

PA to the Head of the School of the Physical Sciences

Office of the School of the Physical Sciences

Deadline: 16th March 2025

Job Reference: LA45212



PA to the Head of the School of the Physical Sciences

Salary:

£30,505 - £34,866 per annum

Contract:

Permanent

Location:

Cambridge

Faculty / Department:

Office of the School of the
Physical Sciences

Responsible to:

Team Manager

Working Pattern:

Full Time

Purpose of the Role:

In addition to providing PA support to the Head of School, this role will involve supporting the Team Manager and other members of the School Office Team with the following activities:

- Provide administrative and PA support to senior staff (Head of Department, Professors etc.). Diary management, manage daily incoming information, circulate and respond to information, make potentially complicated travel arrangements, handle expenses claims, arrange meetings (e.g. book venues, arrange catering), prepare agendas and papers, take minutes, circulate and follow up any action points.
- Open, read and act on mail and e-mails received. Prioritise action to be taken, reply without intervention when able, draft responses and organise papers for signature. Draw attention to matters that require urgent action and prepare the groundwork ready for response; liaise with appropriate staff for action in the event of the managers absence.
- Read agendas for meetings, ensure all relevant documents and files are available, maintain filing system, including confidential files, committee papers and records to enable easy access and retrieval of documents.
- Maintain information flow within the department and the wider University community acting as liaison with the department, university and external stakeholders, manage and maintain the department's web pages, maintain records of departmental activities, manage the production of any communications and publicity materials, update publication records.
- Type scientific books, papers and articles for publication. Type referee's comments on papers and grants, carry out bibliographical searches as necessary and maintain the Department's bibliography, check printer's proofs.



**Purpose of the Role
Continued:**

- Undertake financial administration. Monitor expenditure against budgets, produce grant costings, administer procurement processes, collate information and complete paperwork for payroll, check and record expense claims.
- Provide facilities management support. Maintain office equipment, arrange for repairs, replacements and supplies, maintain stationery supplies, management and use of space.
- Organise events such as meetings, seminars, publicity events, Alumni, provide administrative support including, prepare documents, respond to enquiries including press enquiries, circulate daily bulletins of events listings.
- Provide HR related administration. Place adverts, acknowledge applications, request references, arrange interview dates, liaise with department administrative officer on new appointments, induct new staff and allocate facilities e.g. phone, computer, desk etc.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous PA/Secretarial Administrative experience 	✓	
Skills		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly competent in standard software packages, e.g. Word, Excel, Access and Outlook 	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent organisational skills 	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good time management and ability to prioritise a diverse and changing workload. 	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent communication & interpersonal skills 	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate factual & theoretical knowledge of Personal Assistant/Secretarial work 	✓	
Qualifications		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HND, HNC, level 4/5 vocational qualification or equivalent level of practical experience. 	✓	

Behavioural Attributes

This section summarises the behavioural attributes (or competencies) that we expect the role holder to be able to demonstrate, at what level and whether this is an essential or desirable requirement. Full definitions are at: <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/behavioural-attributes>

Please review these and provide specific examples in your application of how you have demonstrated these attributes in your work, education or other experience. It will assist your application if you explain the situation, what you did and what the outcomes were.

Attribute	Level
Valuing Diversity	A
Achieving Results	C
Communication	C
Innovation and Change	C
Negotiating and Influencing	D
People Development	C
Relationship Building	C
Strategic Focus	D

Professional Services Values

Developed by professional services staff, our values underpin everything we do. By living the values in the work we do, we hope to foster an environment where staff feel empowered. The values encourage staff to; work together and share skills to create a sense of community, act with integrity, take an inclusive and fair approach and develop honest and open relationships that are underpinned by our shared values. We encourage applicants to consider these values within their application.



School of the Physical Sciences

The School of the Physical Sciences is one of six Schools making up the academic work of the University. It comprises the following Departments: Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics (DAMTP), Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Geography (including the Scott Polar Research Institute), Institute of Astronomy, Isaac Newton Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Materials Science and Metallurgy, Physics (Cavendish Laboratory), Pure Mathematics and Mathematical Statistics (DPMMS) and Cambridge Zero.

The School's aim is to contribute to our understanding of the physical world through excellence in observational, theoretical and experimental science and to extend quantitative, qualitative and combined methodologies to address problems in the fields of biology, technology, medicine, social science and the humanities. In pursuit of these goals, the School coordinates objectives in research, teaching, and infrastructure.

The School is responsible for allocating core funds to departments and provides broad strategic focus across its constituent departments in a number of areas including; research activity, undergraduate and postgraduate education, estate needs, fundraising and human resources.

As part of the University's planning process, the School prepares a financial and academic plan which sets out strategic objectives, determines budgets as well as the flow of resources to departments. The School manages a wide range of administrative activities and projects across its departments and works alongside other Schools to further interdisciplinary research.

The School has over 1500 members of staff, over 3000 students and an annual budget of over £100 million.

The Office of the School of the Physical Sciences is a small team led by the Head of School, currently Professor Nigel Peake, the School Secretary, the Director of Education and the Finance Business Partner. There are currently twenty other staff, including those who manage the work of the Degree Committees. The wider School team supporting our Departments also includes representatives from HR, Fundraising and Research administration teams who are assigned to the School.

The Office of the School currently occupies a suite of offices in 17 Mill Lane.

More information about the School Office and links to the websites of the School's constituent Departments can be found at the SPS website: <https://www.physsci.cam.ac.uk/>



Terms of Appointment

Appointment

Appointments will be made on a permanent basis. Appointments will be subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.

Salary

The salary range for this role is £30,505 – £34,866 and appointment is usually bottom of the salary range.

Hours of Work and Working

Pattern The appointment is full time, 36.5 hours per week, Monday – Friday. A hybrid working model is possible at certain times, however the role requires some days per week in the office (exact days to be negotiated).

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 36 days, inclusive of public holidays. There are some periods when annual leave is restricted due to the nature and timing of the work.

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.

References

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

Equality and Diversity

We particularly encourage women and candidates from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background to apply for this vacancy as they are currently under-represented at this level within our University.

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, the Department Administrator, who is responsible for recruitment to this position.

Hybrid Working

The University is supportive of hybrid working, where some

work is undertaken on University premises and some in a remote working environment. The aim of our approach is to enable as many staff as possible to work in a hybrid way if they wish and where their role allows. Please state in your application if you would like to explore the extent to which this position can be worked in this way. If it is appropriate for a role to be worked entirely from a remote working environment within the UK, this will be indicated in the job specification itself.

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 world-leading 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 academic and commercial growth at both the West Cambridge Innovation District, and the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. Eddington, in North West Cambridge, is a mixed-use development including key worker housing for staff, a community centre and a new primary school, managed by the University. Through these projects, the University is 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 £2 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £500 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 undergraduate students, provide student accommodation and pastoral support and deliver small group teaching for undergraduates.

The University awards degrees and its faculties and departments provide lectures and seminars for students and determine the syllabi for teaching.

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.

“Cambridge graduates and researchers have made – and continue to make – a colossal contribution to human knowledge and the understanding of the world around us. Their work touches on the lives and livelihoods of everyone from patients diagnosed with life-threatening diseases, to residents of areas critically affected by climate change, to children growing up in conflict zones. It has a lasting impact on our society, our economy and our culture: the world is truly a better place thanks to their efforts.”

Stephen Toope, Vice Chancellor 2019



Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 23,000 students and over 16,000 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.

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's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is 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.



Equality & diversity

The University has built its excellence on the diversity of its staff and student community. We aim to be a leader in fostering equality and inclusion, and in promoting respect and a sense of belonging for all. We encourage applications from all sections of society. All appointments are made on the basis of merit. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity groups, including the Women's Staff Network, Race Equality Network and LGBT+ Staff Network. More details are available here:

<http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The University has a bronze Race Equality Charter award, with a framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. Furthermore, the University's silver Athena swan award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting gender equality.

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.

You can find a wide-range of high street shops and 3 shopping centres, with independent alternatives at the historic market and nestled within the passageways in the city centre. You will find a cinema, bowling alley, a nightclub and various live performances at the Cambridge Leisure Park, with further entertainment options at the Corn Exchange, Arts Theatre and the ADC Theatre. Further information can be found on the Visit Cambridge website.

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.

Relocation Support

The University recognises the importance of helping individuals to move and settle into a new area. We provide support and guidance to those relocating internationally or domestically to take up a post at the University of Cambridge, liaising with other University offices and selected partners to ensure comprehensive relocation support is available. This includes: accommodation, childcare, schools, banking, immigration and transport. If you would like further information, please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/RelocationService/>. The Shared Equity Scheme and the Reimbursement of Relocation Expenses Scheme provide financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the costs of relocating to Cambridge.

Accommodation Service

The University Accommodation Service helps staff, students and visiting scholars who are affiliated to the University in their search for suitable accommodation in Cambridge. The dedicated accommodation team can provide access to a wide range of University-owned furnished and unfurnished properties, and has a database of private sector accommodation available for short and long-term lets. For further information and to register with this free service please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/>



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.

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.



CAMbens employee benefits

The University offers employees a wide range of competitive benefits, known as CAMbens. CAMbens offers something for everyone across a range of categories, including:

- Financial Benefits, including shopping discounts (both local and national) and a Payroll Giving scheme;
- Relocation and Accommodation Benefits, including relocation assistance and interest-free Rental Deposit Loans;
- Travel Benefits, including Cycle to Work, discounts on train season tickets and interest-free Travel to Work loans;
- Family Friendly and Lifestyle Benefits, including support with childcare and family friendly policies;
- Health and Wellbeing Benefits, including a University Staff Counselling Service, discounts at the University Sports Centre, and other local gyms, and healthcare schemes.



What Cambridge can offer

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 paid emergency leave for parents and carers.

Other family-friendly support includes:

Our highly regarded workplace nurseries, a childcare salary exchange scheme and a high quality holiday Playscheme may be available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities (subject to demand and qualifying criteria). Further childcare information can be found here:

<https://www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

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. The Postdoc Academy supports the postdoctoral community within Cambridge. Further details are available here: <https://www.postdocacademy.cam.ac.uk/>

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. The University delivers The Festival of Wellbeing annually, which is a programme of stimulating talks and activities, which aim to promote wellbeing and good mental and physical health. The University also hosts the [Cambridge Festival](#), which is a great opportunity to get your first taste of public engagement, through volunteering, supporting hands-on activities or proposing a talk.

Development opportunities

We support new employees to settle in through various activities as well as supporting their professional and career development on an ongoing basis. Our Personal and Professional Development (PPD) team provide development opportunities for all University employees, including face-to-face sessions, online learning modules and webinars. All employees also have unlimited access to LinkedIn Learning to support their development. Both new and existing employees can undertake funded Apprenticeships, which lead to a range of vocational and professional qualifications. 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. A range of University training providers also offer specialist learning and development in their own areas e.g. teaching and learning, digital literacy, finance, health and wellbeing, safety.



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.

Conversations about flexible working are encouraged at the University of Cambridge. Please feel free to discuss flexibility prior to applying (using the contact information below) or at interview if your application is successful.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:
Cathy Barton, Deputy School Secretary.

Email: DepSecSPS@admin.cam.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact Georgina Fuller, Team Manager.

Email: PhysicalSciences@admin.cam.ac.uk.

The closing date for applications is **Sunday 16th March 2025**.

Interviews will be held **w/c Monday 24th March 2025**.