

JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Research Officer

Division: Economic Policy Division

Grade: K

Reports To: Head of Section: International Trade Policy

General Information

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 Section (ITPS) undertakes policy-oriented research and analysis on international trade and related development issues 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 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; enhancing member governments' capacity to adapt and develop trade policies in tune with changes in the international trading systems; 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 work on general development issues.

Job summary

Reporting to the Head of the International Trade Policy Section, the Research Officer will undertake review of literature and information to inform relevant trade developments, and undertake the required data analysis to prepare appropriate analytical paper and trade advocacy documents containing evidence-based assessments and any relevant advice and recommendations for member governments and their regional organisations.

Task description

The post holder will:

- Regularly monitor and keep record of trade performance of Commonwealth Members, particularly of those in least developed countries, small vulnerable economies and Sub-Saharan Africa
- Provide assessment of topical trade and related development issues by making use of quantitative data and information as available from secondary sources and develop appropriate policy recommendations for member governments
- Assist the Advisers/Head of Section in the conceptualisation and preparation of the major policy analysis projects, and in reviewing and consolidating other commissioned analytical papers/advocacy documents to be published formally
- Assist the Advisers/Head of Section with research and data analysis in cross-cutting global advocacy areas involving trade and finance, trade and debt, trade issues for small states and for preparing papers and technical presentations to be presented in different forums
- Prepare and, or as required, contribute to the preparation and delivery of written and oral reports, papers and briefings; and prepare and contribute to speeches and briefs for Managers
- Coordinate and assist in preparations for and servicing of meetings, workshops and seminars organised by the Economic Affairs Division by assisting with the preparation of documentation and reports and assisting with the logistical aspects.
- Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Perform other duties as may be required from time to time.

Person specification

Education:

A Post-Graduate degree in Economics/International Trade

Experience

At least three years' experience in the areas of trade policy analysis

Familiarity with major trade database as available from secondary sources

Familiarity with WTO rules and functioning of the global trading system

Familiarity with major regional trading arrangements involving Commonwealth members

Competencies

Post holder should be able to demonstrate:

- Ability to organise, plan and prioritise workload, efficiently and accurately within tight deadlines with minimum supervision;
- Familiarity and work experience of secondary data sources on trade and development and undertaking analysis using them with the help of econometric/statistical software (such as MS Excel and Stata)
- Ability to undertake empirical analysis using fairly advanced regression techniques involving cross-country and panel data
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Ability to interpret complex trade data/information and instructions
- Ability to maintain confidentiality as appropriate
- In addition, all staff appointed to the Secretariat are expected to meet the core requirement of working effectively and sensitively in a multicultural environment.

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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.

Encourages others to evaluate systems, processes & behaviour to ensure respect for diversity is demonstrated

Working with Others

Manages conflict and works towards mutual solutions

Identifies organisations with which to partner for specific solutions

Encourages others and provides them with the autonomy to pursue relationships

Uses personal influence to establish compromise and agreement when faced with conflict

Demonstrates balance between directness and diplomacy in negotiations

Uses influence to persuade partners and third parties toward Commonwealth Secretariat aims

Encourages and supports others in demonstrating cultural awareness when working with others

Managing Resources

Manages programme and cross team activities against specific objectives/results

Manages available resources in order to meet objectives e.g. by effective and efficient use of budget inter alia

Identifies the best method and resources when high level course of action has been

identified

Analyses available resources and what activity they will enable

Takes responsibility for multi team/programme activities

Manages diverse motivations of a range of groups in large scale programmes

Decision Making

Determines what can be realistically achieved when deciding on strategic solutions

Is proactive and responsive in making decisions on complex, technical issues based on appropriate information

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.

Supports subordinates, provides oversight and takes responsibility for all delegated assignments.

Leadership & Development

Reinforces vision throughout organisation e.g. by acting accordingly inter alia

Identifies and develops leadership skills in others

Empowers others to take control of their own development and progression

Offers sound guidance and direction on complex and critical issues

Maximises the potential of others e.g. by creating suitable opportunities for development inter alia