

JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Assistant Research Officer (International Trade Policy) (Two Posts)

Division: Economic Policy Division

Job Grade: Y (Young Professionals Programme)

Reports to: Head of Section, International Trade Policy

Location: London, UK

Young People in the Commonwealth

Young people (under 30) constitute more than 60% of the population of the Commonwealth, and the wellbeing and development of this 1.2 billion youth cohort are essential to the success of the Commonwealth and its 53 member states.

The Commonwealth sees young people as assets to their societies, with a proven capability to contribute to and lead change. It is vital to ensure they are developed and empowered to realise their individual potential, and to contribute to their countries' development and the success of the Commonwealth.

Accordingly, under its Young Professionals Programme (YPP), the Commonwealth is designating a number of junior technical positions for young people.

Economic Policy Division

The Economic Policy Division is responsible for the Secretariat's programmes on national and international economic issues and, with other divisions, for assisting member countries to improve economic policy-making, management and governance. The Division plays a key role in helping to identify solutions to the economic problems affecting Commonwealth developing countries; in achieving an international consensus on these solutions through analytical/ diagnostic work and advocacy; and in providing policy advice to governments. Practical assistance for economic development is a core Secretariat activity and a high priority for governments.

The International Trade Policy (ITP) Section undertakes policy-oriented research and analysis and advocacy work on international trade and related development issues as per the Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan with the objective of helping member countries achieve effective policy mechanism for integration into and effective participation in the global trading system. The work programme is directed towards: promoting policy approaches and actions that aim at fostering multilateral and regional trade, taking account

of special requirements of certain developing member country groups in international trade; enhancing member governments' capacity to adapt and develop trade policies in tune with changes in the international trading system; helping member countries and stakeholders assess the implications arising from emerging developments in regional and multilateral trade; prompting effective national and regional strategies and approaches to trade co-operation; and providing policy advice and other forms of assistance with regards to regional integration involving Commonwealth countries and their greater participation in global trade.

The Section's activities include undertaking policy analysis and providing informed inputs to assist Commonwealth Members effectively formulate trade policy, negotiate and implement multilateral and regional trade agreements, better appreciate the likely implications arising from emerging trade-related developments and consider appropriate policy measures and other actions for dealing with them; organising workshops and other events to promote capacity-building in the related areas; and facilitating dialogue and international consensus-building in support of the adoption of pro-development positions, particularly considering the special development challenges of Commonwealth countries belonging to the groups of small and vulnerable economies, least developed countries and Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the Section also contributes to the Division's and Secretariat's work on general development issues.

Job Summary

The Young Professional Officer will be responsible for providing the International Trade Policy Section technical and administrative support for delivery of analytical work, organisation of advocacy meetings and capacity building workshops, and preparation and documentation of policy work. Reporting to the Head of Section of International Trade Policy, the post holder will undertake policy research including data analysis, literature review and provide support to the team in key areas of Section's trade policy work.

Key Accountabilities

- Assist the ITP Section with literature review, data analysis, information gathering and analytical work on trade and trade-related development issues;
- Work with the relevant Advisers in conducting analysis on multilateral and regional trade negotiation issues of interest to member countries;
- Assist the Section with data work involving Commonwealth countries' trade performance and intra-Commonwealth trade flows;
- Assist the ITP Section in the preparatory processes for major publication projects and their dissemination;
- Assist the Section in preparing analytical and briefing papers on such issues of interest as multilateral and regional trade negotiations, supply chains, South-South trade, and other trade-related emerging and development issues;
- Assist Advisers/Head of Section with research and data analysis for preparing papers and presentations in different forums;



- Assist the Section with the preparation of terms of reference and contracts for external consultants, organising meetings, workshops and conferences as part of the programme of activities;
- Assist in and conduct other trade-related research as required, and contributes to speeches, presentations and talking points for senior officials.
- Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Performs any other duties as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

This role forms part of the Young Professionals Programme (YPP), so to be considered candidates must be no older than 27 years old as at the close of applications.

Education:

- A strong first degree in Economics, International Trade or related discipline.
- A relevant post graduate qualification is highly desirable.

Experience:

- At least one year of demonstrated work experience in the area of Economics or International Trade. The work experience may be gained through a combination of paid employment, post graduate research, and placement or internship positions.
- Good data analysis/quantitative skills and experience of working on international trade agreements and/or the functioning of international trade organisations such as the World Trade Organisation will be advantageous.

Knowledge and Skills:

- Excellent understanding of international trade theories and their applications.
- Ability to review the literature and other information to prepare concise reports.
- Ability to organise, plan and prioritise workload, efficiently and accurately within tight deadlines with minimum supervision.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to interpret complex trade data/information and instructions.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality as appropriate.
- Ability to work autonomously and in teams.

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
- Develops a wide network, including senior level contacts to facilitate activities and further own knowledge
- 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
- Writes reports and papers that are succinct accounts of key information

Developing & Applying Professional Expertise

- Proactively identifies how to develop specialist knowledge
- Takes learning from previous experience and applies it appropriately
- Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches

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
- Identifies biases in systems & processes

Adhering to Principles and Values

- Adapts professional style to suit different situations with different individuals where appropriate
- 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

Drives forward improvements and innovations within own area of responsibility, adding value where appropriate

Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them

Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective

Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands

Promotes new ideas that are picked up by senior colleagues

Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others