

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Events and Protocol Manager

Division: Corporate Business Division

Grade: H

Reports To: Head, Events and Protocol

General information

The Events and Protocol Section forms part of the Corporate Business Division. It is the primary focal point for all matters involving planning, coordination and delivery of events and protocol services for Ministerial and other pan-Commonwealth meetings, hosted overseas by member countries, convened at the Secretariat headquarters in London or at other external venues. It is the central point of contact for Secretariat Divisions and host governments on all operational and logistical matters relating to events and protocol services for Commonwealth meetings. A particularly high-profile activity is the organisation of the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

The Events and Protocol Section consists of the Head Events and Protocol, three Events and Protocol Managers and two Events and Protocol Assistants. This team works closely with senior government officials and Secretariat staff. It also coordinates events at Marlborough House and overseas and acts as the external-facing branch of the Secretariat.

Job summary

The Events and Protocol Manager assists the Head, Events and Protocol in planning and implementing all aspects of ministerial meetings and other events organised by the Secretariat and helps to ensure that the Section operates efficiently. The post holder has lead responsibility for the organisation of some events. The role requires extensive overseas travel often for long periods or at short notice.

Task description

The post holder:

- Assists the Head, Events and Protocol, in the effective operation of the Section and deputises as required.
- Assists the Head, Events and Protocol, in creating a service orientated and client-focused environment across the Secretariat in which all events and meetings are planned and delivered.
- Assists the Head, Events and Protocol to develop policies, strategies, guidelines and procedures relating to event management and to implement these across the organisation where appropriate.

Event Delivery

- Plans, manages and delivers Ministerial and other high-level meetings, assuming the role of Conference Officer for some meetings.
- Prepares, manages, and accounts for event budgets, liaising with relevant policy teams to address event/meeting outcomes, ensuring compliance with the Secretariat's financial rules and regulations.
- Undertakes event planning missions overseas individually or as part of team and prepares written assessments of a host government/host organisation's conference preparations.
- Acts as focal point for all operational, logistical and protocol matters for a host government or host organisation e.g., UNFCCC, IMF, WHA etc. and liaises with relevant counterparts regularly to progress arrangements.
- Identifies and proposes suitable arrangements for social programme events hosted by the Secretary-General, advising on appropriate event formats to align to wider strategic outcomes.
- Provides advice on Commonwealth Ministerial meeting protocols e.g., venue arrangements, flag protocol, official photograph, greeting parties etc. to host government taskforces.
- Within agreed guidelines, and in consultation with the Head of Section as appropriate, provides advice regarding management of Secretariat Ministerial meetings, events, and related issues internally to Senior Directors and colleagues.
- Prepares event and other meeting reports.
- Advises on the design and content of Ministerial meeting delegate apps, websites, logos and overall delegate experience.

Event Practices and Procedures

- Develops and implements programmes to promote greater awareness within the Secretariat of event practices and procedures.
- Reviews procedures and processes regularly and proposes ways to improve and modernise them in line with best international practice.
- Using Microsoft suite of programmes, develops, maintains and provides advice on the design of the Section's electronic tools, conference matrices and spreadsheets, ensuring accuracy and accessibility.

In-House events and meetings

- Oversees the in-house events programme and establishes where necessary new procedures and policies in relation to Marlborough House as a venue, enabling an improved service to internal and external clients.
- Alongside the Head, Events and Protocol, assists in the organisation of annual Commonwealth Day activities and special events at Marlborough House.
- Attends and supervises functions held at Marlborough House to ensure adherence to protocol and efficient use of rooms.
- Oversees the scheduling, prioritising and management of the booking and allocation of meeting rooms and advising on best use of the rooms.

Other tasks and responsibilities

- Actively develops and maintains a network of relationships with relevant national authorities, civil society and international organisations and with Secretariat partner divisions.
- Works closely with travel agents, hotels and other service providers to negotiate the most attractive and cost-effective terms for the Secretariat within approved guidelines and policies.

- Works with the Procurement Section to conduct procurement exercises as and when required.
- Responsible for the management of supplier relationships for those contracted to work in Marlborough House - e.g. caterers, AV.
- Prepares and edits Guidance Notes on organisation of conferences and general correspondence and leads training sessions.
- The post holder has a responsibility to help ensure the preservation of the Secretariat's property and resources.
- Carries out any other duties that may be entrusted to him/her by the Line Manager or Senior Management.
- Adheres to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.

Person Specification

Education

Essential: A university degree in social sciences, communications, event management or related field, or relevant professional qualification. Candidates without these qualifications may be considered provided they have a suitable combination of education and significant experience related to the role.

Experience:

Essential:

- At least five years' experience in international conference organisation with at least two years sole or overall responsibility in large-scale international conference management and planning
- Extensive experience in government, business and/or NGO sectors with a focus on international development
- Proven track record of working collaboratively with major global partners, such as, national governments, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs
- Knowledge of global best practices and approaches to international conference management
- An ambitious and innovative person with strong project management skills and a digital outlook
- Good understanding of global political matters and ability to act at all times with diplomacy and tact
- Strong problem-solving and interpersonal skills coupled with an outcome, delivery-oriented approach
- Proven ability to engage with stakeholders and delegates of the highest-level
- A proactive self-starter with a proven record of working on own initiative and making decisions in challenging, high-stakes and fast-paced environments
- Experience in developing and sustaining networks of stakeholders and partners
- Proven ability to work cohesively as part of an events team, with experience supervising junior staff
- Extensive budget management skills
- Ability to travel extensively often at short notice
- Excellent verbal and written communication in English
- Experience of using administrative and budget tools, and excellent proficiency with Microsoft office applications

Desirable:

- Recent experience of working in a protocol conscious environment
- Good understanding of the multilateral system and policy process
- Good understanding of the international multilateral conference and summit calendar
- Previous experience working at the Ministerial level or higher
- Experience working across different cultures and time zones, particularly across the Global South

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)