

THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIP FOR WEST AFRICA**- IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE OXFORD-MORLAND-WEST AFRICA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP**

Covering Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Togo

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES - for selection for 2020 only

(This Memorandum cancels those issued for previous years)

Background Information

The Rhodes Scholarship programme is the oldest (established 1903) international scholarship programme in the world, and one of the most prestigious. Administered by the Rhodes Trust in Oxford, the programme offers 100 fully-funded Scholarships each year for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom - one of the world's leading universities. Rhodes Scholarships are for young leaders of outstanding intellect and character who are motivated to engage with global challenges, committed to the service of others and show promise of becoming value-driven, principled leaders for the world's future. The broad selection criteria are:

- Academic excellence – specific academic requirements can be found under 'Eligibility Criteria' below.
- Energy to use your talents to the full (as demonstrated by mastery in areas such as sports, music, debate, dance, theatre, and artistic pursuits, including where teamwork is involved).
- Truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for and protection of the weak, kindness, unselfishness and fellowship.
- Moral force of character and instincts to lead, and to take an interest in your fellow human beings.

Please see the Scholarships area of the Rhodes Trust website for full details: www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk

The information below assumes that you have read and familiarised yourself with the basic selection criteria for the Rhodes Scholarships on the Rhodes Trust website. You should also pay close attention to the [detailed Conditions of Tenure for the Scholarship](#).

1. Closing Date

Applications must be submitted online **by 23:59 Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), Monday, 30 September 2019.**

2. Eligibility Criteria

- a. Nationality/citizenship: You must be a citizen of one of the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo.
- b. Education/residency: You must have been resident in one or more of the countries listed above for at least five of the last ten years.
- c. Age: You must have reached your 19th and not have passed your 26th birthday on 1 October 2020. This means candidates must have been born after 30 September 1994 and on or before 1 October 2001. For medical, dental and pharmaceutical students the age limit is extended by up to one year to allow them to complete their internship - such candidates must have been born after 30 September 1993 and on or before 1 October 2001.
- d. Academic achievement: You must have completed an undergraduate degree from a college or university (normally a Bachelor's degree) with the highest classification your University awards, e.g. First Class Honours, or a Distinction in the case of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy courses.
- e. English language: You must have a sufficiently high standard of English to meet the English language proficiency requirements (at the Higher Level listed) of the University of Oxford.
- f. Given the very intense international competition for places at the University of Oxford, candidates (with the exception of those studying in Nigeria and Ghana, and, for some countries, those studying medicine) will have a greater chance of successful admission to Oxford if they have an Honours degree (or have taken an Honours year)

from a University outside of their country or if they have studied to Masters level within their country. Please contact your National Secretary if you require further advice. Candidates may wish to consider applying to the Rhodes Trust's sister Foundation, The Mandela Rhodes Foundation (<https://mandelarhodes.org/>), to pursue an Honour's year or a Master's degree prior to making an application for the Rhodes Scholarship.

Multi-jurisdictional Candidates: If you meet the eligibility criteria for more than one Rhodes Constituency, you must only apply to one. You should apply to the Rhodes Constituency with which you have the greatest connection.

Inter-jurisdictional Candidates: If you have strong and demonstrable connections to **two or more** [Rhodes Constituencies](#) but do not meet the eligibility criteria for any single Rhodes Constituency, you may be eligible to apply for inter-jurisdictional consideration. Please visit the '[Which Scholarship?](#)' page for further details.

Global Scholarship Candidates: If you are not eligible to apply to any existing Rhodes Constituency ([see list here](#)) and you are not eligible to apply for inter-jurisdictional consideration, then you can apply for a Global Scholarship, subject to meeting all other Global Scholarship eligibility criteria and subject to institutional nomination. Please visit the '[Which Scholarship?](#)' page for further details.

3. Application Procedure

- a. You can apply online from **01 June 2019** at <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/apply> via the scholarships tab.
- b. You must submit your application online, with all supporting documents, **by 23:59 Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), 30 September 2019.**
- c. In preparation for making your application, you should read carefully the general information, particularly that held on the Scholarships tab, on the [Rhodes website](#), the [Conditions of Tenure](#) for the Rhodes Scholarship, the information in this document and the graduate admissions pages of the University of Oxford: www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate.
- d. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a social engagement (a dinner with the selection committee and other finalists) and a final interview. You must be available to attend both, **in person**, as no accommodations can be made on date and time, or mode, of these events. Interviews will be held in Lagos on a Saturday between mid- November and early December. No candidate will be selected without an interview. Travel expenses within West Africa and overnight accommodation in Lagos will be provided.
- e. All applicants will be emailed with the outcome of their application.

4. Documents and details to be submitted with application

You must submit a completed application form on-line with copies of the documents and information detailed below. All documents must be submitted in English, or with English translations included. Please note that, if you are invited to interview, you may be asked to bring the originals of all documents with you:

- a. One or more of the following documents to confirm that you meet the citizenship criterion (see 2a above), the residency criterion (see 2b above), and the age criterion (2d above):
 - i. A certified copy of your birth certificate (or an affidavit of birth)
 - ii. A National Identity Card.
 - iii. A valid passport (with translation, if necessary)
- b. An official transcript from the college or university at which you are studying, or have studied, showing grades achieved (to date).
- c. Evidence of residency within the region for at least five of the last ten years, for example official school records.
- d. If English is not your first language you should upload evidence of English Language Proficiency (see the Eligibility Criteria above). You should upload a copy of a standardised English test that is recognised by the University of Oxford (e.g. TOEFL / IELTS) along with the test's marking scheme. Alternatively, you can upload a letter requesting a waiver to this requirement if you meet the University of Oxford's criteria for a waiver: www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/englishproficiency.

- e. A full curriculum vitae which should include details about academic qualifications, prizes, scholarships, positions of leadership, employment positions, involvement in student, voluntary, community or political activities and any cultural, musical or sporting accomplishments. This should not exceed two pages of 12-point Times Roman font and should not include supporting documents. **Please do not include a photograph in your CV.**
- f. A head-and-shoulders colour photograph (jpg format). Please note your photo will not be available to the selection committee until after final shortlisting decisions have been made. If you are selected, this photograph will be used on the [Rhodes webpage](#) unless or until you provide another version.
- g. A **personal statement** of no more than 1,000 words. The personal statement is your chance to tell your story in your own voice: Who are you? What matters to you? What are you hoping to do in the world? Your academic transcript, your curriculum vitae and your reference letters will provide the substantive detail of your commitments and accomplishments, but this essay gives you the opportunity to cast the overarching narrative for the selection committee. You can find further guidance on the personal statement on the '[Application Overview](#)' page.

Please ensure that your personal statement:

- i. Addresses your general interests and activities. What inspires you? What are your passions?
- ii. Discusses your aims and priorities and the contributions you have made and hope to make to the world and/or your local community.
- iii. Tells us your reasons for wishing to study at the University of Oxford, which course / courses you would wish to pursue and why. It is important that you have a firm idea of which course / courses are viable for you to study at the University of Oxford - not all University of Oxford courses are covered by the Rhodes Scholarship - you should refer to the [Conditions of Tenure](#) for further information. For applicants interested in pursuing a second BA degree please see guidance under 'Procedure after Selection' below. It is a good idea to discuss your proposed course of study with your current professors or lecturers in that field, and, if possible, with someone who has knowledge of United Kingdom universities. Additional sources of information are available online at www.ox.ac.uk/admissions, as well as on individual faculty/departmental websites. If you are selected for the Scholarship you will have the opportunity to revisit your course choice.
- iv. Demonstrates that you are able to meet the entry and application requirements of the specific course you have chosen. Please read the Oxford graduate studies course pages carefully: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate>.
- v. If you wish to undertake a DPhil, you should provide a brief outline of your proposed research area, how it contributes to your future career plans, and list one or more researchers with whom you would like to work in Oxford.

Your personal statement should be entirely your own work, with no assistance received. Through the online application form you will be asked to confirm that the entered / uploaded personal statement is your own work and that no external help was given in its creation or editing.

- h. You will need to provide a list of four (minimum) to six (maximum) people (your referees) who are willing to submit references on your behalf:
 - i. At least three of your referees should be academics who have formally taught and graded you in your undergraduate (or, if relevant, postgraduate) studies and who can comment in detail on your academic ability and how well they think you would fare at Oxford. Note – for successful Rhodes Scholarship applicants, these references can, in many cases, later be used to form part of the application to study at the University of Oxford, so it is important that you and your referees bear this in mind. In addition to uploading a reference, your academic referees will be asked a small number of additional questions, including to provide an estimated class ranking. See referee guidance on the final page of this document.
 - ii. One or more referees should testify to your character and/or your involvement in extra-curricular/service or leadership activities. These referees should be persons who are able to comment critically on whether

you fulfil the extra-curricular, non-academic requirements of the Scholarship and who can speak in detail to your character.

- iii. A good referee is one who knows you well, rather than a well-known person who only knows you superficially. Please note that Rhodes Scholarship referees are not typically personal friends, contemporaries or relatives. If a referee fits into one of these categories, they should make the connection clear within the reference.
 - iv. Choose reliable people who are likely to respond to your request for a detailed reference, as their letters will be crucial to your application. **Insufficient references will disqualify your application from being considered by the Selection Committee.**
 - v. You will need to provide email addresses for all of your referees.
 - vi. Ask their permission before listing them as referees.
 - vii. Forward to them the Guidance for Referees available on the final pages of this document. They will receive an automatically-generated email request for a reference once you have completed the referee registration section of the online form. They will also be asked to provide their business and home (or mobile) telephone, as well as their postal address for verification purposes.
 - viii. Ensure that you register your referees within the application form early, to allow them sufficient time to provide a detailed reference letter. **It is your responsibility to ensure that referees submit their references online by 23:59, GMT, 14 October 2019.** Applicants can track the progress of their references within the application form.
- i. Please do not upload documents, certificates, testimonials or links / URL's other than those required.
 - j. All applications must be submitted online. No alternate method of application is accepted. There is no application fee for submission of the Rhodes Scholarship application form.

5. Selection Procedure

- a. Selection for the Rhodes Scholarship is made without regard to financial means.
- b. Selection for the Rhodes Scholarship is made without regard to marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, gender, religion, sexual orientation, social background, disability, caste or other irrelevant distinction. The provision of such information in the 'Outreach' section of the application form is optional, but helps us to ensure that our selection processes are fair and that our outreach efforts are effective; those involved in selection will only see summary statistics of these responses in an anonymised format that cannot be tracked back to the individual.
- c. You are applying for a Rhodes Scholarship for entry to the University of Oxford in October 2020; the scholarship cannot be deferred.
- d. The Rhodes Scholarship is confirmed only upon successful admission to the University of Oxford.
- e. No selection will be made if a sufficiently qualified candidate cannot be found.
- f. The decision of the Selection Committee is final.

6. Procedure after Selection

- a. Please note that successful applicants will need to apply to the University of Oxford very soon after selection. Full details will be given upon selection.
- b. The full application of successful candidates will be accessible to Rhodes House, Oxford, where the Scholarship references can be re-used, if appropriate, in support of the successful candidate's subsequent application to the University of Oxford.
- c. Applicants invited to the final interview or newly-selected Scholars who are intending to do a second BA at Oxford can obtain an application form from the Registrar at Rhodes House (registrar@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk). The completed form must reach the Registrar by **no later than noon GMT Friday 29 November 2019**. Depending on the

timing of the final Rhodes Scholarship interviews, candidates must either make a quick submission immediately following selection or they will need to submit the completed form ahead of the final interview. Candidates who are firm in their choice of a second BA may wish to maximise their chances of admittance onto the course by applying via [UCAS](#) ahead of the UCAS mid-October deadline. If you miss both the UCAS and the Rhodes deadline for the second BA application, the chances of successful admittance to the University of Oxford to study a second BA with senior status are slim.

- d. Successful candidates will be encouraged to disclose, in confidence, any medical condition or special needs which may require academic or personal support in Oxford. This disclosure is entirely voluntary and is requested only to enable Rhodes House to provide suitable support in Oxford and to make the transition to Oxford as smooth as possible.

The Rhodes Trust may contact you some time after the submission deadline to ask for feedback on the application process and any interactions you have had with the Rhodes Trust staff and volunteers.

Please note – before starting an online Rhodes Scholarship application you should be aware of the Rhodes Trust data protection policy for applications: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/pages/personal-data-cookies/>.

Glossary of terms:

Jurisdiction: See Rhodes Constituency below.

District / Regional / State Secretary: Some constituencies conduct selection by region / district / state / territory. In those cases, the regional selection process is managed by a district / regional secretary, who will oversee outreach, queries, shortlisting and final interviews. Selection across the constituency is still overseen by the National Secretary (see below).

National Secretary: There is one National Secretary for each Rhodes constituency. The National Secretaries oversee the selection process, from outreach, to applicant queries, to shortlisting and final selection. Most National Secretaries will also sit on the Selection Committee, although where a National Secretary oversees multiple regions this may not always be possible. For National Secretary contact details please see the '[Apply](#)' webpage and select the appropriate constituency.

Rhodes constituency: A Rhodes constituency is the country / group of countries to which you are applying e.g. Australia or East Africa (covering Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda).

Second BA (with Senior Status): All Rhodes Scholarship candidates will have already completed, or will be about to complete, an undergraduate degree. Successful candidates can apply to do a second undergraduate degree at Oxford University over two years (i.e. with Senior Status). Senior Status is the only basis on which a Rhodes Scholar may pursue an undergraduate degree. Further details can be found [here](#). Please note you can apply for your Oxford BA to be converted to an MA after a few years (see the 'When do graduates become eligible for the MA' question [here](#)). Second BA applications have an early deadline – see the 'Procedure after Selection' instructions above.

Selection Committee: The selection committees conduct the final interviews and make the decisions that lead to the selection of the Rhodes Scholars. The committee will include Senior Rhodes Scholars and distinguished members of the community representing a diverse range of interests and experience.

Useful Links:

An explanation of the types of graduate degrees at Oxford University can be found here:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/introducing-our-courses?wssl=1>

Rhodes House Website: <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk>

Which Rhodes Scholarship? guidance: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/which-scholarship/>

Guidance on completing your application: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/application-overview/>

Conditions of Tenure: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/files/conditions-of-tenure>

Data protection statement: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/pages/personal-data-cookies/>

Rhodes constituencies list: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/list-of-rhodes-scholarship-countries/>

(Please note, that if your country is not listed in the above link, you may be eligible to apply for a [Global Rhodes Scholarship](#))

University of Oxford English language proficiency: <http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/englishproficiency>

University of Oxford Graduate Admissions: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate>

For further information about the Rhodes Scholarship, see www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk

The Rhodes Trust reserves the right to vary these conditions at any time without notice – please visit <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/apply/> for updates.

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Covering Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Togo

GUIDANCE FOR REFEREES

References must be written in English and **must be uploaded by 23:59, GMT, 14 October 2019**.

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a referee for one of the applicants for the Rhodes Scholarship. References form a crucial part of the selection process, and therefore your reference could make the difference to an applicant's success. The following notes are intended to serve as a guide as you write your reference.

Background Information

The Rhodes Scholarship programme is the oldest (established 1903), and perhaps the most prestigious, international scholarship programme in the world. Administered by the Rhodes Trust in Oxford, the programme offers 100 fully-funded Scholarships each year for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom - one of the world's leading universities. Rhodes Scholarships are for young leaders of outstanding intellect and character who are motivated to engage with global challenges, committed to the service of others and show promise of becoming value-driven, principled leaders for the world's future. The broad selection criteria are:

- Academic excellence (First Class Honours or GPA of minimum 3.70 out of 4.00, or equivalent).
- Energy to use their talents to the full (as demonstrated by mastery in areas such as sports, music, debate, dance, theatre, and artistic pursuits, including where teamwork is involved).
- Truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for and protection of the weak, kindness, unselfishness and fellowship.
- Moral force of character and instincts to lead, and to take an interest in their fellow human beings.

The Committees are looking for outstanding young people who are motivated to engage with the global challenges facing humankind, who are committed to the service of others, and to the promotion of international understanding and peace. In short, candidates will be young people of **outstanding intellect, character, leadership, and commitment to service**, who demonstrate a strong propensity to emerge as 'leaders for the world's future', wherever their careers might take them, and in any field. For further details, see: <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/>.

The Rhodes Selection Committee will be grateful, therefore, if you would supply a frank and confidential statement regarding the applicant's qualifications. Your prompt response to the auto-generated email reference request will be of great assistance to the applicant and to the selection process.

The Selection Committee will have available for consideration a copy of the applicant's university academic transcript, curriculum vitae, and personal statement of academic interests, other pursuits, extracurricular activities and reasons for wishing to study at Oxford. Observations which would enhance the Committee's understanding of these records will be especially welcomed. **Your comments should not exceed two A4 pages (minimum 10 point type).**

A brief introduction of yourself would be helpful, including any connections that you have with the Rhodes Trust, Rhodes Scholars and also the University of Oxford (such connections are certainly not essential).

Proven intellectual and academic quality of a very high standard is the first quality required of applicants. However, and just as important, applicants will also be required to demonstrate integrity of character, interest in and respect for their fellow human beings, the ability to lead, the energy to use their talents to the full and the desire to make an effective contribution to the world around them as described above.

A Rhodes Scholar will undertake postgraduate study at Oxford, a taught or research degree, or a second undergraduate degree with senior status (over two years). In all cases, entry to Oxford is very competitive indeed.

The reference form will clarify which type of reference you have been asked to submit. Whether you have been asked to provide an academic reference, or a character/extra-curricular reference, it is not expected that you will be able to speak from first-hand knowledge of *all* the applicant's qualifications.

Academic referees: If you are primarily acquainted with the candidate through a teacher/student relationship, it is expected that your appraisal will concentrate first and primarily on academic quality and potential, although your assessment of other qualities will be welcomed by the Committee. **Academic referees should note that, in the case of a successful applicant, your letter will be used by Oxford departments and colleges for determining the Rhodes Scholar-elect's academic case for admission to postgraduate study.** Consequently, a detailed assessment of the candidate's academic qualifications and suitability to undertake Master's / doctoral level study at Oxford will be very important. Since the University of Oxford requires the following information from referees writing in support of graduate applicants, you are also asked to comment on:

- a. The applicant's relative academic standing in comparison with other students on the same course at the same institution – e.g. top 5%, 10%, 25%?
- b. How many students in the applicant's year group on their programme of study, i.e. with how many students are you comparing the applicant?
- c. On what basis are you making the assessment - personal assessment/official class rank?

Character referees: If, on the other hand, you are better acquainted with the applicant through non-academic interests, it is expected that you will concentrate on assessment of character and non-academic qualities, in the knowledge that the Committee is looking for scholars who show promise of outstanding achievement in later life.

Please do not hesitate to speak of the applicant's limitations as well as strong points. Committees tend naturally to be dubious of appraisals that imply a given individual has no limitations. **Your reply will, of course, be treated as strictly confidential by the Selection Committee.**

All letters of recommendation for applicants should be addressed to the *Rhodes Scholarship Selection Committee*. The Selection Committee (and subsequently the University of Oxford) asks **that your letter of recommendation be on headed paper, signed, and uploaded in pdf format.** You will receive an auto-generated email requesting the reference, which will contain instructions for completing and submitting your letter. As well as uploading your reference letter, you will be asked to complete some basic information about yourself and your relationship to the applicant. All letters of reference should be received via the online application system. **Please ensure that you press submit once you have completed the form.** Once you submit the reference both you and the applicant will receive an automated email to confirm receipt; the applicant will not be able to see the submitted reference, which will remain confidential.

Please note that Rhodes Scholarship referees are not typically personal friends, contemporaries or relatives. If a referee fits into one of these categories, they should make the connection clear within the reference.

References must be written in English and **must be uploaded by 23:59, GMT, 14 October 2019.**