

SOUTHWARK

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Executive Assistant to the COO | Applicant Pack

Job Title:	Executive Assistant to the COO
Reports to:	Chief Operating Officer
Key Relationships:	Director of HR, Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department
Start Date:	ASAP
Salary:	£37,000
Hours of Work:	35 hours per week
How to apply:	Please complete the application form on the Church of England Pathways website by 11.59pm on Sunday 26 th October 2025.
Interviews:	Friday 7 th November 2025

Role Summary

Southwark Cathedral has been a place of Christian worship for over 1400 years. Now it stands on the vibrant and exciting regenerated south bank of the Thames surrounded by cultural venues such as Tate Modern, Shakespeare's Globe and Borough Market, the offices of major companies as well as schools and diverse residential communities. It is an inclusive Christian community that offers a welcome to all.

The Cathedral's mission, ministry and musical tradition are core to its life as a Cathedral and a parish church serving the community. It also relies on the valuable financial contribution made by its income generating activities such as its shop, café, conference rooms, corporate events and concerts. It is a very busy place, attracting 200,000 visitors a year to the Cathedral, its churchyard and medieval herb garden. The Cathedral relies on a small but dedicated team to be inclusive and welcoming to all.

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The Executive Assistant (EA) will provide support to the Chief Operation Officer (COO) to assist them in the effective functioning of all governance, human resources and operational arrangements at the Cathedral.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Support for the COO

- Lead the coordination, preparation, planning and follow up for the COO's briefing for and attendance at meetings associated with the governance of the Cathedral, including Chapter, Finance Committee, Audit & Risk Committee, Nominations Committee, Fabric Advisory Committee and Board of Enterprises.
- Undertake research and assisting in the drafting and review of papers for such meetings. Limited minute taking will be required from the six-weekly forward planning meeting and other ad hoc planning meetings;
- Support the COO in all their working relationships including building and maintaining excellent relationships with Chapter Members and Committee Members, the Bishop's staff and with the wider Diocese, as well as with neighbours, contractors, commercial partners and professional advisers;
- Draft briefs and management reports;
- Assist in the research, writing and preparation of the Cathedral's Annual Report;
- Assist with the drafting and submission of Cathedral-wide documents, such as the Cathedrals Survey.
- Assist with the development of the Cathedral's strategy and supporting reports and documents;
- Assist the COO with national, royal and high-profile civic events planning;
- Provide general administrative assistance in the context of a busy office;
- Promote the mission, purpose and values of the Cathedral;
- Any other responsibilities as may reasonably be required;
- Ensure that the highest standards of professional performance are maintained, and ensure professional skills are regularly updated through participation in training and development activities.

Senior Leadership Team & Diary

- Prepare Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting agendas and supporting documents, handling arrangements for meetings (Zoom when needed);
- Attend SLT meetings, track actions and report where relevant on items;

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- Collate proposals for events from the Head of Events and Head of Visitor Engagement which need SLT approval and include them under SLT standing item on the agenda;
- On behalf of SLT, chair the weekly operational run-through of the Diary Meeting with Heads of Department and other staff;
- Manage the Cathedral diary– make in-house bookings, input the annual liturgical schedule, make alterations arising from the Diary Meeting and work closely with the Learning Centre to input school visits;
- Act as the Cathedral's key contact for the Metropolitan Police's Southwark Counter Terrorism PROTECT Team – provide them with information (proactively and when requested) on Cathedral events and services of interest to the Police.

HR

Recruitment

Support the COO with co-ordination of recruitment for new Cathedral and Southwark Cathedral Enterprises Limited staff, in line with Safer Recruitment best practice;

- Co-ordinate the creation of job descriptions with direction from the COO & Director of HR, in liaison with the relevant Head of Department and line manager for the role being recruited;
- Manage the Cathedral's recruitment processes – identifying platforms for advertisement, arranging short-listing and interview panels, featuring on shortlisting panels where required;
- Lead with preparations for interview – book rooms, invite candidates to interview, arrange testing and advise on test materials where needed, prepare and advise on interview questions;
- Where required, take part in interview panels;
- Manage the appointment process for new starters – communicate process outcomes to applicants (appointment and rejection communications), pursue references, complete pre-employment checks, liaise with colleagues on DBS check requirements;
- Assist with contract drafting for new appointments in liaison with the COO & Director of HR;
- Manage the induction process for new starters – IT set-up requirements, identification and access cards, ensure a desk space is in place for starters prior to arrival, give starters an IT induction and introduction to the Cathedral diary, familiarise new starters with the Staff Handbook, arrange health & safety inductions with the Property team and introductory meetings with relevant members of staff, and liaise with the Visitor

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Engagement Officer to enrol new starters on the next available staff tour of the Cathedral;

- Assist the Finance team by obtaining new starter financial information, HMRC Starter Forms and other necessary enrolment information.

Operational HR Support

Human Resources Administration for Staff

- Manage the Cathedral's digital HR system (Mentor) – be responsible for creating and updating staff profiles, setting up each new leave year, monitoring annual leave & sick leave (reporting on these for KPI and audit purposes where necessary) and being the point of contact for staff who have queries on how to use the system;
- Communicate staff annual leave entitlement and respond to staff queries on leave;
- Support the Finance team with provision of HR information pertaining to the annual audit and insurance cover, e.g. staff numbers, requested contracts, annual leave summaries;
- Assist the COO with drafting of HR documentation/correspondence;
- Work with the Finance team on the provision of Annual Pay Review letters for all staff;
- Keep the Cathedral's hard copy and digital HR filing systems up to date, in accordance with GDPR best practice;
- Assist the COO with HR audits;
- Support the COO and Director of HR with the rolling update of the Staff Handbook and Cathedral policies pertaining to HR;
- Develop and use process checklists for the HR function, including recruitment, induction, appraisal and exit;
- Oversee the administration of the appraisal and performance management process – liaise with managers to provide templates, resources and advice and ensure these are completed on time and to a high standard;
- Record staff training;
- Liaise with the Diocesan Director of HR for advice and support when queries relating to staff or HR situations arise.

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Person Specification

Skills/Aptitudes

- Ability to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality and discretion;
- Proficient in the use of the Microsoft Office suite, including Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook;
- Understanding of process management and policy development;
- Able to demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of good practice in organisation development, particularly change management and developing organisational culture;
- Able to demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of good practice in learning and development, particularly management development and talent management;
- Excellent interpersonal skills with people at all levels – internally and externally;
- Strong written and oral communication skills;
- Effective planning and project management skills, with the ability to set and work to deadlines;
- Ability to move between big picture thinking and minute detail.

Knowledge/Experience

- Accredited HR qualifications **(desired but not essential)**
- Experience and application of Human Resources policy and processes;
- Experience of implementing new systems and processes to improve efficiency;
- Experience of and commitment to continuous organisational improvement and the ability to act as an agent of change;
- Experience of working in an organisation with both paid staff and volunteers;
- Experience of working within a faith setting;
- Experience of an Anglican or liturgical church and familiarity with the Church of England and its structures.

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Personal Attributes

- Self-motivated and enthusiastic;
- Pragmatic and solution-oriented;
- Committed to high standards and continual improvement;
- Willingness to engage with, understand and implement the use of new software, applications and systems;
- Demonstrates a sympathy for the values, aims and ethos of Southwark Cathedral.

Southwark Cathedral is committed to being an Equal Opportunities Employer. We believe in promoting and building a diverse and inclusive team, and workplace, culture and governance structures that are welcoming to and respectful of all. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified people whatever their ethnicity, background, age, disability, long term condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Safeguarding is at the core of all we do. We follow best practice for Safer Recruitment.

Terms and Conditions

Working Hours

The working hours shall be 35 per hours a week, exclusive of meal breaks. Some out of hours working will be required to support meetings and events and this will be notified in advance. Time off in lieu will be awarded in line with Southwark Cathedral's policy.

Annual Leave

25 days paid leave per annum including statutory bank holidays and an extra day at Christmas.

Probation

The appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.

Season ticket loan

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Once the probationary period has been completed satisfactorily, the person appointed will be eligible to take out a season ticket loan.

Pension

The person appointed will be eligible to join a defined contributions pension scheme managed by the Church Workers Pension Fund. The Cathedral will contribute half of the annual premium of 10% of salary.

Working Expenses

Reasonable out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

Privacy Notice

For more information on how Southwark Cathedral processes applicant data, please refer to our HR Privacy Notice on the Vacancies page on the Cathedral website:

<https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/about-us/job-vacancies/>