**Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Class**

Presenters: Ahmed Ijaola & Kehinde Oyetunde

Assalam Alaykum warahmotullah wabarakatuh, Shall we begin the class!!!

I’m Ahmed Ijaola, I’ll be in charge of the first four sections of the class and my colleague Kenny will take over from me.

**Intro**

Commonwealth Scholarships/Chevening are the most prestigious scholarships in the world.. Though the monetary benefits may not be as high as scholarships like MasterCard or HKPFS scholarship.. From my experience, only MasterCard MSc scholarship pay more than Commonwealth.

As a commonwealth scholar, you have a chance to dine with the United Kingdom parliament occasionally, People you have never dreamt about. Both the welcome event and the farewell event organised each year for scholars are superb experience. As a commonwealth scholars, you are often called the “Queen’s Children”

**Benefits of the Scholarship**

\* free air ticket from Naija to UK and free return ticket

\* Visa application fee waiver

\*Full tuition waiver

\* Monthly stipend of £1065 for those studying outside London and £1306 for those studying in London

\* One-time Warm clothing allowance of £414

\* Thesis and Travel Grant during studies

\* Excess luggage allowance while returning home.

**Scholarship Eligibility**

\*a permanent resident/citizen of commonwealth country such as Naija

\*Be unable to afford to study in the UK

\* Minimum of 2:1

\* Haven’t worked or studied in a high income country

The bitter truth is that most of the scholarships are awarded to first class holders.. 98% of the scholarship recipients are first class...

**Commonwealth Scholarships are in two forms**

1. General Commonwealth Scholarship for MSc and PhD: Nomination is done by a commonwealth country government and public tertiary institutions in commonwealth countries

2. Commonwealth Shared Scholarship- Nomination is done by UK tertiary institutions and the funding is taken care of by the UK government and the nominating university. We will focus more on commonwealth Shared Scholarship in today’s class as it is the easier to win the shared scholarship than the general since there is no politics in the nomination process-strictly by merit

**Application Timeline**

Application opens from November to March/April each year, though there were times when the application start dates were late. Before you can apply for commonwealth Shared Scholarship, you need to secure unconditional admissions in UK tertiary institutions.

Once, the scholarship advert is out, you will have access to the list of universities under the scholarship program, the courses they will offer for the scholarship and the number of scholarship slots available in each school. You can visit [www.cscuk.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.cscuk.dfid.gov.uk)

You can get the prospectus that provides information on the scholarship from that website

**Admission Application process**

-UK universities are top-notch universities in the world..

-Though some people discriminate their MSc, just because it’s a year program..

-Lol, those one year programs are the same standard with a two-year program because you won’t be given any breathing space- a rigorous experience indeed…Though UK admission process is quite easier compared to US admission process…

**What are the requirements for admission**

\* Statement of purpose

\* Recommendation/ Referwnce letters

\*No application fees in most schools (I guess Oxford University and/or University of Cambridge require application fees)

\* IELTS/TOEFL- Some schools do not require any of these.

Now, I’ll hand over to my best friend.. Dr Kenny

Hi guys, I am Kehinde Oyetunde. I will be taking you through the rest of the lecture.

**5. Application for the scholarship on CSC portal**

After the applying for admission, you are to start working on your application on the EAS portal. The link will be published on the CSC website. On the portal, you make a separate entries for all applications. Usually, each form is divided into about 7 pages.

The first page is where you will choose the school and specify your intended course of study. The second is a personal information page. You get to provide your details like name, address, marital status etc. Then, there is a page where you fill in your educational history and all. Schools attended, year of graduation, class of degree, CGPA...

Then also, there is a provision to input your work experience, short courses attended, volunteering experience. Try to put good stuff here please. It matters for some schools. Then, there is the essay part.

1. Personal Statement

2. Home country benefits (very important)

3. Objective during award

4. Short term goals

5. Long term goals

**1. Personal Statement**

For personal statement...you just need to write about yourself stating your achievements, goals and strengths etc. Just about you

**2. Home country benefits (very important)**

You need to discuss our your intended program will equip you in making positive impact on your home country. You can start writing by describing the constraints you have at the moment.

3. Objective during award

4. Short term goals

5. Long term goals

These can be in bullets. I think that's fine. Then a page, where you provide your scanned documents like the passport page, transcript, English language proficiency certificate and a photo. Also, you are to provide an application ID for the application. Usually the required ID here is your student number after you have been offered a place. And lastly, you will be asked to provide details of your referees, three of them. You will have to do this for all your applications..

**6. Advice-Do's and Don't**

Apply for an offer as early as possible and it's not an offence to ask that the admission process be expedited if the processing takes longer than advertised.Make your application early. Don't wait for the deadline. Some schools (I think Cambridge) do their nominations before the deadline.

Try to wait to be offered a place (admission) before submitting your online forms. Because you will have to fill in your application ID on the EAS portal. Although some schools like Cranfield, your application number is same with your ID.

Do great work on your essays. I think you should have started by now. It is important to have people (preferably Commonwealth Alumni) do the review. A caution here, most of these alumni are usually busy, so give them time to do the review by not sending them the essays when the deadline is near.

Have you wondered why some 2:1 grads get their chance, over the multitude of some first class grads? It is their package. The essays are important, agreed! but your profile has to be 'rich' also. Add good work experience, volunteering, extra curricular activity etc.

Make as many applications as possible, it improves your chances. The more, the better. Ahmed can testify.

My story, Initially, I made 4 applications and was reluctant to make one more. Not my fault though, I had lot of issues reminding referees to help with the reference.

Anyway, I eventually made the last one and that was my winning ticket.

**About referees, hhmm**

It is difficult to disturb people everytime to help with recommendations. I know how it feels. That brings us to pseudo mails. it works! You create an email (gmail maybe) on behalf of your referee but be smart with it. This will make your respond to the recommendation request yourself. This sure helps.

For example, if Prof. Ahmed Ijaola is one of your referees. Save Prof. Ahmed the stress of providing reference on your 10 applications. He probably has tonnes of work to do. you can create a new gmail account that looks like this 'ijaolaahmed@gmail.com'. This looks convincing…

Using pseudo mails will help you apply to as many as possible. Please don't plagiarize essays. The usual copy and paste most of us are familiar with.

**7. Scholarship outcome timeline**

Expect the outcome towards the end of april, usually, the school will contact nominees to inform them of their nominations. Same with candidates on the reserve list and with time, the status of application on the EAS changes appropriately and for the rest, the entry disappears.