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TO: INTERNATIONAL AND POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP ADMINISTRATORS

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS TENABLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 2010/11

We have attached the scholarship prospectus for the above scholarships for the academic year starting in September 2010.

Your institution is invited to send a maximum of **eight (8)** nominations from students who are currently registered at your institution. Please ensure that your nominations reach us not later than **Friday, 13 November 2009**. These may be in either of the following categories:

- One year taught masters courses or equivalent degrees (excluding MBA)
- Six months of clinical training in medicine or dentistry
- Doctoral degrees, up to three years of duration (UK institution)
- One year research on a split-site basis, towards a PhD registered at a university in your country.

South Africa can send a maximum of 45 nominations of which no more than half (20) may be for doctoral studies (including via a split-site mode). The UK Scholarship Commission will consider applications in both categories separately, and the two will not be in competition with each other.

Please note that applications received after the closing date **WILL NOT** be considered.

Eligibility:

Eligibility requirements are outlined in the scholarship prospectus. I would particularly draw attention to the following:

- The commission will look for evidence of the high academic quality expected of Commonwealth scholars; intellectual and academic excellence will be paramount in all selections. **Candidates studying a first degree are expected to hold at least upper second class honours level or a degree of second class (i.e. 70%+) by October 2010.**
- Candidates should be able to take up the award in October 2010 as deferments are granted in the most exceptional circumstances, and in any event will not be considered for start dates beyond January 2011.

Awards are tenable at any UK institution of higher education for a specific programme of study or research and are not restricted to particular subject areas. **Candidates are expected to state their preferred institutions on the application form, but the final decision on host institution will be made by the Commission. In recent years, placement of successful candidates has sometimes been delayed by the process of gaining admission to their host university. For this reason, we strongly advise candidates to submit independent**

applications for admission directly to their chosen institutions in the UK, prior to, or at the time of, their nomination, without waiting for the result of the scholarship selection procedures. Where offers of admission have been obtained, these should be included with the nominations, and any subsequent correspondence copied to us.

The Commission will not offer awards to scholars already close to completing a doctorate in their own country, though awards may be tenable to complete doctoral studies already underway in the UK.

Selection criteria:

Final selection of candidates and host institutions will be made by the UK Commission. Once again, they will be seeking candidates of the highest academic quality, who demonstrate a real capacity to make a difference to their home country on completion of the award. The main selection criteria are the **academic merit** of the candidate, the **quality of the proposal** and the likely impact of the scholarship on **national development**. We would particularly draw attention to the following:

- Whilst awards remain open to all subjects of study, the Selection Committee will particular favour applications that demonstrably link to the development priorities of the home country. Candidates should be encouraged to make any such links explicit in their applications.
- Priority will be given to candidates whose area of work addresses the general priorities of DFID.

These include:

- (a) to alleviate poverty
- (b) to support economic reform
- (c) to enhance productive capacity
- (d) to help achieve good government
- (e) to promote human development, including better education and health
- (f) to promote the status of women
- (g) to address problems of the environment

Arrangements for Submitting Applications

Please note that the 2010 application should be completed on-line using the new “Electronic Application System” which means that candidates can save their work and go back to it. However, once they have completed the form as instructed, they should print five copies along with the supporting documents. The South Africa Agency (HESA) has decided not to use the online form to its full capabilities in 2010 - we are only encouraging candidates to complete the on-line form – reference letters and academic transcripts should still be obtained and submitted with the print-out as in the past.

Please ensure that the dossiers of nominated candidates not only reach us Friday, 13 November 2009, but are also complete in all respects, and include the university records and the statements of referees (not to be presented in binders of any kind).

Five copies (one original completed form and four photocopies) of each candidate's application should be forwarded; **each** copy should contain **all** of the following:

- A **certified** copy of the candidate's birth certificate/Identity Document should be included with the top copy.
- Photograph (firmly stapled, with at least 3 staples) to the appropriate place on the application
- Attach to the **each** application form, in descending order:
 - (i) Reports from **three** referees – References (not testimonials) specifically related to the candidate's suitability for the planned studies (considerable delay is caused when the report from only one or two referees have been submitted with an application). Will you please obtain before nomination the reports from the three referees named by the candidate? We shall assume that you have taken such reports into account in deciding on your selection process. The referee reports should either be **five original letters** or **one original letter** and **four certified copies**. Applications received without the required references will not be considered by the South African Selection Committee.
 - (ii) **Certified copy** of university **transcripts and certificates** of **all higher education qualifications obtained** (not just the last one) (**each application form should have a certified copy**)

The following steps should be followed:

1. The link to the website is <http://www.cscuk.org.uk/apply/developingcommonwealthscholarships.asp>
2. Click on Making an Application
3. Click on Electronic Application System
4. Click on Access the System

Once the system has been accessed, candidates need to register and will then be able to continue completing the application form.

The Selection Committee has become concerned in recent years with the way in which papers are increasingly arriving in an incomplete state and has instructed its secretariat to render ineligible applications which do not arrive in the manner requested. **Such incomplete applications will not be considered by the committee.**

Timeframe:

- South African nominations to be submitted to the Agency (HESA) by Friday, 13 November 2009;
- Applications are considered by the South African Selection Panel in the first week of December;
- Nominations by the nominating agency (HESA) to be submitted to the UK Scholarship Commission by 31 December 2009;
- Institutions will be informed of the outcome of the first round early January 2010;
- Applications are considered by the UK selection committee in March 2010;
- The final outcome from the UK is expected the end of April or early May 2010.

We thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this regard.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jana van Wyk', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JANA VAN WYK
PROJECT MANAGER: SECTOR SUPPORT & SERVICES

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