

Job Description

JOB TITLE

Tour Guide

REPORTS TO

Primary: Tour Manager
Secondary: Retail Supervisor

JOB PURPOSE

The post holder will lead guided tours focused on the architecture and design of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and telling the story of Mackintosh at The Glasgow School of Art / the Reid Building / examples of Glasgow Style in the city, providing an enjoyable, informative and authentic experience of the GSA for visitors, ensuring the comfort and safety of tour participants and collecting visitor feedback to inform the delivery and content of the tour.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

The post holder will be responsible for:

- Helping to welcome around 12,000 – 30,000 visitors each year from all over the world, of all ages, abilities and from all sorts of backgrounds - families, cultural tourists, architects, Mackintosh enthusiasts, academics, designers, students, journalists, school and university groups, conference delegates, specialist groups and locals;
- Conducting tours in accordance with the training and script provided - delivering the main 45 minute long Mackintosh themed tour, and progressing to supporting and leading other tours and tour operations confidence and experience is gained;
- Ensuring that every visitor enjoys their visit to the Glasgow School of Art and receives the best possible impression of Glasgow, the GSA, our alumni and Charles Rennie Mackintosh's architecture and design legacy. Representing the GSA and speaking positively and constructively about all aspects of the School and city, to enthuse our visitors to support GSA. As an ambassador of both the School and GSA Enterprises Ltd, being courteous, friendly and respectful to both visitors and to GSA students and staff at all times;

- Ensuring that tours are conducted in accordance with time constraints and in line with GSA Enterprises policies and procedures, in particular around the health and safety of visitors – arriving ready to start for allocated shift start time, prior to tour departure to welcome groups and gather all the necessary information for each tour, and departing at end of shift after completing tour and following up with excellent customer service;
- Ensuring that visitors have purchased tickets prior to participating in a tour and that group numbers are accurately recorded and monitored throughout (the maximum group size is 20);
- Reconciling ticket stubs, collecting visitor information for each tour;
- Contributing to the continuous development of the tour operation by recording suggestions from day to day experience, by collecting visitor feedback and encouraging positive online reviews about their experience of the tours;
- Accommodating occasional adjustments to set tour routes and timings, to allow for the annual Degree Show installation and assessment, any building / conservation work, or special arrangements for private tours, which will be communicated in advance by line managers or supervisors in person, over the phone or via email. Proactively checking for route updates before commencing each tour;
- Continuously striving to improve standards of presentation and customer service;
- Ensuring the health, safety and security of individual customers and groups of up to 20 visitors, colleagues and GSAE's premises at all times - health and safety training will be given prior to first public tours, including fire / emergency evacuation, and how to deal with accidents and incidents en route;
- Enforcing the rules along the tour route: no leaving the group, no access to private spaces, no photography outside of the visitor centre and furniture gallery (non-flash only), no touching the Mackintosh furniture or any original artwork / other materials on display, no loud or inappropriate behavior, no food or drink (with the exception of bottled water);
- Invigilating spaces and assisting photographers, journalists, film crews and 'VIP' tours as required once you have gained confidence and with the support of your line manager;
- Undertaking training and development activities in line with the requirements of the role, including attending regular team meetings, training and familiarisation sessions, continually reviewing scripts, shadowing fellow Tour Guides and being shadowed in order to refresh and enhance your knowledge, operational and presentation skills;
- Playing a key role in helping GSA Enterprises Ltd (a limited company established to manage the visitor experience at the GSA and support the School financially) to generate income which is donated to the School annually through Gift Aid;
- Ensuring the smooth running of the tour schedule by signing up for shifts where needed, responding promptly to last minute requests for staffing, keeping line managers up to date well in advance with anticipated periods of low availability, and making requests for time off well in advance;

- Assisting with retail, customer service, administration, events and marketing tasks as requested - If there is no take up for a particular tour, Tour Guides are given the opportunity to help as required in the shop or office for the duration of the shift and paid for their time;
- Carrying out any other duties, as may be reasonably requested.

KEY CHALLENGES

- Developing an understanding of the requirements of visitors in order to tailor presentations as appropriate for each group – ensuring consistency in the delivery of content, whilst tailoring your style of presentation and timings to suit each individual group. For example, older visitors may need to move more slowly between spaces and therefore require concise explanations, children may need a more animated style, and groups from overseas may have an interpreter with them (all tours are conducted in English unless a Guide is particularly proficient and confident to deliver the tour in another language for a specific group);
- Developing a personal knowledge of the Mackintosh Building and the Reid Building at the GSA, along with a wider understanding of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's life and work; and / or a specialist knowledge of the impact of the GSA and its alumni on the city;
- Managing the timings of presentations in each tour space effectively to ensure efficiency of the tour schedule;
- Responding calmly and professionally in line with GSA Enterprises procedures to unexpected incidents along the tour route;
- Delivering the tour in a confident and professional manner whilst dealing with a diverse range of visitors and enquiries.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The post-holder will be a student / graduate of the GSA or a student / graduate of a related course with a sound understanding of the workings of the GSA and knowledge of Mackintosh's legacy;

The post-holder will have a track record of delivering successful presentations / successful experience in public speaking in either an academic or professional context;

The post-holder must be comfortable being 'on stage' and delivering information accurately, consistently and confidently whilst controlling the movements and looking after the health and safety of a group of up to 20 people;

The post-holder will be a friendly, enthusiastic, efficient and energetic individual who can demonstrate excellent communication and presentation skills;

The post-holder will be capable of working with minimum supervision and will demonstrate enthusiasm both for working independently and as part of a team;

The post-holder will be required to be punctual at all times and should demonstrate the ability to manage their work / study schedule effectively;

The post-holder will demonstrate a commitment to Equal Opportunities and diversity and will be willing to undertake training and staff development as required;

The post-holder must demonstrate a positive, flexible, 'can-do' attitude and be capable of performing equally well under pressure as during quiet spells in the tour schedule;

Foreign language skills desirable but not essential.

RELATIONSHIPS

Internal Contacts:

GSAE Directors, Commercial Development and General Manager, Retail Buying and Operations Manager, Retail Supervisors, Head Guide, Administration Coordinator, Communications and E-commerce Manager, Tour Guides, Sales Assistants. GSA academic and support staff.

External Contacts:

Retail customers, tour participants, exhibition visitors, event delegates, suppliers, tour operators/guides, journalists, film crews, contractors, city promoters, staff from associated venues and attractions.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Contract:	Various
Probationary period:	6 months
Salary:	£8.75 per hour, or £9.85 per hour for walking tour lead shifts, paid monthly by bank transfer.
Hours:	Various available. For employees on 'zero-hour' contracts, availability of shifts varies throughout the year according to the seasonal tour timetable (see www.gsa.ac.uk/tours) and availability of fellow team members. Tour Guides are expected to conduct a bare minimum of 1 tour per week throughout the year, to ensure their abilities are kept up to date. A maximum of 4 tours per day is encouraged to ensure consistency in standards, which can be interspersed with other tasks when required.
Holidays:	30 days pro rata, including bank and public holidays, rising to 35 days after 3 years' continuous employment. Holiday pay is accrued with hours worked. Holiday pay is currently issued on a quarterly basis to hourly paid staff.

Any periods of leave or low availability must be requested a minimum of two weeks in advance, and permission gained before booking alternative plans which will affect your availability for shifts.

For employees on 'zero-hour' contracts, where no tours have been conducted for a period of more than 4 consecutive weeks, Tour Guides will be expected to meet with line managers and shadow at least one tour before restarting tours, in order to update on any recent changes and refresh knowledge of the route and script. Where no tours are conducted for a period of more than 12 consecutive weeks, Tour Guides will be expected to meet with line managers and may be asked to reapply for the position when the next vacancy arises.

Notice period:

2 months

Disclosure Scotland:

All posts at Glasgow School of Art Enterprises Ltd are subject to a Disclosure Scotland background check.