MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(HIGHER EDUCATION DIVISION)

Guidelines on Foreign Scholarships Offered to Sri Lankan Students by Foreign Countries and Institutions

2023

❖ **Ministry of Education, Higher Education Division, No.18, Ward Place, Colombo 07**

Introduction

After the independence, with Sri Lanka's endeavour to develop many globally important economic, social, political and cultural relations, opportunities were created to exchange those relations with various foreign nations. As a result, avenues were also created to exchange educational and cultural opportunities. As a consequence of globally disseminating the educational and cultural values of the respective countries by both the friendly nations and other foreign states, the students of this nation have received the privilege of travelling to foreign lands and pursing studies in those countries. To date, numerous foreign nations have extended scholarship opportunities to Sri Lankan students for both undergraduate and postgraduate studies, and students are yielding maximum opportunities out of these scholarship opportunities. Currently, there is a significant enthusiasm among students for foreign scholarships, and a substantial number of undergraduate and postgraduate degree opportunities are offered annually through the Ministry of Education.

One of the principal roles of the Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education is to oversee the scholarship opportunities extended by foreign countries and institutions to Sri Lankan students for pursuing both undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs with the objective of expanding the educational opportunities available to Sri Lankan students and nurturing a highly knowledgeable human resource. Therefore, it is expected that the release of this Guidelines will provide awareness and guidance regarding the process of applying, selecting students and submitting nominations for these scholarship programs.

It is basically expected to draw attention on the following key aspects, and individuals seeking the latest updates on scholarships are encouraged to refer to the Ministry's website (www.mohe.gov.lk) for the most current information.

1. Approaches of offering scholarships by foreign countries / institutions
2. Countries offering scholarships through direct calling of nominations and the associated time periods
3. The process of implementing a scholarship program
4. Basic conditions of applying for scholarships
5. The process of submitting applications
6. The process of prioritizing applications
7. The process of shortlisting for interviews

8. The process of sending the nominations and applications for scholarships to respective countries

9. The process of selecting students for scholarships by the respective countries

10. Visa and other coordinating affairs

11. The process after returning to this country upon the completion of scholarships

12. Obtaining Information on Scholarships

01. **Approaches of offering scholarships by foreign countries / institutions**

The scholarship opportunities offered by foreign countries can be basically categorized as follows:

❖ The scholarships offered through the Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) entered into between the countries and through the calling for nominations by foreign countries from the Ministry.

❖ Direct Scholarships offered by foreign countries / institutions.

Scholarship Programs Offered through the calling of nominations by foreign countries

Information related to these scholarship programs is forwarded to this ministry through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Sri Lankan embassies and high commissions abroad as well as foreign embassies/high commissions in this country. Subsequently, the Ministry of Education selects eligible students and proceed with the nomination affairs.

Direct Scholarships offered by foreign countries / institutions

At certain instances, countries and institutions directly invite applications for scholarship programs. Further information regarding those scholarship programs are published on the Ministry website, and students can to apply directly for those scholarship opportunities.

02. **Countries offering scholarships through direct calling of nominations and the associated time periods**
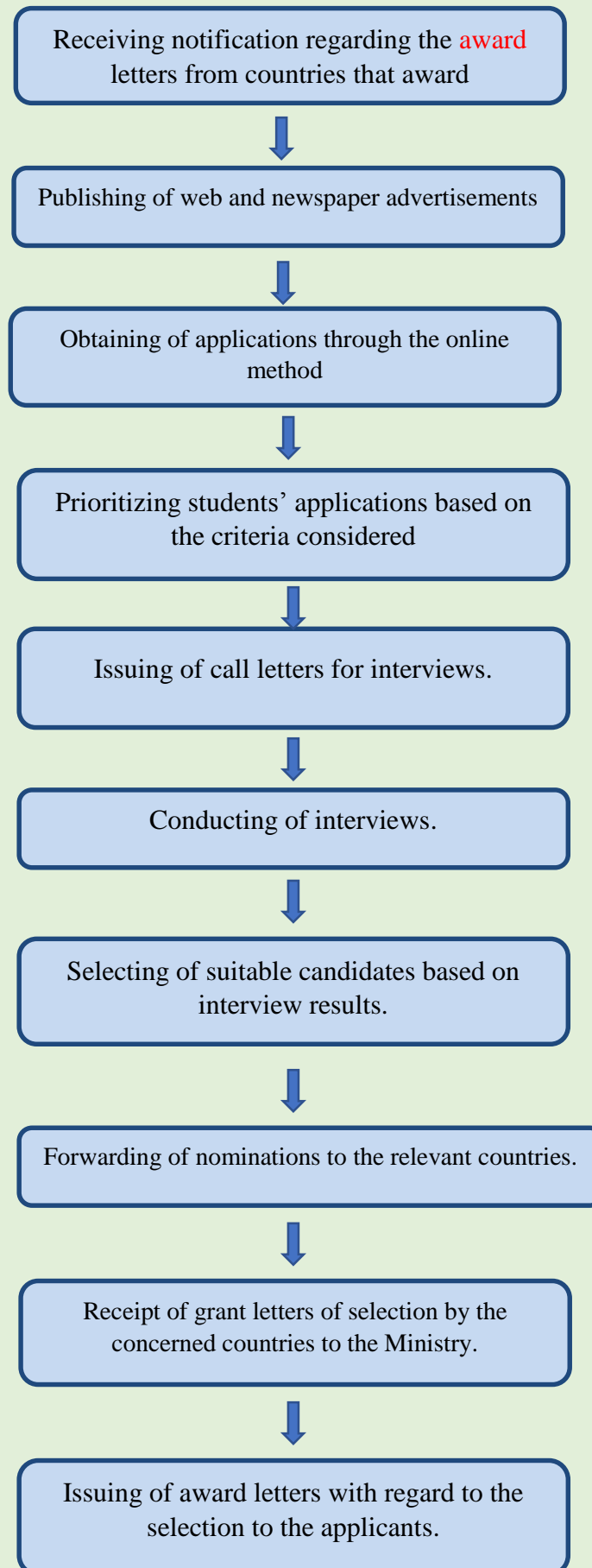
❖ **Undergraduate Scholarship Programs**

No.	Country	Period of Advertising	Timeframe for offering scholarships
1	India	January - February	June-October
2	Hungary	November	June-August
3	Japan	April	March
4	Cuba	August	November
5	Serbia	September	December-January
6	India (Ayush Scholarships)	June	November

❖ **Postgraduate Scholarship Programs**

No.	Country	Period of Advertising	Timeframe for offering scholarships
1	India	January - February	June-October
2	China	November	July
3	Japan	April	March
4	Hungary	November	June – August
5	United Kingdom	August	December
6	India (Ayush Scholarships)	June	August

Note - The deadlines mentioned above may change periodically, depending on the country or institution awarding the scholarships and decisions made by the Ministry of Education regarding offering of the respective scholarships.

03. The process of implementing a scholarship program

Receiving notification regarding the award letters from countries that award

↓

Publishing of web and newspaper advertisements

↓

Obtaining of applications through the online method

↓

Prioritizing students' applications based on the criteria considered

↓

Issuing of call letters for interviews.

↓

Conducting of interviews.

↓

Selecting of suitable candidates based on interview results.

↓

Forwarding of nominations to the relevant countries.

↓

Receipt of grant letters of selection by the concerned countries to the Ministry.

↓

Issuing of award letters with regard to the selection to the applicants.

04. Basic conditions of applying for scholarships

❖ **Undergraduate Scholarship Programs**

- Shall be a Sri Lankan citizen.
- Shall have attained the applicable age limits (The applicable age limit is set by the scholarship awarding countries).
- Shall have passed the G.C.E Advanced Level Examination with a minimum of three S passes. (Can vary according to the scholarship program).
- Shall not be an individual who has registered as an internal student to pursue a degree program at a state university coming under the purview of the University Grants Commission.
- English language competency (This will be determined as per the language medium of the scholarship award)
- Shall be in good physical health.

❖ **Postgraduate (M.A. /M.Sc.) Degree Scholarship Programs**

- Shall be a Sri Lankan citizen.
- Shall have attained the applicable age limits (The applicable age limit is set by the scholarship awarding countries).
- Shall have obtained a degree with the relevant study area from a university recognized by the University Grants Commission. (The class of the university is considered as per the scholarship offering country.)
- English language competency (This will be determined as per the language medium of the scholarship award)
- Shall be in good physical health.

❖ **Postgraduate (Doctorate) Scholarship Programs**

- Shall be a Sri Lankan citizen.
- Shall have attained the applicable age limits (The applicable age limit is set by the scholarship awarding countries).
- Shall have obtained a degree and a postgraduate degree with the relevant study area from a university recognized by the University Grants Commission. (The class of the university is considered as per the scholarship offering country.)

- English language competency (This will be determined as per the language medium of the scholarship award)
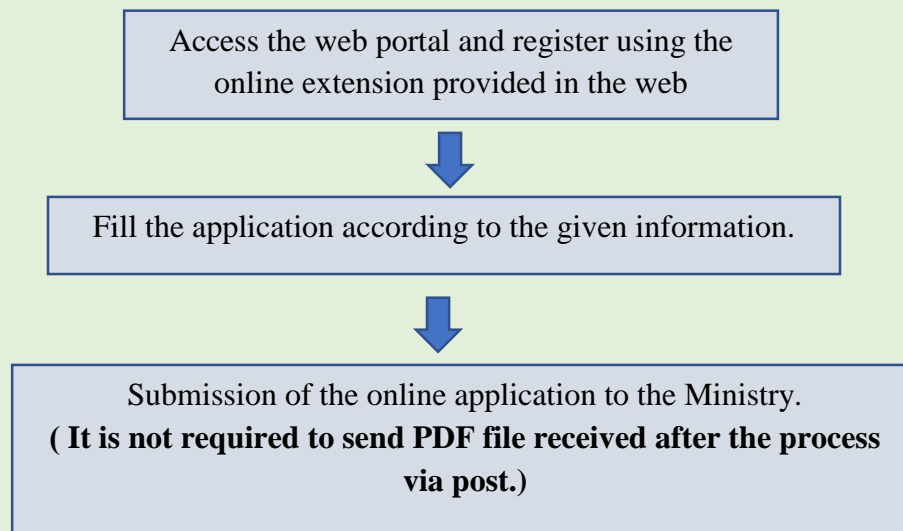- Shall be in good physical health.

❖ **Note- These conditions may change over time based on the policies of the country or institution offering the scholarships and decisions made by the Ministry of Education regarding the respective scholarship programs**

05. The process of submitting applications

- After the foreign countries inform the Ministry regarding the scholarship program, notices are published on the Ministry website (www.mohe.gov.lk), national newspapers published in all three languages and through the Official Facebook Page of the Ministry and applications are invited.
- The Ministry has introduced an Online Application Submission System for sending applications for scholarships, and in cases where relevant web advertisements are published, the corresponding online application submission link will also be provided to facilitate students' application submission.

The process of submitting applications online

- When the Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education publishes the web notices regarding scholarships, the online link (https://foreignscholarships.mohe.gov.lk) will be mentioned, and applications shall be submitted through that as follows.

Access the web portal and register using the online extension provided in the web

⬇

Fill the application according to the given information.

⬇

Submission of the online application to the Ministry.
(It is not required to send PDF file received after the process via post.)
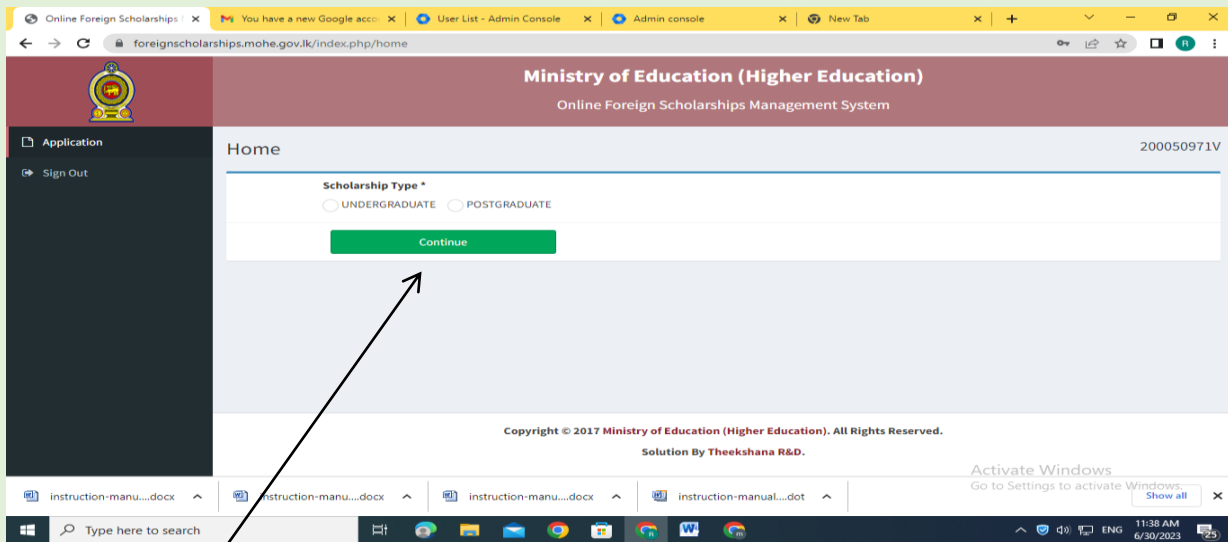
First Step

Click 'Register' for registration.

After completing the required information, click 'Register.' It's important to use a suitable method to remember the password you provided since it will be required again.

Third Step
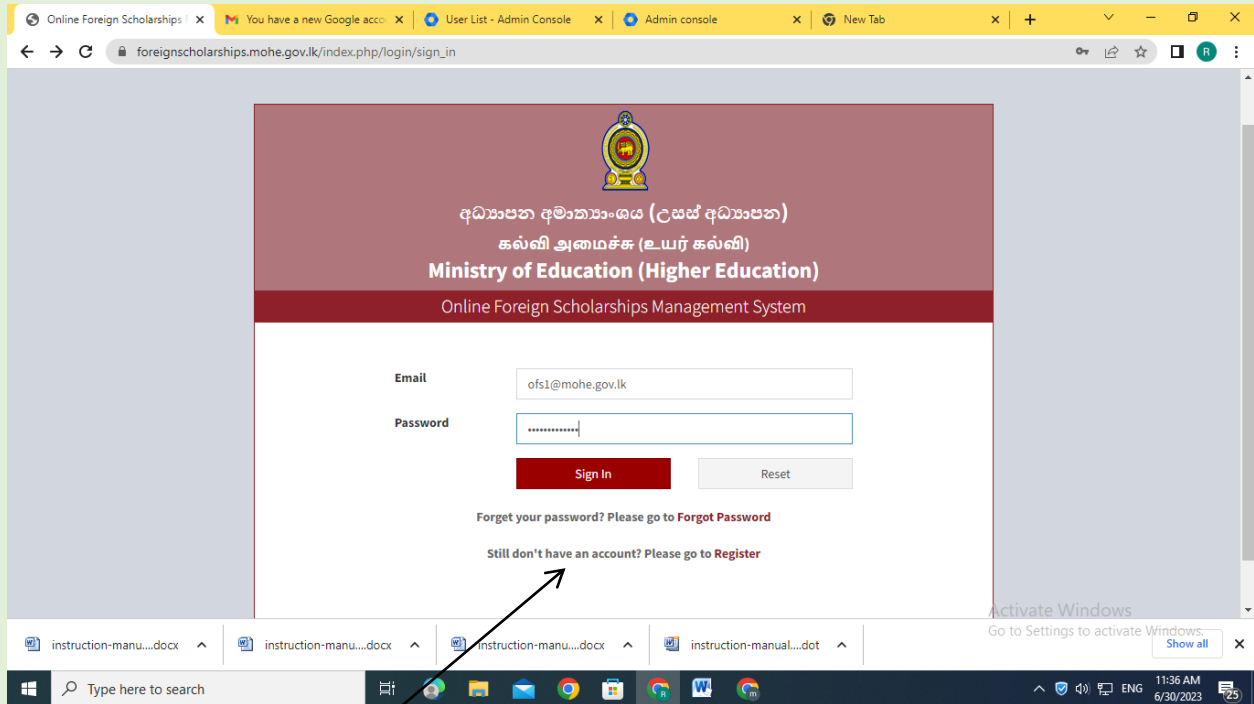
Click on "Sign in" button.

Fourth Step

Choose the scholarship program you want to apply for under 'Scholarship Type,' then click 'Continue' and follow the provided instructions

Submit the application and finally download the PDF copy.

Please note that there is no need to send applications by post, and applications should be submitted online directly to the Ministry of Education (Higher Education Division) on or before the application deadline. submissions through other channels will not be considered under any circumstances.
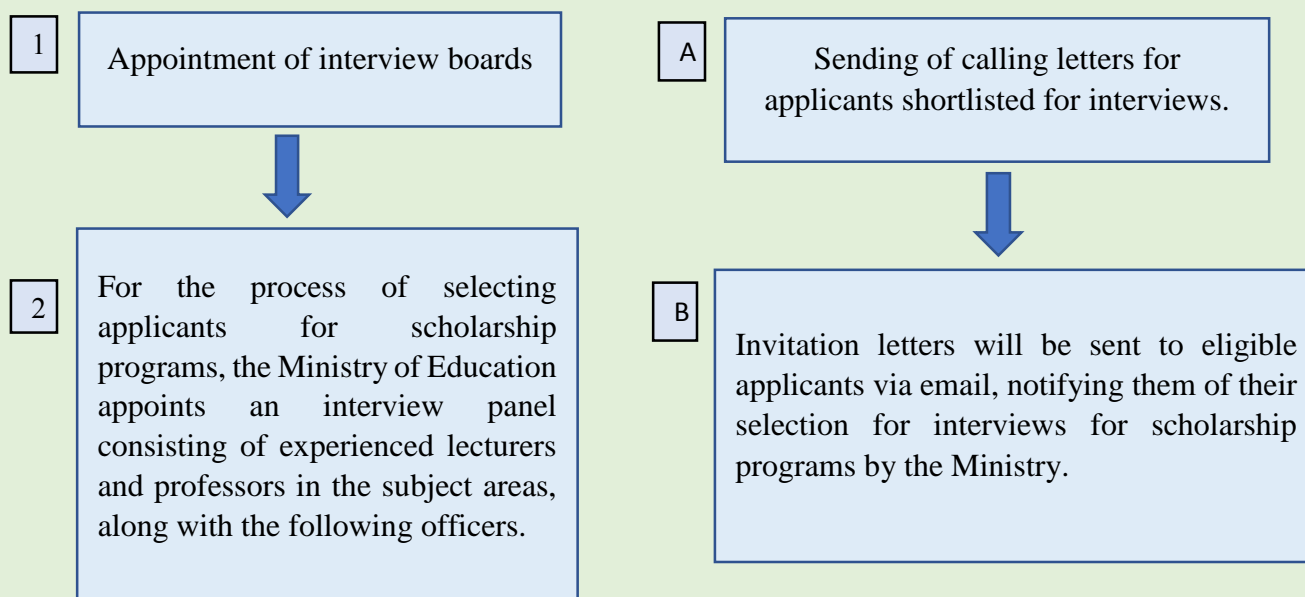
06. The process of prioritizing applications

After receiving applications for scholarship programs from the Ministry, applicants who meet the basic eligibility and scholarship conditions will be shortlisted. The number of applicants called for the scholarships will be determined based on the number of scholarships offered and in accordance with the instructions given by the respective country, and subsequently, the applications will be prioritized in relation to the call for interviews.

Applicants for undergraduate scholarship programs are prioritized based on their merit [Z. Score] in the GCE A Level examination and the conditions under which they are selected for scholarships. Accordingly, the eligible applicants will be called for interviews.

Applicants for postgraduate degrees will be prioritized based on the merit of the undergraduate degree obtained from a university recognized by the University Grants Commission and the conditions under which they will be selected for the respective scholarships. Consequently, the eligible applicants will be called for interviews.

07. Conducting of interviews

In the process of selecting students for scholarship programs, students are chosen through a structured interview. The process of conducting interviews is carried out as follows.

1	Appointment of interview boards

A	Sending of calling letters for applicants shortlisted for interviews.

2	For the process of selecting applicants for scholarship programs, the Ministry of Education appoints an interview panel consisting of experienced lecturers and professors in the subject areas, along with the following officers.

B	Invitation letters will be sent to eligible applicants via email, notifying them of their selection for interviews for scholarship programs by the Ministry.

3

For undergraduate degree programs
- A representation of a Post of Director of the Ministry
- A representation of a university Lecturer
- (Relevant to the subject scope)
- A representation of the University Grants Commission
- A representation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

For postgraduate degree programs

- A representation of the post of Additional Secretary of the Ministry
- A representation of the University Grants Commission
- Two professorial representations from universities
  (Relevant to the subject scope))
- A representation from another ministry
- A representation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

C

Basic documents to bring for interviews -

Basic Documents Required for Undergraduate / Postgraduate Degrees

- Birth Certificate
- National Identity Card/Valid Passport
- Copies of other certificates (Sports and Leadership/Achievements obtained representing the country)
- Proficiency in English language

Educational certificates

- Applicants for undergraduate degrees must submit the originals of the G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination Result Sheet with Z score and the Ordinary Level Result Sheet.

- Applicants for postgraduate degree programs shall submit originals of relevant degree certificates
- Publications/Books/extract etc.

08. Shortlisting of applicants for scholarship nominations after interviews

Applicants will be selected for scholarships based on their merit during the interview. Nominations will then be submitted to each country based on the number of scholarships provided by that country. In cases where additional nominations are requested by the respective countries, those nominations will also be submitted together with the main nominations. Nominated candidates should submit their applications, relevant certificates, and other specified documents to the respective countries and universities.

09. The process of selecting students for scholarships by the respective countries

After submitting the relevant nominations, applicants will be selected according to the scholarship conditions and selection process of those countries. The details of the selected applicants will then be directly communicated to this Ministry through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the relevant country/institution/embassies.

In the Ministry of Education's scholarship selection process, although applicants meeting the highest qualifications are chosen after a thorough review of their credentials, it has been observed that some scholarships are subsequently rejected by the respective countries or institutions.

- Lapses made by applicants when submitting applications.
- Non-compliance with the conditions offered by the countries awarding the scholarships.

Hence, applicants selected for scholarships are responsible for accurately completing their applications when submitting them. Additionally, applicants should exercise caution when choosing courses and universities that align with their relevant educational qualifications.

After receiving information regarding the scholarship grants to this ministry, respective scholarship recipients will be informed in that regard and necessary guidance and advice for their future activities will be provided.

All scholarship recipients are required to register through an information system implemented by the Ministry and submit the scholarship recipient information sheet to this Ministry.

10. Visa and other coordinating activities

Applicants must adhere to the instructions provided by the respective countries for obtaining visas for scholarship recipients. In situations where embassy offices and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs need to intervene, this Ministry will undertake the necessary actions.

11. The process after returning to this country upon the completion of scholarships

After returning to this country upon receiving their degree, scholarship recipients shall visit the Ministry, complete a data form including degree details, and obtain a certificate of recognition of the degree awarding university from the University Grants Commission. Relevant information can be found on the website www.ugc.lk.

12. Obtaining Information on Scholarships

The relevant work regarding scholarships is done by the Overseas Education Division established in the Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education. You can contact us through the following channels.

Similarly, by filling out and submitting the information in the Google form on the Ministry's website's Pre-Registration portal, you can receive information about the Ministry's published scholarship programs via email.

Web portal for pre-registration

Google form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1RLjolWPCpkqPVJ9EvwglxGthCP7Z5PHGL8XRIPpvXVE/edit

Address   -   Ministry of Education (Higher Education Division)

Overseas Education Division

No.18, Ward Place, Colombo 07

Web Site   -   www.mohe.gov.lk

Email   -   ovse@mohe.gov.lk

Telephone No. -   0112698994 (Overseas Education Division)

FAQ

I.   **Question - How can one obtain information regarding scholarships??**

Answer - All scholarship related information and online applications will be available on the Ministry's website (www.mohe.gov.lk), and applicants shall submit their applications only online through the website within the specified deadline.

II.   **Question - Should applications for scholarships be submitted online only?**

Answer - Yes. It is not necessary to submit applications by post; applications received in this manner will not be accepted.

III.   **Question -Can a person who receives scholarship awards and then rejects the scholarship apply for scholarships again?**

Answer - Once scholarship opportunities are awarded, if an applicant rejects the opportunity, it cannot be re-awarded to another individual. Since these opportunities are awarded to the country, applicants should carefully consider this aspect. If rejected so, opportunities will not be given to apply for scholarship programs again in the year under consideration.

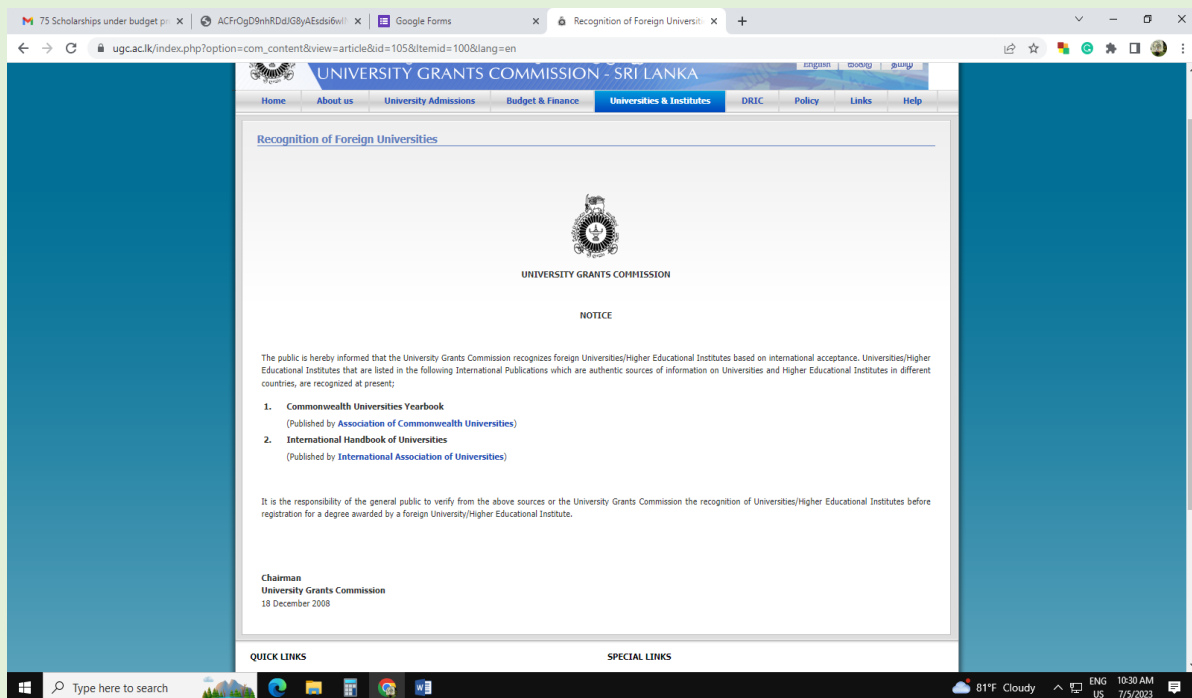IV.   **Question - How to get information on scholarship awarding timeframes?**

Answer - Notices for scholarship opportunities are posted on the website throughout the year. Please visit the Ministry's website for information regarding the timeframes.

V.   **Question - After receiving an undergraduate scholarship, will the opportunity to pursue a degree in a Sri Lankan university be lost?**

Answer - When applying for scholarship opportunities, the application will be rejected if the student is already enrolled as an internal student at a state university in this country. Similarly, a list of students expected to be called for interviews will be sent to the University Grants Commission for registration confirmation. Additionally, after receiving scholarships, the student data will be forwarded to the University Grants Commission, and these students cannot enroll in a university in this country.

VI.   **Question - How do I know regarding the recognition of degrees offered for scholarships?**

Answer - According to the announcement issued by the University Grants Commission, if a university is included in the following lists, it is considered recognized by the University Grants Commission for offering scholarship opportunities. You can obtain further information on this topic by visiting the 'Recognitions of Foreign Universities' web page at www.ugc.lk.

1. **Commonwealth Universities Yearbook**
   (Published by **Association of Commonwealth Universities**)
2. **International Handbook of Universities**
   (Published by **International Association of Universities**)