

# COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP COMMISSION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

## Publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

### WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

#### Constitutional and legal governance

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC) is a non-departmental public body (NDPB) with responsibility for administering the United Kingdom's contribution to the international Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP). The CSC was established by Act of Parliament in 1959 – see [www.cscuk.org.uk/about.asp](http://www.cscuk.org.uk/about.asp) for further details.

The CSFP is a Commonwealth-wide programme through which individuals can benefit from the educational resources of other member states. The CSFP is not coordinated by any central body, and it is for each country to determine how many scholarships and/or fellowships it will offer and under what conditions. The role of the CSC, therefore, is:

- a) to determine, within the finance available and guidance provided by funding government departments, the nature of awards to be offered by the UK, to select recipients for such awards, and to provide appropriate support for them whilst in the UK
- b) when asked by other Commonwealth agencies, to advertise awards available to UK citizens under the CSFP, and nominate appropriate candidates for consideration

The CSC comprises up to 14 individual members and a Chair, who are selected in accordance with the Nolan procedures for appointments to public bodies. Funding for the CSC's work is provided by the Department for International Development (DFID, which is the lead department responsible for the CSC), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Scottish Government, in conjunction with UK universities.

Information about DFID's wider publication scheme can be obtained at [www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk).

#### Organisational information

The CSC's secretariat, including the administration of awards selection by the CSC and monitoring of award holders' progress, is undertaken by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). Other functions, including student welfare and financial administration services for award holders in the UK, are carried out by the British Council. In both cases, the services to be provided and required performance targets are set out in a memorandum of understanding with DFID.

#### Locations and contacts

Responsibility for this publication scheme on behalf of the CSC rests with the officers responsible for the scheme:

Dr John Kirkland  
Executive Secretary  
Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom  
c/o The Association of Commonwealth Universities  
Woburn House  
20-24 Tavistock Square  
London WC1H 9HF  
Fax: +44 (0)207 387 2655  
Email: [john.kirkland@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:john.kirkland@cscuk.org.uk)

Responsibility for day-to-day publication issues rests with:

Dr Jonathan Jenkins  
Director of Operations  
Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom  
c/o The Association of Commonwealth Universities  
Woburn House  
20-24 Tavistock Square  
London WC1H 9HF  
Fax: +44 (0)207 387 2655  
Email: [jonathan.jenkins@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:jonathan.jenkins@cscuk.org.uk)

## **WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT**

Financial information can be found in our Annual Reports to the Secretary of State for International Development. These are published on our website at [www.cscuk.org.uk/about/reports.asp](http://www.cscuk.org.uk/about/reports.asp).

## **WHAT OUR PRIORITIES ARE AND HOW WE ARE DOING**

CSC staff review the publicly-available information on a quarterly basis, to ensure that this fully reflects the current situation. Policy towards the publication scheme is formally reviewed by the CSC annually through its External Liaison Committee.

### **Strategy and performance information**

This is published as part of our Annual Report – see [www.cscuk.org.uk/about/reports.asp](http://www.cscuk.org.uk/about/reports.asp).

### **Assessments, inspections and reviews**

The CSC publishes the results of its evaluation programme online at <http://www.cscuk.org.uk/about/evaluation.asp>.

### **Classes of information published**

In this publication scheme, the CSC is proactively publishing information of relevance to the public interest. This can be defined under the following classifications:

- The nature of awards offered and administered by the CSC
- Demographics of recipients
- Selection criteria
- Performance indicators and targets
- Financial statistics

More specifically, the classes of information routinely published under the scheme include the following:

- Details of the types of awards available in the UK, including eligibility and selection criteria, purpose and application details – *updates as required*.
- The terms under which award holders come to the UK, including financial provision and other requirements – *updated annually*.
- Details of awards available to UK citizens in other Commonwealth countries under the CSFP, as notified to us by agencies in the countries concerned, together with application forms and deadline dates – *updated as required*.
- Details of selections made each year and award holders in the UK, classified by subject, country or origin and institution of tenure – *updated annually*.

- Names, subjects and institutions of those graduating as a result of CSC awards – *updated annually*.
- Statistics showing the success rates of students in gaining their qualifications within specified periods of time – *updated annually*.
- Financial statistics showing the proportion of expenditure devoted to student support, administration and other categories – *updated annually*.
- Details of performance targets agreed between DFID, the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the British Council, and the extent to which these have been met, together with results from an annual survey of award holders commenting on evaluating the operation of the scheme – *updated annually*.
- Agenda, minutes and supporting papers for meetings of the CSC, subject to the provisos below – *available once the minutes of the meeting concerned have been formally ratified*.
- Names and affiliations of CSC members, including a register of any interests relevant to the work of the CSC – *updated as required*.

It is emphasised that, in addition to the formal categories outlined above, it is the policy of the CSC to proactively publish additional information concerning current policies, in order to increase public understanding of its work and operations. Examples include major policy documents, press releases and details of events staged. Where information is required that is not included in the above categories, you are encouraged to contact the CSC using the procedure described below.

### **Manner of publication**

The main channel of publication of the classes of information described above is the CSC website, which can be accessed at [www.cscuk.org.uk](http://www.cscuk.org.uk).

Several of the categories of information listed are published in the CSC's Annual Report, which is laid before Parliament each year by the Secretary of State for International Development. The last nine reports can be accessed from the website, and hard copies of the last two reports are available on request from the CSC. Copies of all Annual Reports since 1960 are available for inspection, by arrangement, at the CSC offices.

Details of the financial and other arrangements for award holders in the UK are available in separate booklets, current editions of which are available from the CSC.

Minutes of Commission meetings are available for inspection, on request, at the CSC offices. Full minutes are available from the inception of the CSC in 1959; however, there may be cases in which certain items of text are removed, for example, if they are considered to hold personal data. In such cases, the CSC will give details of the exemption heading which it considers to apply.

### **Applying for information**

Much of the information listed above is already available via our website and in our Annual Report. When requesting information, you may wish to consult these in the first instance. Please note that, if the information is already published, we are not obliged to provide you with your own copy. If you do place a request for any such information, we will direct you to it.

If you are unable to find the information you are interested in through existing sources, then you may wish to request the information from us. The contact point is as follows:

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom  
c/o The Association of Commonwealth Universities  
Woburn House  
20-24 Tavistock Square  
London WC1H 9HF  
Email: [foi@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:foi@cscuk.org.uk)

You must make your request in writing – email is also acceptable. You may be asked to further define the scope of your request to help us identify the information you want. We will inform you if there is a fee applicable.

Under the Code of Practice and the Freedom of Information Act, we are obliged to respond to your request within 20 working days. If we are unable to do so, we will inform you of our reasons and work to reply substantively as soon as we can thereafter.

When we respond to your request, we will explain in a covering letter any exemptions that may apply to the relevant information, and what to do should you be unhappy with the reply.

### **Exemptions**

The Freedom of Information Act provides that certain information may be exempt from the right of access on certain grounds. These include (but are not limited to) cases where disclosure could prejudice international relations; any criminal investigations or procedures; national security; defence; commercial interests; law enforcement; or personal information. In assessing requests for disclosure, the CSC will consider whether any of these apply to the information being requested.

Where requests for information are made to the CSC, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In particular, the CSC is mindful of its obligation not to publish information relating to the personal circumstances of individual applicants or award holders, their academic progress, or decisions of the CSC relating thereto. In the event that information is not disclosed in response to your request, the CSC will give a reason for this decision, including the category of exemption that has been applied.

### **Charging policy**

The current policy of the CSC is not to charge for information accessed via our website, single copies of our Annual Report, promotional leaflets, or other regular publications mentioned above, providing that these are for private use or study purposes. We would, however, reserve the right to charge for multiple copies, any more substantial documents produced from time to time, or for the cost of retrieving, assembling or copying information generated specifically in response to your request. In the event that any such charges are likely, we would notify you of this before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

### **Complaints procedure**

Our aim is to provide an efficient service to the public in the UK. As with any organisation, however, things can go wrong. Please let us know as soon as possible of any problems. We undertake to respond quickly and to try to ensure that you and others do not need to complain again.

Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, you have the right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office if you are unhappy with our response to either your complaint or your original access request. Details can be found on their website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) or you can write to:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Tel: 0303 123 1113  
Fax: 01625 524510

### **Copyright**

Published materials are normally the copyright of the CSC. Our general policy, however, is to encourage the wider distribution and circulation of our published materials, providing that appropriate recognition is given. Those wishing to use materials in such ways should first contact the Executive Secretary to agree appropriate wording. Unless otherwise stated, no charge will be levied for such use.

21 July 2010