



## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<b>Head of Decorative Arts Conservation</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>Royal Collection</b>
<b>SECTION/BRANCH:</b>	<b>Decorative Arts</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Marlborough House Workshops</b>
<b>REPORTING TO:</b>	<b>The Surveyor of The King's Works of Art</b>

### Job Context

Royal Collection Trust is charged with the care and preservation of the Royal Collection and its presentation to the public. The Royal Collection is one of the largest and most important art collections in the world. It comprises almost all aspects of the fine and decorative arts, runs to more than a million objects and is spread among 15 royal residences and former residences across the UK. At The King's Galleries in London and Edinburgh aspects of the Collection are displayed in a programme of temporary exhibitions. Many works from the Collection are on long-term loan to institutions throughout the UK, and short-term loans are regularly made to exhibitions around the world as part of a commitment to broaden public access and to show parts of the Collection in new contexts. The works of art in the Royal Collection are held by The King in trust for his successors and the nation.

Royal Collection Trust is responsible for the management and financial administration of the public opening of Buckingham Palace (including The King's Gallery, the Royal Mews and Clarence House), Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse (including The King's Gallery). The monies generated from admissions, and from associated commercial activities are invested in the care and conservation of the Royal Collection and the promotion of access and enjoyment through exhibitions, publications, loans and educational activities.

The Decorative Arts section is responsible for the management, conservation, loan, display and maintenance of all works of art in the Collection. It is also responsible for cataloguing and research into the Collection in response to enquiries from the public and in the preparation of exhibitions in The King's Galleries in London and Edinburgh. The Decorative Arts section also arranges for scholars and academic groups to have access to the Collection and leads on a programme of publications including catalogues raisonnés. The Surveyor of The King's Works of Art (who leads the section) has curatorial responsibility for over 800,000 works of art dispersed throughout fifteen Royal Palaces and residences. The internationally renowned collection comprises works of decorative art of almost every type from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, from arms and armour, sculpture, English and French furniture, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and tapestries, jewellery and *objets de vertu* as well as many world cultures works of art, largely acquired through official gifts to successive sovereigns.



Royal Collection Trust, York House, St James's Palace, London SW1A 1BQ  
T. +44 (0)20 7839 1377, F. +44 (0)20 7839 8168, [www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)

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This document is not contractual and may be subject to change following consultation with the post-holder



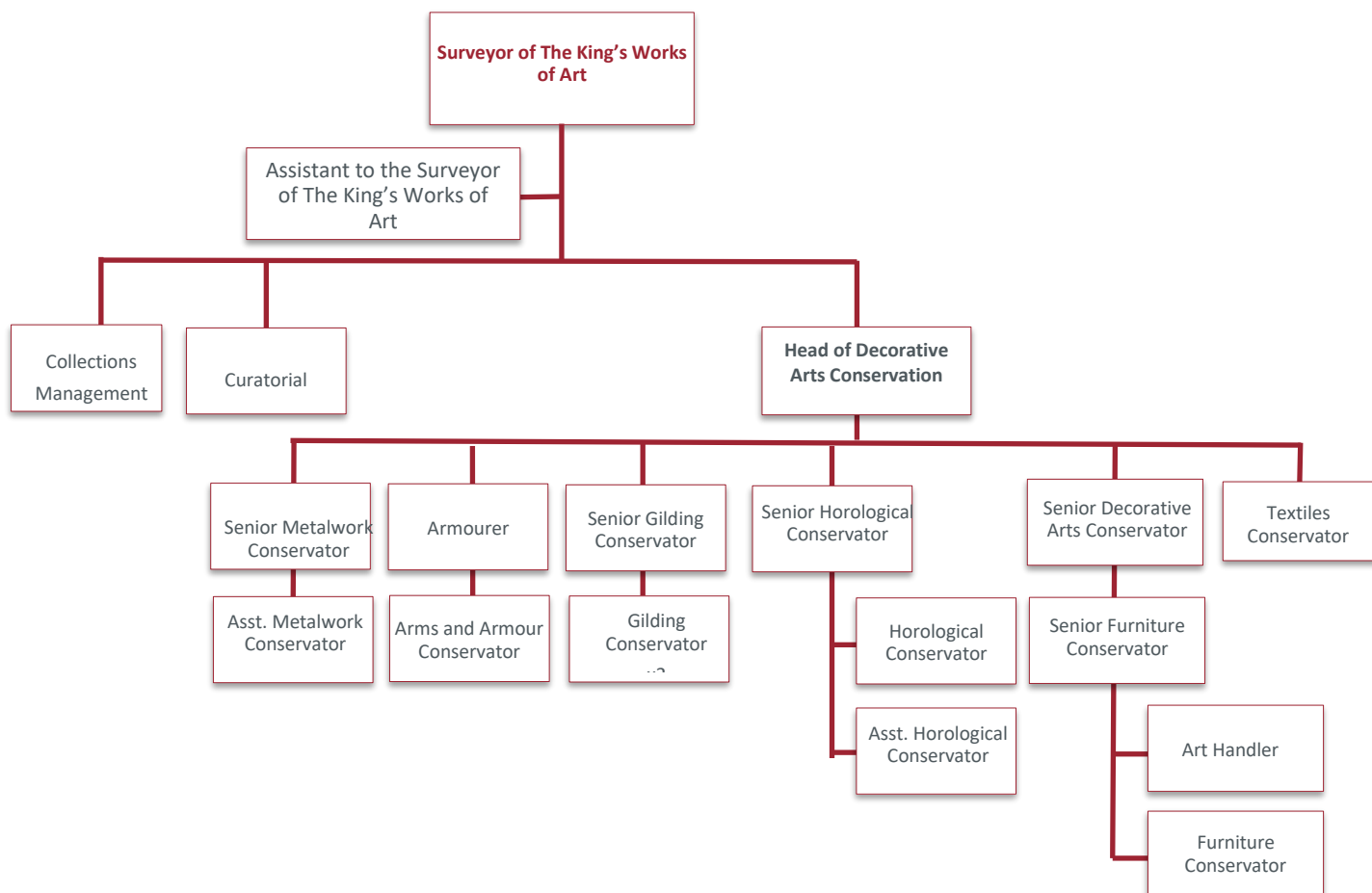
## Organisational Chart

The Head of Decorative Arts Conservation manages a team disposed across seven different conservation specialisms: Arms and Armour, Furniture, Gilding, Metalwork, Horology, Decorative Arts and Ceramics and Textiles. Each team is led by a Senior Conservator, all of whom report to the Head of Decorative Arts Conservation. Six of the seven Senior Conservators have line management responsibility for their teams. The Decorative Arts Art Handler, responsible for moving works of art for conservation and other purposes, also reports to the Head of Decorative Arts Conservation. In total the Head of Decorative Arts Conservation has seven direct line reports and there are 13 conservators in all within the department.

The post holder reports directly to the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art, who has strategic oversight of conservation in the Decorative Arts section and approves all treatment proposals in consultation with the Senior Conservators.

Internally, the postholder has day-to-day contact with all levels of Royal Collection staff, frequent contact with all levels of other Royal Household departments, particularly the Master of the Household's C Branch, occasional contact with other Households and, rarely, contact with Members of the Royal Family.

Externally, the postholder has contact with conservation subcontractors, the staff of other collections including Historic Royal Palaces and English Heritage, manufacturers and suppliers of materials and equipment, shipping agents, and members of the public.





## Job Purpose

The Head of Decorative Arts Conservation manages the work of the conservation teams and, in conjunction with the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art, is responsible for coordinating and overseeing all conservation projects within the section. The Head of Conservation also carries out conservation treatments within their own specialism.

## Principal Accountabilities

- To manage the programme of work for the conservation of decorative art, as agreed with the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art, producing priority lists, monitoring and updating on progress and reporting to the Surveyor on issues arising.
- To carry out agreed conservation treatments, and to assign work to and supervise other members of the team in carrying out such treatments, within agreed time frames, in accordance with professional ethics and relevant health and safety regulations, and ensuring that all treatments are properly documented.
- To ensure that the approach to conservation within the Decorative Arts section is in line with best practice with regard to Sustainability.
- To manage the Decorative Arts conservation teams of Royal Collection Trust, including the recruitment, supervision, safety, training, professional development, appraisal and welfare of the conservators.
- To manage the work of subcontract conservators in the conservation of decorative art, as agreed with the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art.
- To oversee the work of conservators in the Master of the Household's 'C' Branch as agreed by the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art.
- To liaise with the Senior Conservators, lead curators, Collections Management team and with the Arts Logistics and Storage Manager, in the safe and efficient storage of decorative art.
- To liaise with the loans officers and Exhibitions section, the Arts Logistics and Storage Manager, art handler, and crate suppliers and shipping agents externally, in the safe packing, movement and installation of works of art, both within the royal estate and to external venues.
- To liaise with manufacturers, suppliers and colleagues across RCT and in other institutions, regarding the design and/or fabrication of display, packing, transport and storage equipment.
- To act as a courier for works of art within the UK and internationally.
- To arrange for condition surveys of objects, and assessment of conditions in storage and display locations.
- More generally, to provide advice across the Royal Household on conservation policy and practice, including appropriate storage and display strategies, and to provide estimates of costs involved where required.
- To work with the Senior Conservators to ensure the workshops and studios are efficiently laid out, properly equipped and supplied, and maintained in a safe and tidy condition at all times.
- To work with the Assistant to the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art on the preparation and administration of the conservation budget.
- To carry out health and safety assessments and COSHH assessments in a regular and timely fashion.
- To act as an advocate for the conservation work of RCT, through lecturing, publishing, media activities (as appropriate) .

## Job Dimensions



The Head of Decorative Arts Conservation has responsibility for:

- Fourteen permanent staff including 7 direct line reports.

## Decision Making Responsibilities

- The post-holder will resolve all day-to-day issues that arise in the Decorative Arts Conservation workshops.
- The post-holder will evaluate and recommend options for conservation treatments, display, handling, packing and transportation to the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art.
- Decisions about individual treatments are made by the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art in consultation with the relevant conservators and the Head of Decorative Arts Conservation.
- The post holder will evaluate and recommend options to fulfil work programmes for the seven disciplines of Decorative Arts conservation.
- Issues of conservation policy and strategy are made in consultation with the Surveyor of The King's Works of Art, the Curatorial Committee and Operations Board of RCT, in line with the Trust's overall aims and objectives.

## Practical Requirements

The position is full-time, 37.5 hours a week, usually Monday to Friday though due to the nature of this position, flexibility is required in relation to working hours. The post-holder is principally based at the Marlborough House Workshops, but will be required to travel to the other conservation workshops and studios and to other royal residences and locations in the UK and occasionally overseas.

## Person Specification

### Essential

- A degree (or equivalent) in one discipline of decorative arts conservation.
- Substantial experience and highly developed, up-to-date practical skills in the conservation of works of art, and the ability to lead a team of Senior Conservators in the development and implementation of such skills.
- Sound knowledge and understanding of relevant conservation theory and ethics; materials science and technology; historic art materials and techniques; storage, transport and display issues; and health and safety practice as relevant to conservation workshops.
- Experience of scheduling and managing complex conservation projects in a busy setting, preferably within a working collection such as a major museum.
- Excellent communicator and interpersonal skills, with a collaborative approach, and able to influence at all levels and gain credibility quickly.
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- Line management experience. Organised with excellent time management skills, able to balance the competing operational demands whilst retaining focus on the delivery of projects
- Ability to work autonomously and use own initiative to solve problems and make decisions
- Competence in relevant IT (including imaging, databases and spreadsheets).
- A good people manager, able to lead and motivate, as well as coach and mentor individuals and facilitate personal and professional development
- Experience of lecturing, writing and publishing on the field of conservation, for both professional and general audiences.



## **Desirable**

- Experience of managing budgets.
- Experience of the conservation of works of art in the context of historic interiors.
- Nationally recognised status in the conservation profession through professional accreditation (ICON or equivalent).