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Message from the Master

I’m pleased that you’re interested in joining the team at Selwyn.

In the eight years I’ve been here, I’ve seen that the great strength of the college is the way it combines academic excellence with being a strong community. We have limitless ambition, and we expect our students to be the best they can possibly be, but we’re also a friendly place where life-long bonds are formed. Selwyn prides itself on the way everyone works together for the greater good: so it’s our porters who provide a warm welcome to the site, it’s our gardeners who shape the wonderful grounds we inhabit, and we have a terrific team of housekeepers, caterers, conference, maintenance and administrative staff who work to the highest of standards. The goal is simple: a world-class environment to support the brightest students from across Britain and around the globe who study here.

The Bursar is at the very heart of what we do. Martin Pierce has done an extraordinary job in the time he has been here, guiding the college through the pandemic and keeping our operations going and our finances as secure as possible. Under his leadership, we also completed our new £13m library and auditorium project. He well deserves his retirement, and he will leave with the college’s praises ringing in his ears!

Selwyn is by no means the richest college in Cambridge, but we make up for that by being agile and imaginative in the way we operate. We punch above our weight academically and have recently finished in the top 10 colleges in the league tables. We have one of the highest proportions of state school entries in Cambridge, with 80% of this year’s freshers state-educated; and we believe that our increasing diversity is helping to drive up academic standards. We have a strong external profile and we use print and social media to communicate regularly to our highly-engaged alumni. We have a proud record of being the college where Kathleen Lyttelton, wife of the first Master in 1882, was a pioneer of the Cambridge suffrage movement; and we appointed the first female director of music and the first female head porter in Oxbridge. We treat our staff properly: we were early adopters of the real living wage, and were ranked 4th out of the 31 colleges in Cambridge for our support of lower-paid workers.

We’re looking for a Bursar who can keep the college moving forwards in what are difficult times externally, as we recover from the pandemic and contemplate an uncertain future for fees and research funding – and increasing external scrutiny of the way we operate. I’m confident that we can be successful, but this role will require more than ever someone with a vision and the ability to implement it in harmony with the wishes of the Governing Body. We need someone with financial acumen, and also strategic and diplomatic skills that can be deployed in the wider university and beyond – plus the knack of bringing out the best in colleagues. The present incumbent, and his equally esteemed predecessor Nick Downer, have managed to do this and become friends to many of us too. All of us in the college are keen that we find an ambitious Bursar who can inspire future generations in this truly special place.

Roger Mosey
Selwyn is a constituent college of the University of Cambridge. It takes its name from George Augustus Selwyn, who was the first Bishop of New Zealand (1841-68) and later Bishop of Lichfield (1868-78), and in whose memory the college was founded.

The college opened at the start of the academic year in 1882, when 28 undergraduates were admitted. The teaching staff comprised the Master, the Tutor and one non-resident lecturer. At the time it was seen as being away from the Cambridge mainstream, despite only being a short walk from King’s College and the centre of the city. Over time with the opening of the University Library in the 1930s and the later development of the Sidgwick Site – which includes major faculty buildings such as History, English and Law – right next to Selwyn; and due to the steady growth of the University and its development of the West Cambridge site, Selwyn now stands at its geographical heart.

Selwyn grew in size over the years and its site expanded in the late 1960s with the building of Cripps Court, thanks to the generosity of the Cripps Foundation. More expansion took place in the 2000s with two phases of development based on a new court, Ann’s Court, named after Ann Dobson. Chris and Ann Dobson provided almost all of the funding for this development. In 2021, Ann’s Court was completed with the opening of the new Bartlam Library and Quarry Whitehouse Auditorium. Around 70% of the college rooms are ensuite following a major refurbishment of Cripps Court ten years ago.

The college was one of the first in Cambridge to go mixed, admitting women in 1976. Today the college is home to around 390 undergraduates; over 290 postgraduate students, drawn from universities all over the world; the Master and over 60 Fellows. The college has a committed and friendly body of non-academic staff numbering around 110.

Former students from Selwyn College have become prominent in many walks of life, including the actors Hugh Laurie and Tom Hollander, the computer pioneer Sophie Wilson, the Swiftkey entrepreneur Jon Reynolds, the founder of Bloomsbury Publishing Nigel Newton, the former Archbishop of York John Sentamu, the writer Robert Harris, the academics Professor Claire Warwick and Professor Juliet John, the celebrated Indian lawyer Zia Mody, and the politicians Sir Simon Hughes, Scottish government Finance Minister Kate Forbes, and Shadow Secretary of State for Health Wes Streeting.

Today, Selwyn College is a charity. Ultimate authority in the college resides in the Governing Body which meets once a term, with students represented, and comprises the trustees of the charity. However, much business is formally delegated to the College Council; and day-to-day management, and the execution of policy within broad guidelines, are primarily for various college officers e.g. the Master, Vice-Master, Bursar, Senior Tutor, Admissions Tutors and Dean.

For information on the finance and governance of the college, please follow the link below.

http://www.sel.cam.ac.uk/selwyn-college/finances-and-governance/
The Bursarship

The college seeks to appoint a full-time Bursar from 1 September 2022 to succeed Mr Martin Pierce, who is retiring. The Bursar holds a college fellowship and reports via the Master to the Governing Body. He/she is ex officio a member of the College Council. Although written in rather quaint language, the essential duties of the Bursar are accurately captured in the college statutes as follows:

“The Bursar shall under the direction of the College Council have the care of the property, income and expenditure of the college and shall be responsible for the proper keeping of its accounts. He or she shall superintend the supply of provisions and the domestic establishment of the college and shall, with the approval of the Head of House, appoint and dismiss the servants of the college, agree their conditions of employment and regulate their work.”

The Bursar has a general responsibility for all matters affecting the college finances and management of the college estate, staff, properties, trustee and other funds. The college’s endowment is currently £60 million, mostly in stocks and shares, and the college’s investments are decided by a committee, chaired by the Master, with advice from the college’s investment advisers.

Other bursarial responsibilities include:

- the delivery of key building projects, such as the current low-carbon development of three large hostels and the transformation of the old library into seminar rooms and a new home for archives, rare books and the development team

- the planning and optimal application of current income (from fees, investments and trusts) and expenditures to support the college’s charitable objectives

- the preparation of budgets and annual accounts, and the arrangement of audits; and advising the Governing Body and Council on financial issues and risk management
ensuring the smooth and efficient running of the college’s domestic operations – which range from catering and housekeeping to gardens and maintenance – which is led on a day-to-day basis by the operations manager who reports to the Bursar (organogram attached)

definitions and terms of employment of all non-academic staff (including contracts, salaries, pensions, work permits etc.) in association with the HR manager

the monitoring of existing and proposed legislation affecting the college, including health and safety, freedom of information, data protection, and other legal and compliance issues

the overall responsibility for the management of the Bursary, in conjunction with the college’s finance manager

liaison with University officers in general and with bursars of other colleges in particular (including service on the Bursars’ Committee); and the membership of a number of college committees

collaboration with the development office on fundraising and seeking future financial support for the college’s ambitions

The Bursar is also part of a weekly management meeting with the Master, Vice-Master and Senior Tutor at which general issues about the running of the college are raised and are either managed directly or referred to the Council for further consideration.
The Person

We are looking for a candidate with

- The highest professional standards and unimpeachable integrity
- A commitment to excellence in higher education and to the goals of Selwyn College
- Excellent financial skills/acumen with the ability to translate/interpret financial data
- A strong grasp of strategy
- The ability to interact with a wide range of students, alumni and staff in a way that combines authority with approachability
- Knowledge of all relevant legal and regulatory regimes
- Good presentation skills and the ability to represent Selwyn College effectively when dealing with external stakeholders
- Excellent leadership and interpersonal skills
- Flexible pragmatic problem solving.
Experience

The successful candidate should have

- Senior leadership experience

- A successful record of managing a range of key operational functions; ideally including human resources, finance, IT and estates, and optimising use of an organisation’s assets

- Experience of building a strong and responsive service culture, working effectively with multiple stakeholders

- A proven record of innovation, and experience of successfully initiating, planning and driving change and performance improvement

- Extensive experience of providing broader strategic leadership, and contributing to developing and articulating a clear vision

- Experience of leading effective multi-disciplinary teams and developing a strong culture of collaboration and team-working across wide ranging functions.
Salary, Pension and Allowances

The salary for the full-time Bursar is expected to be £90,702. Academic salaries are renewed periodically and the Bursar’s salary will be adjusted in accordance with future reviews. Fellows of the college are entitled to seven free meals in college each week. The person appointed may join the contributory pension Universities Superannuation Scheme.

The appointment will be for five years in the first instance, with a probationary period of one year. Thereafter, subject to satisfactory performance, re-appointment of the fellowship at five-yearly intervals may be expected up to the retiring age of 67. The College Council would give the office-holder at least six months’ notice of any intention not to reappoint. The office-holder would likewise be obliged to give the College Council six months’ notice of a wish to terminate employment.
The Recruitment Process

Application Process

Applications should include a cover sheet (available for download here), full curriculum vitae, and a covering statement outlining key matching experience and rationale for applying for the post.

Applications should be sent by email to the Master’s Assistant: masters-assistant@sel.cam.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is **Tuesday 1 March 2022**.

Enquiries may be addressed to the Master’s Assistant by email, or telephone: 01223 335890/764466.

Interview Dates

Preliminary interviews – 21 March 2022

Final interviews – 29 March 2022

Selwyn College

Grange Road
Cambridge
CB3 9DQ
Tel: 01223 335846
www.sel.cam.ac.uk