



Junior Professional Officers (JPO) Programme

Terms of Reference

GENERAL INFORMATION

Title: Junior Professional Officer – Higher Education

Organizational Unit: Section for Higher Education, Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, Education Sector

Duty Station: Paris, France

SUPERVISION

Direct supervision by: Borhene Chakroun, Director for Policies and Lifelong Learning Policies and Chief of the Section for Higher Education a.i.

Under the overall authority of the Director for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, the supervision of the Chief of the Higher Education Section and the guidance of the Programme Specialist responsible for the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (“the Global Convention”), the Junior Professional Officer will contribute to UNESCO’s work on academic recognition, mobility and internationalization.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Within this context, the JPO will be responsible for:

- Contributing to the coordination and design of research papers on topics such as the recognition of refugee qualifications; quality assurance, including transnational education; and digitization.
- Contributing to data collection and processing, research and analysis on emerging trends related to the internationalization of higher education and supporting the preparation of the Higher Education Section’s inputs for papers, publications and other materials.
- Backstopping the organization of stakeholder meetings and analysis of feedback on key texts for the Global Convention, notably the Operational Guidelines and text on the relationship between the Global Convention and regional recognition conventions;
- Contributing to outreach and capacity development efforts on the Global Convention, with particular focus on the Asia-Pacific region;
- Supporting the preparation of the second ordinary session of the Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties to the Global Convention in June 2025 and its follow-up;
- Contributing to coordination efforts with the Secretariats of the regional recognition conventions and other field offices and category 1 institutes, to promote information sharing and synergies.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Education: Advanced university degree (Master’s degree or equivalent) in education, economy, international relations or a related field.

Work experience:

- A minimum of 2 years of professional experience in programme/project management, education, international relations or related areas.
- A knowledge of issues related to assessment, certification and recognition of skills and qualifications within and across borders is desirable.
- Experience working in higher education including with conventions and intergovernmental processes in the United Nations system is an asset.
- **Competencies and skills:**
- Excellent organizational and planning skills.
- Excellent (oral and written) communication skills, including the ability to draft and produce a variety of written material in a clear and concise manner.
- Strong data processing, research and analysis skills.
- Ability to work effectively in a team and to maintain good working relations within a multi-cultural environment.
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.

Languages: Excellent knowledge of English. Good knowledge of French is desirable.

LEARNING ELEMENTS

The JPO will:

- Acquire practical experience in the field of higher education, in particular academic recognition, mobility and internationalization;
- Contribute to the implementation of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, including its research agenda;
- Develop an understanding of the interlinkages between the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education and regional recognition conventions;
- Deepen understanding of intergovernmental processes, multilateral negotiations and technical cooperation in the United Nations;
- Enhance professional competences, notably problem solving, time management, teamwork and communication.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

UNESCO's Higher Education Section provides evidence-based knowledge and technical support to Member States to enhance their higher education systems and policies and strengthen international cooperation in the field.

A key strand of its work relates to academic recognition, mobility and the internationalization of higher education. As such, the Section provides the Secretariat to the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education ("the Global Convention"), the Lisbon Recognition Convention for Europe and supports the Secretariats in regional offices/category 1 institutes to implement conventions relevant for their regions.

The Global Convention was adopted by UNESCO Member States in November 2019 and entered into force in March 2023, serving as the first United Nations treaty in higher education of a global scope. The Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties – which oversees its implementation and promotes its application – is to adopt an interim work programme at an extraordinary session on 7 March 2024. The key areas focus on the development of Operational Guidelines, recommendation on the relationship of the Global and regional conventions, research and capacity development as well as advocacy and communications.