JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	**Senior Arms and Armour Conservator**
DEPARTMENT:	**Decorative Arts**
SECTION/BRANCH:	**Decorative Arts Conservation**
LOCATION:	**Frogmore Workshops, Windsor Castle**
REPORTING TO:	**Head of Decorative Arts Conservation**

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), 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. The section is led by The Surveyor of The King's Works of Art who 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 16th 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.

Arms and Armour in the Royal Collection amounts to approximately 17,738 individual items.

Job Purpose

- To conserve arms and armour in the Royal Collection located in the Royal Residences and at other sites where the Royal Collection is on display.
- To carry out research into arms and armour in the Royal Collection as required in support of conservation treatments and curatorial projects.

Main Duties

- To prepare treatment proposals for approval by the Surveyor and on completion of conservation treatments to prepare detailed treatment reports and ensure these are added to the CMS.
- To carry out conservation treatments in accordance with the highest standards of conservation practice, and according to programmes of work agreed with The Surveyor of The King's Works of Art.
- To make surveys of the condition of arms & armour and recommendations for remedial treatment where necessary.
- To prepare arms and armour and complete condition reports for exhibitions and loan at The King's Galleries and elsewhere, and to assist with the installation of works of art for exhibition.
- To promote the best possible conditions for the preservation of arms and armour at all sites, having regard for the optimum environmental conditions and housekeeping practices in collaboration with other Royal Household Departments.
- To have responsibility for the Arms & Armour workshop at the Frogmore Conservation Workshops ensuring that it is kept clean and tidy and that a safe working environment is maintained.
- To be aware of and adhere to Health & Safety regulations, ensuring appropriate measures are in place for all tasks.
- To be responsible for the Arms and Armour conservation budget.
- To line manage staff and students as required.
- To research and maintain a constant awareness of best practice in the conservation of Arms & Armour.
- To share the general responsibility for movement control, ensuring that all movements of works of art are recorded immediately on the Royal Collection Collections Management System CMS.
- To support Royal Collection curatorial and conservation projects as required, including displays and publications where arms and armour are involved.
- To maintain an inventory of the tools and equipment held by the Royal Collection for the purpose of the job, and an inventory of any personal tools or equipment held in the workshop.
- Where appropriate, to publish articles arising from the conservation work carried out, and, where possible, to contribute to the Royal Collection's learning programme.
- To lead training sessions and guided visits for staff, and when required, to host researchers and arms and armour specialists with enquiries.

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

Job Dimensions

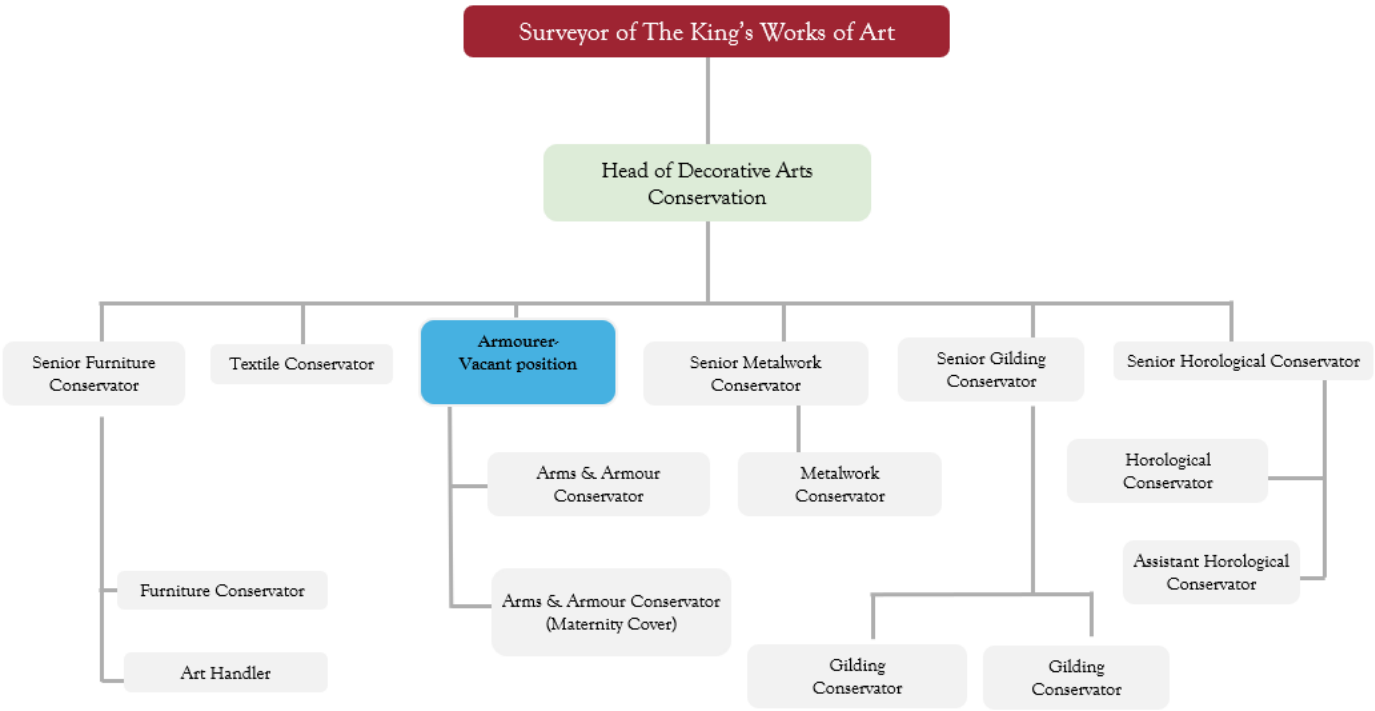
The post-holder has one direct report, and they will be required to assist with supervision of temporary contract workers, interns and work placements as the need arises.

The post-holder has budgetary responsibilities for Arms and Armour conservation.

The principal working relationships are with The Surveyor of The King's Works of Art, The Head of Decorative Arts Conservation, the Arms and Armour Conservator and other colleagues across the Royal Collection and Royal Household at various sites.

External working relationships include those with Historic Royal Palaces (including Hampton Court Palace and the Tower of London) and The Royal Armouries which house significant holdings of Royal Collection Arms and Armour.

Organisational Chart



Decision Making Responsibilities

The Senior Arms and Armourer Conservator has responsibility for the day to day running of the workshop, staff and conservation projects.

Overall conservation priorities and projects will be decided in conjunction with the Head of Decorative Art Conservation and The Surveyor of the King's Works of Art.

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Practical Requirements

An average working week comprises 37.5 hours, Monday to Friday, excluding lunchbreaks, though due to the nature of the role some flexibility will be needed.

The post is based at Frogmore Workshops, within the Windsor Castle Home Park and the general expectation is that the post holder would attend the workshop 5 days a week. However, the post-holder will be required to work at other Royal Residences, which may involve staying away for 1 or more nights.

The post-holder may also be required to stay away from home occasionally to work at other sites or for exhibitions and loans. This may include travel abroad for example, when undertaking loan courier duties.

The job can be physically demanding; There will be times when working at heights is required, and physical object movement will also be needed. A clean driving licence would be an advantage.

Consideration will be given to the requirements of the role and whether adjustments could be made to accommodate any disability.

Person Specification

Essential Qualifications, knowledge and experience

- The postholder should possess a degree in a relevant conservation discipline or be able to demonstrate significant equivalent knowledge of the conservation of Arms and Armour.
- The postholder should have extensive experience of the conservation of silver, enamels, gilt and patinated bronze, ferrous and base metals, leather, textile and organic materials.
- Several years practical experience of the conservation of European, Asian and East Asian arms and armour is essential. Experience with outdoor ordnance of bronze and iron and is also desirable.
- The postholder will have experience of specifying, monitoring and maintaining the correct environmental conditions for arms and armour on display and of the preparation, packing, transport and installation of works of art for temporary exhibition.
- Good organisational ability with a methodical and logical approach to tasks or projects and excellent attention to detail.
- Confident communicator, able to effectively explain conservation concepts, research findings and treatment options to different audiences.
- Training will be provided in specific software but evidence of good general IT skills and competency in the use of databases is required.
- The ability to work independently and collaborate closely with colleagues in the Royal Collection and beyond.
- Excellent manual skills and practical experience with traditional materials and techniques of arms and armour.
- Some experience in treating non-metals where they appear in conjunction with metals i.e. non-metal components including wood, leather, hide, textiles, ivory and mother of pearl and other inlays

Desirable

- Icon accreditation.
- Some knowledge of scientific analysis and techniques to allow technical examination of objects.

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