of meetings and committees, which will include booking rooms, ensuring that relevant facilities (ie, IT) are provided and working, advance preparation and distribution of relevant meeting papers, taking, writing up and distributing minutes in a timely manner, occasionally representing the HOD at meetings where appropriate.
3. To deal with correspondence appropriately which will require sorting, reading and prioritising items of post and email, responding where appropriate to do so and without recourse to HOD, preparing professional communications from basic drafts, distributing communications to relevant other staff, and making informed judgements about confidentiality/sensitivity.

4. To provide support to the HOD in managing staffing issues and sensitivity issues, through familiarity with personnel procedures, arranging meetings with tact and discretion where required, and considering the most appropriate communication method when situations are of a sensitive or confidential nature.
5. To develop successful working relationships with academic and support staff colleagues across the department and in the wider University.
6. To line manage the PA team, ensuring that relevant employment processes are carried out including probation reviews, managing performance, feedback, identifying and meeting development needs where required, performance appraisals, managing attendance and conduct issues taking into account relevant policies, procedure and advice.
7. To fully participate in the recruitment of new members of the PA team, where appropriate.
8. To develop, implement and continuously review office administrative systems and procedures for full effectiveness and efficiency, identifying priority items of business and allocating tasks to staff accordingly.
9. To organise travel for staff using all suitable means to ensure the itinerary meets the requirements of the person requesting it, is in line with University regulations and is most economical.
10. To provide administrative oversight on financial matters: for example, the management of travel, subsistence and other expenses and allowances, invoices for subscriptions
11. To organise facilities for visitors to the Department and maintenance of a visitor office accommodation timetable.
12. To be responsible for the organisation of events (such as the termly Strachey Lecture), conferences and workshops held at the University and other venues as appropriate. From the creation of the initial budget through placing orders, booking rooms, liaising with other University departments and external organisations, putting together the programme of visit, booking dinners, scheduling speakers, and supervision of all administrative matters as required.
13. To support the appointment process of Divisional academic recruitment by working closely with the HR Manager, to provide administrative support through the process of short listing and interview and ensuring that travel and accommodation needs of short listed applicants are met, (which may include visas), as well as the provision of catering and refreshments on the day of interview.
14. As the need arises, to assist the HOD in the preparation of the Department's Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission. This will include setting up a database of publications and measures of esteem for each research active member of staff; ensuring a copy of the listed publications are held in a readily accessible and secure location; assisting in the drafting of the textual responses for the RAE etc.

Selection Criteria

Essential

- Experience of managing the office of a senior member of staff including demanding schedule/diary management.
- Experience of making complex travel arrangements
- Demonstrable experience in the full range of activities required to effectively line manage staff such as performance, attendance and conduct.
- Experience of working on confidential matters with tact and discretion
- Experience in the organisation of events and conferences
- Exceptional interpersonal skills, with the ability to relate to and form effective working relationships with people at all levels of seniority
- Excellent communication skills in the English language both orally and in writing with a high degree of proficiency in drafting correspondence and producing well-presented reports and documents
- A proficient touch typist
- Excellent computer skills including: email, Word, Excel and the internet
- A high standard of numeracy; the ability to manage finances
- The ability to manage and prioritise a varied and busy workload and work to deadlines
- Attention to detail and high level of accuracy

Desirable

- Experience of using financial information systems (e.g. Oracle Financials)
- Experience of working in an academic setting
- Experience of staff recruitment
- Experience of organising academic conferences
- Experience of making international, multi-stop, travel arrangements, including the co-ordination of visas where necessary

Pre-employment screening

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This will include right-to-work, proof of identity and references. All applicants must read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/>.

All academic and related posts (any grade above grade 5) are subject to the University's retirement policy. The University operates an employer justified retirement age, for which the retirement date is the 30 September immediately preceding the 68th birthday. Applicants should be aware that any employment beyond the University's retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures outlined at:

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire/ejra/.

Working at the University of Oxford

For further information about working at Oxford, please see:

www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/professionalandmanagement/

How to apply

If you consider that you meet the selection criteria, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a user. You will then be required to complete a number of screens with your application details, relating to your skills and experience. When prompted, please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them at this stage. You will also be required to upload a CV and supporting statement. The supporting statement should describe what you have been doing over at least the last 10 years. This may have been employment, education, or you may have taken time away from these activities in order to raise a family, care for a dependant, or travel for example. Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that that you meet the selection criteria outlined above and we are happy to consider evidence of transferable skills or experience which you may have gained outside the context of paid employment or education.

Please save all uploaded documents to show your name and the document type.

All applications must be received by **midday** on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk

To return to the online application at any stage, please click on the following link www.recruit.ox.ac.uk

Please note that you will be notified of the progress of your application by automatic e-mails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** regularly to ensure that you receive all e-mails.