



Application Pack

Ref: WA319

Gardening Apprentice

Salary up to £24,000 per annum

Full-time – Fixed Term (minimum 18 months)

40 hours per week (8am – 4pm)

Advert date: 10 May 2024

Closing date: 4 June 2024 (noon)

Westminster Abbey



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About Westminster Abbey

Above all else, the Abbey is a church, a place of prayer and praise and holy ground at the heart of the nation. It is also a treasured part of Britain's heritage and a leading venue for tourism. The Abbey has occupied a central place in the celebration of great events for the nation and remains one of the most beautiful architectural masterpieces in Britain.

A living Church, Westminster Abbey is where the coronation of Kings and Queens has taken place since 1066, and where many of the Kings and Queens of England and of the United Kingdom are buried. Principal among them is St Edward the Confessor, King of England from 1042 to 1066, whose shrine is at the heart of the Abbey Church. Beside and around them are buried or commemorated many of the great women and men from almost every century of British history: statesmen and politicians, lawyers, warriors, clerics, writers, artists, musicians.

Neither a cathedral nor a parish church, Westminster Abbey (or the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Westminster to give it its correct title) is a Royal Peculiar under the jurisdiction of a Dean and Chapter and with direct accountability to the Sovereign. This relationship with the Sovereign dates back to the origins of the Abbey over a millennium ago, but its current form stems from the Charter granted to the Abbey by Elizabeth on 21st May 1560.

We are a welcoming community, but also complex and multi-faceted, with nearly 600 highly committed employees and volunteers. We have deep respect for the heritage of which we are the custodians, but we evolve continuously to meet the opportunities of the future. In recent times this has included the creation of new departments to focus on transforming our digital presence and delivering a significantly expanded programme of public and community engagement. In addition, our newly created Employee Engagement Forum and Social Engagement Statement is helping us to support and develop our staff and volunteers. We have also reshaped our governance arrangements, including a new Strategic Board to help us navigate the challenges and opportunities of the coming decades.

Westminster Abbey's mission is:

- To offer daily divine Worship to Almighty God and resource the Church in this vocation;
- To serve the Sovereign;
- To proclaim the Gospel to the nation and Commonwealth, celebrating the distinctive witness of the Christian faith and engaging with the public square;
- To provide a safe, welcoming and inspiring environment for all who come to the Abbey;
- To act as responsible stewards of God's gifts.

Our Values:

As one we serve each other, our visitors and the wider world in all we do with:

- Truthfulness
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Excellence

Following the State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, which were broadcast to national and international audiences in their millions, interest in the Abbey is very strong. We attract over a million visitors from around the world every year, and our summers and peak period are incredibly busy. However, we receive no regular income from the State, the Church of England or the Crown, and rely almost entirely on income from visitors.

It is an exciting time to join the Abbey, and we look forward to receiving your application and if successful, welcoming your contribution to the Abbey's history.

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Gardening Apprentice
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Gardening Supervisor
DEPARTMENT:	Works (Gardening Team)
KEY RELATIONSHIPS:	Internal: Gardening Team and Facilities Team (Visitor Experience Department) External: Abbey Visitors to the garden areas.

BACKGROUND: Westminster Abbey is both a place of daily worship, and is one of the UK's leading visitor attractions, welcoming over one million visitors each year. A diverse and lively community work at the Abbey comprising around 300 employees and a similar number of volunteers.

JOB SUMMARY: Working under the guidance of an experienced team of professional gardeners, your tasks will cover a range of relevant practical horticulture and gardening expertise. Working on site four days a week and one day at college/studying.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1. Tool and Machinery Management:** You will learn how to handle and maintain gardening tools and machinery. This includes understanding proper usage, safety precautions, and routine maintenance.
- 2. Plant Care and Propagation:** You will participate in planting, pruning, and caring for various plants. This will include learning about soil preparation, watering, fertilizing, and pest control. Propagation techniques, such as seed sowing and vegetative propagation, will also be involved in your training and study.
- 3. Seasonal Planning:** Understanding the seasonal requirements of different plants is crucial. As an Apprentice, you will assist in planning and carrying out tasks based on the time of year. For example, you may help with spring planting, summer maintenance, fall clean-up, and winter protection.
- 4. Bed Planning:** Gaining insights into designing and maintaining flower beds and vegetable patches, as well as learning about plant spacing, companion planting, and creating visually appealing arrangements.
- 5. Weeding and Pruning:** Removing weeds and dead or overgrown plant material is a routine task. You will learn proper pruning techniques to encourage healthy growth and shape plants.
- 6. Harvesting:** For edible crops, you will participate in harvesting fruits, vegetables, and herbs, as well as learning when to harvest for optimal flavour and quality.

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7. **Observation and Learning:** As an Apprentice, you will observe your experienced gardening colleagues to absorb knowledge about plant behaviour, soil health, and garden aesthetics through questioning, seeking advice and actively learning from their mentor(s).

Safeguarding

Westminster Abbey is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk. To prevent them from harm, we undertake appropriate checks on staff and volunteers and require them to complete relevant safeguarding training.

Person Specification

This section outlines the knowledge, skills and abilities the job holder needs in order to fulfil the requirements of the post. 'Essential' criteria are those that the job holder absolutely must have in order to do the job. 'Desirable' criteria are those qualities that would be either useful, or an advantage or those which the job holder can be trained to do.

Essential

Qualifications

1. GCSE qualifications or equivalent in English and Maths, grade A-C/4-9 or equivalent. If you do not have English and/or Maths GCSE qualifications (or equivalent), you will be required to complete Functional Skills as part of your apprenticeship.

Skills/Aptitudes/Knowledge

2. Good verbal and interpersonal communication skills.
3. Proactive, enthusiastic and self-motivated.
4. Good time-keeping and reliability.
5. Attention to detail.
6. Ability to work as part of a team.
7. Physically fit and able to work outside for long periods and in all weathers.

Experience

8. A reasonable standard of IT, with experience of using email (Outlook) and Microsoft Word to create documents (including study) and the internet to research information.

Personal Attributes

9. Demonstrate a passion for plants or gardening.
10. Flexible approach to work and willingness to demonstrate a personable welcome to visitors.
11. Demonstrate a genuine desire to work in grounds maintenance/horticulture.
12. Commitment to the Abbey values and its mission.

Desirable

13. Experience of working or volunteering within the gardening profession.

This Job Profile will be kept under review and may be amended by the Dean & Chapter from time to time. Any proposed changes will be discussed with the postholder.

Working for us

Employment Status

This post is fixed term for a minimum of 18 months.

Salary

Students will be paid a full-time annual salary between £21,000 (for students aged 16-18) and £24,000 (for students aged 19 and above), on the last Friday of each month. Salary is reviewed annually.

Working Hours

These are 40 hours per week. The normal arrangement of working hours is 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday, however the postholder will be required to work hours that suit the needs of the organisation.

Study

The apprenticeship will involve college study one day a week during term time at Capel Manor College in Enfield.

Training

On-site training will be provided in all aspects of the job. Any further training needs will be assessed through the probation period and in annual appraisals.

Annual Holidays

The full-time holiday entitlement is 31 days per annum, including recognised public holidays, rising to 33 days per annum in the fifth year of service.

Pension Scheme and Life Assurance

All employees can join a Group Personal Pension plan, where the minimum employee contribution is 3% and the maximum employer contribution is 9% (as determined by the level of the employee contribution). You will be auto-enrolled into our qualifying workplace pension scheme after 3 months, if you meet the eligibility criteria.

All eligible employees are covered by death-in-service life assurance, whether or not they choose to join the pension scheme.

Staff Discount

All employees receive a 20% discount on purchases from the Westminster Abbey shop and a 30% discount on purchases from the Benugo outlets, which serve refreshments.

Season Ticket Loan

A season ticket loan is offered after satisfactory completion of a probationary period, repayable over 10 months.

Medical Insurance

The Abbey will pay 50% of premiums to join a nominated medical insurance scheme after one year's employment.

Uniform

If a uniform and/or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided, this must be worn at all times.

Equality Statement and How to apply

Equality Statement

The Dean and Chapter aim at all times to recruit the person who is most suited to the job. Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, skills and experience will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

We will ensure that our shortlisting, interviewing and selection procedures avoid discrimination in any way, including on grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality or ethnic origins, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Please return the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form with your application. This will help us monitor our recruitment practice. The form will not be seen by the people making the selection decision.

Safeguarding

Westminster Abbey is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk. To prevent them from harm, we undertake appropriate checks on staff and volunteers and require them to complete relevant safeguarding training. Offers are subject to a relevant level of criminal record check, receipt of references satisfactory to Westminster Abbey, right to work in the UK, proof of professional qualifications and medical clearance, which may include a medical assessment.

How to Apply

Please complete our application form as CVs **will not** be accepted.

You are also advised to read the Job Description and Person Specification carefully and think about how your experience, skills and abilities help you to meet the requirements listed in the Person Specification. Use the 'Supporting Statement' section of the form to tell us how you meet each of the requirements. As well as your previous work experience (including a **full** career history of all employment), tell us about other relevant experience such as community and voluntary experience. Clear information on how you meet all the requirements of the job, with relevant examples, will help us with shortlisting, and we may not be able to shortlist you for interview if you do not provide this.

Please email your completed application to: applications@westminster-abbey.org.

Applications should arrive no later than noon on 4 June 2024. Interviews are scheduled to take place later in the month of June 2024. It may be necessary to also attend an interview at the College.

We regret that, due to the large number of applications we normally receive, we may only be able to contact or provide feedback if you have attended an interview. We appreciate your interest in our work at Westminster Abbey.