



The Commonwealth

JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Admin Officer (Records)

Division: Political Division (POL)

Grade: K

Reports To: Operations Officer

General Information

The Political Division (POL) is the lead division in the Secretariat's high-profile programme for the promotion of democracy and good governance in the Commonwealth. The division works closely with the Secretary-General, providing him with advice and support on all political issues, and particularly in his Good Offices role. Its work ranges from monitoring and analysis of political developments and the preparation of briefings, to the organisation of election observation and the provision of technical assistance. The work is often of great sensitivity and to demanding timetables.

POL is also responsible for organising and servicing the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM), the annual meeting of Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers and meetings of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG).

The Division has a central Registry that maintains archives of all countries, themes and issues that it deals with and is called upon to retrieve and disseminate information on such matters to the Secretary-General, other senior officers, and indeed to other divisions at times, often at short notice. It is also responsible for all documentation needed for the aforementioned meetings of Heads of Government and Ministers, as well as other meetings and events organised by the Division. Finally, the Division has a key role in vetting, for political sensitivity, classified archives for release into the public domain after 30 years, as per the Secretariat's established practice

Job Summary

The role of the Administrative Officer (Records) is key to the smooth functioning of POL through maintaining an efficient Registry and a speedy archive retrieval system; ensuring the production of consistent high quality documents; and providing administrative support for the running of CHOGM, CFAMM, CMAG and other meetings. The post-holder is also a resource for other Secretariat Divisions on archival policies. Finally, the post holder has the politically sensitive task of fulfilling the Secretariat's obligations under the 30-year rule by vetting a large number of Secretariat archives and on an annual basis before their release into the public domain.



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Task Description

(i) Reporting to the Operations Officer, the Administrative Officer (Records) is responsible for managing and providing efficient Divisional Registry/Library services by:

- Supervising a dedicated Divisional Registry/Library by developing and maintaining a systematic and well organised filing/archival system, both manually and electronically through the ScanShare System;
- Maintaining ISIS (Library Software System) to store and retrieve POL/Commonwealth data and information to service POL, other Divisions as needed as well as other users (member governments, consultants etc);
- Advising other Divisional Registries, as required, on archival procedures in order that efficient and correct storing/retrieval of documents are maintained;
- Compiling and maintaining various databases relating to the Commonwealth (including those relating to Heads of Government/Foreign Ministers/CMAG/standing ministerial groups and committees/POL publications and other data) for use by POL, other Divisions, Buckingham Palace (Office of Head of the Commonwealth) and member governments as required;
- Researching and compiling notes, as directed, on criteria, procedures and precedents for Commonwealth membership;
- Editing, proof reading and ensuring conformity to COMSEC house style of reports and articles relating to a variety of Commonwealth topics, as directed;
- Liaising with the Webteam on entries relating to Commonwealth member countries on the Secretariat's website in order that the information is accurate and up to date;
- Supporting good offices and election observer missions, where relevant, undertaking research and extracting information for compiling briefs, administrative notes and other documentation.

(ii) As Documents Officer for CHOGM, prepares and co-ordinates documentation relating to CHOGM/Pre-CHOGM Foreign Ministers Meeting/Committee of the Whole/Senior Officials Meetings and other relevant ministerial meetings, by:

- Liaising with the Conference Section on matters relating to the preparation of CHOGM documentation and meeting procedures, in order that timelines are adhered to;
- Preparing, editing, proof-reading and co-ordinating documentation for CHOGM and other ministerial meetings/groups and ensuring timely distribution to member governments;
- Liaising with High Commissions, Senior Officials from capitals and relevant Commonwealth organisations in matters relating to documentation;
- Uploading/maintaining the secure documentation website for CHOGM (responsibility of which rests with POL) and facilitating efficient/easy retrieval by member governments;
- Preparing meeting documentation and running the Documents Centre at CHOGM, including supervision of seconded local staff;



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- Preparing, editing and proof-reading Memoranda and Minutes of CHOGM (Final Record averaging 400-500 pages with annexes) and other meeting reports and arranging printing and distribution to member governments;
- Assisting with the compilation of the CHOGM Communiqué and other outcome documents, as well as other Commonwealth reference booklets co-ordinated by COM for public release;
- Editing and proof-reading reports and information booklets originating from POL as well as from other Divisions for public release;
- Assisting with logistical arrangements, for the smooth running of POL organised meetings.

(iii) The post-holder is responsible for the on-going Archival Reviews of Shared Commonwealth Records and their release into the public domain under the 30-year rule, requiring political sensitivity, institutional knowledge and attention to detail. This task involves:

- Reading and assessing large amounts of sensitive archival material for release every year;
- Exercising political judgement on each archive before the archives are released into the public domain, seeking guidance from a senior staff member(s) of POL as appropriate ;
- Advising and liaising closely with the Archivist and Records Management Officer in COM in this regard.

(iv) Performs other duties as may be required from time to time.

(v) The job holder is required to adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.

Person Specification

Education:

An under-graduate degree in social sciences.

Desirable

Masters Degree in social sciences.

Experience:

Minimum five years' experience in handling documentation of a confidential nature;

Experience in formatting and preparation of conference documentation, with an eye for detail;

Good degree of familiarity with electronic archiving and documentation software.

Desirable:

Familiarity with international relations, especially political issues of the Commonwealth.



Competencies:

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.
Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.
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.
Changes systems and processes when biases are identified.

Working with Others

Promotes team work and removes barriers to effective team working.
Provides advice and guidance for others sensitively and where appropriate.
Establishes ownership for relevant activities from the outset.
Develops a wide network, including senior level contacts to facilitate activities and further own knowledge.
Manages expectations of member states e.g. to ensure the alignment of what is requested and what Commonwealth Secretariat can offer.
Demonstrates an ability to negotiate with and influence senior colleagues and contacts.
Proactively liaises with other divisions, partners & third parties.

Managing Resources

Identifies targets for team activities and manages progress against objectives.
Plans and manages activity spend accurately against budget.
Takes responsibility for team activity and finds solutions to set backs in a timely and professional manner.
Effectively motivates team e.g. by recognising and promoting team and individual contribution inter alia.
Recognises strengths and weaknesses in others, structuring teams based on this knowledge.
Drives forward results of others.
Takes ownership for team wellbeing.

Decision Making

Considers the relevant justifications for a particular course of action.
Takes context into consideration when making decisions.
Makes effective decisions when acting on behalf of a senior colleague, seeking advice where appropriate.
Bases actions and approaches on the root cause of an issue, rather than the symptoms.

Accountability

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

Leadership & Development

Mentors colleagues effectively e.g. by suggesting development goals and providing on the job coaching inter alia.



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Provides constructive feedback to team members and colleagues with confidence and sensitivity.

Actively seeks feedback on own performance and acts to modify behaviours where necessary.

Inspires others through own enthusiasm.