

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Communications Officer

Division: Communications & Public Affairs Division (CPAD)

Grade: H

Reports To: Deputy Director, CPAD

General information

As the principal intergovernmental organisation of the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth Secretariat implements the collective decisions of its 54 member governments. The Communications and Public Affairs Division (CPAD) is primarily responsible for raising the public profile of the Commonwealth in line with the Secretariat's Strategic Plan. Our principle audiences are member governments, accredited Commonwealth organisations, partner organisations, civil society groups, young people, and the general public. The Communications and Public Affairs Division does this mainly through strategic communications, including proactive media outreach, and a range of public relations activities.

Job summary

The Communications Officer supports the implementation of the Commonwealth Secretariat's strategic communications strategy, which involves proactive media outreach and a range of public affairs activities. S/he will be expected to provide input on and execute communications proposals identified in CPAD's strategic communications strategy in support of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan.

This role additionally requires the post holder to support the division's multi-media outputs, notably the development of quality audio-visual material. Demonstrable experience in the multi-media field is thus essential

Task description

The post holder is responsible for:

- Managing communications for one or more of the Secretariat's thematic work areas. In this role, the officer advises programme divisions on media strategy and takes the lead in framing the communications and profile of the assigned area.
- Contributing to media strategy development and engagement ahead of and during official visits by the Commonwealth Secretary-General to member countries. The Communications Officer may also be called on to accompany the Secretary-General or senior officials on official missions with the objective of providing on-the-ground communications support.
- Collating and re-writing technical and official documents in a media-friendly and informative manner;

- Identifying multimedia opportunities and contributing to social media outputs to highlight the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Developing and maintaining contact with key journalists on Commonwealth matters.
- Coordinating and supervising press conferences, media briefings and interviews.
- Drafting statements and other materials to ensure that Commonwealth values are conveyed consistently and coherently.
- Writing and editing press releases, briefing papers and occasionally, speeches.
- Contributing to the content of the Commonwealth Secretariat website by providing text, photographs, and audio-visual material.
- Identifying and facilitating key media slots for senior management and directors to articulate Commonwealth messages.
- Working as part of a team to identify publicity and news angles for Commonwealth Secretariat programmes and projects.
- Any other duties that may be assigned by the CPAD Director or Deputy Director.

Person specification

Education

Bachelor's degree or equivalent in communications, journalism media studies, international affairs or any other appropriate field.

Desirable:

Master's degree or equivalent in journalism or any other relevant field. .

Experience

At least six years of experience as a reporter or correspondent in a media organisation. Competency in audio-visual or print journalism.

Desirable:

Experience in covering political, parliamentary, social or economic issues; appreciation and knowledge of international and or diplomatic issues; experience as a press officer or involvement in news management; event management.

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.

Identifies biases in systems & processes

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

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

Adapting & 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

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines (L1)

Ensures timely delivery of outputs (L1)



SUMMARY OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PAYPOINT H

Summary of the principal terms and conditions for Pay Point H at the Commonwealth Secretariat. The full terms and conditions are set out in the Commonwealth Secretariat Staff Rules and Regulations which form part of the contract of all staff members.

A. GENERAL

Contract Term	Appointments are on limited term contracts usually of three years. Contracts may be renewed by mutual agreement and subject to fully satisfactory performance. Staff at this level may normally serve for not more than three three-year contracts. The Secretary-General will retain the flexibility to approve or decline extensions as circumstances warrant.
Eligibility to work In the UK	Appointments are subject to eligibility to work in the UK, if applicable.
Medical	Appointments are subject to passing a medical examination.
Clearance	Appointments are also subject to clearance to the extent that the candidate's own government raises no objection to their suitability for employment.
Probation	All appointments are subject to a six-month probationary period. This may be extended at the Secretary-General's discretion for up to another six months.
Period of Notice	During probationary service, the appointment may be terminated by the Secretariat giving five weeks notice. Thereafter employment may be terminated by the Secretariat giving six months, or by the staff member giving three months, written notice.
Annual Leave	<p>Subject to the terms of the letter of appointment, each full-time staff member shall accrue annual leave at the rate of 25 working days per year, increasing to 30 days after 10 years continuous service. Leave without pay will not qualify for the earning of salary increments or annual leave entitlement.</p> <p>The Secretary-General may, upon application made to him/her allow leave entitlements accrued with other official bodies to count towards the 10 year figure.</p>
Pension/Gratuity	<p>Staff are eligible to join the Secretariat's Group Stakeholder Pension Plan (GSPP). This is a combination of a group personal pension and a stakeholder scheme. Pension benefits reflect the level of personal contributions and the value of the investments in the personal plan on retirement. The Secretariat contributes 15 per cent of gross salary; personal contributions are subject to limits based on a percentage of earnings depending on age.</p> <p>Alternatively, staff who do not wish to join the GSPP, may opt to join the gratuity scheme, whereby each month the Secretariat will pay the</p>

equivalent of 15 per cent of gross salary into an interest bearing account. At the end of the contract, the staff member will receive an ex-gratia payment of the cumulative amount including interest. This payment is subject to the Secretary-General's discretion.

Further information on the above schemes can be obtained from the Payroll Section of the Finance & Management Information Section.

Retirement Age 65th birthday.

Private Healthcare and Dental Cover The Secretariat provides non-contributory private healthcare and dental cover for all London-based employees, their spouses/officially recognised partners and children. The cover is subject to underwriting conditions

Insurance Subject to funding, the Secretariat may put in place various insurance schemes for its employees. Where such policies are in place, they shall be subject to the conditions of the underwriters and may change from time to time. Among the insurance policies the Commonwealth Secretariat provides is the Personal Accident/Travel policy. With regard to bodily injury, the underwriters conditions for that policy provide for the following, in respect of pre existing conditions;

Any contributory degenerative condition or disablement (as determined by a Qualified Medical Practitioner) known by the Insured Person to be in existence at the time of sustaining Bodily Injury will be taken into account by Insurers in assessing the level of benefit payable.

Further information on the existing policies would be made available to staff by the Corporate Services Division on request. Staff shall be notified of any changes in the policies as they become necessary from time to time.

B. APPOINTMENT OF BRITISH CITIZENS AND UK RESIDENTS

Salary £56,621 per annum gross, subject to deductions of National Insurance contributions and Commonwealth Secretariat internal income tax paid at UK income tax rates. This salary is fully inclusive.

C. APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS RECRUITED STAFF

“Overseas Recruited Staff Member” means an officer of the Secretariat whose stay in the UK is contingent upon their employment with the Secretariat. Should such a staff member acquire or have, while employed in the Secretariat, been entitled to British nationality or residential status in the UK the staff member will cease, from the date of acquisition or entitlement, to be an overseas recruited staff member.

Salary Gross Salary £56,621 per annum. Please note Salaries for overseas staff will be subject to deductions of National Insurance contributions and Commonwealth Secretariat internal income tax paid at UK income tax rates.

Installation and Termination Grant Will be provided on commencement and termination of appointment at 7% of net salary.

Expatriation Allowance

Will be paid monthly at a rate of 14% of gross salary. Please note that this allowance is taxed at UK tax rates.

Travel

Upon commencement and termination of service, the staff member, and accompanying dependent family members, as defined in Staff Rule 69 c and d in the Human Resource Handbook, will have their air travel costs met by the Secretariat, as follows:

Economy – where total flight time is less than 8 hours

Business – where total flight time is more than 8 hours

For all journeys, the most direct means of air travel available will be provided. In respect of the accompanying family members the relevant journey must be made within 6 months of the eligible staff member's own journey.

If travel is not at the same time as the member of staff, family members will only be entitled to economy class travel, irrespective of length of journey.

Home Leave

The staff member is entitled to home leave once in every three years of qualifying service. Please see Rule 81 in the Sutherland Human Resource Handbook for more information.

Education Allowance

An education allowance will be payable, provided the dependent* child is in continuing full-time education at the time of the staff member's appointment.

The staff member may be entitled to 75% or £18,706 of admissible costs per child per scholastic year.

The admissible cost is subject to a maximum amount of £24,941 per child per scholastic year.

Transporting Effects and initial appointment arrangement

The Secretariat will pay the cost of transporting by sea a staff member's effects up to 500 cubic feet in the case of a single staff member, and up to 700 cubic feet in the case of a married staff member plus an allowance of 100 cubic feet per dependent child* residing with the head of the family. In addition, up to 15 kilograms of excess accompanied luggage by air will be allowed on joining and termination for the staff member, spouse and each dependent child*. No separate allowance will be made for transporting an automobile and not more than one automobile may be allowed to be transported. The Secretariat will meet the reasonable cost of insurance of personal effects. For a 20ft container (internal volume of 1,050 cubic ft) the value of goods insured is up to £35,000.

Subsistence Allowance

When first taking up an appointment and provided a staff member stays in approved accommodation, subsistence allowance at the appropriate United Nations rate will be paid in respect of the staff member, accompanying spouse (75 per cent) and dependent children* (50 per cent) for a period of up to two weeks from the date of the staff member's arrival in post. Thereafter, the cost of a furnished apartment will be reimbursed for a period of up to three weeks or until suitable accommodation is secured, whichever is the earlier.

Diplomatic

There are no diplomatic immunities and privileges attached to the

Immunities & Privileges

holder of this post. Staff members are expected to observe the laws of the UK and other countries in which they may work. Any involvement with the police or other law enforcement authorities must be reported.

+ on submission of receipts

* **‘Dependent child’** means an unmarried natural or legally adopted child of the staff member, who normally resides with the staff member and who is under the age of 18 years or, a child under the age of 21 years who is in full time attendance at an educational institution. With regards solely to Education Allowance a dependent child is recognised up to the age of 25. The Secretary-General may also declare a child who is not the natural or legally adopted child of the staff member as “dependent” on the basis of the information provided. The Secretary-General may waive the requirements as to age and attendance at an educational institution where the child is totally and permanently disabled. Unless otherwise specified, no more than three children (as designated by the staff member) will be considered as “dependent” for the purpose of these rules.

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

Human Resources Division

MONITORING FORM - SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS

Please complete the form below providing the information to enable us to monitor our recruitment and ensure that our recruitment process is free from bias or unfair discrimination. The Commonwealth Secretariat is committed to observing the principles and practice of Equality of Opportunity in all its activities.

Forename(s).....

Surname.....

Nationality

Please state.....

Gender

Please indicate with an "X" Male Female

Date of birth

Day "03"	"dd" e.g. "10"	Month "mm" e.g. "1973"	Year "yyyy" e.g. "1973"

Disability

Please indicate with an "X" whether you consider you have a disability or not.

Disability: Yes No.....

If you have indicated "Yes" that you do consider you have a disability please detail in the space below of any special requirements that you may require when attending for interview or group selection activities so that we can consider how to meet those needs to ensure equality of opportunity.

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Where did you see this post advertised?

Please tell us in which publication or on which website you saw this vacancy advertised.

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Thank you for completing these details – please make sure you return your completed form with your application.