

JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title:	Education Specialist – Higher Education	Grade: B
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Reports to:	Vice President
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General Information

COL develops appropriate and relevant triennial plans in line with its mission and mandate and this job-holder will have the responsibility to implement the approved programme in an effective, efficient and economical manner according to the principles of results-based management (RBM).

Job summary

The Education Specialist – Higher Education develops and manages programme initiatives aimed at policy development at both national and institutional levels to improve higher education in Commonwealth countries. The job holder is expected to provide advice to ministers, university presidents and other senior government officials and act as COL's expert in open and distance learning (ODL).

Task description

The position-holder shall:

- Conceptualize, manage and implement programme initiatives related to higher education. This involves developing an annual plan with achievable results and budgets based on the three-year plan; providing regular updates on all initiatives; authorising expenditures within assigned budgets and defined limits; and actively participating in the monitoring and evaluation of all activities on an ongoing basis..
- Manage ongoing initiatives and activities. This includes working with the Vice President (VP) and other staff to ensure a cohesive approach to activities within the programme initiatives while independently implementing assigned initiatives and activities; identifying partners, selecting and managing consultants, maintaining good relationships with key stakeholders; leveraging other sources of support including raising additional funds, and organising events and other tasks, as appropriate.
- Take responsibility for liaison between COL and assigned member countries for all aspects of COL's work. This includes identifying needs and priorities related to COL's mandate and updating Country Action Plans.
- Contribute to COL's overall mission and corporate life in planning, stakeholder engagement, and internal processes.
- Provide advice to ministers, officials, institutions and COL staff in areas of expertise and take responsibility for representing COL's interests at international fora as necessary.
- Provide leadership to staff, if required and to international partners as an expert in higher education.
- Identify training needs for staff, ensure direct report(s) have clear work plans; conduct performance appraisals on staff who work in the area.
- Other related tasks as may be assigned from time to time.

Direct Report:

- Programme Assistant (shared).

Person specification

Education:	Experience
<p>Essential: Postgraduate qualification in one or more of the following: Education / Social Sciences / Humanities or related discipline.</p>	<p>Essential 10 years of experience of working in open, distance and technology-mediated learning with specific reference to higher education. 5+ years of experience in international development Experience of implementing strategic plans. Experience of working in developing countries.</p>
<p>Desirable: Qualification in open and distance learning. Qualification related to international development. Doctorate in Education / Higher Education</p>	

Competencies

Knowledge

- High level knowledge of global development targets, including an understanding of the policies and practices of international development organisations.
- Detailed understanding of COL’s three-year strategy and results based framework, including an understanding of how individual job responsibilities and priorities link with broader organisational goals.
- Knowledge and experience required to be a credible interlocutor with ministers and senior officials of Commonwealth governments in areas such as: policies and practices of international development organisations; education policy and practice issues; systems design, quality assurance, and applications of technology to education falling within COL’s mandate.
- Specialised expertise and experience necessary to direct and manage the higher education programme initiative and related activities.
- Good knowledge of programme planning, development and evaluations methodologies.

Skills and Capabilities

- **Innovation & Creativity:** Injects originality into daily work through research, personal knowledge, and networking relationships; Thinks "outside the box"; Brainstorms and encourage new ideas and solutions; Takes appropriate risks.
- **Prudence:** Makes sure all ideas receive fair consideration. Sets an example by consistently modelling high standards of performance, honesty, and integrity especially with appropriate use of funds; Is willing to change his/her mind when given new information.

Ability to mobilise, prepare and manage financial budgets in an effective, efficient and judicious manner.

- **Professional Judgement:** Possesses an in-depth understanding of the programme goals and issues related to assigned functional or specialised areas that adds value and has the scope of scaling up activities.

Is sought out by others for advice in the specialised area. Maintains up-to-date knowledge through profession specific publications, contacts or professional memberships.

Technical competence to be perceived as a thought leader and be a credible interlocutor by COL's partner institutions and agencies. Ability to develop and implement effective strategies for monitoring and evaluation of the programme, other functions or initiatives within the established results-based framework.

Ability to develop realistic, relevant and achievable plans which are aligned and integrated with COL's triennial planning framework.

- **Networking:** Ability to develop and maintain a network of senior contacts in government agencies and institutions on issues related to education, ODL, and technology areas.

Ability to exercise professionalism, discretion and diplomacy while representing COL's interests. Capability to respond, with appropriate proposals and solutions, to requests from Commonwealth governments and institutions for assistance in areas within COL's mandate. Has the skill to create a "can-do" climate with ease that leads to developing a professional partnership.

Ability to identify and select quality partners, as well as prepare, negotiate and manage agreements that achieve value for money while remaining consistent with COL's policy framework.

- **Communication, Supervisory and Team Orientation Skills:** Delivers information effectively in a variety of settings including one-on-one, team settings, and wider audiences; Displays sensitivity to ethnic and gender issues in verbal and written communications.

Capacity and skills to manage human resources (staff, consultants, advisors, etc.) in order to carry out COL's plans within the results based framework.

Ability to lead teams as well as communicate and work with others, both within and outside of COL, by promoting co-operation and collaboration to achieve collective outcomes. Openly shares information, knowledge and expertise with the team and co-workers; Appropriately gives and is open to feedback from team / co-workers.

Personal Attributes and Behaviours required of All Staff

- Commitment to the ideals of COL, notably to the role of education as the key to human freedom and development and to the capacity of technology to enhance that role.
- Capacity to work in a multicultural office environment and to interact effectively with people from all Commonwealth countries; and readiness to adopt the working culture (timekeeping, time management collegiality, mutual respect, etc.) in the location of their job (Vancouver, Delhi, etc.).
- Readiness to use office technologies effectively and to adapt to new technologies that may be introduced and capacity to research and retrieve information about COL's activities and issues related to its mission and programmes.