

Job Description

Landscape and Grounds Operative

Salary:	Grade 3
Contract:	Full time, ongoing
Location:	Canterbury
Responsible to:	Grounds, Landscape and Biodiversity Manager
Job family:	Operational

Job purpose

To maintain and improve the external environment of the Canterbury campus to required standard as stated in the service level statement, for the benefit of staff, students and visitors.

The average working hours for this role are 35 hours per week, split into seasonal working:

Summer: Monday to Thursday 08.00 to 16.30, Friday 08.00 to 14.30 (total 36.45 hours)

Winter: Monday to Wednesday 08.00 to 15.30, Thursday 08.00 to 15.00, Friday 08.00 to 14.00. (Total 31.75 hours)

Key accountabilities

The following are the main duties for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Work with colleagues in the Grounds Team providing a wide range of planned and reactive horticultural services to ensure a safe and aesthetically pleasing soft landscape environment for all staff, students and visitors to the University.
- Proactively carry out work in line with the landscape specification document to ensure annual landscape maintenance occurs in a timely manner.
- Carry out regular maintenance and project work to enhance the biodiversity of the campus and help deliver implementation of the published Environmental Management System.
- Work with a proactive awareness of health and safety issues in order to ensure that the University and Estates Department's guidelines and procedures on health and safety are adhered to all times.
- To work effectively with university provided IT technology including both hardware and software to enable the production of management information to support service delivery and development.
- Drive and operate University owned plant, vehicles and equipment to carry out horticultural tasks around the estate in a safe and compliant manner.
- To work effectively with colleagues in the Grounds Team in order to ensure the best use of skills and experience to achieve the team's objectives.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- To work with daily direction, but with discretion as to how to perform the duties of the role. Examples of decisions taken is the order of work; appropriate tools , machinery and chemicals to apply to problems;

balance of time taken to quality of work produced. Decisions are made within a context of limited resources, tight budgets and deadlines.

- Role holders will be expected to use their initiative to identify remedial work needed and act on it or ensure it is reported for others in the team to complete. They will be entrusted with a level of autonomy and to be an active part of the team working to deliver an estate condition in line with aspirations of the University of Kents master plan. To be able to work to tight deadlines and flexibly to work within the constraints of the weather.
- Documented service level statements are in place which gives high level guidance and quality standards: the role holder will interpret these and apply practical solutions to ensure compliance.
- Risks associated with the role mainly relate to health and safety. A poor decision by the role holder could impact on staff, students or visitors. Examples of most extreme outcomes would be major injury or death caused by unsafe working practices (e.g. driving, chainsaw use, mowing or strimming etc).

Facts & figures

The total size of the Canterbury campus is 300 acres, with the site split in two distinct parts, academic and residential. The department is expected to visit each part of the campus twice a month and meet other set standard level agreements and KPIs.

The campus has a wide range of landscape features from vistas over the city of Canterbury to woodland glades, ponds and formal gardens. This is mixed with various shrub beds and lawned areas, some of which are planned for renovation over the next five years.

The Landscape and Grounds team also undertake some work around the entrances to our 300-acre farm just to the north of the campus.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: Students and staff at all levels, including senior management team members

External: Visitors, members of the public, consultants, contractors, suppliers and event organisers. Regional and national agencies, local authorities.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Repetitive limb movements
- Regular use of screen display equipment
- Noisy working environment (above 80d)
- Working with machinery (please specify any vibration hazards)
- Working with chemicals (inc. requirement to wear latex gloves and inc. work with CO2 or N2 gasses)
- Potential exposure to asbestos or other dusts
- Working in confined spaces
- Working at heights
- Prolonged physical/manual work/Manual handling (inc. human beings)
- Vocational driving on & off campus (includes use of cars, vans, ride-on mowers, buggies)
- Prolonged weather hazard exposure – wind/rain/snow/pollen/UV & sun
- Working in isolation
- Contact with Human fluids (blood, saliva etc)
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends

- Ability to occasionally travel in a timely and efficient manner between campuses

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- NVQ 2 or equivalent in related area e.g. Horticulture, Sports turf or Maintenance of Amenity facilities (A)
- Good computing skills, especially in MS Word, Outlook and Excel (A)
- Chainsaw CS 30 & 31; Pole saw CS48 or equivalent or a willingness to undergo training (A)
- Full UK manual Driving licence, you will be driving University vehicles and transporting equipment (A)
- Proven experience of all aspects of horticultural maintenance in a medium to large organisation (A, I)
- Knowledge of maintenance techniques and processes inherent in the upkeep of artificial and natural landscapes (I)
- Proven experience of a wide range of mowing machinery and techniques (A,I)
- Operate and maintain a wide range of grounds care machinery including woodchippers/shredders (A,I)
- Drive a range of tractors and operate both PTO and ground driven equipment (A, I)
- Identify a wide range of both native and non-native plants, trees, shrubs and bedding plants using both common and botanical nomenclature (I, T)
- Work in an organised manner using your knowledge and expertise to deliver on time and to standard (I)
- Ability to work efficiently on own as well as in a team (I)
- Ability to interpret information clearly and instruct others in relevant area of work (I)
- Excellent communication skills (I)
- Up to date with current techniques used in Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance (I)
- Knowledge and awareness of health and safety policy and practices in relation to grounds and garden operations (I)
- Flexibility to alter working hours and willingness to be on call for severe weather and other ground care emergencies (I)
- Willingness to undertake all personal development and training required to maintain skills and knowledge (I)
- Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- GCSE Maths & English Grade C/4 or above or equivalent (A)
- Membership of a related trade body (A)
- Set up heights of cut on ride on cylinder and rotary mowers (T)
- Knowledge of a range of strimmer's and attachments and how to operate and maintain (A, T)
- Set out a range of sports pitches from scratch, or the ability and willingness to study and learn (A, I)
- An understanding and awareness of current environmental management biodiversity (A, I)
- Previous experience with an electronic maintenance workflow system e.g. Invida (A)
- Driving licence allowing use of trailers or a willingness to undergo training (I)
- Previous experience of working with apprentices and less experienced ground worker (e.g. work experience) (A, I)
- City and Guilds/Lantra or NPTC spraying certificates PA 1, 2 & 6 qualification (A)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage