



18 August 2009

GENERAL INFORMATION

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS TENABLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, 2010/11

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

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.

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.

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. The Commission does not offer scholarships for postdoctoral research.

1. APPLICATION PROCESS:

If you are currently a South Africa citizen and registered at a Public Higher Education Institution in the country, then you should submit your application through that institution. Each institution has a person who is responsible for the coordination of the Commonwealth Scholarships. We have attached the list with the names & contact details. You will need to contact the institution to ascertain the institutional application process and closing date for applications well in advance.

Individual applications will only be considered if—

- (a) A South African citizen who is not currently registered at any Public Higher Education Institution.
- (b) A South African citizen who is currently studying or staying in a foreign country; and
- (c) A South African citizen who obtained his/her **last qualification** from a foreign institution.

All other applications received directly from individuals will not be considered.

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission has introduced an Electronic Application System (EAS) as a pilot phase for 2010. As Nominating Agency for South Africa we have decided NOT to use the system to its full capabilities due to various reasons. However, the Commission has requested that ALL candidates complete the form on-line. Applicants will still have to print five copies of the form once completed, are still responsible to obtain academic reference letters and academic transcripts in the prescribed format (see item 4 below - originals or certified copies attached to each application), and submit to the University. In other words applicants need to

visit the CSC website, access the EAS and complete the application on-line in order to produce the hard copies.

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.

2. ELIGIBILITY:

Eligibility requirements are outline in the prospectus. I would particularly draw attention to the following criteria as set by the Commission in the UK and the South African Selection Panel:

- 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 an upper second class honours (average of 70%+) by October 2010 to be considered.
- Candidates should be able to take up their awards in October 2010.

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, except for MBA. **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. (see note 10 to the application form.)

3. SELECTION CRITERIA

Final selection of candidates and host institutions will be made by the UK Commission based on the nominations from the South African Nominating Agency. 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**.

Applications which do not meet the **academic criteria** will not be considered at all. **We receive substantially more nominations than scholarships available and for this reason it has become a very competitive selection process over the years.**

4. ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS (Applicable to higher education institutions and eligible individual applications)

Please note that South African students don't have to submit a Certificate of English language proficiency at this stage. Individuals will be informed in cases where it will be required after the first round of selections.

Please ensure that your application not only reach us on **Friday, 13 November 2009**, but also are also complete in all respects. **Please do not submit applications in binders of any kind.**

Five copies (printed from the on-line system) and **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:

- 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). **It is the responsibility of the candidates to approach referees and to ensure that these references are submitted in the correct format and on time. The Agency will not follow-up on any outstanding referee reports. The referee reports could be sent directly to the Agency by the referee or preferably candidates should collect the referee reports and include with the application. One original letter & four copies. The South African Selection Committee will not consider applications received without the required references.**
- **Certified copies of academic transcripts and certificates (all records of qualifications obtained (undergraduate and postgraduate – not just the your last qualification obtained) in descending chronological order (each application form should have a certified copy of the transcripts & certificates)**

The South African 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. **The Committee will not consider such incomplete applications.**

5. TIMEFRAMES:

- 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 to be submitted to the UK Scholarship Commission by 31 December;
- 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.

Please direct all queries per email to Esther Roman at **sso@hesa.org.za**

Kind regards

JANA VAN WYK
PROJECT MANAGER: SECTOR SUPPORT & SERVICES