

ANY AMOUNT OF BOOKS

The Charing Cross Road Bookshop

56 Charing Cross Road, London, WC2H 0QA

www.anyamountofbooks.com



Senior Bookseller at Any Amount of Books.

We are a general secondhand bookshop in the classic tradition, one of the few in central London. We sell a wide range of good quality general secondhand books, ranging from £1 clearance bargains in our much-loved barrows outside the shop, to collectable antiquarian books for several hundred pounds. Our customers are Londoners, tourists, collectors and other book dealers. We have many regular loyal customers. We also sell online and ship books across the world. We are well known for our good turnover of stock, reasonable prices, friendly and informed staff.

What we are looking for:

We are recruiting for a committed Senior Bookseller to support the two bookshop directors in the smooth day to day running of the bookshop, support and encourage our team of booksellers, and ensure a consistent quality is maintained in the shop.

In order to work effectively for us and for the job to be fulfilling for you, you will need to have the following essential attributes:

- A genuine enquiring interest in a wide range of books, especially in secondhand books.
- Prior experience of working in a bookshop.
- Prior experience or a strong interest in working with secondhand or rare books.
- Excellent communication skills.
- A pro-active approach to work.
- A willingness to take on a wide range of tasks.
- Excellent attention to detail and to really care about how a bookshop looks and operates.
- Good numeracy skills and experience of cash handling.
- A reasonable confidence with computers.
- The ability and interest to work well with others as part of a small team.
- Able to lift and carry boxes of books.

Ideally but not essentially you will have:

- Some prior experience of cataloguing books or of using a database.
- Some prior experience of using excel.
- Some prior experience of working with online orders and preparing books for posting.
- Prior experience of managing or co-ordinating other people.

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What we offer you:

- A starting wage for this role of between £28,390 and £29,430 (pro-rata for part time).
Note: This role is being advertised as a full-time role but we are open to part time applications from the right candidates. Please ask us if you have any questions about this, as we can be flexible to ensure we get the best person for the role. Given the scope of the role, it is unlikely to work on less than 3 -4 days a week /28- 32 hours per week
- 1/3 off all personal book purchases (after successful completion of the probationary period).
- The opportunity to extend your knowledge of secondhand bookselling, including training to catalogue books on our database, pricing and buying books.
- A relaxed friendly work environment, casual dress.
- 5.6 weeks annual leave (pro rata for part time staff).
- Contributory workplace pension.

General expectations:

Focus and detail are important, in this role you may well get called away from one job to help sort out another.

You should be aware of what is happening around you in the shop at all times, and to be proactive in responding to customer queries, staff requests for support, and picking up areas that you see are not being dealt with.

There are always things to do in the shop, sometimes these are not always obvious, and we need you to help lead others in ensuring the shop is always looking its best and that new stock gets onto shelves and the window is refreshed.

You should be aware of the books we have in stock on the shelves – it would be impossible to know every book, but by tidying and sorting sections and putting books out, you should become familiar with what is in each section; there is an expectation that by applying for this position you will be interested in the range of books in the shop, and maintain and promote that interest to others, to further a culture of engagement with the books to all staff working in the shop.

Pricing books:

You will support the Director in the pricing of books for the shop. This requires a good understanding of secondhand / rare book values, and an ability to absorb knowledge. This does not necessarily entail prior direct experience of working in a secondhand / rare bookshop environment, but we would expect the candidate to have experience of other secondhand / rare bookshops, and an awareness of a wide range of book values in order to handle this aspect of the role with confidence.

This aspect of the role will be supported with in house training from the Director, and it will be developed over time.

You will need to be open to learning our approach to pricing and valuing stock for the context in which our bookshop operates.

Pricing is done both in the shop itself and off site at our storage locations.

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Collection of books logistics following buying of stock:

You will support the Director when she is buying books and with the practical arrangements around collecting books that have been bought for the shop. This involves hands-on packing books and carrying boxes, logistics of arranging boxes and couriers for collection, from sellers address to our storages, arranging staff to help where required and liaising with the sellers for a smooth transaction. Training and support will be given on this, you will need to be well organised, able to respond calmly when things do not go as planned, and happy to be very hands on with packing and carrying a lot of books. There is scope for developing this aspect of the role further into the future to valuing and buying, but at this stage this is a supportive practical role to free up the Director's time in the collection of books that have been bought.

Cataloguing books:

We sell online as well as in the shop, and we catalogue and list books for sale on various portals: currently Biblio and Abebooks. We have several staff and a freelancer helping to photograph and list books for sale onto our database.

This is an area we would assume you can take to quickly with appropriate training.

It requires excellent attention to detail, an understanding of the various terms used to describe secondhand books and their condition, an ease and confidence around databases and computers, as well as the ability to work at a good pace while maintaining accuracy.

Online Sales – processing and posting sold books

As books are sold online, the orders need to be processed, packed and posted. This is an area of work currently being managed by the Operations Director, and a part time member of staff, but would ideally be passed onto another member of staff and we see the person in this role as needing to have a thorough understanding of the various processes involved and may need to have a focus on this area on a couple of days a week, and support other staff carrying out this role. An element of this is communicating with buyers on queries, and you would need to be able to support staff in answering queries appropriately.

Full induction and training on this aspect of the role will be given.

Management of staff:

Overall HR responsibility and formal line management sits with the Operations Director, but a key part of this role is supporting the Director and Operations Director in the smooth day to day running of the bookshop and helping staff to be able to carry out their roles effectively and to the best of their ability.

You will be the initial support to other staff with any enquiries they may have, and you will need to be supportive and confident in directing staff where they might be struggling, in the absence of the Directors, either day to day or when they are on leave

The Directors will help in this but cannot be in the shop at all times, hence this being one of the key responsibilities and elements of your role. An ability to communicate clearly to the Directors and to all staff is very important.

For periods when the Directors are on leave there will be a limited element of managing sickness / emergency leave cover, but it is not expected that this will be a major part of the role.

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Physical requirements:

- The job involves being on your feet a lot of the day – when on the till and when restocking books on the shelves.
- There is some bending down and reaching up to shelves and using library kick stools and stepladders.
- You will be required to help lift and carry boxes of books into the shop and up and down stairs regularly, at our shop and storage sites.
- When on house calls you will be packing books and helping to load these in and out of houses and vans.
- There are wheeled trolleys of books which need to be put out and brought in from the street each day.
- The day can sometimes involve starting at one location, going to more than one location to collect books, and then back to the bookshop. Travel across London is by public transport, and we use taxis and couriers to transport books to the shop and from book buys.

What is the working day in the bookshop like?:

The shop is open Monday to Saturday 11.30am to 7.30pm and on Sundays from 12.30 to 6.30pm. The normal working day for most staff is from 10.30am to 7.30pm, (12.00 to 6.30pm on Sundays)

It is expected that you will be at the shop ready to start your day in good time and be prepared to stay a little bit after closing time to lock up etc when needed. You will help maintain an existing culture of good timekeeping.

We always have a minimum of 2 staff in the shop at any time. One member of staff is based near the till, and the other out in the main body of the shop. It is very important that this is maintained, and we expect the person in this role to take a lead in this. Staff organise amongst themselves who is based where and when they swap over. A third member of staff is in the shop at least from opening time through to 4.00pm to provide cover for lunch and other breaks, so there is never a point where any one staff member is on their own in the shop. At times you will be part of the 3 staff in the shop to ensure there is adequate cover.

There are always tasks to be done in the shop and while we expect all staff to be pro-active, and there is a good culture of this in the shop, you will take a strong lead in sorting sections, putting books out, checking the window displays, and ensure this is done to the standards we require. You will lead by example.

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During the day bookshop staff will be covering a range of duties, which include:

- Opening up the shop and putting out barrows of books outside.
- Refreshing the window display.
- Restocking the shelves with new arrivals, sorting, tidying and alphabetising sections.
- Putting book protector sleeves on books.
- Helping to carry boxes of books in and out of the shop, and up and down stairs.
- Being on the shop floor to help customers and to monitor what is going on in the shop.
- Using the till and taking cash and card payments, recording larger sales in a ledger, cashing up at the end of the day.
- Taking customer enquiries and some orders over the phone.
- Some pricing and some research of books.
- Updating management with messages as required.
- Light clean of shop at start of day, washing up teacups, putting out recycling and rubbish.

Some of these you will help with, some will be delegated. It will differ from day to day. It is a small team and we expect everyone to help with all areas of work.

Covid Safety Requirements:

We have maintained very high standards of Covid safety throughout the time we have been open during the coronavirus pandemic. We have established ourselves as a shop known for its emphasis on safety, through our clear messaging and insistence on face mask wearing. This hasn't pleased everyone, but the majority of our customers have been reassured that we take safety seriously, and consultations with all staff have helped inform our approach.

Recently, following staff consultation, we have relaxed requirements for staff to wear a facemask while in the shop (but we will continue to provide 2 different types of face mask, including N95 FFP2 masks). Customers without masks on are no longer asked to wear a facemask on entry.

We have improved ventilation in the shop to help mitigate the spread of Covid, we have installed True HEPA air filtration purifiers, and we have hand sanitiser at the entrance to the shop and by the till for staff.

We limit customer numbers in the shop at busy times to avoid overcrowding and allow some social distancing. When numbers reach capacity, we have a system in place to only let more customers in after some have left.

HOW TO APPLY:

Please apply by email, with a covering letter and CV
to Michael Cubey, Operations Director office@anyamountofbooks.com
Closing date: Friday 15th July