



INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FORUM (ISF)

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Transcript of Lecture [ISF Forum 5]: Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme (CSSS)

Saturday 30th November, 2019; 0700 WAT

Lecturer: Agboola, Happiness Opeyemi.

His profile:

Happiness Opeyemi Agboola is a health practitioner with a Bachelor's Degree in Health education in 2015 from the university of Ibadan, Nigeria (First class Honours) and recently finished a Master's Degree in Health and Safety education in September 2019 under the university of Ibadan Graduate Scholarship Scheme.

Achievements:

- He is currently a Commonwealth Shared Scholar at Birmingham city university for MSc Public Health 2019/2020 session.
- He has led several students association and voluntary organizations such as the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS).
- He is currently the health project coordinator for Rural Nurture Initiative (RNI).
- He is a member of the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS), National Association for Physical Health Education Recreation, Sport and Dance (NAPHERSD), National Association of Health Educator (NAHE) with over 3 publications to his credit. E.g: Agboola, H.O, Oladimeji, A.A & Olofintuyi, O.O. 2019. Health Education: An Empowerment Tool for Achieving Agenda 2030 in Nigeria. Published at Africa and Education International 2019 Conference Journal

Moderator: Scholar Mic

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Lecture Agenda

1. [About Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme \(CSSS\)](#)
2. [Why study in the UK](#)
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About the Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme (CSSS)

Commonwealth Scholarship is the most prestigious and most competitive scholarship in the World. It is fully funded by the UK government and managed for Department for International Development (DFID). The aim is for International Development. Knowing this is a key to win the scholarship.

That is why the scholarship is directed at Least Developed Countries majorly in Africa, and some Asian countries like India and Pakistan. Meanwhile, Nigeria has consistently have an higher percentage of winners. This is why Commonwealth scholarship commission depend you return back to your home country after studies to carry the development plan you wrote when you initially wrote in your essays.

If you have started the application you will notice the essays are about development at the global and National level

Commonwealth scholarship is for Leadership with excellent academic profile. So if you are looking for this scholarship because you are tired of Nigeria and want to run away;

- 1) You will have a poorly constructed and less convincing essay and the Commission will see through it (except you are an expert).
- 2) If you don't intend to return home you won't be convincing enough in essays.

Why Study in the UK

- 1) High quality of Education
- 2) Highly developed independent learning system
- 3) Great international experience
- 4) Good place to start building your Travel history
- 5) Admission easy and straight forward...most of them do not require application fee

Your Essay is the Key!

Why am I emphasizing the essay, this is because that is what determine whether you win not. Commonwealth is fair. The Qualifications to apply is a 2.1 or 2.2 with a Masters. While being a first class is an edge it just shows you meet the requirements to apply. It is not a key determinant!

Even if you have a first Class you are not the only first class applicant aiming for this same school. In fact in my school, out of five of us who won the scholarship, only two are first class, the remaining three are second class upper. E.g:

"Congratulations on winning one of the most prestigious scholarships in the world. We chose you through a rigorous process of selection. I, and our team of commissioners, read every single essay that you wrote, and out of thousands upon thousands of applications from over 53 countries, you convinced us that you have the academic excellence, the intellectual capacity, the leadership proficiency and the ability to truly cause changes. That's why you are here."

CSC Executive Chairman. 2019. This just proved my points.

Tips to ensure better chances at securing a Commonwealth Shared Scholarship

Now, I am talking about the Commonwealth Shared Scholarship. It is the school which you are applying to that will nominate you for this scholarship.

So I will give the following tips:

1) Make sure you take each session of the essays seriously and competitively. For example:

After each work experience don't just talk about your position and responsibilities briefly explain your achievement at your workplace in relationship to the course.

2) This is a competition. Don't ever leave a section blank.

E.g Publication, while not a requirement for Masters, when it comes to choosing among multiple equal ranked with powerful essay they look for other things to make a choice. For example, while submitting my application, I don't have a journal publication but I have articles I wrote for website, and I self-published without it being reviewed. So I included it.

3) Don't say you have so and so. Give a link to proof what you said is true.

4) This is common among "we blacks" though UK is an English Country. They care more about your Impact than Big Grammars. Please use simple grammar to illustrate powerful points. Don't use big English words to impress your readers.

5) You are funded by the UK. There is no free money anywhere, balance your essay to benefit both Nigeria and UK.

6) Don't say you solve all the problem in Nigeria or your home country. They know it is not possible. You are not the only one they have given or will give a scholarship. Then pick a small problem and give a fool-plan to tackle it effectively. For example, I focus on HIV malaria and Rural Health. Other scholars can tackle other problems.

7) Please avoid being emotional in your essay. They don't fall for it. They know Africans are poor. Don't waste words on Emotional idioms. You already applying for scholarship shows you don't have money. They are looking for development impact agent with financial challenges. Emphasize more on what you have done and what you will do. Touching emotional stories should be moderate in personal statement

Now, your essay is the KEY!

Being a Shared Scholarship you would be nominated by your school once you have a conditional or unconditional offer.

I know a would be scholar who was nominated with a conditional offer but finally lost the scholarship because he could not meet the English requirements of his school. That is too show how powerful his essay was.

Please get powerful referees, who will talk well about you in line with your essay. Referees who have good letter head. It is very important. To confirm what you are saying is true. Obviously.

In things like this you need God's favour.

1) If it is possible, apply for as many shared scholarship as possible (if the system have not changed). I applied for 12 schools and only BCU nominated me.

2) Pray.

3) Don't give up. I lost Commonwealth FSB track , reserve for Erasmus, lost Ireland Government scholarship, lost chevening scholarship, lost MasterCard.

One of the current Commonwealth scholar won it at the 5th attempt since 2014. Another one won it at third attempt since 2016.



Questions & Answers

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- Q:** I am currently applying to schools in the UK, and waiting for feedback from some. Can I still proceed with the CSC Shared Application? With respect to the deadline of 18th.
- A:** Yes. Once you have an application Number of the school you can proceed if the school is on the list of those funding the course for the year.
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- Q:** Please do you need TOEFL and IELTS to apply for Commonwealth sheared scholarship?
- A:** No you don't need it.
You however need it if your school require it for admission offer.
Commonwealth scholarship is only concerned with funding you once nominated do your part to meet your School requirements.
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- Q:** Good evening thanks scholar. Please when does the commonwealth scholarships come out. And the application link to their website.
- A:** Sir,
It has been out since and it will close December 18 I mean for Commonwealth shared scholarship <http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/shared-scholarships/>
Here is the link. You can check out these two files and the link for more details.
Note: PDF document is attached below.
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- Q:** How can one show proofs of his impact?
- A:** You do this in your essay by talking about it and if you have a link to show them online put the link there.
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- Q:** How can one self-publish his work?
- A:** I have an account with Research gate and academia. Though not as strong and respected as peer-reviewed journal article.
You can submit your articles online on research gate and generate a DOI for it online.
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- Q:** Good evening,
I thank you Scholar Agboola, for creating time to guide us more for a swift application.
My question is on 'How the impact of my propose work could be best measured'? Am I supposed to start statistical figures or just presume a positive reduction.
- A:** It will be presumed or predictive. Just like an estimate of what your Impact would have achieved. Not really statistical just a simple percentage. Also, periodical publication of your Impact can be done biannually or annually.
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- Q:** Thank you very much for this enlightenment. My first question is this, to apply for common wealth scholarship, how do I start?
QUESTION 2.
What are the requirements and steps to be taken?
Thanks.
- A:** Here is the link:
<http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/shared-scholarships/courses/>
Check the school and courses that are to be funded for this year.
Check the school requirements and apply. Also note that application to the school and admission for scholarship are two different things and has two different processes.
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- Q:** Thanks very much for this, please is there any specific course specific course that this scholarship covers? And also does it cover PhD?
- A:** It is fully funded
1) Full Tuition
2) Monthly stipend
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3) Thesis grant
4) Travel Grant
5) Airfare to and fro UK for your program.
No it does not cover Ph.D.
There is another Commonwealth application for Ph.D.

Q: How do you write the study outline and detailed plan of study essay?

A: This was newly introduced. I didn't write in my time. But I can give an advice. Plan if study is about how you will learn professional and academically, this will be in line with the skills you intend to gain in the UK.

Q: 1. What's the scholarship duration? And I know there's a bond that states that you have to compulsorily return home after your program, how many years do you have to remain at home for?

2. My question is what are the standardized tests required to apply for such scholarships? And is it compulsory?

3. Considering how competitive it is, can a person who graduated with 2.1 apply still?

4. The English language requirement, is it for u.k IELTS academic or IELTS ukvi, which will be accepted for a student visa. I have heard cases of english test results that were accepted by scholarship bodies and schools but we're not accepted at the embassy. Please help clarify this?

5. For each Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Application, there must also be a corresponding University application, right?
Is the Commonwealth shared scholarship for any UK University/course?

6. How are you raising money for application fees?

A: Number 1.
The shared scholarship is 1 year.
You can only stay if you get a PH.D funding. Yes. You will sign a contract that you will return back to your home country. This is not cheating. You can go to Toronto the next month you arrive in Nigeria. But though not compulsory they expect a feedback on your developmental plans.

2) There is no standardized test. Only essay and your documents.

3) Yes. 2.1. People have won it.

4) Once your school have given you admission you are free from English test. I did not use any English exam for visa.

5) In my time 2019. It is application per school

6) I applied to all school that are application fee free.

Q: Thanks for this wonderful lecture.
For someone that is currently not in his country of Nationality, can such person still apply?

A: Yes. If you have not stayed or live in a Developed nation for more than one year.
But I will ask, where then will you develop???

Q: Glasgow University has offered me a conditional admission on 27th of November, what next?

A: I'm happy for you!

1) Admission in what?
2) Is your course part of what is being sponsored for that year. Check here for details.
3) If yes, Apply for shared.
4) Go and apply for another school.

Q: 1. How does one answer the essay on study joutline?

A: 1) Has been answered
2) No it is not required and necessary but will give you

<p>2. Is it necessary to have a journal published or an article to our name when applying?</p> <p>3. Is English language proficient test required?</p>	<p>an edge. So do your best to stand out.</p> <p>3) Not required for scholarship, might be required for admission.</p>
<p>Q: Good evening, thank you to our Scholar and lecturer.</p> <p>I pray another Agboola (mine) replaces you at Commonwealth Shared next year.</p> <p>I have learnt a lot, in fact, one question agitating my mind has been answered already but I still have another question.</p> <p>This is it:</p> <p>I have an NGO, this organisation has been going to secondary schools to address students on drug abuse, sexual orientation, unwanted pregnancies, leadership and entrepreneurial development, our targets are Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 of the SDG, now, how do you advise I go about my essay? And I hope I can have your attention to review my essays?</p>	<p>A: This is good!</p> <p>Tell them what you have done. Tell them what your NGO will continue to do when you return from the UK.</p>
<p>Q: Thank you for this wonderful lecture, Sir. My question; Is passport a compulsory requirement before one can be offered admission or it can be provided after admission?</p>	<p>A: At this stage you should even be applying for scholarship not admission.</p> <p>1) Some schools will allow you to apply without passport but you must provide this later on.</p> <p>2) Commonwealth scholarship allows International passport or National ID Card. But Intl passport shows your readiness for business.</p>
<p>Q: What's the best format for presenting ones academic prizes, award and publications?</p>	<p>A: Any good format is okay once it passes the message across. For example:</p> <p>Agboola, H. O. (2018). Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons: Nature, Types of Abuse and Health Consequences. A review. Published 8th December, 2018 on https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329505020 DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.35934.69449</p> <p>There is a guide for this during application.</p> <p>Note: Additional document is attached below.</p>
<p>Q: My question What is your position on incessant requests for a reference letter from your referees? You said to applied to 12 schools, how did you go about the references?</p>	<p>A: Thank you for this question</p> <p>Number FOR ADMISSION: Always go for an open-ended referee.</p>
<p>Q: How do you mean by always go for an open ended referee?</p>	<p>A: For example: The address is: "TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN"</p>

I write a letter of reference on behalf of Mr. Blah blah applying for MSc Public Health in your institution. You can use this type of letter for anybody and everybody. Your institution is also relative. Note: For Commonwealth shared scholarship You will only be asked to bring a reference if nominated as a scholar or reserve. Nominated as a scholar means you are number one the list of those who are nominated. Reserve means you are a back-up if the original nominated scholar fails to show up. So you don't need multiple referees letter for the scholarship. In addition, I applied for the same course throughout UK, so I used one reference letter for all of them using the technique.

Q: How can one generate DOI at research gate?	A: Before you finally publish, you will be asked if you want to.
Q: Thanks for lecture sir. Please, does it mean one must have been offered admission in either one or more of the schools on the list before one can attempt to apply for this scholarship?	A: No sir/ma. Apply once you have an application ID from the school. You get an ID once you submit an application online to a school. If you wait for your admission offer is out scholarship will have closed. Please ensure the course is part of what is being funded this year by that school. Do your research. But you must have admission/offer to be considered for the scholarship.
Q: Question: Thanks scholar for the lecture. Is the application ID requested by CSS the same with reference number given by my school?	A: Yes. You will be given an application number by your school and CSC will ask on the form.
Q: Thank you scholar for this presentation, please can you illustrate further on the DOI, how can one generate such?	A: You need to attempt this first if you choose your article as a pre-print research gate will ask you when you want to generate a DOI. If you follow each instructions and steps you will see it.
Q: In writing essays, can a referenced sentence be included?	A: Yes. If it contributes to your essay. Please don't Plagiarize! In UK, it is easy to detect plagiarism and it is a criminal offense. Be original. Now how will they read thousands of essays. Actually they might not read all. They only read papers that passes plagiarism check. And pray! I wish you all the best!
Q: Thank you very much scholar Agboola for this wonderful opportunity. I just want to ask what the scholarship board is looking out for as regards one's 5-year career plan considering the fact one	A: You can't predict what the future holds but you have personal plans. I believe you will like to be married and you plan on having children like academically and professionally

cannot predict what the future holds?

you don't know what the future but you have plans also.

Now, truthfully what is your plan on five years time.

Do not lie on your essay.

If you plan to do a PhD write it there.

However, let your plan favor your development plan and also appeal to UK interest.

For example:

What is UK DFID currently doing in Nigeria

Is your career plan in line with it?

What has UK recognize as Nigeria problems?

Imagine a plan to solve it and also doing a research

PhD on it as part of your career plans.

Imagine having an NGO solving this problem.

Long term should be a continuation and progress from the 5 years.

Please explore this:

<https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/dfid-nigeria>

Q: My Publication is in the Nigerian Journal of Health Educators, How can I get my DOI?

A: You can't get DOI for this. It is already in a Journal. Just quote the Author, title, journal, chapter and page number.
DOI are used for online journal articles.

Attached Documents

1. Terms and conditions - Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme (CSSS). [terms-conditions-shared-scholarship-2020.pdf](#)

2. Selection criteria for Commonwealth Shared Scholarships.

[selection-criteria-shared-scholarships-2020 \(1\).pdf](#)

3. Image illustrating format for presenting academic awards.

[Format for presenting academic awards \(2\).png](#)

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