



Exeter
Cathedral

Virger Application Pack





Job Description

Job Title: Virger

Department: Virgers

Reporting to: Custos

Hours of Work: Part time 30 hours/week

Salary: £11.44 an hour

Contract Type: Permanent

Background to the role:

The Cathedral is the principal church of the Diocese of Exeter and contains the Bishop's seat which is the symbol of their authority. The Cathedral is run and managed by the Dean & Chapter, supported by the College of Canons. The Virgers Department is led by the Custos (equivalent to Dean's Virger or Head Virger in other Cathedrals) who is supported by the Canons' Virger (Deputy Head Virger). In common with other ancient foundations, such as Winchester Cathedral and St Paul's Cathedral, at Exeter Virger is spelt with an 'i'. This is because the title derives from the latin '*Virga*' for branch or twig which references the staff or rod carried by the Virger in processions.

Purpose of the Role:

The duties of a Virger at Exeter Cathedral can be divided into four key areas:

1. Security & Safety
2. Regular Services & Liturgical Duties
3. Internal Events, External Events & Major Services
4. Staging

Duties and Responsibilities

Security & Safety

- Ensure the Cathedral is tidy, welcoming and safe for all who enter.
- To ensure daily the security of the Cathedral site.
- To unlock the building in the morning and close down the building following completion of Evensong/Evening Prayer or an event.
- To ensure decorum is maintained across Cathedral site and on the Green, notifying the Police in the event of criminal activity.
- To issue keys and cathedral radios to staff and contractors
- To monitor the roof register
- Act as the first responders to incidents and emergencies.
- Respond to any fire alarms, with responsibility for the evacuation of the main building, communicating the need to evacuate to other parts of the site and coordinating the handover to the emergency services when the Cathedral is open.
- Act as the principal first aiders within the Cathedral and Cathedral Green.
- Undertaking the weekly test of the Fire Alarm system and the monthly checking of emergency lighting and fire extinguishers.
- Maintaining a visible presence on the floor of the Cathedral and on the Green, reporting any H&S concerns to the H&S Manager and faults or repairs to the Works Department.
- Undertaking the daily bank run, to ensure the safe and secure deposit of any takings.
- Collecting change orders for the coffee van, shop and entry desk as and when required.
- Setting out tables and chairs for the Cathedral's coffee van.
- Any other duties as required.

Regular Services and Liturgical Duties

- To ensure the regular services are prepared for, set-up and packed-down correctly.
- When on duty, to act as the Virger at any Cathedral Service as necessary, wearing a cassock and gown.
- To provide technical support to services as required, e.g. setting up of sound systems and projectors.
- To ensure votive candle stands are clean, tidy and well stocked.
- Ensure the plate, vestments and linen are kept in the best condition possible and are stored and cleaned to the highest standards.
- Undertake any preparatory duties for extra services and festivals as instructed by the Custos or Canons' Virger e.g. liturgical preparation for confirmations, baptisms or installations.
- To ensure the flag is flying correctly from the North Tower.

Internal Events, External Events & Major Services

- To ensure, using the Cathedral's diary system, the correct set-up for any internal event, meeting or major service and to provide any technical support that may be required.
- Upon instruction from the Events Department to set-up for any corporate hire booking across the Cathedral site.
- To ensure that any events and major services are packed down correctly and that the Cathedral is prepared for the next working day.
- Working in conjunction with the Custos to ensure the correct chairing is set out in the Cathedral and to ensure that, where necessary, any reserved seating is clearly marked.
- In conjunction with the Custos, Event Manager and Cathedral Clergy ensure that the correct protocol is observed when dignitaries visit the Cathedral.

- In conjunction with the Custos, Events Manager and Head Sidesmen, ensure that occupancy calculations are not exceeded during services and events.
- Provide first aid and stewarding coverage during services and events, controlling the evacuation of the building if necessary and liaising with the emergency services as appropriate.

Staging

- As part of a team erect and dismantle staging as required, following the correct practices and adhering to any method statements and risk assessments
- As part of a team erect and dismantle the Dais and other portable staging as and when required
- As part of a team remove and replace, as necessary, the static chairing within the Cathedral



Candidate Profile

This role requires the post-holder to work flexibly in a close-knit team. Excellent situational judgement and an ability to think quickly and clearly under pressure and in an emergency are also required. A positive can-do attitude is also essential.

Essential:

- Ability to work as part of a close-knit team
- Good awareness of Health and Safety (training will be provided)
- IT literate
- Personable and a good communicator
- Excellent standard of personal presentation
- An attention to detail combined with a passion for excellency in all tasks
- A flexible approach with a positive outlook

Desirable:

- First aid qualification - it is a requirement of the role that hold a first aid qualification. Training will be provided if necessary
- Fire and Evacuation experience (training will be provided)
- Knowledge of sound systems and AV setup (training will be provided)
- Knowledge of the liturgical calendar and the Church of England
- An understanding of the daily workings of a Cathedral Church



Photo by Sebastian Christopher

Working for us

Working Pattern

30 hours a week on a pre-agreed rota. This role operates Monday to Sunday throughout the year. Working on weekends, bank holidays and on evening shifts (usually 18:30 to 00:00 when concerts are held) should be expected.

Occasional overtime, particularly during Advent, Christmas and Holy Week should be expected. All overtime will be agreed in advance and paid at the hourly rate.

Annual Holidays

The holiday entitlement is 30 days per year (pro-rata) including public holidays. If you are required to work on a public holiday, you will be entitled to the equivalent time off on an alternative day, to be agreed with your line manager.

Pension Scheme

The Cathedral will match up to 5% of your contribution to your pension plan (provided it is HMRC approved).

Discounts

All employees receive a 10% discount on purchases made in our Shop and Café and complimentary tickets to our in-house concerts.



Photo by Emma Solley

About Exeter Cathedral

A vibrant community hub and a world-class heritage destination, Exeter Cathedral has been at the heart of Devon for nearly a thousand years. Now, as then, it offers a refuge for reflection and a place for prayer - as well as stage for artists, performers and musicians. It has witnessed a fascinating history and remains home to a living Christian faith, a place for learning and a retreat for relaxation. Exeter Cathedral is, at once, a centre of innovation and of ancient treasures; telling stories of the past while carefully conserving them for the future. Innovatively sharing its secrets to welcome a new generation.

Our Values

At Exeter Cathedral, we are committed to and will courageously pursue being:

- Welcoming to all
- The best we can
- Open and listening
- Fair and respectful

Safeguarding

Exeter Cathedral is committed to following best safeguarding procedures and practices to protect children and vulnerable adults. It is therefore an essential contractual requirement that all employees complete safeguarding at the appropriate level identified for their role and attend refresher training when invited by the Cathedral.

Appointment is subject to clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service at the Enhanced level.

How to Apply

Please complete the application form, available on our website, <https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/>, and submit it along with a covering letter stating why you are the right candidate for this role. You may also include your *curriculum vitae*, if you wish.

For an informal conversation about this role please email vacancies@exeter-cathedral.org.uk

Applications should be sent by email or post to:

Catherine Escott, Chief Operating Officer, 1 The Cloisters, Exeter, EX1 1HS

Email: catherine.escott@exeter-cathedral.org.uk

The closing date for applications is Monday 16 September, 12 Noon.

Interviews will be held on Friday 27 September 2024.