

Conference & Events Assistant (Summer 2026)
(Free Accommodation Included)

St John's College is looking for friendly, flexible, and motivated students to join our Operations Team over the summer. This is a great opportunity to gain paid experience, build your CV, and live right in college rent free. There are up to 5 positions available.

OVERVIEW	
Job title:	Conference & Events Assistant (Summer 2026)
Responsible to:	Conference & Events Manager, Residential Business Manager
Responsible for:	N/A
Working alongside:	Events Assistants and Operational teams
Grade:	St John's College Minimum Casual Rate
Salary:	£12.60 per hour + 15% holiday pay Free accommodation in College 1 st July to 20th September 2026 Some meals during events worked
Contract type:	Fixed-term: 22 June to 22 September 2026 Casual: Zero hours contract
Working arrangements:	Required to work from St. John's College, flexibly
Pension:	N/A
Holidays:	N/A – holiday allowance paid in monthly salary
Start date:	22 June 2026
Closing date:	04 May 2026 (23:59 BST)
Interview date:	w/c 11 May 2026

ABOUT ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

St John's College is one of the smallest Durham colleges, renowned for our welcoming atmosphere. Founded in 1909 and set in a series of beautiful, listed buildings in the heart of Durham city, our community enjoys stunning views of Durham Cathedral and boasts gardens and lawns stretching down to the River Wear. Each year we have around 250 students resident in the College – undergraduates and postgraduates studying for degrees at Durham University, as well as students of Cranmer Hall, a theological College within St John's. The College has a degree of independence within the University, both financially and in its governance, meaning that we have the freedom to do things a little differently. Throughout the year, the College's Christian ethos translates into warm hospitality. All our different staff teams work closely together with our students to create the unique John's experience.

JOB SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

St John's College is seeking friendly, flexible, and motivated individuals to join the Operations team during the summer period as Conference & Events Assistant.

This is a hands-on, customer-facing role supporting the delivery of conferences, events, bed-and-breakfast services, catering operations and housekeeping services across the College. Post-holders will contribute to ensuring that all guests receive a welcoming, professional, and high-quality experience, and that College facilities are maintained to excellent standards of cleanliness, presentation, and safety.

The role involves working across conference and events support, catering service, and housekeeping duties as business needs require. Shifts may include early mornings, evenings, weekends, and occasional late finishes. Flexibility and a strong team-working approach are essential.

The post-holder will work closely with the Conference & Events Manager, Residential Business Manager, Chef Manager, and Housekeeping Supervisor as appropriate.

This is ideal for students staying in Durham over summer or looking for paid experience in events, hospitality, or operations.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Customer Service and Guest Experience

- Provide a courteous, friendly, and efficient service to staff, students, and external guests at all times.
- Act as a first point of contact for conference delegates and B&B guests, responding to queries professionally and escalating issues where required.
- Work from the College helpdesk when required, following agreed procedures and recording information accurately.
- Maintain discretion and professionalism, respecting guest privacy at all times.

Conference and Events Support

- Support the organisation and delivery of conferences, events, and College functions, working closely with colleagues across departments.
- Set up and reset meeting and event rooms according to client specifications, including furniture layout and AV equipment (training provided).
- Provide on-the-day operational support during events, including welcoming guests and troubleshooting basic issues.
- Assist with bar operations when required, including serving, stock control, and liaising with the Chef Manager regarding supplies and pricing.

Catering Duties

- Assist with the preparation and setup of serveries and dining areas for meal services.
- Serve food to guests, ensuring portion size, presentation, and temperature meet required standards.
- Re-stock counters, buffet areas, and salad/sandwich bars, ensuring correct stock rotation.
- Maintain cleanliness of front- and back-of-house catering areas, including washing equipment and operating the dishwasher.
- Develop an understanding of menus, allergens, and special dietary requirements, ensuring allergen information is available.
- Maintain personal hygiene and present a professional appearance in line with food safety standards.

Housekeeping Duties

- Clean and prepare guest bedrooms, including vacuuming, mopping, waste removal, and bed stripping and remaking where required.

- Service bathrooms, WCs, and utility areas to a high standard, including cleaning sanitary ware and mopping floors.
- Clean public and shared areas, including teaching rooms and social spaces.
- Report maintenance issues and Health & Safety concerns promptly to the Housekeeping Supervisor.

Health, Safety and Training

- Maintain a safe and secure working environment in line with College policies, Health & Safety regulations, and COSHH requirements.
- Use cleaning chemicals and equipment safely and appropriately, completing required cleaning records.
- Attend mandatory training sessions, including but not limited to:
 - Manual handling
 - Fire safety
 - Food hygiene
 - COSHH
 - Customer service
 - Internal IT systems and GDPR
 - AV equipment setup
- Undertake any additional reasonable duties commensurate with the role as directed by managers and supervisors.

Flexibility and Availability

- Be flexible in shift patterns to provide cover for sickness, holidays, and operational emergencies.
- Be available to work variable hours, including early mornings, evenings, weekends, and occasional late nights.
- Where applicable, be available at short notice to support College operations during busy periods.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidates will be friendly and motivated individuals with a passion to represent St John's College and to provide excellent service to external guests and customers. They will need to have a flexible approach to work during this period and be available at short notice to provide cover and support.

	Criteria	Essential	Desirable
1	Excellent interpersonal skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a warm, professional, and welcoming approach when interacting with guests, students, and staff. 	X	
2	Strong written and oral communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to respond clearly and professionally to queries both in person and via email or telephone. • Comfortable recording information systematically for escalation or future reference. 	X	
3	Strong organisational and administrative skills with attention to detail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capable of accurately handling bookings, following procedures for logging data, and managing room setups. 	X	



5	Ability to work independently and collaboratively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works reliably without direct supervision, especially during out-of-hours shifts. Contributes positively to team efforts, communicating effectively with other departments. 	X	
6	Excellent customer service focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently delivers a responsive, helpful, and solution-oriented service to internal and external guests. 	X	
7	Flexible and proactive approach to work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willing to work irregular hours, including early mornings, late nights, weekends, and cover shifts at short notice. Responds calmly and efficiently to last-minute changes or unexpected issues. 	X	
8	Smart and professional appearance and manner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represents the College positively through appearance and behaviour, especially at formal events and high-profile functions. 	X	
9	Experience with AV equipment setup and troubleshooting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confident in setting up AV systems for events, or demonstrates a willingness and aptitude to learn. 		X
10	Experience in hospitality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comfortable serving and managing a bar, including liaising over stock level and ordering, and health & safety requirements supported meal service, table setup, or events preparation, ideally in a formal or institutional setting 		X
11	Awareness of hygiene, Health & Safety, and COSHH (training provided)	X	

This role is subject to the successful applicant providing proof of eligibility to work in the UK.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please see St John's College [Privacy Notice for Job Applicants](#)

The application process is open to all Durham University students.

The application should include:

- Letter of application
- Current CV
- Names and contact details of two referees

Applications should be submitted by email to: elizabeth.hall3@durham.ac.uk

The deadline for applications is 04 May 2026 (23:59 BST). Interviews are expected to be held on w/c 11 May 2026.