

JOB DESCRIPTION



Supporting a thriving parliamentary democracy

Job title:	Committee Specialists, international development and foreign policy – three roles
Campaign Type:	Concurrent
Payband:	B1
Pay range:	£37,510 - £43,361 (<i>Appointment will normally be made at the minimum of the pay range</i>)
Team:	Chamber and Committee Team
Section:	Committee Office
Reports to:	(1) Head of the International Affairs Unit (2) Clerk of the International Development Committee (3) Clerk of the Foreign Affairs Committee
Number of posts:	3
Hours:	36 hours a week
Contract type/ duration:	Permanent (roles 1 & 2) Fixed term of 12 months with the possibility of extension or permanency (role 3)
Issue date:	13 December 2019
Closing date:	23:55 pm on 12 January 2020

The House of Commons Committee Office is looking to recruit three new Committee Specialists in international development and foreign policy.

The House of Commons

The House of Commons is the democratically elected House of the UK Parliament. Its responsibilities include checking and challenging the Government on behalf of UK citizens, making and shaping laws, and checking and approving Government spending and taxes.

As well as the 650 elected MPs (Members of Parliament), over 2,000 people work behind the scenes, supporting the democratic process in many different ways. Our teams are politically impartial and work together to deliver the three shared objectives which guide our work:

- Facilitating effective scrutiny and debate
- Involving and inspiring the public
- Securing Parliament's future

The House of Commons is committed to equality and diversity. Our aim is to build a diverse, dedicated and high-performing workforce to keep the House of Commons running smoothly and to support a thriving parliamentary democracy.

Team information

The Committee Office comprises the staff of most select committees, the Scrutiny Unit, the Web and Publications Unit, and the Media and Communications Service.

The Committee Office provides support and advice for all aspects of the work of select committees. Each committee has a secretariat, usually of between 4 and 7. Committee Specialists are policy analysts and they can be attached to a single committee, more than one or across a policy-based 'cluster' (see below). Others work in the Scrutiny Unit which supports the work of all committees and supports pre-legislative scrutiny.

Job introduction

As a policy specialist working in an inclusive, fast-paced organisation at the heart of British democracy, you will be part of a team that provides impartial procedural, policy and research support directly to committees of Members of Parliament holding the Government to account. Your work will include:

- advising on possible subjects for scrutiny, including drafting terms of reference and calls for evidence for inquiries,
- preparing briefing material, questions for witnesses and conducting analysis of evidence,
- attending, and providing advice during, committee meetings,
- drafting committee reports and other outputs, including correspondence and media and social media materials,
- proposing, designing, organising and attending Committee events and visits (including overseas), and
- maintaining up-to-date knowledge about the Committee's subject area through research and by building on relevant external contacts and networks.

You will be expected to work collaboratively with colleagues on other committees, the media and outreach teams, the Commons Library, and other parts of the House service, and may have the opportunity to be involved in work on the House's wider activities.

These appointments are to:

Role 1: The International Affairs Unit (which provides support across the committees on International Development, Foreign Affairs, Defence and the National Security Strategy) on a permanent basis, with a focus on international development and/or foreign policy;

Role 2: the team supporting the International Development Committee (IDC) on a permanent basis, with a focus on international development;

Role 3: the team supporting the Foreign Affairs Committee on a temporary basis until the end of 2020, with a focus on foreign policy.

You may also conduct work for other Committees from time to time. These positions sit within a defined pool of similar roles within the wider department known as the Chamber and Committees Team (CCT). Post holders may be circulated to any other suitable Committee Specialist post at the same grade within CCT as business needs change and evolve. In any case, postholders should expect to circulate within 5 years. Circulation has no impact on pay and preferences are taken into account as far as possible. (Staff in most CCT roles circulate in this manner.)

Key stakeholder relationships

Internal:

- Chairs of Committees.
- Other Members of the Committees.
- Part-time specialist advisers appointed by the Committee

- Other House staff, working in the Committee Office (e.g. Media Officers, Committee Specialists working on related subjects) or other areas of the House (e.g. House of Commons Library, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology).
- Specialists may also be asked to support other Committees on related subjects, as the need arises.

External:

- Government departments.
- Other public bodies.
- Individuals and organisations relevant to the committee's subject area: for example, academics, think tanks, NGOs and trade associations.
- Members of the public.

Management responsibility

None.

Location

This post will be located within the Parliamentary Estate, Westminster, London.

Security

Successful candidates will be required to complete pre-employment checks. This includes security vetting to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) level unless otherwise specified. All successful candidates are required to pass these checks before an offer can be confirmed.

Applicants should be aware that if they have resided outside of the UK for a total of more than two of the last five years they are not eligible for vetting.

Please visit: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/PSD-Security-Vetting-booklet.pdf> for further information.

Hours

Consideration will be given to candidates who wish to work part-time or as part of a job share. If you are selected for interview please inform the panel of the days/hours you are available to work; alternatively, you can inform the recruitment team at any stage of the process.

Net conditioned full-time working hours for staff of the House are usually 36 per week. This excludes daily meal breaks of one hour.

The exact daily times of attendance will be agreed with line management.

For further information:

Candidates should refer to the House of Commons careers website <https://www.parliament.uk/about/working/jobs/> or contact Recruitment@parliament.uk or 020 7219 6011.

Application and selection process

We will conduct a sift based on the criteria set out in the skills and experience section. A longlist of candidates will be sent a written test to be completed remotely (further information will be provided to those selected at this stage). A shortlist of candidates will then be invited to attend a competency-based interview.

Key responsibilities

Working with the Committee Clerk, Committee Specialists are responsible for ensuring that the

Committee has the information it needs to undertake effective scrutiny of Government. As a Specialist working for the Committee, you would be required to:

- Lead inquiries for the Committee team—supporting the Committee in identifying inquiry topics, planning the inquiry programme, identifying and employing specialist advisers, identifying and briefing a diverse range of witnesses, and organising public and private meetings of the committee. You will:
 - develop/maintain an up-to-date knowledge about the subject area of an inquiry,
 - liaise with external advisers supporting the Committee’s work,
 - provide oral and written briefing (for example, on background and suggested questions for the committee to ask witnesses) and draft committee reports,
 - draft correspondence, media content and speeches, in collaboration with colleagues as required
- Attend all Committee meetings relevant to the inquiries you are managing and meet the Chair and other members of the Committee when required. You may also have the opportunity to organise Committee outreach events and accompany the Committee on visits, both in the UK and overseas.
- Maintain a body of knowledge and a thorough understanding of policy issues relevant to international development / foreign policy and keep the relevant committee, or committees, up to date with recent developments by:
 - horizon scanning, undertaking research in areas of interest, analysing published material and continually developing and engaging with a network of external experts
 - bringing a diverse range of voices to bear on the committee’s work
 - sharing professional knowledge, networks and technical skills with colleagues in other committees and the Commons Library, and across the House service.

Qualifications:

The following qualification is required for this role:

- A 2:1 degree (or equivalent) or postgraduate qualification, **or** significant work experience in a relevant policy/scrutiny environment.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE	APPLICATION	TEST / EXERCISE	INTERVIEW
CRITERION 1: Ability to research often unfamiliar topics and rapidly acquire specialist knowledge using a range of sources, to analyse this information and to develop well-argued, evidence-based conclusions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERION 2: Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to explain complex information clearly, impartially and succinctly to a non-specialist audience.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERION 3: Strong interpersonal, teamwork and negotiating skills to build and maintain a broad range of effective working relationships, including promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERION 4: Strong organisational skills, with demonstrable experience of working in a fast-changing environment, planning and prioritising your own work to meet strict deadlines and achieve high standards of quality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERION 5: A good knowledge and understanding of issues within international development and foreign policy, with relevant policy, research, practical or scrutiny experience and a knowledge of the roles of the key individuals and organisations in the field.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERION 6: (DESIRABLE): An understanding of how the work of select committees contributes to policy formation within the contemporary political and media environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>