



## Job Description and Selection Criteria

<b>Post</b>	<b>Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture</b>
<b>Department/Faculty</b>	<b>Theology and Religion</b>
<b>Division</b>	<b>Humanities</b>
<b>College</b>	<b>Oriel</b>

### Overview of the post

The University of Oxford intends to appoint to the Oriel and Laing Professorship of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture with effect from 1 October 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter, following the retirement of the current holder, Professor John Barton, FBA. The professor will be a member of the Faculty of Theology and Religion and hold a fellowship at Oriel College.

The professorship is one of two full professorships in the Faculty of Theology and Religion devoted to Biblical Studies and is held by a scholar of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. Together with the Dean Ireland's Professor (whose holder must work on the New Testament) the professor provides leadership in Biblical Studies in Oxford. As one of the most high-profile professors in this field the UK, the post-holder plays a significant role in the promotion of the study of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible both nationally and internationally. In making this appointment, the Faculty seeks to build on its traditional strength in this field, developing the subject in explicit dialogue with cognate studies both of its ancient setting and of its formative role and influence over the centuries.

The successful candidate will have an international reputation and a record of high-level critical scholarship in an aspect of the study of the Old Testament /Hebrew Bible, including its impact on later history; there are no prescriptions relating to the religious or confessional position of the holder. She or he will be expected to provide leadership in research in this field, developing existing interdisciplinary connections within Oxford and beyond to enhance the Faculty's research momentum and global profile. The professor will take a central role in graduate teaching (for both taught and research degrees) and will continue existing efforts to increase the strength of the cohort of graduates working on aspects of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. Within a multi-disciplinary framework, the successful candidate will make a major contribution to the teaching of all mainstream and compulsory elements of the undergraduate syllabus (including not only the core paper currently taken by all students, 'God and Israel in the Old Testament', but a range of specialist papers as well). The Faculty welcomes applications from candidates who enjoy working in an interdisciplinary way and who value reflection on the place of their work within the larger field of Theology and Religion.

This is an exciting time to join Oxford's Faculty of Theology and Religion. The Faculty recently changed its name from Theology to reflect the greater diversity of research and teaching now undertaken by its members, which encompasses the study of religions as well as Biblical Studies and Christian Theology. A major review of the undergraduate curriculum for single and joint honours programmes is currently in progress. The new professor will be able to contribute to that curriculum reform particularly in the development of optional courses taken by students in their final year of study.

Queries about the post should be addressed to Mrs Frances Jenkins, Head of Administration and Finance in the Faculty of Theology and Religion ([frances.jenkins@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:frances.jenkins@theology.ox.ac.uk) or telephone: +44 (0)1865 270791). Candidates may also discuss it informally with the Faculty Board Chairman, Professor Sarah Foot, by email ([sarah.foot@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.foot@theology.ox.ac.uk)) or telephone +44 (0)1865 286078.

All enquiries will be treated in strict confidence; they will not form part of the selection process.

## **Duties of the position**

The Oriel and Laing Professor will be a member of both the University, and the College community at Oriel College. She or he will be part of a lively and intellectually stimulating research environment where scholars perform to the highest international levels in research and publication, drawing on the excellent research facilities which Oxford offers. She or he will have a role to play in the running of the College as a member and trustee of its Governing Body.

The professor's duties will include:

### *Research and academic leadership*

- Research and research leadership in the exegesis of Holy Scripture with special reference to study of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. The Professor will be expected to take a lead in encouraging research achievement and nurturing a research culture (particularly through leading the graduate Old Testament Seminar), and to be active in applying for research funding.
- The professor will be expected to foster a culture of grant application among colleagues also working in this field and in the Faculty of Theology and Religion as a whole, as well as taking an active role in relevant development campaigns.
- The professor will be expected to create and maintain links with other Theology and Religious Studies departments in the UK and overseas as well as cognate faculties in Oxford and elsewhere. This may include, for example, organizing visits and lectures by leading scholars, fostering individual and collaborative research and teaching projects, or obtaining appropriate funding to support such activities.

### *Teaching*

- The professor will provide at least 36 hours of lectures or classes per year, and provide supervision for Masters and doctoral students. The professor will be expected to offer lectures on the Old Testament for undergraduates reading Theology and Religion and the joint degree programmes with Oriental Studies and Philosophy. The professor is also expected to take a key leadership role in the overall administration and delivery of the Masters programmes, viz. the nine-month (MSt) and two-year (MPhil) in Old Testament.

### *Examining*

- The professor will be expected to undertake examining for undergraduate and taught graduate programmes and for doctoral theses.

### *Administration*

- All professors are expected to serve often as members of the Faculty Board and of a selection of the Board's sub-committees; they are normally expected, at some point in their term of office, to take the role of Director of Graduate Studies for a three-year period.
- The professor will co-operate in the administrative work of the Faculty of Theology and Religion, in both term and vacation, under the direction of the Chairman of the Faculty Board.

The professorship is held in the Faculty of Theology and Religion. The Faculty is managed by a Faculty Board, led by the Faculty Board Chairman who holds office for a three-year term. The person appointed to the Oriel and Laing professorship will be expected to take on the role of Faculty Board Chairman (effectively Head of Department) at some point if asked to do so by the Humanities Divisional Board.

## **Selection criteria**

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out below. Applicants should make sure that their application shows very clearly how they believe that their skills and experience meet these criteria.

Oxford is committed to fairness, consistency and transparency in selection decisions. Chairs of selection committees (known as electoral boards) will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity and fair selection and there will be at least one member of each gender on the board wherever possible.

The selection criteria for this post are as follows:

- A doctorate in a relevant field and a distinguished record of research in some aspect of the study of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible together with concrete future research plans and an international reputation which will contribute to and enhance the profile of the subject and of the Faculty of Theology and Religion.
- Demonstrable plans for an on-going research agenda which will result in further substantial publications of recognised international quality during the tenure of the chair.
- The ability to demonstrate research leadership, including leading by example, taking a lead in encouraging research achievement and nurturing a research culture, including the obtaining of research grants.
- A record of obtaining external funding for individual research or larger projects.
- A commitment to providing effective teaching and to fostering a high level of achievement at undergraduate and postgraduate level.
- A record of successful graduate teaching and supervision, including experience of graduate taught courses, and of the successful supervision of doctoral theses.

- Experience of university governance and management, and of academic administration.
- Readiness and ability to play a leading role in stimulating and developing the study of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible at all levels within the Faculty of Theology and Religion and to communicate the central interest and importance of the subject to a wider public.
- Willingness and ability to create and maintain links with Theology and Religious Studies departments elsewhere in the UK and abroad, and with cognate faculties in Oxford.

## How to apply

There is no application form. Applications must include:

- your full contact details including email and full postal addresses, and a telephone number
- a covering letter or statement explaining how you meet the criteria set out above
- a full CV and list of publications
- an indication of where you first heard about this post
- the names and contact details (postal and e-mail addresses and telephone number) of **three** referees.

You should contact all three of your referees before applying, to ensure they are aware of your application and of the requirements for the post, and to ensure that they would be content to write a reference for you for this post, if they were asked to do so.

The University will assume that it is free to approach your referees at any stage unless your application specifies otherwise. Therefore if you would prefer a referee or referees to be approached only with your specific permission or if you would prefer them to be approached only if you are being called for interview on the final short list, then you must state this in your application, alongside the details of the relevant referee(s). You should provide the names and full contact details of three referees even if you do not wish them to be contacted yet.

If you are shortlisted but only Oxford references are available for you, you will be asked at a later stage to provide the name of an additional referee outside Oxford.

Applications should be sent by email to Mrs Ruth Kinahan, Senior Personnel Officer, Senior Appointments at [professorships@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:professorships@admin.ox.ac.uk).

The deadline for applications is **Monday 14 April 2014**.

Should you have any queries about how to apply, please contact Mrs Elaine Eastgate at [professorships@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:professorships@admin.ox.ac.uk) or telephone: +44 (0)1865 280189.

The full membership of the board of electors will be published in the *University Gazette* (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/>) when it is finalised. All applications will be acknowledged after receipt and will be considered by the board of electors as soon as possible after the closing date. The board is free to search for other candidates at this or any subsequent stage in its proceedings. All shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and will be asked to give a short presentation to the electors as part of the interview. The board's decision will be communicated as soon as possible after the interview but in some cases there may be a delay while deliberations are ongoing.

# Essential Information for Applicants for the Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture

## The University

The University of Oxford aims to sustain excellence in every area of its teaching and research, and to maintain and develop its position as a leader amongst world-class universities. Placing an equally high value on research and on teaching, the colleges, departments and faculties of Oxford aspire both to lead the international research agenda and to offer a unique and exceptional education to our undergraduate and graduate students.

Oxford's self-governing community of scholars includes university professors, readers, and lecturers, college tutors, senior and junior research fellows and over 2,500 other university research staff. The University aims to provide facilities and support for colleagues to pursue innovative research and outstanding teaching, by responding to developments in the intellectual environment and society at large, and by forging close links with the wider academic world, the professions, industry and commerce. The Strategic Plan, detailing strategy for the period 2013-18 can be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pras/planning/>.

Research at Oxford combines disciplinary depth with an increasing focus on inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary activities addressing a rich and diverse range of issues, from deciphering ancient texts and inscriptions using modern scientific and computational methods developed in Oxford, through to global health, climate change, ageing, energy and the effects on our world of rapid technological change.

Oxford seeks to admit undergraduate students with the intellectual potential to benefit fully from the college tutorial system and small group learning to which Oxford is deeply committed. Meeting in small groups with their tutor, undergraduates are exposed to rigorous scholarly challenge and learn to develop their critical thinking, their ability to articulate their views with clarity, and their personal and intellectual confidence. They receive a high level of personal attention from leading academics.

Oxford has a strong postgraduate student body which now numbers nearly 10,000, nearly 45% of the full-time students. Postgraduates are attracted to Oxford by the international standing of the faculty, by the rigorous intellectual training on offer, by the excellent research and laboratory facilities available, and by the resources of the museums and libraries, including one of the world's greatest libraries, the Bodleian.

For more information please visit [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)

## The Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the faculties of Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Oriental Studies; Philosophy; and Theology and Religion, as well as the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art. The division has responsibility for over 500 members of academic staff, for over 4,000 undergraduates (more than a third of the total undergraduate population of the University), and for about 1,600 postgraduate students.

The Division offers world-class teaching and research, backed by the superb resources of the University's libraries and museums, including the famous Bodleian Library, with its 11 million volumes and priceless early book and manuscript collections, and the Ashmolean

Museum of Art and Archaeology. Such historic resources are linked to cutting-edge agendas in research and teaching, with an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary study.

The Division's faculties are among the largest in the world, enabling Oxford to offer an education in Arts and Humanities unparalleled in its range of subjects, from music and fine art to ancient and modern languages.

For more information please visit: <http://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/>

## **The Faculty of Theology and Religion**

The University is organised into about 140 different departments, each of which recruits its own staff. This post is in the Faculty of Theology and Religion, which has its office at in central Oxford at 34 St Giles'. Theology and Religion is one of the oldest faculties in Oxford; Alexander Neckham from St Albans is recorded as giving biblical and moral lectures as early as 1193 on *The Psalms of David and the Wisdom of Solomon*. The modern Faculty is large, with 25 academic staff (professors and lecturers), and around 130 other Faculty members, who hold positions in colleges and halls of the University. Many have international reputations. The range of academic research interests encompasses biblical studies, ethics, Christian doctrine and Church history, as well as science and religion, philosophy, the psychology and sociology of religion, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Christian spirituality. With some 390 students on different undergraduate courses, and around 280 graduates pursuing both taught and research degrees, there is scope for a great deal of diversity as well as depth of study. Oxford is consistently ranked among the top three best Theology/Religious Studies departments in the country.

The professor will receive an annual research allowance from the faculty of £1000. New professors in the Humanities are also eligible to apply for a start-up grant of up to £7,500 to cover the cost of IT equipment, travel, conference attendance, books etc.

For further information please visit <http://www.theology.ox.ac.uk/>.

## **Oriel College**

There are 38 self-governing and independent colleges at Oxford (of which Oriel College is one), giving both academic staff and students the benefits of belonging to a small, interdisciplinary community as well as to a large, internationally-renowned institution. The collegiate system fosters a strong sense of community, bringing together leading academics and students across subjects, and from different cultures and countries.

Oriel decided in 1876 that the Canonry at Rochester Cathedral, held in association with the Provostship of the College, should be separated and used to endow a chair in Theology. The first Professor (John Wordsworth FBA, later Bishop of Salisbury, great-nephew of the poet) was elected Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture in 1883. Since then a succession of distinguished biblical scholars have held the chair as Fellows of Oriel: Thomas Kelly Cheyne FBA (1885), George Albert Cooke (1908), Charles Fox Burney (1914), David Capel Simpson (1925), Hedley Sparks FBA (1952), James Barr FBA (1976), Ernest Nicholson FBA (1979), and John Barton FBA (1991). A further generous benefaction from the Laing Foundation in 1991 secured the endowment of the chair, which then became the Oriel and Laing Professorship.

Oriel has recently demonstrated its commitment to Theology and Religion by raising the funds to support a permanent post in Philosophical Theology (previously held by Richard Cross), to which Bill Wood has now been appointed. We are now one of the leading colleges in the University for Theology and Religion, and for the joint school of Philosophy and Theology, with 15 undergraduates and 16 graduates on postgraduate taught and research courses. Our results are among the strongest in the University.

The Oriel and Laing Professor would find a supportive College environment, with Professor Brian Leftow and Professor Bill Wood as colleagues, a strong Philosophy school with three Fellows, and notable historic theological collections in the Senior Library.

Potential applicants can find out more about Oriel College at: <http://www.oriel.ox.ac.uk/>.

## Standard Terms and Conditions

### *Standard duties*

(i) to lecture, or hold classes, in at least two of the three university terms and to give at least thirty-six lectures or classes in all and not less than twelve in each of two terms; and

(ii) to undertake research and original work and the general supervision of research and advanced work in your subject and department, and to assist students in their studies by advice or informal instruction.

It is expected that professors will generally participate in the business and affairs of the relevant faculty or department.

### *Salary, benefits and pension*

The salary of the person appointed will be determined by the Vice-Chancellor, after appropriate consultation. In addition the professor will be eligible for consideration, in regular reviews, for one of a number of additional salary awards which may be made in recognition of outstanding academic distinction and/or contribution to the academic work of the University (e.g. in leadership in, or in the development of, some field of study).

The salaries of professors at Oxford are generally above the average of those in other leading UK universities.

An additional pensionable allowance will be payable in respect of any period during which the professor is Head of Department/Faculty Board Chairman. (Any allowance payable for a period of less than three years will not, however, be pensionable.)

Eligible staff may join the Universities Superannuation Scheme. Details are available on the website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/pensions/uss/>.

### *Length of appointment*

The professorship is tenable until retirement. For all academic staff the University has adopted a retirement age of 30 September before the 68th birthday. There is a procedure for requesting an extension of employment beyond that date.

### *Sabbatical leave and outside commitments*

All professors may apply for sabbatical leave to allow them to focus on their research. In general, one term of leave is available for each six terms worked. This leave may either be taken as one term of leave after 6 terms of service, or accumulated and taken as one year of leave after 6 years of service.

Professors may also spend up to 30 working days in each year on projects outside their employment duties, such as consultancy, spin-out activity and membership of research councils and other bodies. There is no limit to the amount of money which staff may earn from these activities. Full details are available on the university website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/academic/approvaltoholdoutsideappointments/>. Guidance on ownership of intellectual property

(<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/182-052.shtml>) and managing conflicts of interest (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/integrity/conflict/policy/>) is also available on the university website.

### *Residence*

Professors are required to reside within the University (i.e. within twenty-five miles of Carfax, the central point of Oxford) during at least six months in each academic year, between 1 October and 1 August, and in particular during not less than six weeks of each term.

### *Relocation expenses*

Subject to HMRC regulations and the availability of funding, a relocation allowance may be available.

### *Family support*

The University has generous maternity and adoption leave arrangements, and also offers support leave to fathers and partners. Additional paternity leave of up to 26 weeks (for children born or placed for adoption after 3 April 2011) is available where parents decide to share the 52 week maternity leave entitlement. Details are available on the website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/>.

All staff are eligible to apply to use the University nurseries (although there is a long waiting list for nursery places), and the full range of tax and National Insurance savings scheme is in operation. Details are available on the University's childcare website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/childcare/>.

The University will try to accommodate flexible working patterns as far as possible and there is considerable flexibility in the organisation of duties. More information on family support and flexible working policies is available on the website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/>.

Information for parents and carers is available at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/parentsandcarersinformation/>.

### *Facilities and services*

The University has a range of facilities and benefits for its staff; more details are available on the website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/benefits/>.

The University Disability Office provides support to staff and students with a disability and may be contacted through its website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/>.

### *Equality of opportunity*

The policy and practice of the University of Oxford require that all staff are offered equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

### *Medical questionnaire and the right to work in the UK*

The appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of a medical questionnaire and the provision of proof of the right to work in the UK.

Applicants who would need a work visa if appointed to the post are asked to note that they may need to enter the UK under the Tier 1 (Exceptional talent) category of the UK's points-based system. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-exceptional-talent>.

#### *Particular arrangements*

Oxford welcomes applications from candidates who have a disability. These documents will be made available in large print, audio or other formats on request. Applicants invited for interview will be asked whether they require any particular arrangements to make the interview more convenient and effective for them.

#### *Data Protection*

All data supplied by candidates will be used only for the purposes of determining their suitability for the post<sup>1</sup> and will be held in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's Data Protection Policy (available on the website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/dp/policy.shtml>)

<sup>1</sup> But NB if the person appointed to the post is a migrant sponsored under the UK's points-based migration system, we are required to retain the applications of all shortlisted candidates for one year or until a UK Border Agency compliance officer has examined and approved them, whichever is the longer period.