



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Assistant Departmental Administrator (Operations)

Department of Geography

Closing date: 14 April 2025

Job reference: LC45260



Assistant Departmental Administrator (Operations)

Salary:

£35,116 - £45,413

Contract:

Permanent

Location:

Cambridge

Department:

Geography

Responsible to:

Business & Operations Manager

Working Pattern:

Full-time

The University of Cambridge has a Hybrid Working Policy that aims to enable as many staff as possible to work in a hybrid way if they so wish, whilst recognising that some roles will include tasks that can only be performed on University premises.

Purpose of the role

The Department of Geography wishes to enhance its existing administrative support by appointing a skilled and enthusiastic administrator to the new role of Assistant Departmental Administrator (Operations).

The role-holder will work flexibly and employing a significant degree of initiative to provide high-level administrative support to the Department, and in particular to the Head of Department and Business and Operations Manager, through a mixture of on-going responsibilities and project work.

They will support the Head of Department directly in the development and delivery of operational and strategic priorities, interpreting and explaining guidance, gathering and analysing management information, developing local policies and procedures, and leading projects.

They will support the Department's strategic and operational priorities through effective leadership in the areas of communications, information management and compliance.

Key responsibilities

- **Support for the Head of Department**

Working as part of a team together with the Business and Operations Manager, the Assistant Departmental Administrator (Academic) and the Administrator of the Head of Department's Office, the role-holder provides proactive, high-level administrative support to the Head of Department, which may include: drafting letters and researching and writing reports, discussion papers and other documents; summarising reports, policies, guidance documents, etc., in order to brief the Head of Department, Departmental Management Group (DMG) or other relevant departmental committees; collection, analysis and presentation of management information; developing ideas into strategic position papers and/or alternative scenarios for further discussion.



Key responsibilities continued

- **Support for the Business and Operations Manager**

Deputizing for the Business and Operations Manager during planned and unplanned absences, including oversight of the departmental administrative staff team; participation in Department, Faculty, School and University-level meetings and supporting DMG; delegated management of administrative processes, as required.

The role-holder provides line management for the Administrator of the Head of Department's Office and the General Office Secretary/Receptionist, including: allocation of work; designing, explaining and overseeing new processes and procedures, monitoring performance and progress, undertaking formal staff reviews, identifying and recommending necessary training, interviewing new applicants, acting as first contact for staff grievances and disciplinary matters, resolving minor grievances and referring serious cases to the Business and Operations Manager as required.

- **Communications**

Working in collaboration with the Information and Communications Committee, of which they are an active member, the role-holder is the administrative lead on departmental communications strategy and practice, taking oversight of public-facing web content and co-ordinating the on-going development and delivery of an alumni engagement strategy for the Department, including producing e-newsletters, web pages and dedicated alumni publications (the Department's annual magazine, *Landmark*), liaising with the University's development office and the central communications team as necessary.

- **Compliance**

The role-holder takes administrative oversight of University and statutory compliance issues and processes, including data protection, Freedom of Information, Prevent and management of conflicts of interest. They take the lead and/or provide support and co-ordination as required on annual and ad hoc compliance audits. They support the maintenance and testing of emergency and business continuity plans and act as Secretary to the Safety, Security & Working Environment Committee, drafting and circulating agendas and papers, taking minutes and following up actions in collaboration with the Buildings, Safety & Engineering Manager.

- **Information management**

The role-holder has oversight of the Department's administrative information management systems and practices, developing and implementing new systems and practice to meet changing departmental needs and University and external standards (e.g. GDPR). They are an experienced user of, and advocate for, electronic information management tools (including Microsoft SharePoint) and promote and support good practice in information management and filing systems across the Department.

The role-holder is the departmental contact with the University Library (UL). They liaise with and support the Department-based, UL-employed Library & Information Manager and Library Assistant to embed them within the administration team and ensure that departmental needs are articulated and met, including in relation to management of the physical library space.

- **Projects**

Setting up, leading and delivering fixed-term projects of varying sizes and durations, as appropriate to the grade. Examples may include: acting as departmental contact for University systems change programmes; organisation of alumni fundraising initiatives or events; administrative support for the Department's REF (Research Excellence Framework) submission.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Familiarity with the Higher Education environment, preferably including in an employed role.	✓	
Experience of proactively designing, managing and delivering projects in a Higher Education or similar environment.	✓	
Experience of staff management or supervision.	✓	
Demonstrable experience of delivering good practice in information management in a workplace setting.		✓
Experience of providing leadership in regulatory compliance and/or business continuity planning.		✓
Skills		
Proven research skills, excellent analytical skills and a record of problem-solving.	✓	
The ability to engage with strategy.	✓	
The ability to think independently and to take initiative, to work flexibly and to effectively manage parallel work streams and competing deadlines.	✓	
The ability and willingness to quickly familiarize self with relevant processes/guidance/regulations within the University and outside, in order to fill gaps in own knowledge.	✓	
The ability to write well in a variety of formats (e.g. informal emails, formal letters, policy documents, reports and discussion papers); to summarise, synthesise and present information effectively, to develop ideas and to form and make convincing arguments, face-to-face and in writing.	✓	
Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate effectively with, and to influence, people in a variety of roles/at a variety of levels within a large organisation and to proactively build appropriate networks.	✓	
Exercising appropriate tact and discretion in handling sensitive or confidential information.	✓	
Qualifications		
First degree (or equivalent experience).	✓	

The Department of Geography

The Department of Geography has a long-established international reputation as one of the leading centres of innovative geographical thought and education and celebrated one hundred years of teaching Geography in Cambridge in 2019.

The Department is a friendly and inclusive scholastic community with wide-ranging research interests spanning the natural and social sciences and the humanities. Incorporating the Scott Polar Research Institute, and based on two central Cambridge sites, at Downing Place and Lensfield Road, it has approximately 40 academic, 25 research and 45 support staff at any one time.

Teaching

The Department delivers a Tripos (undergraduate degree) with an intake of approximately 100 students per year and has a vibrant graduate community of approximately 150 students studying at PhD level and on Master's courses in *Geography*, *Polar Studies*, *Anthropocene Studies*, *Holocene Climates* and *Conservation Leadership*.

The Department was ranked top in the 2025 *Complete University Guide* in the category of Geography and Environmental Science and third in the 2024 *QS World University Rankings* for Geography.

Visit our website at <http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk>

Research

The Department's research activities are organised into six thematic groups: *Vital Geographies*, *Infrastructural Geographies*, *Geographies of Knowledge*, *Biogeography and Biogeomorphology*, *Climate and Environmental Dynamics*, and *Glaciology and Glacial Geology*. These overlap with two centres of excellence – the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, co-hosted with the Faculty of History, and the Scott Polar Research Institute. The Department also provides the home for the University of Cambridge Conservation Research Institute.

The Department's research is aided by well-supported laboratories, field equipment and high-performance computing services, supporting a combination of fieldwork, laboratory analysis and experiments, remote sensing and computational modelling.

The last UK Research Excellence Framework exercise (2021), based on a metric measuring the quality of our research publications and the strength of our research environment, ranked the Department fourth in the country.

For further information see:
<http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/>.



The School of the Physical Sciences

The School of the Physical Sciences is one of the six Schools making up the academic work of the University. It comprises the following Departments:

[Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics \(DAMTP\)](#)
[Yusuf Hamied Department of 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 \(DPMMS\)](#)

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

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.

Terms of Appointment

Tenure and probation

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

Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The post is full-time, working Monday to Friday.

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme) – a hybrid 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 41 days inclusive of public holidays. For part-time employees, annual leave will be pro rata'd based on days worked.

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.

Equality and Diversity

We particularly encourage 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 hr@geog.cam.ac.uk.

The University

The University of Cambridge is consistently ranked one of the best universities in the world, achieving academic excellence through its Faculties, Departments and other Institutions, together with the 31 Colleges.

The University is renowned for its record of discovery and innovation. It is one of the great institutions, with a regional, national and global reach, attracting the very best and brightest minds. Our staff and students shape the world around us for the better: we attract and partner with like-minded people.

Whether contributing to the development of new anti-cancer drugs, adding to the understanding of how black holes are formed, revolutionising the study of ancient settlements, convening academic expertise to offer solutions to the climate crisis, or analysing public attitudes towards democracy around the world, the University's research is remarkable in its breadth, quality and impact. The University also sits at the heart of Europe's largest technology cluster and has catalysed more than 1,500 high-tech companies. And yet what inspires our 24,000 students and 13,000 staff is not what has already been achieved, but what is possible in the future.

The education and experience of our students, based on a partnership between the University's academic Departments and Faculties and the 31 Colleges, is second to none. Every student is a member of one of the Colleges, each a community of students, academics and staff drawn from across the University's comprehensive range of subject areas.



The University is a self-governing community, with a system for decision-making that provides a high degree of accountability and transparency to its members. Each Department and Faculty is part of one of six academic Schools, but each of them, and each individual academic, has a great deal of autonomy. The Colleges are independent and self-governing, working in a symbiotic relationship with the University.

The University has a number of Institutions that are independent of any Faculty or Department and are not part of the academic Schools. These include the Institute of Continuing Education (which provides high-quality education to adults throughout their lives), the Fitzwilliam Museum, Kettle's Yard (an historic house and gallery that holds important collections of modern art) and the University Library. In addition to their diverse contributions to University and public life, these non-School Institutions are also important centres of teaching and research.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment provides academic publishing, examinations and learning materials worldwide, supporting the dissemination of research, academic development at school and in higher education, and international student mobility. Legally, the Press & Assessment is a department of the University. It provides very important funds to invest in the academic purposes of the University.

The University has made truly remarkable contributions to the sum of human understanding, with breakthrough ideas and discoveries that have changed the way we understand ourselves, our planet, and the universe around us. Yet the global and national contexts in which it operates are fast-changing and increasingly filled with uncertainty. In a world that is becoming - politically, economically, socially, and technologically – ever more interconnected but even less equal, the University's mission – “to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence” – has never been more relevant.



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.

“Through its outstanding education, research and innovation, the University of Cambridge has made – and continues to make – a lasting contribution to human knowledge and is flourishing. By working at the University of Cambridge, you will be joining a vibrant community of students, scholars and professional services staff committed to supporting and enhancing the University's mission to contribute to society.”

*Professor Deborah Prentice,
Vice Chancellor 2023*



Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 24,000 students and over 13,000 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.

The University offers 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 their 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 continues to redevelop its historic city centre sites demonstrating a clear determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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 26 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 are 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 (<https://www.nvs.admin.cam.ac.uk/>) is an organisation within the University that welcomes the partners and families of visiting scholars and new members of the University. Run by volunteers, the group offers opportunities to visit interesting Cambridge venues, learn about the community, take part in social events and gain local knowledge while developing a strong support network of both residents and other newcomers.

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.

In your application you are strongly advised to identify how your skills and experience match those specified in the Person Specification for this role. Contact details of two referees are required, one of whom must represent your current or most recent employer, and at least one of whom we may contact if you are shortlisted for interview.

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.

All applications must be received by Monday 14 April 2025 (11:59 PM, UK time). Interviews for shortlisted candidates are expected to take place in Cambridge on Monday 19 May 2025.

If you have any questions about this vacancy or the application process, please email the recruitment manager in the first instance on hr@geog.cam.ac.uk

