



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION AND  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

**COMMONWEALTH MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS  
TENABLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM – 2026**

Applications are invited from eligible Sri Lankans for the awarding of Postgraduate Scholarships for Master's and PhD degree programs offered under the UK Commonwealth Scholarship Program.

Candidates must apply using the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) online application system, which can be accessed via the CSC website.

**<https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/about-us/scholarships/>**

The CSC application portal is open from **02<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 to 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 16:00 (GMT)**

**Commonwealth Master's and PhD scholarship application deadline extended up to 16:00 BST on Tuesday 21 October, 2025**

**Applicants are requested, if possible, to submit their applications between 21:00 to 06:00 BST as the system is quieter during these times.**

Number of Nominations requested by CSC:

- Master's - 09
- PhD - 06

**1. Fields of Study:**

These scholarships are offered under 6 development themes. All candidates must apply under one of these themes. (for more information: <https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/csc-development-themes/>)

- a) Science and Technology for development
- b) Improving Population Health, Health System and capacity
- c) Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- d) Strengthening peace, security and governance
- e) Strengthening resilience and response to crises
- f) Access, inclusion and opportunity

## **2. Eligibility Requirements:**

Applicants should carefully review and adhere to the both eligibility criteria set by both CSC and this Ministry.

### **2.1 General Eligibility Requirements:**

- a) All applicants should be citizens of Sri Lanka
- b) Should be in good health and ready to live in UK during the period of study

### **2.2 For Master's Applicants,**

Should possess 04-year (Minimum duration) Bachelor's Degree (SLQF 6) with a First or Second Class Upper Division in the relevant field of study from a recognized university by UGC in Sri Lanka.

### **2.3 For PhD Applicants,**

- a) Should possess 04-year (Minimum duration) Bachelor's Degree (SLQF 6) with a First or Second Class Upper Division in the relevant field of study from a recognized university by UGC in Sri Lanka.
- b) Should possess a Master's degree (SLQF 9,10,11) in the relevant field of study from a recognized university
- c) Should NOT be registered for a PhD, or an MPhil leading to a PhD at a UK university or Sri Lanka before September/October 2026
- d) Should provide a supporting statement from a proposed supervisor in the UK from at least one of the institutions named in your application form.

## **3. How to apply:**

**Applicants must apply directly through the CSC online application portal using the appropriate link below.**

Each scholarship has a 'How to apply' section which will have information and guidance on the application process and the link to the online application system. The CSC is unable to accept any application that are not submitted via the online application system or after the closing date indicated above.

### **3.1 To apply for a PhD Scholarship: -**

**<https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/scholarships/commonwealth-phd-scholarships-for-least-developed-countries-and-fragile-states/>**

### **3.2 To apply for a Master's Scholarship: -**

**<https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/scholarships/commonwealth-masters-scholarships/>**

### 3.3 Guidance on completing the CSC application form can be viewed via:

<https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/advice-for-applicants/>

#### 4. Special Notes:

- a) Candidates should submit all transcripts detailing all higher educational qualifications to-date transcripts for any qualifications you are currently studying (with certified translations if not in English) to the CSC online application system.
- b) Award of the scholarship conditions laid down in this notification may vary as per the criteria imposed by the UK scholarship Authority without prior notice.
- c) Candidates who received scholarship would select the higher educational institutes recognized by University Grants Commission (UGC), Sri Lanka
- d) Any candidate who declines the scholarship after the final selections, will not be considered for any of the scholarship coordinated by this Ministry.
- e) Extension of the period of the scholarship will not be recommended by this Ministry.

#### 5. Interview and Selection:

- a) The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) in UK will provide electronic copies of all submitted application forms to this Ministry for the selection of applications for the Commonwealth Scholarship program. Once these electronic copies received, further required information of the applicants will be collected by this Ministry, in order proceed further with the selection process. All eligible applicants will be shortlisted by the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education based on the information provided in the CSC application according to the Grading system (Annexure 01) for assessment of applications.

The CSC selection committee will grade applications based on the following criteria;

- Candidate Merit (Including academic background)
  - Quality of the study plan
  - Potential impact of the work on the development of Sri Lanka
- b) Candidates must demonstrate in the application the **direct** and **applied relevance** of their study to development in Sri Lanka
  - c) Candidates will be asked to supply personal statement within their application by CSC, which will provide additional context to their application.
  - d) Applicants must attach all supporting documentation to their application at time of submission (before the deadline) to CSC portal. Applications with the following documents missing are considered incomplete and therefore ineligible.
    - Proof of citizenship
    - All university academic transcripts
    - At least two references (in letter head and signed)
    - Supporting statement from UK Supervisor (PhD candidates only)

- e) The shortlisted candidates are required to present himself/herself at an interview to be held at the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education (Higher Education Division), No.18, Ward Place, Colombo 07.
- f) An interview will be held within a short period after the closing date. He/she should produce original certificates to prove the qualifications, University placement letter (if already available), Two referee reports, Birth Certificate, National Identity card/ Passport and any other documentary evidence in support of his/her candidature at the interview. Traveling or other expenses incurred with this interview will not be paid.
- g) Any form of canvassing either in written or verbal will be considered as a disqualification for a scholarship.
- h) Any statement in the application, which is found to be incorrect, will render the applicant liable to disqualification, if the inaccuracy is discovered before selection and to the withdrawal/cancel of award, if discovered after selection.

**6. Nomination for the Scholarship:**

No candidate should treat his/her nomination for the Scholarship by the authorities of Sri Lanka as his/her acceptance for an award. Awarding of the scholarship is a matter entirely within the discretion of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission/ UK to whom the nomination is made

**Secretary**

Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education  
Higher Education Division  
18, Ward Place  
Colombo 07.

**13.08.2025**

## for FCDO-funded commonwealth scholarships tenable in the United Kingdom

| Grade            | Academic merit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Quality of Research proposal (doctoral)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Quality of Study plans (Masters)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Development impact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| Grading criteria | <p><b>Primary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examination results</li> <li>Academic transcripts</li> <li>Tutors' and referees' reports</li> </ul> <p><b>Secondary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic prizes or awards</li> <li>Other relevant academic achievements</li> <li>Publications, where appropriate</li> </ul> | <p><b>Primary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear abstract of what the candidate wants to research</li> <li>Extent to which the work programme has been well researched (including references to key literature); and the extent of engagement with the host supervisor</li> <li>Quality of the research proposal, including innovation and relevance to current research in the chosen field and to development policy</li> </ul> <p><b>Secondary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity of expression.</li> <li>Feasibility of proposed research</li> <li>Likelihood of completion within three years</li> </ul> <p><b>For Split-Site Awards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevance of work in UK to PhD</li> <li>Evidence of strong research link with UK institution</li> </ul> | <p><b>Primary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statement of what the candidate wants to learn and how it relates to their objectives</li> <li>Extent to which the proposed course and institution of study have been well researched (including specific options and dissertation topics, where appropriate) and presented</li> </ul> <p><b>Secondary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing offer of admission to the course</li> <li>Clarity of presentation</li> </ul> | <p><b>Primary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent of the need: how the plan of study/research relates to development in the sector and country</li> <li>Expected outcomes, the projected timeframe to achieve them and potential beneficiaries</li> <li>The way and extent to which the candidate proposes to apply new skills and qualifications; how does this relate to development</li> </ul> <p><b>Secondary Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference to a national development priority or capacity shortage</li> <li>Reference to the selected CSC theme</li> <li>Extent of the benefit: how the impact of the work might be measured</li> <li>Past demonstrable commitment to 'development' agendas through voluntary work.</li> <li>Leading or participating in relevant projects or programmes</li> </ul> |