



Magdalene College CAMBRIDGE

College Assistant Professor in English: further particulars

The College

Magdalene is a college of the University of Cambridge, admitting students in all subjects, with about 330 undergraduates and about 120 graduate students resident, and approximately 70 teaching and research Fellows and College Lecturers. Founded in 1428, the College has nearly 600 years of academic tradition behind it, and boasts a rich architectural heritage shaped over centuries. It is notable for its libraries: two historic collections, in the form of the Pepys Library and the Old Library, and the New Library, a state-of-the-art teaching collection, archive and gallery that won the RIBA Stirling Prize in 2022. The College's Master is Sir Christopher Greenwood.

Further details of the College can be found on its website:
<https://www.magd.cam.ac.uk/>

English at Magdalene

Magdalene is arguably the home of English Studies in its modern form. I. A. Richards, author of *Practical Criticism* (1929), began as an undergraduate at the College in 1911. After a long period teaching at Harvard, he returned to Magdalene and lived here until his death in 1979. One of Richards' early students at Magdalene was the poet and critic Sir William Empson, author of *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930). C. S. Lewis became a Fellow of the College after moving from Oxford in 1954 to become the University's first Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English. More recently, the distinguished American literary critic Professor Helen Vendler was an Honorary Fellow. Building on these rich foundations, English in the College embraces the full range of the subject's contemporary reach and methodological diversity.

The College also has a virtually unrivalled tradition in poetry: Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, T. S. Eliot, Seamus Heaney and Les Murray were all members of Magdalene; three of them were also recipients of the Nobel Prize for Literature. The current Honorary Fellowship includes the former Poet Laureate, Dame Carol Ann Duffy, and The Rt Rev. and the Rt Hon. the Lord Rowan Williams of Oystermouth – a published poet as well as a former Archbishop of Canterbury and Master of the College.

Our current teaching and research staff includes Prof. Marcus Waithe, Professor of Literature and the Applied Arts (currently serving as Deputy Head of the School of Arts and Humanities for Research); Dr M E J Hughes, who becomes an emeritus Fellow

when she retires as Director of Studies this September, while remaining Pepys Librarian; Dr Michelle Taylor, Armstrong T.S. Eliot Research Fellow; and Dr Dominic Walker, College Lecturer and Leverhulme Early Career Fellow. Professor Helen Cooper is a Life Fellow and emeritus Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature. Professor James Raven is a Life Fellow who works on the History of the Book.

The Role

The College seeks to appoint a College Assistant Professor in English. The post is for a term of three years and eleven months in the first instance; assuming satisfactory performance the contract is renewable beyond the fixed term to a permanent position, subject to election by the Governing Body. The successful candidate will be elected to an Official Fellowship for the duration of the post. Applicants should have a strong record of teaching English literature, as well as a record of research and publication commensurate with the stage of their career.

The successful candidate will be expected to provide College undergraduate teaching (supervisions) in at least two and preferably three papers of the English Tripos, as well as dissertations, and will take the lead in directing undergraduate studies in English in the College. Applications are invited from candidates working in *any field* of English Literature. Preference may be given to candidates who can combine period paper supervision with supervision in one of the compulsory cross-period papers, namely 'Practical Criticism and Critical Practice' (1&2) and 'Tragedy'. The successful candidate will be expected to give preference in their supervising hours to Magdalene students, but supervisions may be given for other Colleges, in particular where this would assist with supervision swap arrangements. The successful candidate will be expected to offer 160 hours of teaching across the academic year (an average of 8 hours per week during full term).

For further details about the teaching of English at Magdalene see:

<https://www.magd.cam.ac.uk/study-magdalene/undergraduate-study/subjects/english>

For further details about the teaching of the English Tripos at Cambridge, including the list of current undergraduate papers:

<https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/course.htm>

The successful candidate will be expected to act as Director of Studies for some or all of the College's undergraduate English students, and will participate in the admission of undergraduate students, which includes Open Days and outreach work. They will be expected to engage in research and publication, and in scholarly activities more broadly. The successful candidate will also be expected to take on a substantial College Office, such as Tutor (a pastoral support role) if requested to do so. Such roles would be additionally remunerated. The teaching commitment for the post has been set with a view to enabling the successful candidate to take on such a position. Willingness and ability to take on such roles will be a consideration in the appointment process, and successful performance in such a role will be a relevant consideration for renewal of the contract.

As an Official Fellow, the successful candidate will be a Member of the Governing Body, which entails duties of trusteeship, and may be asked to serve on College committees.

College-appointments are members of the English Faculty and are provided with an academic staff entry on the Faculty website. It is important to the College that the successful candidate engages with Faculty affairs, both in educational matters and where research is concerned.

Duties

Key teaching and administrative duties include:

- Directing the studies of undergraduate students in English, of whom there are approximately 5-8 in each year. This role involves advising students on their studies, arranging their supervisions with colleagues from across Cambridge, encouraging their progress, providing letters of reference and arranging beginning-of-term and end-of-term meetings. An entertainment allowance is provided to support social functions. Directors of Studies are also encouraged to attend Matriculation and Graduation Dinners.
- Attending meetings of Directors of Studies and monitoring updates for Directors of Studies sent by the College and by the English Faculty.
- Teaching undergraduates in English in supervisions for at least 8 hours per week in Full Term.
- Participating in the annual English admissions process. This involves holding admissions interviews shortly after the end of Michaelmas Term and taking part in selection meetings at College and intercollegiate level, including the winter candidate 'pool'. The appointee will also contribute to Open Days each year, and will participate in other access and widening participation initiatives aimed at attracting candidates.
- Assisting in other ways with the work of the College, for example with the selection process for Junior Research Fellowship competitions, or with the judging for creative writing or essay competitions.

It is expected that the successful candidate will engage in research and publication in peer-reviewed journals. The University of Cambridge and other institutions offer a wide range of relevant professional development courses, with which the successful candidate will be encouraged and expected to engage.

Qualifications and Experience

The successful candidate will normally be expected to have a PhD in a relevant area, or be about to be awarded their PhD by the start of the appointment. They will show evidence of ability to engage in high-level research in English, with publications and research activity commensurate with their career stage. They will show evidence of ability to teach English effectively at undergraduate level. They will show evidence of ability to work together with colleagues in a collegial and collaborative manner.

Remuneration

The annual stipend, depending upon experience, will be equivalent to points 41 to 44 of the Cambridge University Scale (currently £38,636 to £42,091), and is pensionable under the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).

Any additional teaching beyond the contractual requirement of 160 hours a year will be paid at the normal hourly rates for College supervisions.

Other Details

The College is able to make limited grants towards certain research expenses. The successful candidate may be granted sabbatical leave at reasonable intervals by the Governing Body.

Official Fellows are eligible to take a buffet lunch free of charge in College on any or all weekdays, Monday to Friday. This applies when Fellows' lunch is served and there is no payment in lieu for occasions when there is no lunch. Official Fellows may also take dinner free of charge on High Table or in the Senior Combination Room when it is served, and may sign in guests on most dining nights; guests are paid for by the Fellow. Wine taken by Fellows and their guests is also charged at a reasonable rate.

Within the constraints of availability, Official Fellows may apply for single accommodation in College (in the Precincts), for which there is a service charge. Accommodation in the Estate is subject to availability.

The successful candidate will be employed by the College for an initial term of three years and eleven months, from 1 September 2026 to 31 July 2030, as a College Lecturer in accordance with the College Statutes. Subject to satisfactory performance the contract is renewable beyond the fixed term period to a permanent position, subject to election by the Governing Body. The successful candidate will be elected to an Official Fellowship, and will be subject to the residence requirements for College Officers.

Any offer of employment will be subject to the applicant holding the right to work in the UK. The role may be eligible for someone to undertake whilst holding a Skilled Worker visa. The College is a licensed sponsor but eligibility for sponsorship will be dependent on individual applicant circumstances. Please e-mail the Human Resources department separately on hr@magd.cam.ac.uk if you believe you will require a visa.

Applications

Applications for the College Assistant Professor in English position must be made through the CASC FAS online application system. Candidates should submit a covering letter (including details of teaching and administrative experience, and summarising current and planned research), their curriculum vitae, and the names and contact details of two referees. Referees will receive an email with details of how to provide a reference through the CASC FAC online application system. Applicants are required to ask their referees to submit their references through the online application system by the closing date for applications. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that references are received.

Longlisted candidates will be invited to submit up to 10,000 words of unpublished or recently published written work. Shortlisted candidates will be additionally invited to submit a set of model teaching materials.

The closing date for applications is noon on Monday 20th April 2026. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview, expected to take place in June 2026. Interviews will be in-person or for specific circumstances may be via Zoom at the discretion of the appointments panel.