

Webinar Q & A

Indicative guidance only, any doubts please consult with the Secretariat.

GPA and Academic Requirements

Q: What are the GPA requirements if our course does not offer honours?

A: Same as specified in the Info for Candidates: GPA 3.7; WAM 80%; other indicators of academic achievement.

Q: Is a WAM of 78% automatically rejected? Are our high school grades taken into account? Especially if we have done GCSEs and A Levels

A: No, not automatically excluded; it would depend on other/overall evidence of academic achievement. High School performance is relevant but secondary - it's more about the committee getting a sense of your academic capability.

Q: If our WAM is below 80% but we still achieved First Class Honours (i.e. 75-80%) can we still apply? Would it be worthwhile?

A: If you can show a strong upward trajectory in the discipline/area you are interested in studying at Oxford, then this would be taken into account.

Q: Could we still apply if our high school results were not as outstanding as our university's?

A: Yes, if you can show a strong upward trajectory, speak to that journey in your statement. As noted above, high school results are less relevant than university results.

Q

- **Hi! So you do not need to have done an additional Honours year and thesis to apply? Or is this helpful to have?**
- **How rigid is the First-Class Honours requirement? My current degree does not include Honours (it is purely optional).**
- **Can you apply while finishing your honours degree? Or do you need to do it the year after?**
- **Not a question, but it reassured me when Tahlia said that you still can apply if you have not done Honours because my degree doesn't offer Honours. Thank you!**

A: Honours or equivalent if you can, but without if you are running out of years! Please review the eligibility criteria, as there are combinations of age and degree completion timing that you must meet. If in doubt, please contact your State/ Territories Secretary.

Q: I will be studying a master's degree in Oxford this upcoming year (instead of an honours year in Australia) and would like to apply for the Rhodes scholarship to complete a DPhil after this master's program. I am not sure when my graduation for the master's program is, however, I think it might be slightly after July 2026. If it is after July 2026, would this mean I am not eligible to apply?

A: There is some discretion [within reason] in relation to defining the timing of 'graduation', so that is not necessarily a barrier. Your performance in the Masters will be a primary consideration for the Committee, so you will need to ensure you have at least one referee from the Masters who can speak to your level of achievement.

Eligibility and Application Criteria

Q: Can I apply for the Rhodes Scholarship if I am an international student studying Master's of social work currently? Alternatively, can I apply after I get my PR in Australia?

A: Yes, you can apply in the country that you are a citizen of, or the global scholarship if your country does not have a dedicated scholarship. You need to have done at least two years of schooling at an Australian secondary school and have citizenship or PR to apply in Australia. See the list of constituencies at <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/constituency-information/>

Q: I am an Australian citizen, but not a current resident, as I am studying abroad for an undergraduate degree. I would like to know whether there is anything I must consider in addition to that for students studying in Australia. I am not a 2026 applicant, but I plan to in the future, and I would appreciate your support.

A: It is not unusual for people doing degrees overseas to apply if they satisfy the criteria - citizen or permanent resident and having done 2 years of secondary school in Australia. But I would get in touch with the Secretariat in your constituency, as there are a few things to keep in mind if applying from overseas.

Q: Is there a strict age restriction?

A: Yes, the age restriction as stated in the eligibility criteria, is strictly applied.

Q: What if you are 31 but currently doing a Juris Doctor?

A: You would not be eligible due to being above the age limit.

Q: I am turning 25 this year, not under. Am I still eligible?

A: Based on the eligibility criteria, if you are turning 25 this year, you would not meet the age requirement of being aged 18-24 on 1 October 2025. However, if you completed your first undergraduate degree later than usual and meet the second criterion, you might still be eligible. Specifically, you must be under the age of 27 on 1 October 2025 (born after 1 October 1998) and have completed your first undergraduate degree on or after 1 July 2024. If you fall into this category, you could still be eligible. If you have any further questions or need clarification, feel free to ask during the webinar or contact your State or Territories Secretary.

Q: Since applications for the Scholarship close in August and I'm set to graduate with honours after the closing date (end of 2025), how will my eligibility (first class honours) be assessed if final results aren't available by the application deadline?

A: You can still apply if you have referees who can assure the committee that you are on track for a first-class Honours. This is the position I (Elle) was in when I applied.

Q: Do you need to apply for both the Rhodes Scholarship and to Oxford directly, or once receiving the Scholarship, are you set in your chosen degree?

A: You apply for the Scholarship stating your intended degree (and a backup), and then, if you are successful, you will be supported to apply to Oxford. If you are considering a DPhil (PhD), you would be well advised to get in touch with a potential supervisor to be sure there is someone you could work with.

Q: To clarify the application process, does the recipient of a Rhodes Scholarship receive automatic acceptance into Oxford, or rather, is the granting of a Rhodes scholarship contingent upon the subsequent successful acceptance into Oxford?

A: No, getting a Rhodes scholarship does not grant academic acceptance into Oxford. So the scholarship is contingent on you receiving a place at the university. Hence there is weight given to academic excellence during the application process for the scholarship.

Q: Are there any "networking" expectations as part of the application? Is it helpful to have reached out to past scholars / Oxford staff?

A: Any prior networking that you want to do (you don't have to!) is more about you becoming better informed about Oxford. The only case in which you would be expected to contact academic staff at Oxford is if you are thinking about doing a DPhil - in this case, it would make sense to get in touch with a potential supervisor to make sure you have someone to work with.

Q: Are the references/CV/personal statement used after you get shortlisted, or is selection made on your interview performance and the parts of you describe from that point on?

A: The shortlisting is done based on your application, which includes your CV, personal statement, and references. Then the final decision is made based on the application and interview together.

Q: Is it mandatory to specify the year of high school graduation as part of the application, or is this detail only required under certain circumstances?

A: Yes - it is an eligibility criterion to have completed 2 years of schooling at an Australian secondary school, and you will be asked for the dates of your high school education.

Q: Hello, I studied for two semesters abroad - one in England and one in Wales. My grades from these semesters were not included in my Australian GPA. Is there a way for me to submit the transcripts from these semesters to have the marks included in the assessment of my application?

A: Yes, you can include those in your application.

Q: What distinguishes a compelling personal statement from a standard one?

A: A compelling personal statement gives a sense of you as a whole person—something that cannot be gleaned from a CV—while addressing the question prompts.

References and Recommendations

Q: Are you planning to have a seminar targeted at the referees as well?

A: We try to reach prospective referees through the Secretariat; they are also welcome to contact the Secretariat.

Q: Do we need at least three academic referees?

A: Yes.

Q: The reason I ask is that it says that three of the referees should be "academics who have formally taught and graded you in your studies."

A: Yes, understood - that's language that is used for consistency with the scholarships globally. We interpret that with some flexibility - please discuss with your Secretariat. The referees need to be able to assess how your academic achievement compares to that of others; there may be other ways in which they can do that without having formally assessed you (eg, as an Honours convenor).

Q: Would it be desirable or not to solicit a referee from high school days to demonstrate longstanding achievement? Is the focus more on your momentum and more recent trajectory?

A: It depends on your academic journey. It is not unusual to use a high school referee if there is an achievement from that time you want to highlight. However, it is not an expectation, and using referees from your tertiary studies is also fine.

Q: What if the people who know us well in university are not necessarily from the subjects we did well in?

A: When selecting referees, choose individuals who can provide a comprehensive and positive view of your abilities and character. It's beneficial to ask for references from people who know you well and can speak to your strengths, even if they are not from the subjects, you excelled in.

Q: Should I consider having my character referees from the same activity I had participated in (volunteering) or have a different range of referees?

A: I would have a range.

Q: I attended a placement-heavy degree with very little formal teaching (fairly self-directed). I'm curious to hear from probably Laura specifically about how to go about finding suitable academic references from university in this instance? Do they all need to be from a university or people who can comment on your academic achievement/qualities in other areas, such as postgraduate work?

A: Hi! I think it would depend a little on how your degree is structured. It may be that you have supervisors on placement who can comment on your academic achievements quite well, even if they aren't formally part of the University; and you can combine them with referees from the University who are involved more directly with the assessment of your degree (perhaps the University director of placements, if that would be appropriate) or who have given you tutorials and can perhaps comment more specifically on your academic results. I think, overall, people who know you are better than people who have a specific role or responsibility! I hope this helps!

Accommodation and Stipend

Q: Do you have the option to live on campus or is it self-sourced accommodation?

A: The vast majority of Rhodes Scholars live in college accommodation for at least one year. The university is made up of colleges, and all students are part of a college.

Q: How much is the stipend? Is it based on the calculated living costs on the website or is the calculated living cost our expected out-of-pocket expense?

A: The stipend varies from year to year, but as a guideline, it is approximately the mean living expenses cost on the Oxford University website. This amount is enough for one student to live on but not necessarily save a lot of money while they're there.

Scholarship and Admission Outcomes

Q: Is the Rhodes Scholarship outcome announced before the Oxford admissions one? Has there been anyone who has been awarded a Rhodes Scholarship but who has not been admitted to Oxford? Not sure how to navigate the cross-application process.

A: Yes, and that usually happens to a few Rhodes Scholars (of the 104) each year. In such cases, the Scholar-Elect applies again in the following year, and the Rhodes Trust carries the scholarship forward until they are admitted. In terms of the application to Oxford, the scholarship is awarded in September/October and the deadlines for Oxford admission are usually December/January, so there enough time to apply to the university, using your Rhodes application as a base. You find out in Feb/March if you got accepted to the university.

Non-Academic Pursuits/Advice

Q: Hoping to gauge how relevant sporting achievement is?

A: It is just one way you could demonstrate energy and breadth of interests/activity. Those can equally be demonstrated by other non-sporting activities.

Q: Where does the emphasis fall on pursuits that aren't academic or service-based? For example, if you're involved in the arts but that isn't related to your academic background.

A: If you are involved in the arts but this isn't related to your academic work, this would fit into the 'energy' criterion. Other pursuits, whether it is sport, theatre, or other activities, also fall under this category.

Q: What about research? Research isn't just academic in nature - can that show my use of energy?

A: "Roundedness" is an important part of the criteria. Research would normally be considered as an academic pursuit, rather than an extra-curricular one. You could explain in your application how it spoke to the other selection criteria.

Q: What about establishing a successful business/funding your own studies? What attributes would this demonstrate?

A: Energy, initiative, entrepreneurship...

Q: My academic transcript is very strong, with multiple prizes/awards/scholarships. However, my volunteering and community involvement is comparatively weak. Will this disadvantage me in the application process?

A: It is rare that someone is super-strong across all four criteria. It depends on how well you can speak across the four. You would need to demonstrate some level of genuine commitment to the 'service of others' criterion.

Q: In terms of work experience and volunteer experience, i.e., mental health work and social justice advocacy, if you have had a large involvement in a small number of projects, is this a disadvantage compared to longer-term commitments or involvement in more projects overall?

A: The number is not really a factor - it is more the degree of commitment. So, a longer-term commitment is a good thing, as it shows a genuine desire to help people.

Q: If you don't have a lot of achievements in different extra-curricular areas or "evidence" for commitment/leadership in different areas, would you recommend taking a couple of years to build this up before applying?

A: I wouldn't apply if you are weak on 2-3 criteria. Committees are suspicious of applicants who take up voluntary work at the last minute - longer-term commitment is a better sign of meeting what the scholarship is about. So give yourself some time to demonstrate such commitment.

Q: Do you have to have lots of work experience, volunteer experience, or awards in your field to have a good chance of being accepted?

A: You don't necessarily need awards in the volunteer sector, but you do need to show commitment. Work experience in itself is not necessarily material; but it may be if it demonstrates your qualities against some of the criteria. It is recommended to talk to the advisor at your university about your particular case.

Q: Are repeat applicants based on their development between applications?

A: Applicants are based on their achievements to that date; and if you're applying for a second time, the committee will consider your application afresh. However, if you haven't developed in any respect between applications, it may be difficult to demonstrate momentum in your areas of interest/ strength.

Q: I'm involved in several non-academic pursuits but am worried about backing this up with evidence. Are they expecting awards/competitions/etc.?

A: A strong backup could be one of your character references. There is a strong emphasis on service and community, which rarely have a defined "winner." Think about how you could explain in writing or speech what your pursuits have meant to you and others in your community.

Q: Well, low CGPA but have good research activities and strong research skills and have extracurricular activities experience, will the person apply here for scholarships?

A: Don't exclude yourself - check with the Secretariat.

Q: If under the age criteria but already have a PhD and really want to broaden academic credentials, is this okay? Is the panel likely to think others would get more benefit?

A: It would depend on the case you make. Why would doing the extra Oxford degree be useful? What would it allow you to do that you can't already? Committees would assess your case on its merits.

Personal Experiences and Testimonials

Q: Hi, and thank you for your time. I was awarded two scholarships by the NSW Government to pursue a university-level course in interpreting, in addition to my main degree in Medical Science. I have been working as a certified NSW Government interpreter in two languages for the past two years, since the age of 19. Alongside this, I also collaborate with hospitals in Victoria and Queensland as an interpreter across both languages. I would like to know — do you think this experience can help strengthen my application?

A: This sounds like quite relevant experience, and a worthwhile endeavour! Definitely include it.

Q: Hi Nanak, could you please elaborate on your experience studying law in Australia and studying at Oxford after graduating. How did you think this helped you achieve your goals?

A: Happy to add a bit more detail. I studied at UNSW in Sydney and loved it, did a bunch of volunteering and work in legal areas while studying and in the year after graduating (in asylum seeker and refugee law, and environmental law). I decided to pivot my degrees at Oxford to non-legal degrees, partly as my goals and dreams for life continued to shift! I definitely didn't have a clear path and goal in mind when starting out on my legal journey.

Q: Very specific question. I currently have a permanent position as a teacher and own a house. I get the feeling there's not a lot of teachers that apply and also not sure if this can be supported by the scholarship? I am keen to apply but unsure if the scholarship can support me.

A: No barrier at all to applying! The most relevant issue is the degree you plan to study at Oxford - it has to be something Oxford offers (which includes Masters in Education, if you want to continue in the education arena; but you could also study other programs – the committee will want to understand your rationale for whatever you plan to study).

Specific Situations

Q: Curious about the track record of medical graduates applying in their final year and how, if accepted, this will impact the completion of their internship year (particularly thinking about AHPRA registration)?

A: Hi - this definitely can be done! I personally applied during my intern year, which made things slightly easier. However, other scholars applied in their final year of Medical school and then attended Oxford after completing 3/4 of internship (as most courses begin in October). They then needed to go back to complete the remaining weeks of internships in increments around their Oxford degrees - but it can be done, particularly if you're getting close to the age limit!

Q: Is there a lot of courses, to your knowledge, in the psychology field that is available to study under the scholarship? I read somewhere that the DClinPsych wasn't eligible for this scholarship?

A: Correct – there are a number of 'NHS-linked' programs that aren't open to international students. The DClinPsych is one of them; but there are other Psych degrees you can do.

Q: Would a MD in Medicine as 2nd degree equate to 1st class honours equivalence? Would I need to complete it or could I apply for Rhodes in year 3 of 4 of that course?

A: In general, yes re equivalence. You need to apply within the age constraints - that can be a challenge for those studying medicine, but it's quite possible. Suggest contacting your Secretariat or me.

Q: Can we do post graduate doctor of medicine with this?

A: No, if you mean MD. See <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/dm-doctor-of-medicine>; and please refer to the Rhodes Scholarship FAQs for detailed information.

Multiple Degrees and Other Scholarships

Q: Did the scholars who completed two masters complete both under Rhodes, and if so, do you apply for both of these at once?

A: Yes, both under Rhodes. You can apply for multiple degrees in one year (Rhodes funds the application of two), but you will only be able to accept one course offer. You apply for only one at a time; for the second course, you will need to apply in the year you arrive in Oxford.

Q: Are there other international scholarships which are not so ageist?

A: Yes, there are several scholarships without an age limit, such as the Clarendon Scholarships at Oxford, Sir John Monash Scholarships, Ramsay Scholarships, Quad Fellowships, Fulbright Scholarships.

Additional Questions

Q: Would you suggest taking some time after graduating from your undergraduate degree to build your CV and prove upward momentum, or apply as soon as you can to have as much university support as possible?

A: It depends on your personal situation. For some, working for a few years after undergrad is sensible, and strengthens your application if you make the case in those terms.

Q: Many applicants apply with a specific program detailed in their application and change their decision after receiving the scholarship e.g. from masters in public health to a DPhil. Isn't this a strategic decision and how does the selection committee take measures to think about those candidates that are authentic?

A: Committees focus very much on candidates' authenticity, and their degree plans. Some changes are less a change of strategy than identifying the best pathway in the circumstances – eg the example you give. Sometimes this can depend on the competitiveness of particular degrees at Oxford - some are extremely hard to get into, so a change needs to be made. All candidates should be able to speak to the reasons for their degree selection; but ultimately, a Scholar-Elect is allowed to change their plans for good reason.

Q: How many applicants are there on average per state who apply for the Rhodes?

A: Numbers vary from state to state, generally reflecting the proportion of tertiary students in that state or territory. The average number of applicants nationally over the last 5 years is c. 150.

Q: When considering those who are shortlisted for an interview, who is the panel traditionally made up of? More to the point, are we likely to have a member on the panel that has expertise in our areas of study/passion?

A: There are normally seven people on the committee, three of whom are Rhodes scholars, and three from the community/academia. State governors chair the state committees, and other distinguished Australians the Territories and AAL committees.. Whether someone has expertise in your area will depend on that composition - you can't assume it will be the case, so you need to be able to explain your area of study to a non-specialist audience.

Q: Unfortunately, I am well over the age to apply for this scholarship. Can I apply for another scholarship and study the course online? What happens if you have a disability? Is there any help during your course?

A: Sorry! If you are over the age for this scholarship, you will need to ask the other scholarship providers about those details. See the response to the earlier question about other scholarships. For information about the support Oxford provides for students with a disability, see <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability>

Q: Hi there! Less of an application question - if successful, when would courses begin during the year (mid-year entry or beginning of 2026)?

A: Generally, Oxford degrees commence in October. So you have almost a year between the announcement of the scholarship and the commencement of the academic year.

Q: Apologies, I may have overlooked this during the previous presentation. I recall Peter mentioning that if we have questions that extend beyond standardised responses and require critical evaluation or nuanced consideration, there is a way to contact him directly. Could you kindly provide the appropriate email address or confirm the process for doing so?

A: You're all very welcome to contact me with any questions/issues at australia.secretary@rhodestrust.com.