This updated edition of the Museums Association’s (MA’s) Salary guidelines should, perhaps, be issued with a health warning in the light of the current economic crisis.

Encouragingly, the MA’s research points to an overall improvement and greater parity in pay at most levels in our sector, but there are recent signs that the pay gap between national and university museums on one hand and independent and local authority museums on the other may be beginning to widen. Rather more worryingly, at the most basic entry level pay in some non-national organisations is still so far behind the guidelines as to be almost insulting.

What this may suggest is that as funding becomes more constrained, some organisations may be inclined to lose sight of the need not just to retain and reward existing expertise but to develop promising new colleagues who will in time become experts themselves and who will bring new energy, fresh thinking and greater diversity into our organisations. Because people are by far the most cash-expensive element of museums’ budgets, and therefore obvious targets for knee-jerk cost-cutting, there can be a tendency in times of financial hardship to lose sight of the fact that without good people our collections effectively become dead assets.

Building and maintaining an increasingly confident and diverse workforce, as we have been doing collectively over the past decade or so, hasn’t happened by accident. We must make sure that we don’t slip backwards to a point where we have to begin building again in order to respond creatively to economic recovery when it comes. In the short term this may indeed mean fewer jobs and more frozen posts, but it must not also signal a lower value being assigned to those that are available. Pay levels that appropriately reflect skills, qualifications and experience are vital to museums’ abilities to meet both public expectations and funders’ requirements. Whatever else happens, we must not lose sight of the fact that, in our commitment to public and academic engagement with our collections, in the end we are all about people.

The Museums Association staff involved with the report, particularly Rebecca Jacobs, Caitlin Griffiths and Maurice Davies, have put an enormous amount of time and thought into its accuracy and analysis; it is now up to us, collectively, to ensure that their effort is not wasted!

Nichola Johnson
Convener, MA Professional Development Committee and director, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts
Museums are places of inspiration, engagement and creativity. Both the government\(^1\) and the public\(^2\) acknowledge the contribution they make to society. They preserve, research and illuminate the past and help us to make sense of the present and the future. Museums not only enrich our cultural life, they also make a valuable economic contribution.

This is only made possible through the work of museum staff. They bring the collections to life and enable the public to have access to, and engage with, their cultural heritage.

These best practice salary guidelines have been produced in response to the findings of the report Pay in Museums\(^3\), 2004, which highlighted the state of pay in the museum sector.

Purpose of the guidelines

The guidelines are intended as a practical document to be used when setting starting salaries for posts within museums. They can also be used as an advocacy tool to raise the issue of pay with employers and funding bodies. Content includes suggested salaries for a range of museum posts, and comparisons of salaries of similar posts in related sectors. The guidelines seek to raise awareness of the issues surrounding pay within museums and generally improve levels of pay within the sector.

How the guidelines were compiled

The guidelines and suggested salaries have been produced with information and advice gathered from:

- Pay in Museums report, 2004
- recent job descriptions
- local government and civil service banding
- personnel departments
- related sectors such as libraries and archives
- job evaluation schemes and competency frameworks.

Many groups within the sector contributed valuable input and advice, such as the Association of Independent Museums, the National Museum Directors’ Conference Human Resources Forum and the Museum Professionals Group. From the MA, members of the council and in particular the professional development committee provided detailed guidance and suggestions. Members of staff who contributed comments and support include Mark Taylor, Maurice Davies, Caitlin Griffiths and Catrina Lucas. Nikola Burdon was responsible for overseeing the original 2006 project and Rebecca Jacobs managed the 2009 update of the guidelines.

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\(^1\) ‘We in government are passionate about the importance of our cultural heritage, and its place in the wider world. I believe that museums and galleries are at the heart of this.’ Estelle Morris, arts minister. Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st–century life. Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2005

\(^2\) • The 2,500 museums in the UK receive more than 100 million visits each year, more than to all the country’s live sporting events
  • 37% of UK adult residents, over 17 million people, visit museums and galleries at least once a year. This is one of the highest proportions in Europe
  • Research shows high public satisfaction levels with museums, rising from 73% in 2000 to 80% in 2002 - one of the few increases in public satisfaction across all public services in that period.

 Manifesto for Museums, 2004

\(^3\) The full report and summary can be downloaded from the MA’s website: www.museumsassociation.org
### Approach

This document is intended to be of use to all UK museums, whether a large national with over 500 staff or a small independent museum with one paid member of staff. Regardless of the type of museum or job title, it is knowledge, experience and most importantly responsibilities that should determine salaries.

It is recognised that museums have many different grading systems, job evaluation procedures and competency frameworks that they adhere to. Existing frameworks within a range of museums were taken into account when producing the guidelines. The guidelines are not intended to replace comprehensive evaluation and competency structures, but they will sit alongside and complement them.

The guidelines state a starting salary range; this range does not reflect the extent of the grade in which the post sits. Movement within grades is linked with the application of knowledge and skills, attitude and contribution to the organisation, which is usually monitored through internal appraisal systems.

### Introduction to job profiles

A series of generic job profiles has been compiled to determine progressive levels within the sector – Entry I, Entry II, Career I, Career II, Career III and Senior.

One of the key findings of Pay in Museums was the lack of career progression through the sector. The guidelines, and the job profiles contained within them, have been designed to map out a clear career progression structure to encourage this.

Inevitably there will always be exceptions and differing circumstances that should be taken into consideration when using the guidelines. For example, a person may have extra responsibilities such as managing large numbers of staff, caring for an important or large collection, or specific expertise. The job profiles should be used as a guideline and starting point with salaries adjusted to accommodate specific circumstances.

The job profiles section includes examples of posts advertised in the past year. This demonstrates that some museums are paying salaries at or near to the levels suggested in the guidelines, and that these salaries are achievable. The selection of examples has been made on the information available in the basic job description for the post released on application, not on the total package given by the employer. Please note, the examples are taken from the financial year 2008/09, unless stated otherwise.

### Parameters

The job profiles are limited to collections and learning and visitor services in the first instance. There is hard data to indicate existing levels of pay for these categories as they reflect those established in Pay in Museums, 2004. Conservators are not included within the job profiles. The Institute of Conservation (ICON) is the professional body for conservators and has expertise in this field, therefore it is a more appropriate source of information and advice.

Examples of posts at director/head of service level have been given, although no job profile has been described due to the extreme variability of such posts, depending on size and profile of an organisation.

It is recognised that the current range of job profiles is limited and does not reflect the wide range of posts held within museums. Further data needs to be gathered in areas such as fundraising and marketing in order to extend the scope of this document and better reflect the museum workforce. An extended pay survey is intended, with up-to-date information feeding into the guidelines in future years and ultimately producing a comprehensive range of job profiles.
Other considerations

Cost of living
The cost of living varies within the UK. London weighting and regional variants and markets will affect the setting of salary scales in general, and should be taken into account, where possible. Investigating the cost of living in your area will assist to set appropriate levels of pay, unfortunately there is often a lack of up-to-date research in this area.

Hours of work
The guidelines assume a 37-hour working week (excluding lunch break). Consideration should be given for the number and nature of hours required for a post.

Benefits package
In a sector where earnings are modest, a good benefits package can help attract the right person to the job.

Essential requirements of a benefits package:
• leave entitlement (annual, maternity, paternity, compassionate etc)
• pension.

Desirable requirements of a benefits package:
• childcare
• travel (discounts and loans)
• flexible working (job-share, flexitime, home working etc)
• opportunities for career break or sabbatical
• car benefits (parking, loan, mileage allowance)
• relocation packages
• discounts (shop, reduced/free entry, catering)
• leisure facilities.

Training and development
It is essential for the museum profession that its workforce is trained to the highest levels in order to offer the best quality of service to users. Professional development also ensures that museum staff are able to meet the challenges of a constantly changing and evolving sector.

Good training and development leads to increased job mobility, opportunities for career progression and the development of skills such as management and leadership, which are all vital to create a dynamic sector and a committed workforce. It is the responsibility of all employers to ensure that their staff has access, opportunities and support to undertake training and development. Many museum posts are on a fixed-term contract basis. It is recognised best practice that all staff, regardless of length or type of contract, should be able to access training and development opportunities, that will allow them to build skills and knowledge that will aid their career advancement.

Updating the guidelines
The guidelines will be updated annually, with salary figures reviewed in line with inflation and current trends. The most up-to-date figures and information will be available via the MA website, www.museumsassociation.org

Actual pay levels will be monitored and published on a regular basis, together with comments from relevant bodies, organisations and individuals. A follow up pay survey of the sector is intended to analyse the effect of these guidelines and keep abreast of current trends of pay.
When creating a new post or reviewing an existing one within your museum:

• Match the responsibilities and requirements of the post to the most appropriate job profile and read the related salary range. The salary range is an indication of an appropriate starting salary for the level of knowledge, experience and responsibilities required.

• UK museums are extremely diverse and individual factors, such as the region and the total employment package, including pensions, should also be taken into account. Due to this variation a starting salary range has been given. See other considerations (p5*) for more details.

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**Entry I**

A basic entry or trainee level role. It is not expected that candidates will have a postgraduate qualification, but they should expect to receive training through the workplace.

**Starting salary range 2009/10:**

£16,000-£19,250

**Professional knowledge**

Will have a basic level of professional competence and knowledge.

**Management of resources**

No significant budget or people management responsibilities.

**Decision making and influence**

Will be expected to deliver on short-term targets through an established work programme.

**Freedom to act**

Work will be undertaken with the advice and guidance of more senior colleagues.

**Communication and networking**

Ability to work as part of a team. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

**Qualifications**

Likely to have degree (or equivalent qualification/experience/training).

**Previous work experience**

Minimal or no relevant experience.

**Job examples 2008/09**

1 Museum assistant (Middle East), British Museum, London, £16,830

1 Documentation assistant, Rochdale Borough-wide Cultural Trust, £15,153-£18,430

1 Learning assistant, Falkirk Council, £15,105-£17,517

1 Documentation assistant, Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon, £16,200

1 Documentation assistant, Exeter City Council, £15,153-£16,217


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**Entry II**

An entry-level role that requires candidates to have more relevant general knowledge of the sector than Entry I, usually gained through a postgraduate qualification, or hands-on experience and training.

**Starting salary range 2009/10:**

£19,750-£23,750

**Professional knowledge**

Will have a good general level of professional competence and knowledge and some working knowledge in a particular professional discipline.

**Management of resources**

No significant budget or people management responsibilities.

**Decision making and influence**

Will be expected to deliver on short-term targets through an established work programme.

**Freedom to act**

Work will be undertaken with the advice and guidance of more senior colleagues.

**Communication and networking**

Ability to work as part of a team. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

**Qualifications**

Likely to have degree and relevant postgraduate qualification (or equivalent qualification/experience/training).

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1 All job examples are taken from recent advertisements, with salaries quoted for the financial year 2008/09 unless otherwise stated.
Previous work experience
Some relevant experience (up to one year).

Job examples 2008/09
Assistant education officer, National Coal Mining Museum for England, West Yorkshire, £19,885
Museum assistant, Whipple Museum for the History of Science, University of Cambridge, £19,263-£21,681
Learning coordinator, National Centre for Citizenship and the Law, Galleries of Justice, Nottingham, £16,000-£20,000
Education assistant, Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston City Council, £19,370-£20,591


Career I

This role requires two to three years’ experience and knowledge to be able to take on reasonable responsibilities. Candidates will be starting to gain more focused knowledge or expertise in their chosen career path.

Starting salary range 2009/10: £24,250-£26,750

Professional knowledge
Will have working knowledge in a particular professional discipline and/or responsibility for a discrete area of work/collection.

Management of resources
May occasionally play a team leader role. Likely to have supervisory responsibilities for volunteers and/or freelance staff. Will not have significant budgetary responsibility

Decision making and influence
Generally working as part of a team to deliver work targets. May be responsible for small projects.

Freedom to act
Will work within set procedures and standards and report to more senior colleagues.

Communication and networking
Likely to have good presentation skills. Ability to communicate well with the public, contractors and colleagues. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

Qualifications
Likely to have degree and relevant postgraduate qualification (or equivalent qualification/experience/training), working towards Associateship of the Museums Association (AMA).

Previous work experience
Demonstrable relevant experience (around two to three years).

Job examples 2008/09
Derek Williams curator of modern and contemporary art, Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, Cardiff, £22,446-£27,056
Learning and outreach officer (secondary schools), Cartoon Museum, London, £29,000
Curator, National Trust for Scotland, Edinburgh, £24,314
Museums officer (interpretation and outreach), Falconer Museum, Moray Council, £22,375
Documentation officer, Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, £21,681-£25,888
Learning officer (family learning), Coventry City Council, £18,907-£23,749

Collections and learning continued

**Career II**

This role requires the development of some expertise in a chosen area. Candidates will begin to take on strategic and advocacy responsibilities and/or substantial staff/delivery responsibilities.

Starting salary range 2009/10: £26,750–£31,250

**Professional knowledge**
Will have considerable knowledge in a particular discipline and/or responsibility for a discrete area of work/collection.

**Management of resources**
Likely to manage a team or discrete area of work.
Likely to have some budgeting input/responsibilities.

**Decision making and influence**
Will have a degree of responsibility for projects and/or specialism.
Will contribute to the development of their area of work.

**Freedom to act**
Will have procedures/standards to follow.
Will refer to a manager for guidance.

**Communication and networking**
Will have well-developed and effective communication and presentation skills.
Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

**Qualifications**
Likely to have degree, relevant postgraduate qualification (or equivalent qualification/experience/training), AMA.

**Previous work experience**
In-depth relevant experience (around four or more years).

**Job examples 2008/09**
Curator fine art, Leeds City Council, £26,067–£27,594
Collections and curatorial services officer, Newport City Council, £23,749–£25,320
Curator of geology, York Museums Trust, £24,612–£26,238
Curator: Illuminating Cultures, Tate, London, £24,375–£32,250

Salary for teacher after five years, outside London - £30,148, inner London - £34,768, September 2008

**Career III**

This level of role requires candidates to have substantial knowledge, skills and experience. Candidates will have the ability to manage a discreet area or team, and contribute to the strategic development of the organisation.

Starting salary range 2009/10: £31,250–£36,250

**Professional knowledge**
Will have a high level of professional competence and knowledge relevant to the organisation.
Will have technical/specialist knowledge as well as a range of management skills.

**Management of resources**
Will have supervisory responsibilities and will probably act as a team leader.
Will likely be assigned a budget.

**Decision making and influence**
Will be responsible for public service delivery relevant to their role through project management and/or specialist input.
Will play a role in developing the organisation strategically.

**Freedom to act**
Will have freedom to set team and own work targets, subject to meeting organisational objectives.
Will likely be responsible to a senior manager.

**Communication and networking**
Will have good negotiation and influencing skills.
Will be expected to have a range of contacts and represent the organisation externally.
Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

**Qualifications**
Likely to have degree, postgraduate qualification (or equivalent qualification/experience/training), AMA, likely to be working towards Fellowship of the Museums Association (FMA).

**Previous work experience**
Substantial relevant experience (around six or more years).

**Job examples 2008/09**
Curatorial services manager, Birmingham City Council, £30,598–£37,543
Adult programmes manager, National Portrait Gallery, London, £34,312
Deputy head of education, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, £29,699–£36,784
Learning and access manager, Grant Museum of Zoology, University College London, £31,620–£38,250

Senior

This is primarily a management role. There are complex degrees of seniority depending on the level of responsibilities, and size and profile of the organisation. Although one job profile has been described below, three salary brackets have been given to demonstrate the varying levels.

Management level in a small museum will often equate to the responsibilities and pay at Career III, or not go beyond Senior level 1, whereas a management position in a large, high-profile museum may equate to the responsibilities and pay of a director elsewhere.

Starting salary range 2009/10:
Level 1: £31,250-£36,250
Level 2: £36,250-£42,500
Level 3: £42,500-£68,750+

Professional knowledge
Will have the acknowledged authority and ability to draw on extensive experience to develop policy and solve complex issues.

Management of resources
Likely to manage a complex function and department and act as team leader. Will probably manage a significant number of staff. Will have financial responsibility of whole function and have skills to balance conflicting demands.

Decision making and influence
Will play a significant role in planning, setting standards for others to follow. Will be a decision maker for major teams and projects, and have the ability to justify decisions to directorate.

Freedom to act
Will be able to introduce new practices under the guidance of agreed policy. Will be significantly involved with the formation and implementation of policy.

Communication and networking
Will have advanced communication skills, often leading negotiations with important stakeholders and representing the museum. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

Qualifications
Likely to have degree, relevant postgraduate qualification (or equivalent qualification/experience/training), and relevant management training. AMA, FMA.

Previous work experience
Substantial relevant experience (around six years or more).

Job examples 2008/09
Level 1:
Head of collection and exhibitions, The Hepworth, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, £34,107
Head of learning, River and Rowing Museum, Henley-on-Thames, £30,000-£35,000
Learning and access manager, Luton Cultural Services Trust, £30,598-£33,291

Level 2:
Learning manager, Museum of Childhood, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, £34,981-£42,048

Level 3:
Director of learning and knowledge, Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust, £46,550-£54,765
Head of transport, industry and technology, National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster, £40,000-£50,000
Director of education, information and access, National Gallery, London, c£70,000

Entry I

A basic entry or trainee level role. It is not expected that candidates will have much knowledge of the sector, but they should expect to receive training through the workplace.

Starting salary range 2009/10: £14,500-£16,000

Professional knowledge
Will have a basic level of knowledge relevant to the role and organisation, including visitor care.

Management of resources
No significant budget or people management responsibilities.

Decision making and influence
Will be expected to deliver direct customer care through an established work programme.

Freedom to act
Work will be undertaken with the advice and guidance of more senior colleagues.

Communication and networking
Ability to work as part of a team. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

Qualifications
Good standard of education.

Previous work experience
Minimal or no relevant experience.

Job examples 2008/09
Gallery assistant, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, £16,329-£19,628
Museum assistant/handyperson, National Slate Museum, National Museum Wales, Llanberis, £13,105-£16,327
Museum assistant, Exeter City Council, £14,197-£14,882
Visitor assistant, Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust, £13,644-£16,053
Career I

A role that requires moderate experience (two to three years) and knowledge to be able to take on a basic level of responsibilities and customer care.

Starting salary range 2009/10: £16,000-£19,250

Professional knowledge
Will have working knowledge and skills relevant to the role and organisation, including visitor care and access.

Management of resources
May occasionally play a team leader role. May have small budgetary responsibility.

Decision making and influence
Generally working as part of a team to deliver set work targets. Will deliver direct customer care.

Freedom to act
Will work within set procedures and standards and report to more senior colleagues.

Communication and networking
Will have the ability to communicate well with the public and colleagues. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

Qualifications
Good standard of education and relevant professional training.

Previous work experience
Some relevant experience (around two to three years).

Job examples 2008/09
Gallery supervisor, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, £17,026-£19,645
Museum assistant, Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, Colchester Borough Council, £15,237-£18,058
Museum attendant, Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon, £16,200

Career II

A role that requires some expertise in a chosen area. Candidates will begin to take on strategic and advocacy responsibilities and/or substantial staff and delivery responsibilities.

Starting salary range 2009/10: £19,250-£24,250

Professional knowledge
Will have considerable knowledge and skills relevant to the role and organisation, including operations, team management and visitor access.

Management of resources
Likely to manage a team and/or discrete area of work, and be responsible for upholding standards. Likely to have some budgeting input/responsibilities.

Decision making and influence
Will have a degree of responsibility for the delivery of workloads and customer care. Will contribute to the development of their area of work.

Freedom to act
Will have procedures/standards to follow. Will refer to a manager for guidance.

Communication and networking
Will have well-developed and effective communication and team-working skills. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

Qualifications
Good standard of education and relevant professional training, working towards AMA.

Previous work experience
Some relevant experience (around four or more years).

Job examples 2008/09
Floor manager, Tank Museum, Dorset, £22,000
Visitor services manager, Manchester City Council, £22,664-£25,940
Temporary exhibitions supervisor, National Museum of Science and Industry, London, £17,500-£19,500

Senior

This is primarily a management role. There are complex degrees of seniority depending on the level of responsibilities, and size and profile of the organisation. Although one job profile has been described below, three salary brackets have been given to demonstrate the varying levels. Management level in a small museum will often not go beyond Senior level 1, whereas a management position in a large, high-profile museum may equate to the responsibilities and pay of a director elsewhere.

Starting salary range 2009/10:
Level 1: £24,250-£31,250
Level 2: £31,250-£36,250
Level 3: £36,250-£47,500+

Professional knowledge
Will have the acknowledged authority and ability to draw upon extensive experience to develop policy and solve complex issues. Will have leadership and extensive organisational skills.

Management of resources
Likely to manage a complex function and department and act as team leader. Will probably manage a significant number of staff. Will have financial responsibility of whole function and have skills to balance conflicting demands.
Decision making and influence
Will play a significant role in planning, setting standards for others to follow. Will be a decision maker for major teams and projects, and have the ability to justify decisions to directorate.

Freedom to act
Will be able to introduce new practices under the guidance of agreed policy. Will be significantly involved with the formation and implementation of policy.

Communication and networking
Will have advanced communication and team-building skills. Ability to engage with users/visitors to support learning and enjoyment.

Qualifications
Likely to have degree (or equivalent qualification/experience/training), and relevant management training, AMA and working towards FMA.

Previous work experience
Substantial relevant experience (around six or more years).

Job examples 2008/09

Level 1:
Gallery manager, York Art Gallery, York Museums Trust, £24,612-£26,238
Visitor services manager, Tate Liverpool, £23,700-£29,550
Visitor services manager, National Trust, Berhamsted, £22,000

Level 2:
General manager, Museum of Flight, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh, £30,612-£37,347
Principal manager: visitor services and operations, Manchester City Council, £30,456-£34,107

Level 3:
Director of operations, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, £43,000
Head of operations, Ulster Museum, National Museums Northern Ireland, £37,322-£49,800

Director/heads of service

Salaries of directors and heads of service are extremely dependent on the size and profile of the organisation. In order to give an indication of the level of starting salaries that are being offered compared with the size and type of museum, a selection of recently advertised positions is detailed below. The examples given are cited to give an indication of levels and ranges of pay. General managers of very small museums, where there is often no more than one paid member of staff have been included in this section.

Very small (one or two professional staff)
Museums and heritage officer, Litchfield City Council, £18,907-£20,736 *Local authority
Curator, Norfolk Nelson Museum, £20,347 *Independent
Curator, Lyme Regis Philpot Museum Trust, Dorset, £23,000 *Independent

Small (up to 15 staff)
Principal officer museums, galleries and heritage, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, £30,598-£33,291 *Local authority
Director, Freud Museum, London, £28,000-£32,000 *Independent
Director, Scottish Maritime Museum, £33,000 *Independent
Director, Dorset County Museum, up to £35,000 *Independent

Medium (up to 50 staff)
Principal museums and heritage officer, Aberdeenshire Council, £38,965-£40,762 *Local authority
Museum director and chief executive, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, c£75,000 *Independent
Director, Foundling Museum, London, £45,000 *Independent
Museum director, Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, National Trust for Scotland, Alloway, £43,664-£55,728 *National

Large (more than 50 staff)
Chief executive, Royal Armouries, Leeds, up to £95,000 plus bonus *Independent
Director, Manx National Heritage, Isle of Man, £73,680-£92,097 *National

No recent examples of directors of university museums were available at the time of publication.

All job examples are taken from recent advertisements, with salaries quoted for the financial year 2008/09, unless otherwise stated.