

Commonwealth Shared Scholarships

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Commonwealth Shared Scholar 2017/18

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Disclosure: This presentation is based on my personal experience and therefore should not be treated as an official document.

What are the Commonwealth Shared Scholarships?

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan is one of the largest and most prestigious international scholarship schemes in the world.

Since it was established in 1959, > 30,000 individuals have held a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship.

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) awards ~700 scholarships and fellowships for postgraduate study and professional development to Commonwealth citizens each year.

The CSC offers:

- i. [Commonwealth PhD Scholarships \(for least developed countries and fragile states\)](#)
- ii. [Commonwealth Split-site Scholarships \(for low and middle income countries\)](#)
- iii. [Commonwealth Master's Scholarships](#)
- iv. [Commonwealth Shared Scholarships](#)
- v. [Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships](#)
- vi. [Commonwealth PhD Scholarships \(for high income countries\)](#)
- vii. [Commonwealth Medical Fellowships](#)
- viii. [Commonwealth Professional Fellowships](#)

Funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the 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.

These scholarships are offered under 6 CSC development themes:

- i. Science and technology for development
- ii. Strengthening health systems and capacity
- iii. Promoting global prosperity
- iv. Strengthening global peace, security and governance
- v. Strengthening resilience and response to crises
- vi. Access, inclusion and opportunity

Eligibility

To apply for these scholarships, you must:

- i. Be a citizen of or have been granted refugee status by an eligible Commonwealth country, or be a British Protected Person
- ii. Be permanently resident in an eligible Commonwealth country
- iii. 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
- iv. By September 2021, 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).
- v. Not have studied or worked for one (academic) year or more in a high income country
- vi. Be unable to afford to study at a UK university without this scholarship
- vii. Have provided all supporting documentation in the required format

Choosing a university/course

Gives you an idea on how many scholarships are available per university →

<https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/commonwealth-shared-scholarships-2021-university-contact-details/>

You may find the following resources useful when researching your choices of institution and course of study in the UK:

- i. [Study UK](#) – British Council website, with guidance for international students and a course and institution search
- ii. [Steps to Postgraduate Study](#) – a guide to asking the right questions about taught postgraduate study in the UK
- iii. [Postgrad.com](#) – information for postgraduate students, with a course search
- iv. [Prospects](#) – information on postgraduate study in the UK
- v. [Research Excellent Framework](#) 2014 results – results of a system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions
- vi. [UCAS Postgraduate](#) – guidance on how to find and apply for a postgraduate course
- vii. [Unistats](#) – the official website for comparing UK higher education course data
- viii. [UKCISA](#) (UK Council for International Student Affairs) – advice for international students on choosing a course of study

The CSC is not responsible for the content of external sites.

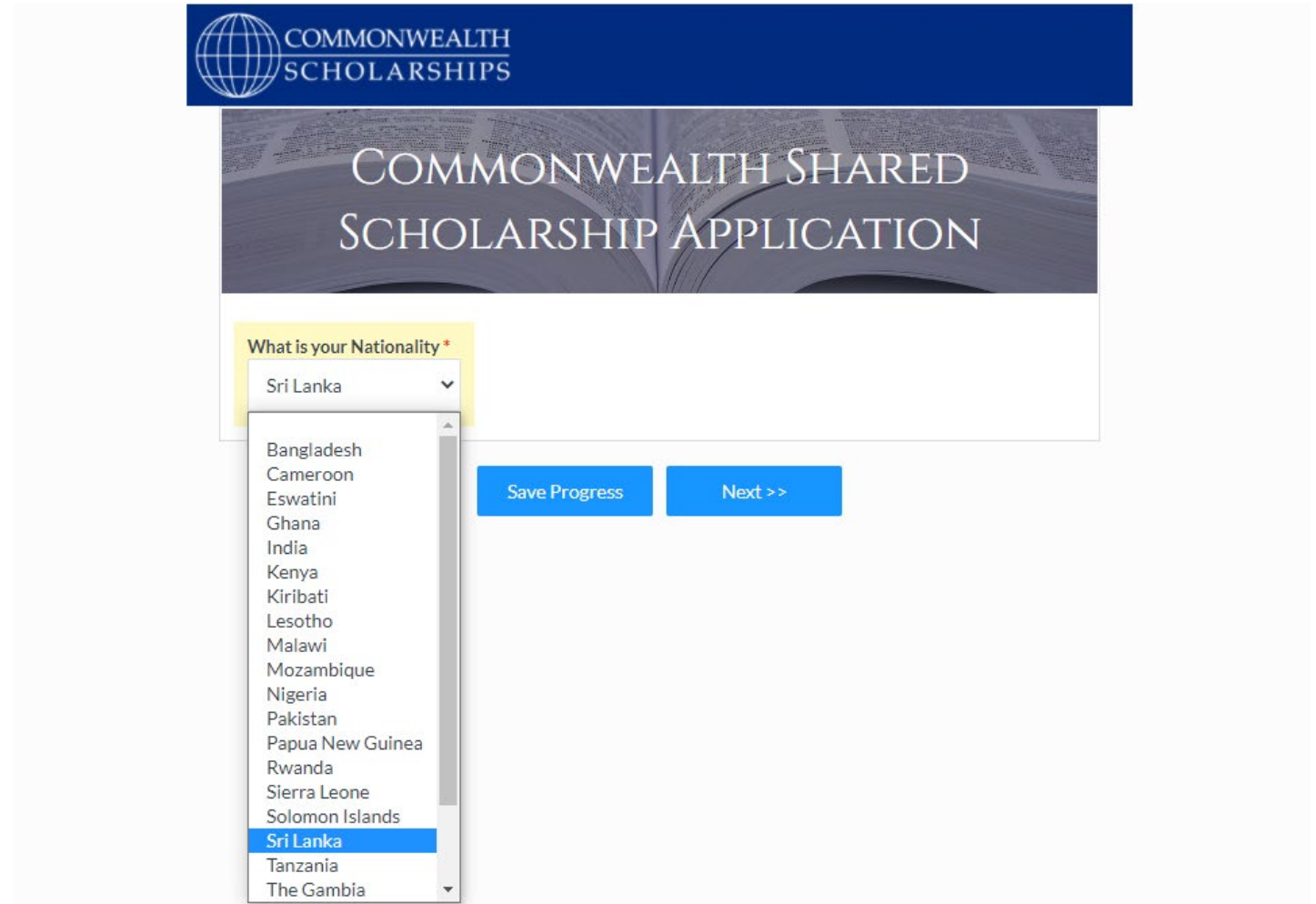
How to apply

- 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**.
- View the [full list of eligible courses](#).
- You must also secure admission to your course in addition to applying for a Shared Scholarship.
You must check with your chosen university for their specific advice on when to apply, admission requirements, and rules for applying.

CSC's online application system

CSC's online application system -

<https://fs29.formsite.com/m3nCYq/wfeafywiw0/index.html>



The screenshot shows the Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Application form. At the top, there is a blue header with the Commonwealth Scholarships logo. Below this is a banner image with the text "COMMONWEALTH SHARED SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION". The main form area contains a dropdown menu labeled "What is your Nationality *". The dropdown is open, showing a list of countries including Bangladesh, Cameroon, Eswatini, Ghana, India, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka (highlighted), Tanzania, and The Gambia. To the right of the dropdown are two blue buttons: "Save Progress" and "Next >>".

COMMONWEALTH
SCHOLARSHIPS

COMMONWEALTH SHARED
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

What is your Nationality *

Sri Lanka

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

Save Progress

Next >>

- 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 by the closing date to be eligible for consideration:
 - i. Proof of citizenship or refugee status – uploaded to the online application system
 - ii. Full transcripts detailing all your higher education qualifications including to-date transcripts for any qualifications you are currently studying (with certified translations if not in English) – uploaded to the online application system

Your application

- Development impact
- Proposed study in the UK
- Career plans
- Personal statement + Voluntary and leadership experience
- Referees

Development Impact

Commonwealth Scholarships in the UK are funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) → An important selection criterion is the potential contribution that you will make to international development if you are awarded a scholarship.

Provide a Development Impact statement in 4 parts:

- i. How your proposed study relates to: **(200 words)**
 - a) development issues at the global, national and local level?
 - b) development issues connected to your chosen CSC theme and the wider sector?
- ii. How you intend to apply your new skills and qualification when you return home? **(100 words)**
- iii. What you expect will change in development terms following your studies, including: **(250 words)**
 - a) the outcomes that you aim to achieve?
 - b) the timeframe for their implementation?
 - c) who the beneficiaries will be?
- iv. How the impact of your work could be best measured? **(100 words)**

Proposed study in the UK

- i. Provide a short outline of your proposed study/research. This should be written for an audience that does not have any prior knowledge of the subject and must not be overly technical. Any abbreviations or specialist terms must be explained **(125 words)**
- ii. Provide a detailed plan of your proposed study. The selection panel will want to understand why you have selected your proposed course and university. Describe clearly: **(300 words)**
 - a. why you have chosen your proposed course and university and why you want to undertake this study in the UK
 - b. what it is that you are looking for in a course and how your chosen course relates to your objectives
 - c. any dissertation topic you have in mind

Career Plans

The selection panel will want to understand how your proposed study will assist you in your career.

Describe the skills that you expect to gain from this scholarship, and your career plans once you return home afterwards:

- i. Objectives during the award **(250 words)**
- ii. Career Plans in the 5 years following the Award **(250 words)**
- iii. Long-term Career Plans **(250 words)**

Personal statement + Voluntary and leadership experience

- i. Summarise the ways in which your personal background has encouraged you to want to make an impact in your home country. You should indicate areas in which you have already contributed, such as having overcome any personal or community barriers to higher education **(500 words)**
- ii. Summarise the ways in which you have engaged in voluntary activities and the opportunities you have had to demonstrate leadership **(500 words)**

Referees

You are expected to provide referee details of:

- i. your current/most recent employer,
- ii. your most recent academic study and
- iii. of someone as a 'personal' referee.

The latter should know you in a *personal rather than a professional capacity* and should not be related to you.

Attachments

You must submit the following supporting documents as 3 separate files:

- i. A scan of the personal information page of your passport or national identity card which has a photograph as proof of your citizenship or refugee status in an eligible Commonwealth country.
- ii. Scans of full transcripts detailing all your higher education qualifications, including to-date transcripts for any qualifications you are currently studying, with certified translations if they are not in English (*merged into one file*).
- iii. Scans of **all** your university degree certificates (*merged into one file*)

Each file must be no more than 5 MB in size and must be in one of the following formats: PDF, .doc, .docx, .odt, .jpg, .jpeg, .png

Files submitted in any other format (including Zip files and PDF Portfolios) will not be accepted.

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 in **July 2021**.

Applications will be considered according to the following selection criteria:

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

**GRADING SYSTEM FOR ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS FOR COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS
(FUNDED BY THE FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH & DEVELOPMENT - FCDO) TENABLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM 2021**

Grade	ACADEMIC MERIT	QUALITY OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL (<i>Doctoral</i>)	QUALITY OF STUDY PLANS (<i>Masters</i>)	DEVELOPMENT IMPACT
Grading criteria	Primary Indicators • <i>Examination results.</i> • <i>Academic transcripts.</i> • <i>Tutors' and referees' reports.</i> Secondary Indicators • <i>Academic prizes or awards.</i> • <i>Other relevant academic achievements.</i> • <i>Publications, where appropriate.</i>	Primary Indicators • <i>Clear abstract of what the candidate wants to research</i> • <i>Extent to which the work programme has been well researched (including references to key literature); and the extent of engagement with the host supervisor</i> • <i>Quality of the research proposal, including innovation and relevance to current research in the chosen field and to development policy</i> Secondary Indicators • <i>Clarity of expression.</i> • <i>Feasibility of proposed research</i> • <i>Likelihood of completion within three years</i> For Split-Site Awards: • <i>Relevance of work in UK to PhD.</i> • <i>Evidence of strong research link with UK institution.</i>	Primary Indicators • <i>Statement of what the candidate wants to learn and how it relates to their objectives</i> • <i>Extent to which the proposed course and institution of study have been well researched (including specific options and dissertation topics, where appropriate) and presented.</i> Secondary Indicators • <i>Existing offer of admission to the course</i> • <i>Clarity of presentation</i>	Primary Indicators • <i>Extent of the need: how the plan of study/research relates to development in the sector and country</i> • <i>Expected outcomes, the projected timeframe to achieve them and potential beneficiaries</i> • <i>The way and extent to which the candidate proposes to apply new skills and qualifications; how does this relate to development</i> Secondary Indicators • <i>Reference to a national development priority or capacity shortage</i> • <i>Reference to the selected CSC theme</i> • <i>Extent of the benefit: how the impact of the work might be measured</i> • <i>Past demonstrable commitment to 'development' agendas through voluntary work.</i> • <i>Leading or participating in relevant projects or programmes</i>

Value

Value Shared Scholarships are jointly funded by the CSC and participating UK universities. Each scholarship provides:

- i. 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)
- ii. Approved tuition fees
- iii. 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)
- iv. Warm clothing allowance, where applicable
- v. Thesis grant towards the cost of preparing a thesis or dissertation
- vi. Study travel grant towards the costs of study-related travel within the UK or overseas
- vii. Excess baggage allowance, up to an annual approved limit, when returning home
- viii. 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
- ix. 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)
- x. **LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE**

Terms and Conditions

- 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.

Final thoughts

- Apply for as many courses as you like!

For each offer you receive → fill a separate CSC application form

- 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.
- All applications must be submitted by **16.00 (GMT) on 9 April 2021** at the latest
- For more information: <https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/scholarships/commonwealth-shared-scholarships/>
- Feel free to drop me an email for any queries 😊 charuni.p@gmail.com