



MAGDALENE
COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE



Appointment of

Master

January 2026

Saxton Bampfylde



About Magdalene College

Founded in 1428, Magdalene has a rich history and nearly 600 years of academic tradition. Today, it is a vibrant academic community of some 320 undergraduates, 150 graduates and 60 Fellows, together with 90 administrative and other staff. The College has a strong reputation among both home and international students, who together form a vibrant and diverse community. Magdalene admits students in all subjects taught at the University.

The College has gained an outstanding academic reputation from its scholars, both past and present. It boasts a heritage of distinguished figures in arts and sciences, among them Samuel Pepys, I A Richards, William Empson, C S Lewis, the former Lord Chief Justice, Lord Judge, broadcaster Katie Derham, Dame Sarah Springman DBE FREng and Professor Ros Rickaby OBE FRS. T S Eliot and Thomas Hardy were Honorary Fellows. Among its distinguished scientists have been Patrick Blackett PRS, OM, and Nobel Prize-winner, the ornithologist David Lack, Copley Medallists David Keilin, and Sir John Gurdon, former Master and Nobel Laureate.

The early 21st century has seen significant developments at Magdalene, enhancing both academic and student life. A highlight of the new millennium was the admission of Nelson Mandela as an Honorary Fellow. President Mandela visited Magdalene in 2001, where he met some of the holders of the College's Mandela-Magdalene scholarships. His legacy continues to grow, with the establishment in 2017 of the Magdalene Mandela Memorial Fellowship alongside the first Professorship of the Deep History and Archaeology of Africa, generously endowed by the Jonathan and Jennifer Oppenheimer Foundation.

In 2005, the College completed the Cripps Court development on Chesterton Road, providing a lecture theatre, seminar rooms, and modern conference facilities, alongside high-quality student accommodation. This and other expansion projects ensure that Magdalene can continue to house all undergraduates and nearly all postgraduates within a short walk of the main College site.

The New Library, completed in 2021, provides a dedicated 24/7 space for study, collaboration, and inspiration. It houses the College's working library, the College Archives and Ronald Hyam Archive Work Room, and The Robert Cripps Art Gallery. The following year, the New Library was awarded the prestigious The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stirling Prize for the UK's best new building.

In recent years Magdalene has seen excellent performances by its student members across a wide range of subjects, and the Governing Body sees maintaining and enhancing this tradition of excellence as their highest priority. This scholarly endeavour combines with the social traditions of the College to provide a mutually supportive and friendly academic community.

A constituent part of the University of Cambridge, the College prides itself today on being a warm and inclusive community committed to excellence in academic endeavour and to preparing students to be active participants and contributors to society and culture.



The role

Appointment of Master

Magdalene College is seeking to elect a new Master to succeed Sir Christopher Greenwood, who is to retire in September 2027.

The Role of the Master

The Master should be dedicated to the values of academic life and will be expected to promote and maintain an environment for a thriving intellectual and social community in which all students, Fellows and staff can flourish. They are expected to play a visible and active role in the life of the College, providing both strategic leadership and pastoral support.

In collaboration with the Fellowship and wider membership of the College, the Master will:

- Engage Fellows and the College community to continue to shape the identity, purpose and direction of the College.
- Be an active, visible and accessible figure, setting the tone and helping to strengthen an inclusive culture in which all can thrive.
- Work with colleagues to ensure the College continues to attract applicants for undergraduate and postgraduate study of the highest academic standard, and from all backgrounds.
- Attract and retain individuals of the highest calibre in research and teaching for the Fellowship of the College, maintaining and strengthening

its reputation in education and research within the University and beyond.

- Support and maintain the work of the Alumni and Development Office in fundraising, bringing enthusiasm, commitment and strategic oversight to this vital work.
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with alumni and other significant stakeholders who do so much to enhance the life and work of the College.

Leadership and Governance

The Master works closely with the President, Senior Tutor, Senior Bursar, Development Director and other College Officers in the running of the College. The Master leads and supports the work of those College Officers charged with ensuring the financial stability of the College, the pastoral and academic provision within the College, the creation of an environment conducive to research and intellectual attainment, the maintenance of the historic legacy of the College in its buildings, endowments and ethos, and the future development of the College.

The Master is required to preside at the meetings of the Governing Body. They will also chair several other college committees including the Finance and General-Purpose Committee the Fellowship Committee and the Academic Committee.



External Representation and Fundraising

As ambassador for the College, the Master represents and promotes the interests of Magdalene College in the wider world. As Head of House, the Master represents the College at the Colleges' Committee of the University and may play an active part on other inter-collegiate and University bodies.

The Master will also take a leading role in the College's fund-raising programme. They will work closely with the Development Director and the Alumni and Development Office to maintain momentum in any current or future campaign, taking a lead in the development of strategies, and engaging directly with current and former members of the College and other benefactors. Active participation in key components of the College's programme of events inside and outside Cambridge, involving a significant amount of overseas travel, is expected.

Ceremonial and Social Duties

The Master takes a leading role in ceremonial and social functions within Magdalene, hosting events, making keynote speeches and taking part in admission of new Fellows. They are also expected to confer degrees on students graduating from the College on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor of the University, host students, staff and fellows for less formal occasions, and support student extra-curricular activities.

Time Commitment and Residence

While the role may be undertaken in a part-time capacity, the Master is expected to make the role their first priority and to reside in the Master's Lodge as their primary residence.





Person specification

The College aims to select candidates for interview from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds in which they have demonstrated an eminent record of success. The successful candidate should embrace the values and ideals of the College and promote a collective and inclusive environment for learning and research.

Knowledge & Experience

The successful candidate will be an individual of integrity with a proven record of leadership and achievement in their field. They will command the intellectual and personal respect of Fellows and the wider community of Magdalene College.

The Master is also expected to demonstrate the following:

- Experience in leadership and development of strategy within their field.
- Understanding of and, ideally, a successful history of fundraising and developmental work.
- Evidence of success in working in collaboration with others to achieve aims and objectives through building consensus.
- A strong interest in or understanding of the UK higher education sector and the challenges facing the College and the University as a whole.
- A strong commitment to sustainability, ideally with experience or knowledge of practices consistent with this goal.



Skills and Personal Qualities

- Ability to effectively chair committees, demonstrate a clear understanding of the principles of governance, and advise in the formulation of policy.
- Genuine enthusiasm for the academic aims of the College and the ability to work with students and Fellows to nurture their academic progress and welfare.
- The intellectual and/or professional credibility to command the respect of the Fellowship and the broader College and University community.
- An interest in the depth and breadth of the academic mission of the College.
- Commitment to the values of inclusion, diversity, excellence and freedom of thought and speech.

- A willingness to act as host at collegiate events.
- A strong commitment and ability in fundraising and acceptance of the need to travel widely in the cause of this vital work.
- A sense of responsibility for the integrity of College life with the tact, diplomacy and empathy necessary to achieve this aim.
- An inclusive and engaging style with the ability to motivate the Fellowship, student body, alumni and staff to meet the challenges the College will face during their tenure and beyond.
- Ability to act as an ambassador and advocate for the College and to represent Magdalene in various settings including in the wider University, local community and media environments.



Terms of Appointment

Term of office: 7 years

Time dedicated to the post: The appointment is expected to be made on a less than full time basis ideally between 0.6 and 0.8 WTE.

Residence in the Master's Lodge

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Magdalene College on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **IABSL**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Monday 2 February 2026**.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



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