



# **Commonwealth Scholarships for Master's and PhD study**

For developing Commonwealth country citizens

## **2016 prospectus**

## INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) is one of the largest and most prestigious scholarship schemes for international study in the world. Since it was established in 1959, around 30,000 individuals have benefited – 25,000 of them have held awards funded by the UK government, managed by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC).

This prospectus describes the Commonwealth Scholarships for Master's and PhD study in the UK offered by the CSC for citizens of developing Commonwealth countries in 2016. These scholarships are funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), with the aim of contributing to the UK's international development aims and wider overseas interests, supporting excellence in UK higher education, and sustaining the principles of the Commonwealth.

For information about the other scholarships and fellowships offered by the CSC, visit [www.dfid.gov.uk/cscuk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/cscuk). For information about Commonwealth Scholarships offered by other Commonwealth countries, visit [www.csfp-online.org](http://www.csfp-online.org)

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission's Secretariat is provided by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), which is responsible for all matters concerning selection, academic studies, and evaluation. The British Council is responsible for supporting award holders in their home countries before and after their awards.

## COMMONWEALTH PhD SCHOLARSHIPS

Up to 36 months' support towards completion of a three-year full-time doctoral postgraduate qualification at an eligible UK university.

**Purpose:** To enhance individual teaching and research capacity leading to increased institutional capacity in academic and other sectors in Commonwealth countries, 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 developmental and leadership focus.

## COMMONWEALTH MASTER'S SCHOLARSHIPS

12 months' support towards completion of a full-time taught postgraduate qualification at an eligible UK university. The CSC funds one-year Master's programmes only, and does not fund MBAs.

**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 the potential to enhance the development of their home countries with the knowledge and leadership skills they acquire.

In addition, citizens of the Falkland Islands, Maldives, St Helena, and the Seychelles can apply for:

- Scholarships for study towards an undergraduate degree in the UK
  - You must have applied through the UCAS system by the time you submit your scholarship application
  - If applying to study medicine, you must have secured a place at a UK medical school by 31 October 2015

## ELIGIBILITY

To apply for these scholarships, you must:

- Be a Commonwealth citizen, refugee, or British protected person
- Be permanently resident in a developing Commonwealth country. For a full list of eligible countries, visit <http://bit.ly/cscuk-developing-cw-countries>
- Be available to start your academic studies in the UK by the start of the UK academic year in September/October 2016
- By October 2016, 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)

The CSC promotes equal opportunity, gender equity, and cultural exchange. Applications are encouraged from a diverse range of candidates.

## HOW TO APPLY

You should apply to study at Master's/PhD level at a UK university with which the CSC has a part funding agreement. Part funding agreements are at the discretion of individual universities. For a list of universities that have already agreed to part fund Commonwealth Scholarships, visit <http://bit.ly/cscuk-uk-universities>

All subject areas are eligible – although you should note that the CSC's selection criteria give priority to applications that demonstrate the strongest relevance to development.

You must apply to one of the following nominating bodies in the first instance – **the CSC does not accept direct applications for these scholarships:**

- National nominating agencies – this is the main route of application. For a full list of agencies and contact details, visit <http://bit.ly/cscuk-agencies>
- Selected universities/university bodies, which can nominate their own academic staff. For a full list of eligible universities, visit <http://bit.ly/cscuk-scholarships-developing-cw>
- Selected non-governmental organisations and charitable bodies

All applications must be made through your nominating body in your home country. Each nominating body is responsible for its own selection process. You must check with your nominating body for their specific advice and rules for applying, and for their own closing date for applications. The CSC does not impose any age limit on applicants, but nominating bodies may do so in line with their own priorities.

You must make your application using the CSC's Electronic Application System (EAS) – information on how to use the EAS, including detailed guides, is available at <http://bit.ly/cscuk-scholarships-developing-cw>.

Your application must be submitted to and endorsed by one of the approved nominating bodies listed above. The CSC will not accept any applications that are not submitted via the EAS to a nominating body in your home country.

All applications must be submitted by **19 November 2015** at the latest.

Awards made by the CSC are subject to the ongoing endorsement of the nominating body. The CSC cannot accept nominations for these scholarships from other organisations or applications directly from individuals; such applications will not be acknowledged.

Universities or other organisations that wish to be invited to nominate candidates for these scholarships should write to the Executive Secretary, Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK, Woburn House, 20-24 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HF, UK.

## SELECTION PROCESS

Each year, the CSC invites each nominating body to submit a specific number of nominations. The deadline for nominating bodies to submit nominations to the CSC is 17 December 2015.

The CSC invites around three times more nominations than scholarships available – therefore, nominated candidates are not guaranteed to be awarded a scholarship. There are no quotas for scholarships for any individual country. Candidates nominated by national nominating agencies are in competition with those nominated by other nominating bodies, and the same standards will be applied to applications made through either channel.

Each nominated candidate's application is first considered by a member of the CSC's panel of advisers with expertise in the subject area concerned, and then by the CSC's 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 impact of the work on the development of the candidate's home country

## TENURE AND PLACEMENT

Awards are tenable at any approved UK university or higher education institution with which the CSC has a part funding agreement (as mentioned previously) for a specific programme of study or research. Awards are not restricted to any particular subject areas. 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.

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.

In your application, you are expected to identify at least one but preferably three universities and courses/supervisors (for research degrees) that you think are the most appropriate for your study, 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. 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. Tuition fees for at least the current academic year are available on university websites.

**You must take the necessary steps to secure admission to your preferred universities in advance of your scholarship application. Many courses have strict admission deadlines.** You should check admission requirements carefully when applying.

If you are applying for PhD study, 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.

If you are selected for an award but have already started your PhD study by the time of your selection, your award will begin at the start of the next academic year (i.e. in September/October following your selection) and will end after you have been registered for your PhD for 36 months. This is in line with the CSC's policy on PhD length. Agreement on part funding in these circumstances is at the discretion of the university – you should check with the universities at which you wish to study before applying.

## 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 dependants, nor usually the cost of journeys made before your award is finally confirmed)
- Approved tuition and examination fees
- Stipend (living allowance) at the rate of £1,034 per month, or £1,268 per month for those at universities in the London metropolitan area (rates quoted at 2015-2016 levels)
- Thesis grant towards the cost of preparing a thesis or dissertation, where applicable
- Warm clothing allowance
- Study travel grant towards the costs of study-related travel within the UK or overseas
- For PhD Scholars, fieldwork grant towards the cost of fieldwork undertaken overseas (usually the cost of one economy class return airfare to your fieldwork location)
- For PhD Scholars, 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)
- If your scholarship is at least 18 months long, the following family allowances:
  - Spouse allowance of £222 per month 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)
  - Child allowance of £222 per month for the first child, and £109 per month for the second and third child under the age of 16, if you are accompanied by your spouse and children and they are living with you at the same address in the UK
- If you are widowed, divorced, or a single parent (irrespective of the length of your scholarship), child allowance of £444 per month for the first child, and £109 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

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 at <http://bit.ly/cscuk-handbook-forms>

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

- A Commonwealth Scholarship covers fees, fares, and personal maintenance. Other scholarships, awards, or bursaries that cover the same costs may not be held concurrently.
- 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 reserves the right to publish the names of provisionally selected candidates on the CSC website. By applying for an award, you are giving your consent for your details to be published in this way if your application is successful.
- 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 medical report 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 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 may be required to take an approved English language test and/or be screened for tuberculosis for your visa application. These regulations are subject to change at any time. You should check the GOV.UK website at [www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa](http://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa) 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 for you to remain in the UK after your award to work or undertake postdoctoral study.
- 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.
- 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 <http://bit.ly/cscuk-anti-fraud-policy>
- All terms and conditions of award are subject to UK local law and practices, and are subject to change by the CSC.

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## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

You may be required to take the academic IELTS English language test as a condition of eligibility. It is your responsibility to check with your nominating agency whether this requirement applies to you. An IELTS test will be considered valid only if it is taken after 1 October 2015 and before 6 March 2016. You must achieve an overall score of 6.5, with no less than 5.5 in each band.

As a further condition of award, you may be required, by the CSC or your university, to provide evidence of a particular level of English language proficiency.



**Commonwealth Scholarship  
Commission in the UK**

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