

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Education Officer

Division: Secretary-General's Office

Grade: I

Reports To: Education Adviser

General Information

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 56 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity.

The Education Officer is part of the Education Unit within the Social Policy Development Section at the Commonwealth Secretariat. The primary objective of this role is to implement programme and interventions aligned with the Commonwealth's established education and social development policy priorities. This includes organising and providing support for ministerial and senior officials' meetings, notably the annual Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM) and other affiliated meetings. The Education Officer will ensure that all initiatives are in line with the Commonwealth's agreed-upon education policies, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Commonwealth Charter, Secretariat's Strategic Plan, and the recommendations of relevant Commonwealth meetings, such as the 21CCEM, the 22CCEM and the 2022 and 2024 CHOGMs. The approach to this role will be rooted in evidence-based and rights-based methodologies, leveraging education and social policy research, analysis, and the documentation of good practices within the Commonwealth.

Job Summary

Reporting to the Education Adviser, the Education Officer will provide professional, technical, research, operational, and administrative support to the Education Unit. This includes providing specialised technical assistance on various educational domains such as early childhood, foundational learning, primary and secondary education, non-formal education, tertiary education, and skills development; as well as cross-sectoral work including in Health, Youth Development and Sport. The Education Officer will play a vital role in facilitating programme development and implementation, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment, as well as reporting. The incumbent will ensure active exchange of information and good practices.

Moreover, fostering close collaboration and robust working relationships with Member Countries, partners, and key stakeholders is crucial to effectively support the implementation of the Secretariat's education and social development programmes. Acting as a central point of contact for the Commonwealth Education Ministers Action Group

(EMAG) and other related entities, the Education Officer will contribute to their processes and activities.

Additionally, this role involves crucial support for the planning and operational execution of the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM), a key platform for identifying critical education issues and aligning national strategies with global objectives. The Education Officer will collaborate closely and assist the Education Adviser in the operational delivery of Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEMs) which is the main forum for identifying issues and priorities across the Commonwealth, and harmonising national plans with international goals.

Task description of post-holder:

Strategic Guidance:

- Translate education objectives into actionable regional/national strategies for Commonwealth member countries.
- Provide technical advice aligned with the Commonwealth Secretariat's education programs and strategic plans.

Stakeholder Collaboration:

- Establish and maintain effective partnerships with education stakeholders, policymakers, and international bodies.
- Facilitate information sharing to enhance program implementation and stakeholder capacity building.

Cross-Sectoral Integration:

- Analyse education and social development issues, fostering collaboration with various sectors including health, youth development and sport, to integrate education concerns into their plans and programs.

Research and Reporting:

- Conduct research on global education trends and data, utilizing findings for program development, management, and reporting.
- Prepare and contribute to various written reports, documents, and communications related to education development.

Program Monitoring and Support:

- Monitor and assess the implementation of technical country programs and projects in the education sector.
- Provide program and project support to meet the needs of member countries and enhance institutional capacity.

Representational and Organizational Roles:

- Represent the education team at meetings and organize relevant workshops and conferences.
- Assist in planning, organizing, and servicing technical and expert group meetings.

Training and Capacity Building:

- Organize and support expert group meetings, training seminars for government officials and national experts, focusing on social development issues in education.

Administrative and Program Support:

- Support program development, planning, and results-based management, including budgeting, reporting, and risk management.
- Assist in administrative tasks and document management, reports, filing systems, financial transactions, correspondence and document management, as well as assisting with the preparation of contracts for consultants and for procurement, ensuring compliance with organizational processes.

Other:

- Adhere to the gender equality values of the Commonwealth as outlined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Perform other related duties as required.

Education

Post graduate degree in Education, international development, social sciences, or a related field is required.

Essential Experience:

- At least 5 years of progressive experience in global education or an education-related projects, programs or policy formulation in an international development context.
- Demonstrated professional experience at the international level and/or in a developing country working within international development organisations, particularly in global education related programmes.

- Profound understanding of education systems, policies, and practices, both at national and international levels. Knowledge of various education methodologies, curriculum development, teacher training, and assessment techniques.
- Experience working with Governments, Ministry of Education and other line Ministries and a sound understanding of government operations within developing country settings.
- A sound understanding of project design, including project budgeting and forecasting, the use of tools such as Project Cycle Management (including the Logical Framework) and Results-Based Management (RBM).
- Strong inter-personal skills in collaboration and coordination.
- Strong IT skills, particularly in budgeting, forecasting, financial analysis and reporting.
- Excellent written and oral communications/presentations skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to work with minimum supervision.
- Full familiarity with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Desirable:

- Experience within a government agency in a developing country or a development organisation with responsibility for policy development, project development, design and management in global education.
- Certification in Project Management such as Prince 2.

Competencies:

Working with Others

Regularly shares information of value with colleagues.
Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues.
Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well.
Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures.
Utilises networks to ensure similar goals are achieved collaboratively.
Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries.
Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks.
Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations.

Communication

Interacts and communicates effectively with internal/external contacts.
Ensures information is communicated to all the appropriate people.

Provides feedback to more senior colleagues effectively, providing justification where necessary.
 Uses the correct method of communication, depending on the message and the audience.
 Anticipates objections in dialogues and prepares convincing responses.
 Delivers difficult messages with tact and sensitivity.

Planning and Analysis

Schedules activities according to deadlines and importance.
 Liaises with various parties in diverse locations to organise activities.
 Agrees new timescales when faced with competing activities.
 Balances a focus on detail with a broader perspective.
 Effectively interprets inquiries and quickly identifies elements that do and do not fall within their remit, dealing with them appropriately.

Developing & Applying Expertise

Takes advantage of opportunities to develop an area of expertise.
 Takes learning from previous experience and applies them appropriately.
 Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches.

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds and treats all people equally with dignity and respect.
 Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.
 Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.
 Identifies biases in systems & processes.

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.
 Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Adapting and Innovating

Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect.
 Helps others evaluate and strengthen ideas.
 Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them.
 Demonstrates flexibility e.g., by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective inter alia.
 Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands.
 Welcomes and adapts to new ideas and/or approaches.
 Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others.

