

Instructions for Letter of Recommendation Writers – UK Scholarships

General tips: Your student should share with you, either via their personal statement or by providing additional information, which program(s) they are proposing to do in the UK and how this course of study (and experience in the UK) is so key to their intellectual and professional goals. Ideally, your letter will help them make their case, and help to contextualize their past accomplishments with the scholarship criteria in mind.

The letter may progress as follows:

- Details on how you know the applicant
- Discussion of the award and why, based on your experiences with the applicant, they are a good fit
- Discussion of why the applicant is a good “investment,” with details about their potential and promise
- Discussion of how the applicant stands in relation to others you have worked with (e.g., “I would place her in the top 3% of undergraduates I have taught at Carnegie Mellon” or “His work in the lab is at the level of an advanced graduate student.”)

I. GATES CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARSHIP

- Award description: 1 to 3 years of fully-funded graduate study in any field at University of Cambridge, plus travel expenses to and from the UK
- Selection criteria:
 - **Intellectual Ability**
 - **Leadership capacity** (applicants’ ability to “take others with them”)
 - **Commitment to improving the lives of others** (broadly interpreted)
 - **Justification for the choice of course** (a convincing argument for how *a particular degree* at Cambridge accords with the applicant’s qualifications and aspirations)
- Reference guidelines:
 - Academic references: Part of Cambridge application and should be approached as any letter for a highly competitive graduate program
 - Gates Cambridge reference: “Please give your assessment of the applicant’s suitability for a Gates Cambridge Scholarship. These are awarded on the following criteria: [see selection criteria above.]” More info (see “Gates Cambridge reference”): <https://www.gatescambridge.org/apply/how-to-apply/>
- What your student should provide to you: CV or resume, proposed degree program information, Gates Cambridge essay, reference letter submission instructions and deadline

II. RHODES SCHOLARSHIP

- Award description: 2 years of fully-funded study in any field at University of Oxford, plus travel costs, laboratory and other fees
- Selection criteria:
 - Literary and scholastic attainments
 - Energy to use one’s talents to the full, as exemplified by fondness for and success in sports or intellectual pursuits and rigor
 - 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 one’s fellow beings
- Reference guidelines:

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- Reference letters must *specifically* address the applicant's experiences, qualifications, character, and academic/professional goals *as they relate to the Rhodes criteria* and the proposed course of study at Oxford. Rhodes website: <http://www.rhodescholar.org>
- What your student should provide to you: CV or resume, reference letter submission instructions and deadline, Rhodes personal statement (note: You may NOT provide feedback or advice on your student's personal statement, as outside help is expressly forbidden per Rhodes Trust policy.).

III. MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP

- Award description: 2 years of fully-funded graduate study in any field at a UK institution, plus travel expenses to and from the UK, books, fees, thesis grant, research and daily travel expenses
- Selection criteria:
 - **Academic merit:** Quality and knowledge of proposed program of study; strong, relevant academic background; quality and breadth of recommendations
 - **Leadership potential:** Ability to deliver results; strength of purpose; creativity; self-awareness
 - **Ambassadorial potential:** Knowledge of US/UK relations; evidence of transferable extra-curricular activities; interpersonal skills and ability to engage with others; self-confidence and ability to seize opportunities
- Reference guidelines:
 - Letters should be addressed to the "Marshall Scholarship Selection Committee" and no longer than 1,000 words in length. Detailed information for recommenders from Marshall site:
<http://www.marshallscholarship.org/applications/recommendersinfo>
- What your student should provide to you: CV or resume, application essays (personal statement, proposed program of study, leadership, ambassadorial potential), reference letter submission instructions and deadline. Further, the applicant should brief you on what sort of reference they are asking you to be (academic or leadership-focused).

IV. CHURCHILL SCHOLARSHIP

- Award description: 1 year of fully-funded graduate study in a STEM field leading to a degree at University of Cambridge
- Selection criteria:
 - **Outstanding academic achievement**, especially in the major
 - **Proven talent in research** and a capacity to contribute to the advancement of knowledge
 - **Outstanding personal qualities** (may be demonstrated in academics and research, as well as extracurricular involvements)
- Reference guidelines:
 - Provide a frank, detailed assessment of the student's strengths and weaknesses as a scholar and future leader in an academic STEM field. Reference form (including specific letter prompt):
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D5AaQ-YexIqEistfyMGQghluBzExmoHC/view>
- What your student should provide to you: CV or resume, proposed program of study essay, personal statement, reference letter submission instructions and deadline