



# **Commonwealth Shared Scholarships**

For candidates from least developed,  
low and lower middle-income  
Commonwealth countries

**2021 terms and conditions**

## About Commonwealth Scholarships

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) is one of the largest and most prestigious international scholarship schemes in the world. Since it was established in 1959, over 30,000 individuals have held a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship – 28,500 of them were funded by the UK government, through the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC).

The CSC awards around 700 scholarships and fellowships for postgraduate study and professional development to Commonwealth citizens each year.

The CSC's Secretariat is provided by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, based in London: overseas services are provided by the British Council.

For information about the other scholarships and fellowship offered by the CSC, visit the [CSC website](#). For information about Commonwealth Scholarships offered by other Commonwealth countries, visit the [ACU website](#).

## Commonwealth Shared Scholarships

Commonwealth Shared Scholarships are for candidates from least developed, low, and lower middle-income Commonwealth countries, for full-time master's study on selected courses, jointly supported by UK universities.

Funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Commonwealth Shared Scholarships enable talented and motivated individuals to gain the knowledge and skills required for sustainable development and are aimed at those who could not otherwise afford to study in the UK.

**Purpose:** To contribute to development needs of Commonwealth countries by providing training for skilled and qualified professionals and academics and to contribute to UK higher education and foreign policy aims by encouraging collaboration and links.

**Intended beneficiaries:** High-quality postgraduate students who have not studied extensively overseas before, and who have the potential to enhance the development of their home countries with the knowledge and leadership skills they acquire.

### Commonwealth Shared Scholarships are offered under six development themes:

#### 1. Science and technology for development

The scholarship, which may be in any area of science or technology (including, for example, agriculture, veterinary science, or forestry), will develop knowledge and/or skills that are directly related to the specific needs of a low or lower middle income country. Where possible, applications should cite expressed national or local priorities.

#### 2. Strengthening health systems and capacity

The scholarship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will improve health provision or outcomes for disadvantaged groups in low and lower middle-income countries. A range of approaches could be adopted, such as training staff to fill critical shortage areas; establishing better systems, processes, or management; health promotion and improving

understanding of non-take up; or developing new treatments.

### **3. Promoting global prosperity**

The scholarship will support economic prosperity in low and lower middle-income countries. The knowledge and/or skills gained could lead to, for example, enhanced trade capacity; improved economic understanding or decision-making by business or government; new products and services; or long-term capacity building, through the development of entrepreneurial skills, for instance.

### **4. Strengthening global peace, security and governance**

The scholarship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will strengthen peace and security at national, regional, or international levels. Multiple approaches could be used, such as strengthening open and transparent governance; improving mutual understanding within and between societies; or building systems that reduce the potential for conflict or encourage its resolution.

### **5. Strengthening resilience and response to crises**

The scholarship will develop knowledge and/or skills which will help low and middle countries adapt to changing contexts, withstand sudden shocks, or increase capacity to preserve the continuity of operations following such events. This could apply to a broad range of threats, including natural and physical disasters; long-term threats such as climate change; interruptions to the supply of key resources; or sudden economic or technological disruption.

### **6. Access, inclusion and opportunity**

The scholarship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will promote opportunity amongst historically disadvantaged groups in low and lower middle-income countries. This could be through, for example, expanding educational opportunities; conducting community outreach; enhancing access to decision-making; or increasing understanding of the barriers faced. A range of disadvantage can be addressed – including social, economic, gender, ethnic, regional, or political – provided that the need is clearly stated.

## Eligibility

To apply for these scholarships, you must:

- Be a citizen of or have been granted refugee status by an eligible Commonwealth country, or be a British Protected Person
- Be permanently resident in an eligible Commonwealth country
- Be available to start your academic studies in the UK, or remotely if required, by the start of the UK academic year in September/October 2021.
- By September 2020, hold a first degree of at least upper second class (2:1) standard, or a second class degree and a relevant postgraduate qualification (usually a Master's degree).
- Not have studied or worked for one (academic) year or more in a high-income country
- Be unable to afford to study at a UK university without this scholarship
- Have provided all supporting documentation in the required format

The CSC aims to identify talented individuals who have the potential to make change. We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination and encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates. For further information on the support available to candidates with a disability, see the [CSC disability support statement](#).

## Eligible Commonwealth countries

Bangladesh  
Cameroon  
Eswatini  
Ghana  
India  
Kenya  
Kiribati  
Lesotho  
Malawi  
Mozambique  
Nigeria  
Pakistan  
Papua New Guinea  
Rwanda  
Sierra Leone  
Solomon Islands  
Sri Lanka  
Tanzania  
The Gambia  
Tuvalu  
Uganda  
Vanuatu  
Zambia

## How to apply

You should apply to study one of the taught Master's courses offered in the Commonwealth Shared Scholarship scheme. These scholarships do not cover undergraduate courses, PhD study, or any pre-sessional English language teaching, and are usually tenable for one year only. For a full list of eligible courses, visit the [CSC website](#).

You must take the necessary steps to secure admission to your course at the same time as applying for a Shared Scholarship. **You must check with your chosen university for their specific advice, admission requirements, and rules for applying.** For a full list of contact details, visit the [CSC website](#).

You must make your Shared Scholarship application using the CSC's online application system, in addition to any other application that you are required to complete by your chosen university. The CSC will not accept any applications that are not submitted via the online application system. Information on how to use the online application system is available on the [CSC website](#).

You can apply for more than one taught Master's course and/or to more than one university through the Commonwealth Shared Scholarships Scheme, but you may only accept one offer of a Shared Scholarship.

All applications must be submitted by **16.00 (GMT) on 9 April 2021** at the latest. You are advised to complete and submit your application as soon as possible, as the online application system will be very busy in the days leading up to the application deadline and the Commission cannot make allowances for local or personal difficulties which might affect your ability to submit

Your application must include the following supporting documentation in order to be eligible for consideration:

- Proof of citizenship or refugee status – uploaded to the online application system
- Full transcripts detailing **all** your higher education qualifications (with certified translations if not in English – uploaded to the online application system)
- References from at least two individuals – you must submit referee details on the online application system. We will request references from those stated on your application form only if you are nominated or a reserve candidate at the nomination stage.

Supporting documentation uploaded to the online application system must be uploaded as files which are no more than 5 MB in size and must be in one of the following formats: PDF, .doc, .docx, .odt, .jpg, .jpeg. Files submitted in any other format (including Zip files and PDF Portfolios) will NOT be accepted.

The CSC will not accept any applications that are not submitted via the online application system, or any applications directly from individuals; such applications will not be acknowledged.

## Selection process

Each participating UK University will conduct its own recruitment process to select a specified number of candidates to be awarded Commonwealth Shared Scholarships. Universities must put forward their selected candidates to the CSC in May 2021. The CSC will then confirm that these candidates meet the eligibility criteria for this scheme. Universities will inform candidates of their results by July 2021.

Applications will be considered according to the following selection criteria:

- Academic merit of the candidate
- Potential impact of the study on the development of the candidate's home country

For further details, see the Commonwealth Shared Scholarships 2021 selection criteria on the [CSC website](#).

## Value

Shared Scholarships are jointly funded by the CSC and participating UK universities.

Each scholarship provides:

- Approved airfare from your home country to the UK and return at the end of your award (the CSC will not reimburse the cost of fares for dependents, nor the cost of journeys made before your award is confirmed) – arranged by the university; funded by the CSC
- Approved tuition fees – funded by the CSC
- Stipend (living allowance) at the rate of £1,116 per month, or £1,369 per month for those studying at universities in the London metropolitan area (rates quoted at 2020-2021 levels) – paid and funded by the university
- Warm clothing allowance, where applicable – paid and funded by the university
- Thesis grant towards the cost of preparing a thesis or dissertation, where applicable – claimed from and paid by the university; funded by the CSC
- Study travel grant towards the costs of study-related travel within the UK or overseas – claimed from and paid by the university; funded by the CSC
- Excess baggage allowance, up to an annual approved limit, when returning home – claimed from and paid by the university; funded by the CSC
- Reimbursement of the cost of a mandatory tuberculosis (TB) test, where required for a visa application (receipts must be supplied) – claimed from and paid by the university; funded by the CSC
- If you are widowed, divorced, or a single parent, child allowance of £478 per month for the first child, and £118 per month for the second and third child under the age of 16, if you are accompanied by your children and they are living with you at the same address in the UK (rates quoted at 2020-2021 levels)

**The CSC's family allowances are intended to be only a contribution towards the cost of maintaining your family in the UK.** The true costs are likely to be considerably higher, and you must be able to supplement these allowances to support any family members who come to the UK with you.

## General conditions

- A Commonwealth Shared Scholarship covers fees, fares, and personal maintenance. Other scholarships, awards, or bursaries that cover the same costs may not be held concurrently.

- In order for the CSC to administer your application effectively and efficiently after you have submitted, it will be necessary to create a record in your name. If you are nominated for an award to the CSC, your details will be kept on file. Basic anonymised demographic data for all applicants will be kept for analytical research. The CSC is committed to protecting your personal information and to being transparent about the information we are collecting about you and what we do with it. To find out more, see our [privacy notice](#).
- If your application is successful and the CSC has confirmed that you meet the eligibility requirements of the scheme, your university will notify you that you have been provisionally selected (selected for an award subject to the CSC agreeing your terms of admission to the university)
- The CSC does not require any candidates to take an IELTS (English language) test. You should note, however, that, as a further condition of your scholarship, you may be required by your university to provide evidence of a particular level of English language proficiency.
- The CSC will not be able to offer you a scholarship if it would contravene the terms and conditions of another scholarship that you have previously held.
- When terms of admission to the university have been agreed and all documentation has been completed and returned, the CSC will send you a formal Confirmation of Award.
- You will be required to submit a well-being and disability form before your Confirmation of Award can be issued.
- You will be required to sign an undertaking to return to your home country as soon as possible after the end of your award
- You will be required to sign a declaration confirming that you are a national of an eligible Commonwealth country, and not at present living or studying in a high income country; have not studied or worked for more than one academic year in a high income country and are unable, either yourself or through your family, to pay to study in the UK, as well as an undertaking to return to your home country as soon as possible after the end of your award. Any false declarations will cause at least the CSC's share of your award to be terminated, even if your course of study has started. In such circumstances, you will be required to refund any payments made by the CSC in connection with your award.
- You are expected to start your award on the date stated in your Confirmation of Award.
- If you require a Tier 4 visa to come to the UK to study, you must meet all relevant immigration requirements set by UK Visas and Immigration. You should check the [GOV.UK](#) website for updated information.

- All UK immigration regulations are set by UK Visas and Immigration and are subject to change. The CSC has no control over these regulations.
- You are expected to reside in the UK throughout your award, and to seek approval from the CSC in advance for any overseas travel.
- You must not undertake paid employment during your award without approval from the CSC in advance.
- The CSC will consider a request to extend your leave to remain in the UK after your award only if you wish to move from Master's to PhD study. Strict conditions will apply.
- The CSC cannot provide a letter of support or permission for you to remain in the UK after your award to enable you to work.
- Your award may be terminated at any time for reasons of unsatisfactory conduct, progress, or attendance, or if your registration is suspended or terminated by your university for any reason.
- Scholars will be expected to abide by the [Commission's Code of Conduct for Award-Holders](#) and [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#). Your award may be terminated at any time for reasons of unsatisfactory conduct, progress, or attendance, or if your registration is suspended or terminated by your university for any reason.
- In line with the UK Bribery Act 2010, any applicant convicted of bribery will be banned from reapplying for a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship for a period of up to five years.
- Applicants are expected to adhere to the [CSC's Code of Conduct for award holders](#)
- The CSC is committed to administering and managing its scholarships and fellowships in a fair and transparent manner. For more information, see the [CSC anti-fraud policy and procedure](#) at and the [FCDO guidance on reporting fraud](#).
- The CSC does not charge candidates to apply for any of its scholarships or fellowships through its online application system, and it does not charge organisations to nominate candidates. If you should be charged to apply for a Commonwealth Scholarship you should inform the Commission using our [Reporting Fraud e-mail address](#).
- All terms and conditions of award are subject to UK local law and practices, and are subject to change by the CSC.

For more information, see the current [Handbook for Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows](#).

Please note that the conditions outlined in the Handbook are subject to change.



Commonwealth Scholarship  
Commission in the UK

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