

JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title:	Adviser and Head, Human Rights Unit
Division:	Governance and Peace Directorate (GPD)
Grade:	E

Reports to:	Senior Director, Governance and Peace Directorate
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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 54 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity.

The Human Rights Unit (HRU) supports Commonwealth member states by strengthening their national capacity to promote and protect the human rights of their citizens in accordance with international law and standards as well as the *Commonwealth Charter*. The HRU's mandate and annual work-plan is derived from the Commonwealth Secretariat's four-year Strategic Plan as well as decisions taken by Commonwealth Heads of Government.

The Commonwealth Secretariat's intermediate outcomes for the human rights programme are: (i) effective institutions and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights; (ii) improved and constructive engagement of member states in the United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, through technical assistance; and, (iii) advancement of the values of 'respect and understanding' within a democratic process and (iv) Business and Human Rights. In advancing these outcomes:

- HRU provides technical assistance to establish and strengthen national human rights institutions (NHRIs) that are compliant with the Paris Principles. In addition, the HRU works with member governments, NHRIs and other partners and stakeholders to share best practices and to strengthen the capacities of NHRIs on salient human rights issues in the Commonwealth.
- The intersection between law and politics happens at the corner of human rights. Thus, the HRU supports the development of the capacities of governments, parliaments, NHRIs and civil society to engage with the UPR mechanism and process. This includes the provision of technical assistance to governments to implement accepted UPR recommendations.

- HRU supports the sharing of Commonwealth lessons learnt and best practices developed in the field of transitional justice and reconciliation, in order to advance the Commonwealth values of respect and understanding in furtherance of *Civil Paths to Peace* (the Report of the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding).
- HRU plays a key role in research, understanding, and making recommendations to stakeholders of the intersection between human rights and the corporate world.

Job Summary

The Head leads, motivates and manages the Human Rights Unit (HRU) and reports to the Senior Director of the Governance and Peace Directorate. The Head of HRU is accountable for delivery by the Unit of the outcomes of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan concerning human rights. The Head of HRU works with representatives of Commonwealth member governments, national human rights institutions and other national institutions to advance the effective and sustainable promotion and protection of human rights and Commonwealth values as outlined in the *Commonwealth Charter*. The Head of HRU leads in the design, development and delivery of capacity-building and advocacy initiatives which meet the requirements of member states and which reflect the Commonwealth Secretariat's 'trusted partner' approach. The Head of HRU is also the Secretariat's lead adviser on human rights matters, and represents and advocates for shared Commonwealth perspectives internationally as required including in the UN human rights system and with other international and intergovernmental organisations. The Head of HRU is also responsible for building and maintaining relationships with relevant Commonwealth accredited organisations to promote the advancement of human rights in the Commonwealth.

Task description

The post-holder:

- Leads the Unit and is accountable for the effective management of the Unit's staff and the delivery of their work, including planning and resource allocation;
- Devises and oversees delivery of capacity-building programmes to advance human rights as well as Commonwealth values and principles, and to assist member states in the effective and sustainable implementation of international human rights obligations;
- Supports high level meetings of member governments including through attendance and presentations, and overseeing provision of relevant human rights related material;
- Provides expert advice to the Secretary-General and other Secretariat senior management on key human rights developments of relevance and priority to the Commonwealth;
- Oversees the dissemination of Commonwealth and international best practice through capacity development interventions including publications;
- Devises and advances strategic partnerships with international and regional human rights mechanisms to advance Commonwealth values, maximise synergies and facilitate collaboration in the promotion and protection of human rights;

- Acts as the principal point of contact with accredited Commonwealth organisations as well as other interested parties that are engaged on human rights issues, promoting liaison and information exchange;
- Leads in promoting and strengthening networks and collaboration between Commonwealth human rights institutions aimed at strengthening national capacity to protect and promote human rights;
- Represents the Commonwealth publicly, including media engagements;
- Adheres to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy; and
- Undertakes other relevant duties that may be assigned by the Secretary-General and the Senior Director of Governance and Peace.

Person specification

Education:

- A post-graduate qualification in law, human rights, social sciences, international relations or other relevant area
- A doctoral degree with a thesis in a human rights related area will be desirable.

Experience:

- 10 years or more of working/teaching in the human rights field including experience of applying international human rights law; development and implementation of human rights policy; and, protecting and promoting human rights.
- Employment and successful results in the human rights field at a senior level in a governmental, academic or intergovernmental context.
- Experience in research, publishing, and managing grants.
- Conversant with the four immediate outcomes of the Commonwealth's human rights programme.
- Leadership and management of a multi-cultural team of professionals.
- Post-doctoral experience in a relevant human rights related area will be an advantage.

Competencies:

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.

Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats all genders equally.

Shows respect & 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.

Creates an environment where respect for diversity is embedded in behaviours, systems & processes.

Communication

Establishes a culture of constant, consistent, clear and open communication.

Ensures information is communicated to and from the top level and filtered through the appropriate channels.

Communicates effectively with and gains understanding of top level stakeholders e.g. Heads of member states and relevant ministers.

Planning & Analysis

Organises work programme with full cognizance of Board of Governors requirements.

Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level.

Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states' goals.

Ability to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information.

Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical situations.

Decision Making

Makes informed decisions that are instrumental to the direction and profile of the Commonwealth Secretariat in general.

Is confident of making strategic/critical decisions with limited information in time pressured situations.

Applies advanced judgement in the approval of corrective action for the resolution of organisation wide issues.

Creates a culture that values ownership of decisions and leads by example.

Adhering to Principles & Values

Defines Commonwealth Secretariat values.

Sets example and embodies Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values.

Demonstrably protects the reputation of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Interprets and implements Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values.

Leadership & Development (strategic)

Provide vision and overall strategy for the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Creates a vision where the reputation of the Commonwealth Secretariat is upheld and consistently evolving.

Communicates the Commonwealth Secretariat's vision, achievements and impact in a manner that inspires enthusiasm amongst employees, member states, and external parties.

Establishes a culture where the creation and capitalisation of opportunities for staff development and fulfilment is promoted and valued.

Provide top level professional advice in strategic issues at management committee, board of governor & EXCO level. Lead on strategic issues.