



Commonwealth PhD Scholarships

For candidates from high income
Commonwealth countries

2020 terms and conditions

Introduction

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, 35,000 individuals have held a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship – 27,500 of them were funded by the UK government, through the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC).

The CSC awards around 750 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 fellowships offered by the CSC, visit the [CSC website](#). For information about Commonwealth Scholarships offered by other Commonwealth countries, visit [The Association of Commonwealth Universities \(ACU\) scholarships website](#).

Commonwealth PhD Scholarships (for high income countries)

Commonwealth PhD Scholarships are for candidates from high income Commonwealth countries, for full-time doctoral study at a UK university. Funded by the UK Department for Education (DfE), Commonwealth PhD Scholarships support excellence in UK higher education and sustain the principles of the Commonwealth.

Purpose: To support world-class research and scholarship, and to contribute to UK higher education and research by attracting high-calibre international candidates and encouraging links and collaboration.

Intended beneficiaries: High-quality graduates who have the potential to become influential leaders, teachers, or researchers in their home countries, and whose proposed research topic has been described to the satisfaction of the selection committee as having a focus on innovation and leadership, for the benefit of wider society.

Eligibility

To apply for these scholarships, you must:

- Be a citizen of or have been granted refugee status by an eligible Commonwealth country
- Show evidence that you are permanently resident in an eligible Commonwealth country. You must have lived in an eligible Commonwealth country for a continuous period of five years within the last ten years. If the CSC is unable to determine this from your application, you will be contacted to provide further evidence.
- Be available to start your academic studies in the UK in January/February 2021 (to be agreed by the CSC)

- Hold a first degree of at least upper second class (2:1) honours standard, or a second-class degree and a relevant postgraduate qualification (usually a Master's degree) by the time you submit your scholarship application
- Not have commenced and be currently registered for a PhD, or an MPhil leading to a PhD, in your home country or elsewhere
- Not be registered for a PhD, or an MPhil leading to a PhD, at a UK university before January 2021
- Hold an unconditional offer from your chosen university/universities listed on your CSC online application, at the point of being notified that you have been provisionally selected for an award by the CSC in October 2020
- References from at least two individuals
- A supporting statement from a proposed supervisor at one or more of your chosen UK universities
- Have provided all supporting documentation in the required format

*When applying for this scholarship you should ensure that you have contacted your chosen university/universities to confirm you are able to secure admission in January 2021; please be aware that some universities may not offer January 2021 admission for some of their courses.

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

Anguilla
 Australia
 Bahamas
 Barbados
 Bermuda
 British Virgin Islands
 Brunei Darussalam
 Canada
 Cayman Islands
 Cyprus
 Falkland Islands
 Gibraltar
 Malta
 New Zealand
 Seychelles
 St Kitts and Nevis
 Trinidad and Tobago
 Turks and Caicos Islands

How to apply

All subject areas are eligible, although the CSC's selection criteria gives priority to applications that clearly demonstrate the strongest potential for strategic impact.

The CSC will negotiate joint funding agreements individually for selected candidates. You should make this clear to your chosen university/universities.

You must make your application **directly to the CSC** using the CSC's online application system. **The CSC will not accept any applications that are not submitted via the online application system.**

Information on how to access the online application system is available on the [CSC website](#).

All applications must be submitted by **17:00 (BST) on 20 July 2020** 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.

Your application must include supporting documentation by **17:00 (BST) on 10 August 2020**. In order for your application to be eligible for consideration, your supporting documentation must include the following:

- Proof that you are a citizen of an eligible Commonwealth country: a copy of your valid passport (or national ID card) showing your photograph, date of birth, and country of citizenship – **uploaded to the online application system**
- Full transcripts detailing all your higher education qualifications listed on your online application form (with certified translations if not in English). All transcripts must be up to date at the time of submitting your application, including any transcripts to date for qualifications for which you are currently reading– **uploaded to the online application system**
- References from at least two individuals – **submitted directly by the referee to the online application system** (referees will be sent an email request).
- A supporting statement from a proposed supervisor at one or more of the UK universities named on your application form – **submitted directly by your supervisor to the online application system** (supervisors will be sent an email request).

If any of these documentations are not provided by the dates specified above, your application will be considered ineligible. **It is your responsibility to ensure that your referees and proposed supervisor(s) are able to complete the references and supporting statement(s) by the deadline and that they receive the reference requests.**

The CSC will not accept supporting documentation submitted outside the online application system.

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.

Only one application per applicant for these scholarships will be accepted. Only the application with the latest submission date, including submission of references and supporting statements will be accepted. Any modifications to an application will count as a later submission date.

You are not required to apply via a nominating body for these scholarships.

Selection process

Once received by the CSC, applications will undergo a first sifting process based on academic merit, from this sift a shortlist will be created and only those who have made the shortlist will be considered; firstly by an academic adviser with expertise in the subject area concerned, and then by the CSC selection committee in competition with other candidates.

Applications are considered according to the following selection criteria:

- Academic merit of the candidate
- Quality of the proposal
- Potential of the candidate to lead in the pursuit of global excellence in research and knowledge

For further details, see the Commonwealth PhD Scholarships (for high income countries) 2020 selection criteria available on the [CSC website](#).

Tenure and Placement

Awards are tenable at any approved UK university or higher education institution for a specific programme of research. Awards are to obtain one degree; funding will not be extended to enable candidates to complete a qualification in addition to or higher than that for which the selection was made. Awards are made in respect of **full-time study only** and no other course of study may be undertaken at the same time.

Your award will be tenable only at a UK university with which the CSC is able to make a joint funding agreement. Under a joint funding agreement, the CSC will fund two years of a three-year PhD and the host university will fund one year. Joint funding agreements will be negotiated individually for selected candidates.

You must make clear in your application which qualification you are applying for. This will enable the CSC to consider your application in the correct category. Applications which do not make this clear may be considered ineligible.

You are expected to identify at least one but preferably three universities and supervisors that you think are the most appropriate for your research, and to explain your reasons. This is important because the CSC will not change the university or course of a provisionally selected candidate after the point of selection, unless exceptional information becomes available that could not have been foreseen at the time of application, or unless a joint funding agreement cannot be reached. If you only propose one institution and it is not possible for placement to go ahead there then your candidacy will lapse.

You may propose to study at one university for a four-year PhD, but this must be based in a recognised Doctoral Training Centre. You must research this option thoroughly and justify its added value compared with a three-year PhD. As the CSC will fund only a limited number of four-year PhDs, if you do choose this option, you are strongly advised to also propose at least one three-year PhD choice.

The CSC will make the final decision on institution of study and reserves the right to overrule any preferences indicated by the candidate. The CSC will consider the suitability of the course and its value for money when deciding on any overrule.

You must take the necessary steps to secure admission to your preferred universities in advance of submitting your scholarship application, as you are expected to provide evidence of an unconditional offer from at least one institution at the point you are notified by the CSC that you have been provisionally selected for an award. **Many courses have strict admission deadlines and may not offer January admission.** You should check admission requirements carefully when applying.

You must provide a supporting statement from a named supervisor from at least one of the UK universities to which you are applying. Applications without any statements will be considered ineligible. You are strongly advised to provide a supporting statement from a supervisor at your first choice university. If you do not, the CSC reserves the right to select you for placement at another university for which you have provided a supporting statement.

Value

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 usually the cost of journeys made before your award is finally confirmed)
- Approved tuition fees
- Stipend (living allowance) at the rate of £1,110 per month, or £1,362 per month for those at universities in the London metropolitan area (rates quoted at 2019-2020 levels)
- Thesis grant towards the cost of preparing a thesis or dissertation, where applicable
- Warm clothing allowance, where applicable
- Study travel grant towards the cost of study-related travel within the UK or overseas
- Provision towards the cost of fieldwork undertaken overseas (usually the cost of one economy class return airfare to your fieldwork location), where approved
- Paid mid-term visit (airfare) to your home country (unless you have claimed (or intend to claim) spouse and/or child allowances during your scholarship, or have received a return airfare to your home country for fieldwork)

- Family allowances, as follows:
 - If you are accompanied by your spouse but no children: spouse allowance of £239 per month for a maximum period of nine months, if you and your spouse are living together at the same address in the UK (unless your spouse is also in receipt of a scholarship; other conditions also apply)
 - If you are accompanied by your spouse and children: spouse allowance of £239 per month and child allowance of £239 per month for the first child, and £117 per month for the second and third child under the age of 16, if your spouse and children are living with you at the same address in the UK (unless your spouse is also in receipt of a scholarship; other conditions also apply)
 - If you are accompanied by your children but no spouse: child allowance of £478 per month for the first child, and £117 per month for the second and third child under the age of 16, if your children are living with you at the same address in the UK

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 in order to support any family members who come to the UK with you.

For more information, see the Handbook for Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows, available on the [CSC website](#).

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

General conditions

- A Commonwealth Scholarship covers fees, approved 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 and 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, the CSC 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 English language test. You should note, however, that, as a further condition of award, 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, the CSC will send you a Notification of Award (formal offer of a scholarship).
- When all conditions of the Notification of Award have been met, the CSC will send you a formal Confirmation of Award.
- You will be required to submit a Health 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 within one month of the end of your award.
- You are expected to start your award on the date stated in your Notification 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 will be selected for an award on the basis of the plan of study outlined on your application form, which is not expected to change significantly during your award. Any such changes must be agreed by the CSC.
- 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.
- Collaboration is a feature of doctoral research. The CSC expects that participants in collaborative projects will develop a collaborative agreement to clarify the contributions and rights of each partner. The CSC will not get involved in negotiating an exploitation agreement, but will need to be assured that an arrangement acceptable to all parties exists. Arrangements should be made to identify, protect and value any arising intellectual property and to secure a suitable return to the institution and the investigators through exploitation. The CSC considers the intellectual property ownership to lie initially with the student; however, many universities have their own locally applicable policy. In many cases, it is in the best interest of a student for ownership to be vested with the university, which will have greater negotiating powers and will be likely to be able to seek the best returns in any exploitation agreement. Award holders are expected to notify the CSC when CSC-funded intellectual property is exploited.
- The CSC cannot provide a letter of support or permission for you to remain in the UK after your award to work or undertake postdoctoral study.
- Scholars will be expected to abide by the [Commission's Code of Conduct for Award-Holders](#) which is in the Handbook for Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows, and [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#) which is on the GOV.UK website. 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](#) and the [DFID guidance on reporting fraud](#).
- 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 [Handbook for Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows](#).



