Archive Assistant, Oldham Archives

Freelance position, £120/day, 3 days/week, 9 months fixed term

This is an exciting opportunity to be involved a major improvement in access to and storage of Oldham Archives’ collections. In the first stage of this project in Summer 2025 we will be moving our Local Studies and Archives collection to a new archives facility as part of the Spindles Town Centre redevelopment. We plan to open our new research and engagement spaces to the public in Autumn 2025.

We are currently working on packing and preparation of the Archives and Local Studies collections to support this project. We are looking for a freelance Archive Assistant who can support our Exhibition and Collection Co-ordinator (Archives) to assist with ongoing collection care, documentation, packing, relocation and decanting of collections.

Key Tasks:

Collections Management

1. To prepare collections for conservation, relocation and accessible storage.
2. To undertake documentation on relevant collections and update the collections database.
3. To participate in the physical movement of Archives and Local Studies collections between the existing and new store including packing and arranging a diverse range of collections.
4. To support safe and accessible storage arrangements by undertaking regular building and environment checks.
5. To ensure that Collections Management practices adhere to professional archive standards and accepted best practice.

Public access & engagement

1. To assist with research on the collections to support display, interpretation and online access.
2. To support the digitisation of collections and online information which extend remote access.

1. To assist with exhibition preparation and display including research, object selection, interpretation, installation and other engagement activities.
2. To provide access to the collection for researchers and other public enquiries.
3. To provide public talks and behind the scenes tours.
4. Contribute to marketing and social media output about collections content.

Other

To support apprentices, customer experience staff and volunteers as required.

To carry out duties on behalf of the Collections and Exhibitions team members in their absence.

To work flexibly in the interest of the service including attendance at key events and occasional out of hours and weekend working.

What we are looking for:

Essential:

Experience of working in an Archive environment.

Experience of handling, cataloguing and digitisation of Archives and Local Studies collections.

Experience of the practical aspects of location movement and packing, including condition checking as well as a good working knowledge of collection management standards.

Experience of working with at least one specialist collection management database.

Effective communication skills (written, verbal, ICT and interpersonal skills) and attention to detail with proven ability to maintain a high level of accuracy and motivation when performing routine and repetitive tasks.

Experience of effective multi-disciplinary team working.

Evidence of high-level organisational skills including the prioritisation of tasks and a methodological approach. Ability to manage workload with minimal supervision.

Awareness of health and safety matters affecting staff working in Archive stores and with collections.

Desirable:

A recognised degree in relevant area of work or comparable experience in the workplace.

Experience of using a bar-coding system.

Experience of working on a large-scale collection move or collection store decant.

A clean driving license and the ability to drive a hire van would also be useful.