

# INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS: 2005 ENTRY



COMMONWEALTH  
SCHOLARSHIPS

*Through its participation in the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP), the United Kingdom seeks to make its higher education available to students of the highest ability, with the potential to make a real contribution to their home countries.*

*We are keen to encourage high quality applicants from a wide range of backgrounds. We appreciate that candidates spend a great deal of time in preparing their applications, and want to ensure that these are presented in the best possible way. This leaflet provides guidance on the selection process and the type of information that the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK (CSC) will find most helpful when making its decisions. It should be read in conjunction with the formal terms and conditions.*

## PLANNING YOUR APPLICATION

### ✓ *What Awards are available*

Four types of studentship are available in the UK – **General Scholarships**, **Academic Staff Scholarships**, **Split-Site Doctoral Scholarships** and scholarships by **Distance Learning**. Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowships and Commonwealth Professional Fellowships for those in mid-career are also available. The Commission will continue to offer joint awards with a number of UK universities.

### ✓ *Check Eligibility*

Each scheme has detailed eligibility criteria and not all are available in every country. Before applying, please check that you meet these in all respects. If in doubt, please check with your nominating agency or the CSFP website at [www.csfp-online.org](http://www.csfp-online.org). Please note that there are different routes of nomination for each type of award.

### ✓ *Consider the Qualification for which you are Applying*

Candidates applying for Master's courses will not be able to transfer to doctoral study without making a separate application. Please consider carefully which type of award best suits your circumstances and experience.

### ✓ *Check National Priorities*

It is a principle of CSFP that each country is best placed to determine its own national priorities. Whilst no subject of study is excluded, some countries prioritise certain areas in deciding which students should be nominated. Please check with your nominating agency. Where such priorities have been notified to the Commission, they have been listed on the CSFP website, where a full list of nominating agencies can also be found.

### ✓ *Check Deadlines*

The CSC writes to nominating agencies in July to let them know how many applications are required from each country for the following year's competition. Most agencies will have an internal deadline for applications, which you should check in advance. Some agency closing dates may be listed on the CSFP website.

## COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION FORM

### ✓ *Have you considered which UK institution you would like to attend?*

If so, have you made contact with a potential course leader / supervisor there? Whilst it is not a formal requirement, the selection committee does prefer to see evidence that candidates have researched their choices thoroughly. You should indicate your preferences for institution of study on your application form and in order to help secure admission where deadlines may be in force, candidates are expected to make independent applications to UK universities, especially for taught courses in subjects such as Law or International Relations which are likely to be oversubscribed. Further information on taught course and research opportunities can be obtained from the Association of Commonwealth Universities website ([www.acu.ac.uk/cudos](http://www.acu.ac.uk/cudos)) or the British Council website ([www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)). Many British Council offices also have resource centres which can be consulted.

### ✓ *What are the advantages of undertaking this work in the United Kingdom?*

Given the limited resources available, the selection committee will be reluctant to support candidates whose project could have been wholly completed in their home country, although provision may be available for doctoral students to undertake fieldwork in their home country as part of their research.

### ✓ *How will the work contribute to the development of your own country?*

CSFP guidelines favour candidates who will make a 'real difference' to the development of their countries. You should provide therefore, evidence that your work will address a major national need or skill shortage, and emphasise the impact that it will have on your career. In addition, if you have previously studied in the UK or elsewhere overseas, you should state how this has benefited yourself and your country to date.

### ✓ *Have you justified your choice of course and your project methods?*

Although the space available for describing your project is limited, you should explain your *choice of course and institution* and outline any areas of special interest to you. Projects which involve research activity should mention likely methods and approaches to be adopted, particularly stressing any novel features.

## THE SELECTION PROCESS IN THE UK

- The first element in the selection process is nomination by the **nominating agency** appropriate to your type of award. Procedures and selection criteria are determined by each agency, and not controlled from London. If you are nominated, however, your application should be with us by 31 December.
- An early responsibility of nominated candidates is to alert their **referees**. Given the limited time available for selection in the UK, it is not possible for referees to be followed up if they do not submit their comments. This could be to your disadvantage. Candidates **must** provide a reference for any previous period of university study in the UK. In addition, if you are currently studying in the UK, or about to embark upon a course of study, you must also name a referee associated with this study.
- Once your application arrives in the United Kingdom, it will be sent to one of our **Panel of Advisers**. Advisers cover all academic disciplines. However, they may not have a detailed background in the precise area of your proposal, so please try to avoid highly technical terms that are not fully explained.
- Applications are then considered by our selection committee in late February or March. The committee comprises five Commission members, balanced between subject areas. We aim to let candidates know the outcome by the end of April. Any offers will be subject to placement, satisfactory medical reports and any other conditions set by the Commission.
- If your application is unsuccessful, please remember that we only have funds available to support about 35-40% of nominated candidates each year. Inevitably, many high quality candidates cannot be funded. There is no restriction on the number of times you can apply, however, providing that you continue to be eligible and are nominated again. Sadly, the Commission does not have the resources to enter into correspondence regarding individual cases.

### NOTE

The advice given in this leaflet is designed particularly for students from countries whose awards are supported by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. Awards for citizens of Australia, Bahamas, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Cyprus, Malta, New Zealand and Singapore are supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and involve different criteria. A separate leaflet is available for these counties on the CSFP website at [www.csfp-online.org](http://www.csfp-online.org).