

Trainee Technician

Cambridge University Botanic Garden

December 2024



The role

Salary:

£23,028 pa

Contract:

12 months

Location:

Central Cambridge

Department:

Botanic Garden

Responsible to:

Head of Horticulture

Working pattern:

Full-time

Some weekend and event working

About the traineeship

The Cambridge University Botanic Garden Certificate in Botanical Horticulture offers training in botanical horticulture for up to eight Trainees and is suited for individuals looking to further their hands-on experience to enable them to further their horticultural careers. The one-year training programme runs from early September and is based in the 40-acre Cambridge University Botanic Garden, one of the largest university-owned botanic gardens in the world. Here, Trainees gain a comprehensive skill set in botanical horticulture, essential for maintaining a world-class collection of over 8,000 plant species. This challenging programme is designed for those aiming to acquire expertise in practical botanical horticulture and collection management. As employees of CUBG, trainees receive a salary for the duration of the traineeship and there are no course fees.

Upon successfully completing all elements of the course, Trainees are awarded a CUBG Certificate in Botanical Horticulture. As an independent qualification, the CUBG Certificate is self-accredited by the Cambridge University Botanic Garden and is equivalent to an FHEQ level 4 qualification.

Traineeship content

The CUBG Certificate is taught by internal specialist

and academic staff. The one-year traineeship integrates in-depth practical training with foundational classes in botany, plant taxonomy and curation, equipping participants with essential skills and knowledge for managing botanical collections.

Working alongside experienced Garden staff, Trainees rotate through each of the six horticultural sections of the Garden: Eastern Display; Western Display; Glasshouse; Nursery and Experimental; Landscape and Machinery; and Trees and Shrubs. Trainees spend four or five weeks in each section, repeating each section twice to experience each section at different times of the year. Trainees make a significant contribution to the work of the horticultural team and are integral to its horticultural operations.

Practical training is supplemented by a formal educational programme comprising talks, workshops, plant identification sessions and visits to gardens and related sites of interest. Attendance at all sessions is essential for completing the qualification. One day each week is dedicated as a study day and includes formal teaching sessions and time for personal study and research, and access to library facilities.



Assessment and Objectives

Assessment

1. Practical work

Trainees receive practical training in all sections. Working alongside experienced professionals, Trainees will be given instruction in a range of horticultural tasks, ranging from watering of specialist Glasshouse collections, weed control, general maintenance, machinery use and management of tree collections. Through this practical work Trainees will develop practical skills and plant knowledge, and confidence. This work-based learning is integral to the qualification and requires Trainees to maintain a weekly record of their work and a summary of their placement on the section, for which they receive feedback and marks from supervisors on each section.

2. Written work

Trainees complete two written assignments. The first is an essay up to 3000 words on a topic assigned by the course tutors, and the second is a report up to 5000 words on a topic chosen by the Trainee in consultation with the tutors. Weekly study days provide time to research and work on these assignments, though some additional work outside scheduled hours is required.

3. Verbal assessments

Trainees are required to present a tour of an area of their choosing during the year, which is assessed by a small tour group comprising Garden staff and Garden Guides. Work is also assessed in a professional conversation at the end of the year. All assessments are moderated by external examiners. Successful students are awarded the Cambridge University Botanic Garden Certificate in Botanical Horticulture at pass, merit or distinction level.

Objectives

The CUBG Certificate aims to prepare Trainees for a career in botanical horticulture by providing hands-on training augmented with teaching and independent research. In particular, the traineeship aims to:

- Provide an extensive practical and theoretical training, based on the horticultural and curatorial operations of Cambridge University Botanic Garden.
- Deliver foundational training in botany and plant systematics, enriching the practical horticultural elements essential to maintaining a large plant collection.
- Enable Trainees to develop their own areas of interest through student-centred learning.
- Teach the highest standards of professional practice to Trainees, and consistently address the current and future demands of the horticultural industry.

By the end of the programme, Trainees should be able to demonstrate:

- A critical understanding of the role of botanic gardens and plant collections, including the importance of plant record-keeping and management.
- The skills and knowledge needed to cultivate and manage botanical collections in alignment with scientific and horticultural principles.
- An informed perspective on issues related to plant diversity and conservation.



Duties and Responsibilities

1. Horticultural Duties

Provide practical horticultural assistance to section supervisors and assistants in the maintenance, development and curation of all sections within the Garden.

Maintenance and development tasks include watering, sweeping/tidying, weed control, edging, hoeing, planting, mowing, hedge cutting, pruning and propagation. Trainees use a range of machinery including tractors, rotary mowers, cylinder mowers, hedge cutters and leaf blowers.

Provide curatorial assistance in the labelling and recording of plants and collections using the plant records database (BGIRIS)

2. Meet the Requirements of the CUBG Certificate in Botanical Horticulture

Trainees are expected to attend all teaching sessions, complete weekly logs and a summary report for each section in the Study Day or in their own time. Complete all practical, written and verbal assessments.

3. Garden-wide Operations

Provide horticultural support throughout the

Garden during garden wide seasonal tasks.

Provide additional cover in other Garden sections during periods of absence and short staffing.

As required, liaise with other Garden teams such as Administration, Estate Management and Visitor Services, reporting on current works, projects and area closures.

Assist where required on garden wide Estate, Learning and event projects.

Assist with growing material for learning activities.

Provide support for Garden events such as Apple Day, Festival of Plants and Botanic Lights.

4. Health and Safety

Observe and adopt all statutory and local health and safety regulations and codes of practice.

Report health and safety incidences appropriately



Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
To have or be undertaking a minimum basic horticultural qualification, eg RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture	√	
Skills		
Demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of horticultural practice, theory and plant knowledge	√	
Good verbal and written communication	√	
Experience		
Some experience of growing plants and of practical horticulture as a professional is essential	√	
Additional Requirements		
Demonstrate that they are motivated and committed to pursuing a career in horticulture	√	
Be committed to furthering their experience in practical horticulture, planstmanship and collection curation.	√	
Demonstrate an understanding of how a Botanic Garden and its collections differ from other horticultural establishments		√

Terms of appointment

Tenure and probation

The appointment will be made for one year from Monday 8 September 2025 to Sunday 6 September 2026. Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a six month probationary period.

Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The hours of work for the position are 36.5 hours per week average, working Monday – Friday. There is a variation in start/finish times between sections. Trainees are also expected to work weekends on a rota basis with other Trainees, and to assist when requested at various events for which additional hours are paid.

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of CPS (Contributory Pension Scheme) – a defined benefit and defined contribution pension scheme. For further information please visit: www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk/.

Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 7.2 weeks (36 days), inclusive of public holidays.

General information

Pre-employment checks

Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work

in the UK before you can start working for us. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon you gaining it.

Health declaration

Once an offer of employment has been made the successful candidate will be required to complete a work health declaration form.

Qualifications

The person specification for this position lists qualifications that are essential and/or desirable. Please note that if you are offered the post you will be asked to provide your relevant original certificates of these qualifications.

References

offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Screening Checks

The nature of this role means that the successful candidate will also need to undergo a health assessment.

Information if you have a disability

The University welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring fair treatment throughout the recruitment process. We will make adjustments to enable applicants to compete to the best of their ability wherever it is reasonable to do so and, if successful, to assist them during their employment. Information for disabled

applicants is available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/staff/disabled/>

We encourage you to declare any disability that you may have, and any reasonable adjustments that you may require, in the section provided for this purpose in the application form. This will enable us to accommodate your needs throughout the process as required. However, applicants and employees may declare a disability at any time.

If you prefer to discuss any special arrangements connected with a disability, please contact, Wendy Godfrey, the Departmental Administrator, who is responsible for recruitment to this position, admin@botanic.cam.ac.uk.

Alternatively, you may contact the HR Business Manager responsible for the department you are applying to via hrenquiries@admin.cam.ac.uk.



Cambridge University Botanic Garden



Cambridge University Botanic Garden is a 40 acre historic garden which is home to an internationally important and diverse collection of over 8000 plant species from across the world. It combines its role as a research and teaching facility for the University with that of public education and is an important amenity enjoyed by over 300,000 visitors a year.

The present Garden was opened in 1846, and was the vision of John Stevens Henslow, Professor of Botany from 1825-1861 (and mentor to Charles Darwin). The eastern half of the site was then developed in the 1950's.

As well as a vitally important living collection, the Garden provides facilities and horticultural expertise for any member of the University of Cambridge. It is also used for educational and learning activities, from pre-school children upwards and also provides a varied programme of adult education courses.

Garden highlights include the Glasshouse range, Winter Garden, Dry Garden, Scented Garden, Pinetum, the Systematic Beds, Rock Garden and lake as well as year round interest.

We have over 8,000 Friends who pay an annual membership to the Garden and enjoy it, together with our other visitors, as a beautiful amenity and a place to relax and unwind.

Regular events are held in the Garden such as Festival of Plants, Twilight, Apple Day and Sounds Green music evenings, as well as the occasional flowering of a Titan Arum.

Today we have approximately 60-65 members of staff across Horticulture, Curation, Learning, Visitor Services, Estate Management, Administration and Development under the Directorship of Professor Beverley Glover.

All teams work together in the day to day running of the Garden, as well as long-term planning, maintenance and development. There are two main office buildings on site, Cory Lodge and 1 Brookside, as well as offices behind the Glasshouse range, together with reserve glasshouses, poly-tunnels and potting sheds. There are also two staff room facilities on site as well as the Garden Café and Shop. Facilities also include a Schools' Garden with a purpose built in-door teaching space for schools, and a Classroom. Parking is also available for members of staff and it is a short walk to Cambridge Train Station.

The Botanic Garden is part of the University's School of Biological Sciences.

The School of the Biological Sciences

The School of the Biological Sciences is one of the six Schools that are responsible for delivering teaching and research and the administration of those activities within the University. The School delivers internationally-leading research and teaching on animal, plant and microbial science at scales that range from the atomic, molecular and cellular through whole organisms to populations and communities. The research impacts on the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industries, on human and animal health and the clinic as well as in conservation, agriculture and the environment.

About the School

The School of the Biological Sciences employs around 2000 staff teaching over 4000 students (around 2000 undergraduates in the Natural Sciences, Medical Sciences and Veterinary Sciences and Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Triposes plus around 2000 postgraduates).

The School collaborates closely with the School of Clinical Medicine. The joint Graduate School of Life Sciences looks strategically at graduate provision and education across the two Schools and at the undergraduate level the Medical Education Committee oversees medical education.

The School is currently arranged in two Faculty Boards (Biology and Veterinary Medicine) which are divided into nine Departments: Biochemistry, Genetics, Pathology, Pharmacology, Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, Plant Sciences, Psychology and Zoology are part of the Faculty Board of Biology while Veterinary Medicine is part of the Faculty Board of Veterinary Medicine.



The School also contains five major interdisciplinary Institutes: Wellcome Trust / CRUK Gurdon Institute for Cancer and Development, Wellcome Trust / MRC Stem Cell Institute, Cambridge Systems Biology Centre, Cambridge Centre for Crop Science and the Sainsbury Laboratory for Plant Development. It has also incorporated the MRC Toxicology Unit, Leicester which will physically relocate to Cambridge in 2020.

The School is involved with several Strategic Research Initiatives including being a major player in the Cambridge Conservation Initiative. The School is associated with the Museum of Zoology and the Botanic Garden. Key officers of the School plus details of relevant Research Ethics Committee (Human Biology and Psychology) can be found on the School's website..

Athena SWAN

The Athena SWAN Charter was launched in June 2005 to recognise and reward commitment to advancing the careers of women working in higher

education in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM).

The University of Cambridge was a founder member of Athena SWAN Charter and the University won its first award in the inaugural round of March 2006.

Since then, the University has successfully renewed its Bronze Athena SWAN award in 2009 and 2012 and in 2014 achieved a Silver Athena SWAN award.

Many of the Departments in the School of Biological Sciences hold awards at Bronze or Silver level and the School continues to support the Athena SWAN process across all subjects.

The University

The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful universities. We are a renowned centre for research, education, and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society. The University is consistently ranked amongst the top universities in the world. Our affiliates have won more Nobel Prizes than any other University.

Our sustained pursuit of academic excellence is built on a long history of first-class teaching and research within a distinctive collegiate system. For eight centuries our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our principal goal is to remain one of the world's leading universities in an increasingly competitive global higher education sector. Today the University of Cambridge is at the centre of a cluster of over 4,300 businesses employing 58,000 people. Our capital investment projects include the West Cambridge site, the North West Cambridge development and the growth of the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. The North West Cambridge development includes the opening of a primary school – the first in the UK to be managed by a University. So we are deeply embedded in, and committed to serving, our local community. These are all conspicuous signs of a University that is not only adapting to new needs, but also anticipating the future.

Our mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Our core values are:

- freedom of thought and expression; and
- freedom from discrimination.





About us

The University is one of the world's leading academic centres. It comprises 150 faculties and departments, together with a central administration and other institutions. Our institutions, museums and collections are a world-class resource for researchers, students and members of the public representing one of the country's highest concentrations of internationally important collections.

The University has an annual income of £1.66 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £400 million per annum and continues to grow.

The Colleges and the University remain committed to admitting the best students regardless of their background and to investing considerable resources both in widening access and financial support.

The 31 Colleges are self-governing, separate legal entities which appoint their own staff. Many academic staff are invited to join a College as a Teaching Fellow, which provides a further social and intellectual dimension. The Colleges admit students, provide

Our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our campaign, 'Dear World... Yours, Cambridge', will raise £2 billion to help us shape all our futures.

student accommodation and deliver small group teaching. The University awards degrees and its faculties and departments provide lectures and seminars for students and determine the syllabi for teaching and conducting research.

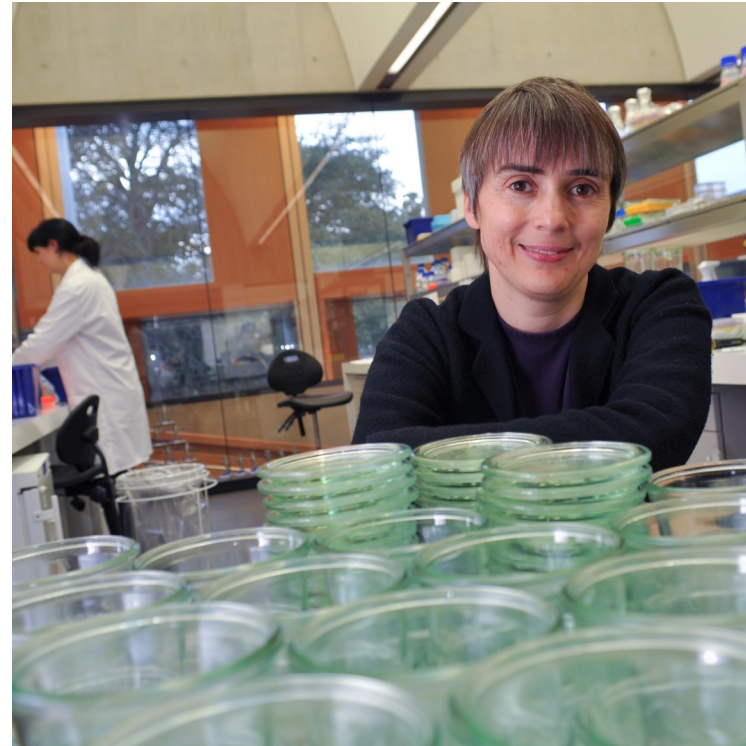
The University's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a new science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is now expanding further to the north west of Cambridge including investing in affordable homes for University key workers and community facilities. Even with our continued development, the University remains within walking or cycling distance across the campus. The University is a major partner on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and we continue to redevelop our historic city centre sites demonstrating our determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.

Our instinct for seeking out excellence and setting up enduring and mutually beneficial collaborations has led us to establish strategic partnerships across the globe. Whether it is the successful Cambridge-Africa Programme involving universities in Ghana, Uganda and elsewhere on the African continent; or the close association with the government of India to pursue new research in crop science; or the creation, with Germany's Max Planck Institutes, of a Cambridge-based centre for the study of ethics, human economy and social change – international partnerships are now an inextricable part of the University's make-up.

Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 18,000 students and over 11,000 staff from all walks of life and corners of the world.

The University continually explores strategies to attract and retain the best people. It is committed to supporting its staff to achieve their best. We are a fair, diverse and inclusive society and we believe our staff are our greatest asset. There is strong commitment to developing institutional leadership and supporting and encouraging staff development at all levels. Furthermore, the University's Athena SWAN award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women. We offer a variety of roles including academic, research, professional, managerial and support roles. We also offer extensive benefits and excellent learning opportunities within a stimulating working environment. The University has signed up to the Race Equality Charter, a notional framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.



Living in Cambridge



Cambridge is rich in cultural diversity. From beautiful University and College buildings, museums and art galleries, quaint gardens and punts on the River Cam, to a vibrant restaurant and café scene, our employees are surrounded by the wonderful features of this unique city.

If you prefer the faster pace of life, London is a 45 minute train journey away. For those travelling from overseas, Stansted Airport is just 45 minutes away and Heathrow Airport under 2 hours away.

The University is a short distance from a host of other attractions such as Ely Cathedral, Newmarket Races and various wildlife parks and stately homes.

Cambridge is also within easy reach of the beautiful Broads and coastlines of Norfolk and Suffolk.

Further information about attractions in and around Cambridge can be found at [Visit Cambridge](http://www.visitcambridge.org), the official tourism website for the city.

What Cambridge can offer

We offer a comprehensive reward package to attract, motivate and retain high performing staff at all levels and in all areas of work. The University offers a wide range of competitive benefits, from family leave entitlement, to shopping and travel discount schemes. Our generous annual leave package contributes to the positive wellbeing of our University employees. Sabbatical leave enables academics to focus on research and scholarship, whilst still maintaining their full salary. The University also has a career break scheme for academic and academic-related staff, with additional flexible working policies for all other staff.

CAMBens employee benefits

We offer a CAMBens scheme for University employees, providing access to online and in-store shopping discounts and cashback. With more than 2,000 participating retailers, employees can save money on a wide range of household expenses, from groceries and clothes, to holidays and insurance and much more. A range of local discounts are also available, helping employees to save money whilst also supporting local Cambridge businesses. CAMBens Cars and CAMBens Cycle to Work salary sacrifice schemes are also available, which enable employees to save money on transport costs. A 10% discount rate on the purchase of train season tickets, bulk buy tickets and an interest free travel to work loan are also available for staff of the University of Cambridge.

Family-friendly policies

The University recognises the importance of supporting its staff. We have a range of family-friendly policies to aid employees' work-life balance including a

generous maternity, adoption and shared parental leave entitlement of 18 weeks full pay and emergency family care support via My Family Care.

In addition, our Ofsted rated 'outstanding' workplace nurseries, childcare vouchers, a childcare salary sacrifice scheme and a high quality holiday play scheme are available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities. The Newcomers and Visiting Scholars Group is an organisation within the University run by volunteers whose aim is to help newly arrived wives, husbands, partners and families of Visiting Scholars and members of the University to settle in Cambridge and give them an opportunity to meet local people.

Your wellbeing

The University's Sport Centre, Counselling Services and Occupational Health are just some of the support services available to University employees to promote their physical and mental wellbeing. There are many societies in Cambridge catering for almost every taste and interest. Whether you want to take part in a sport, participate in music or drama, pursue a hobby, or join a political group, you will almost certainly find that a society exists for this purpose. The University also hosts the [Cambridge Science Festival](#) and [Cambridge Festival of Ideas](#), as well as [Open Cambridge](#) weekend, which together attract over 50,000 visitors per year. The festivals are a great opportunity to get your first taste of public engagement, through volunteering, supporting hands-on activities or proposing a talk.



What Cambridge can offer

Pay and benefits

The University salary structure includes automatic service-related pay progression in many of its grades and an annual cost of living increase. In addition to this, employees are rewarded for outstanding contribution through a number of regular pay progression schemes. The University offers attractive pensions schemes for employees, with an additional benefit of a salary exchange arrangement providing tax and national insurance savings. Payroll giving is also a simple, tax-efficient way for employees to make monthly donations to charity.

Relocating to Cambridge

The University Accommodation Service exists to help employees in their search for a rental home in Cambridge. A new University development at North West Cambridge called Eddington offers subsidised rented accommodation to University staff. The development consists of high quality furnished one and two bedroom apartments. For more information about the development and how to apply please visit the website www.nwc.cambridge.co.uk

The importance of helping individuals settle into a new



area is also recognised by the University. The Shared Equity Scheme <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/pay-benefits/cambens-employee-benefits/financial/shared-equity-scheme> provides financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the purchase of living accommodation, where they have to relocate to take up their appointment. Removal expenses are also available for qualifying new members of staff.

Equality & diversity

The University has a vibrant and varied community. We support and encourage under-represented groups and we value diversity. We welcome applications from individuals with disabilities. Our recruitment and



selection procedures follow best practice. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity networks for women, black and minority ethnic and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff. More details are available here: <http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

Development opportunities

We support new employees to settle in through various activities. The encouragement of career development for all staff is one of the University's values and we put this into practice through various services and initiatives. Our Personal and Professional Development Department provides development opportunities and courses for all University employees. These include face-to-face sessions, online learning modules and webinars. Employees may also apply for financial support to undertake training that will lead to a qualification. We offer reduced staff fees for University of Cambridge graduate courses and the opportunity to attend lectures and seminars held by University departments and institutions. The CareerStart@Cam programme also supports employees in assistant staff roles who do not hold higher education qualifications to develop their skills, experience and qualifications.

Whether it is understanding the molecular basis of neurodegenerative diseases, or helping farmers in India increase their yield, or discovering better ways to live in large cities – I know that what we do in Cambridge affects lives, and livelihoods, the world over.

Vice Chancellor Emeritus, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, 2016

How to apply

Applications should be submitted online via the University of Cambridge jobs page www.jobs.cam.ac.uk by clicking "Apply online" in the job advert. You will need an email address to register for our online system.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:

Wendy Godfrey

Email: admin@botanic.cam.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact our Administration Team on the e-mail above.

The closing date for applications is Sunday 2 March 2025



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE