**Curator: Ruskin Collection and Library Unique and Distinctive Collections**

**Additional Information**

**The University**

Lancaster University has just celebrated its 50th anniversary with a world-class reputation as a centre for excellence in research, teaching and scholarship. Ranked as a top 10 UK university (in The Times, Guardian and Complete University league tables) and in the top 1% of universities in the world, Lancaster continues to sustain its reputation for teaching and research excellence both nationally and internationally.

The University places great emphasis on a strong student experience and gives students access to academics who are experts in their field, whilst providing an integrative environment that is conducive to learning for a culturally and ethnically diverse student population. The main campus is situated on the southern outskirts of Lancaster and is set in 250 acres of landscaped parkland, close to the lively, friendly and historic city of Lancaster. The campus is 30 miles south of the Lake District, 20 miles east of the Yorkshire Dales, and even closer to the Forest of Bowland and the Fylde. It is one hour’s drive from Manchester and about 2½ hours by train from London.

The University has published an ambitious strategy for 2020. Our vision is to become a university that is globally significant – a leader in higher education that provides the highest quality research and teaching, and engages locally and internationally on the issues and debates of the day and future. Driven by research, and stimulating learning, the globally significant university informs and changes practice and thinking worldwide.

To find out more about the University strategy please visit: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/about-us/theuniversity/strategic-plan/](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/about-us/theuniversity/strategic-plan/)

**Library Services**

Library Services provides resources and services to support the teaching and research activities of the University, both at the Lancaster campus as well as internationally, including at two overseas campuses. It consistently achieves high satisfaction ratings from students; it came joint first in the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2017.

Library Services manages the University Library, the Learning Zone and the Ruskin Library. It has 80 staff organised in three broad functional areas; Operations and User Services, Academic Services and Digital Innovation and Research Services. Further details of staffing structure and roles can be found at [http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/library/people/](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/library/people/).

**The Ruskin Library and Research Centre**

The Ruskin Library, adjacent to the University Library, is home to the Whitehouse Collection of material relating to John Ruskin (1819-1900) and his circle. The collection is made up of an extensive store of papers including manuscripts, Ruskin’s diaries and over 7,000 letters.
In addition to some 350 books from Ruskin’s Library, the great strength of the book collection is a unique assemblage of all Ruskin’s published writings (which run to a collected edition of 39 volumes) in successive editions, including foreign language versions of some of the more important texts such as Modern Painters, Stones of Venice and Unto this Last.

In the public galleries are displayed a selection from the 1,500 drawings and 500 prints in the collection, of which 950 are by Ruskin, and others by his friends and associates, including Samuel Prout, Francesca Alexander and Albert Goodwin. As an interdisciplinary and socially-committed critic and thinker, John Ruskin offers an inspirational model for connecting and developing much of the research undertaken at Lancaster University. A Victorian polymath and visionary, Ruskin was an art critic, social reformer and educator; George Eliot wrote that

‘I venerate him as one of the great teachers of the day’. A wide-ranging thinker, engaged with science as well as art, Ruskin stressed the importance of aesthetics and the careful study of the natural world, emphasising their links to political, economic and social concerns.

Building on the work of Lancaster University’s internationally significant Ruskin Centre which carries out research into John Ruskin, based in the comprehensive Ruskin library and accredited museum: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/depts/ruskinlib/Pages/welcome.html](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/depts/ruskinlib/Pages/welcome.html), the University has recently created a new University Research Centre. The Ruskin Centre for Culture, Landscape and Environment (RCCLE) integrates the work of the Library and previous Centre under the leadership of Professor Sandra Kemp and significantly widens the focus from the writer’s own work to also consider key Ruskinian areas of interest in which Lancaster already has international expertise. The RCCLE aims to maximise our reputation for Arts and Humanities led research, facilitate cross-disciplinary funding bids and contribute to the University’s Engagement strategy.