



Job description: General Assistant

Job title	General Assistant
Reporting to	<i>tbc</i>
Key responsibilities	Support the whole Chawton House operation with a combination of front of house, retail, tea room, events, collections, gardens and estate, and administrative duties.
Hours	Specified days and minimum hours Evening and weekend working will be required.
Salary	Living Wage
Location	Chawton House, Alton
Duration	Ongoing

Chawton House is an historic house and estate once owned by Jane Austen's brother Edward Austen Knight and frequented by his sister who lived in a cottage he owned close by. It is home to two significant collections: one of women's writing (1660 – c.1860) and one of the Knight family library. The House is set in over 250 acres of the South Downs National Park, including a historically significant formal garden, ancient woodland and parkland.

The charitable objectives of Chawton House are to preserve the House and grounds for the benefit of the public, and to promote the study of, and public engagement in, women's writing. Having operated predominantly as an academic library until 2017, Chawton House has transformed and is now open to the public seven days a week, with lively public, academic and learning programmes onsite and online, successful retail, hire, catering and tours offers. The operation is supported by a 80+ volunteer team.

Purpose of the role

The General Assistants are at the heart of everything Chawton House does. The team supports every area of the organisation's operation, from working in the popular tea room to front of house, events, marketing and administrative support for the Deputy Director and Chief Executive. All General Assistants are trained as baristas, in food hygiene, first aid, front of house and basic collections care. As Chawton House grows and diversifies, the General Assistants will

Chawton House, Chawton, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1SJ

www.chawtonhouse.org | 01420 541 010 | info@chawtonhouse.org



continue to support these new areas and have the opportunity to develop their individual areas of interest (with the relevant training). If they wish, General Assistants aged 18 or over can train as Kitchen Assistants and join the casual team that supports the Cook and the wider catering operation.

Key areas of responsibility

- Support the whole Chawton House operation with a combination of front of house, retail, tea room, events, gardens and estate, collections and administrative duties.
- Work as a Tea Room Assistant in the Courtyard and Old Kitchen Tea Room, and any pop-up catering as required.
- Retail assistant in the Chawton House shop.
- Opening and closing the House at the start and end of opening.
- Staff the Tea Shed/Ticket Office and be the first point of contact for visitors to Chawton House.
- Support the Curator and Collections Manager with basic collections care.
- Flexible post to provide out-of-hours cover for private hire and other events.
- Administrative, marketing and events support
- Contribute to the charities plans and feed in ideas, taking the lead on own ideas once approved if appropriate.
- Assistance with projects, digital activity and public engagement.

This job description is not all encompassing. Over time the emphasis may alter without changing the general character of the role. Duties will be periodically reviewed with the post holder, and revised and updated in consultation if required.

Benefits

You are entitled to the following employee benefits:

- 15 % staff discount in the café and shop
- Access to professional development opportunities
- Use of *Gardeners World* 2for 1, Historic Houses and RHS company passes.
- Where applicable, employers contribution pension scheme.



Personal specification

Essential criteria	Assessed at application	Assessed at interview
Good understanding of excellent customer experience	x	x
Physically fit to do lifting and moving of displays, tables, chairs etc		x
Welcoming and helpful manner		x
Flexibility to attend out of hours events at short notice and when necessary	x	
Willingness to working flexibly on a range of tasks across a busy historic house		x
Pleasant and helpful manner which will make visitors feel welcome		x
Remains calm and effective in a fast-paced environment	x	x
Good oral and written communication skills	x	x
Independent worker who is flexible and will work as part of a team	x	x
Willingness to learn new skills and processes	x	x
Desirable criteria		
Experience of working or volunteering in a leisure, hospitality, culture or heritage organisation	x	
Work or voluntary experience of a customer-facing role	x	