

# China Oxford Scholarship Fund Awards Application

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

An applicant must be a national of the People's Republic of China who is ordinarily resident in China, Hong Kong or Macau. An applicant must have an official or conditional offer to pursue a postgraduate degree at Oxford University.

### **I am a Chinese PRC national who has been studying abroad. Can I apply?**

Yes.

### **I am currently studying at Oxford University. Am I eligible?**

Yes.

### **I am already attending Oxford University as a graduate student. Do you still need my transcripts for my undergraduate studies?**

No. Existing graduate students at Oxford University are exempt from this requirement.

### **I graduated several years ago and just won a postgraduate place at Oxford. Am I eligible?**

Yes.

### **I am a visiting scholar from China and am doing coursework at Oxford. Am I eligible?**

No.

### **Do I need to specify which award I am interested in?**

No. The Awards Panel will decide the award that is best suited for successful candidates.

### **Can my application form be completed hand-written?**

Yes. Please ensure you complete the form by print and that it is legible. However, we strongly recommend the form is completed via word processing so that the Awards Panel can review your application easily. The application form is available for download in the Word Document format to allow for word processing.

### **Can I use coloured ink to complete my application form?**

No. You must use black ink.

### **Should I put down my personal university email address on the application form or should I provide my private email address such as a sina, 163, gmail etc?**

We prefer that you provide your private email address and not your university email address.

### **Is it okay for me to staple or glue my application form and all my supporting documents together?**

No. Do not staple or glue any of the documents together as this impedes the processing of the applications. We advise you to use a paperclip.

### **How long should my personal statement be?**

We recommend one page. It should not exceed two pages.

**Should I include my research proposal and resume with the application?**

No. Do not include your resume or research proposal with your application. You can expand on either of these in your personal statement of purpose if you wish to do so.

**Why do you need to know about my undergraduate scholarships or awards?**

This is to allow the Awards Panel the ability to gauge a candidate's propensity to secure recognition of academic achievement as well as funding for his or her studies.

**I don't know if I have been accepted to the college of my choice yet at Oxford? Should I leave that part on the application form blank?**

Please state which college you have applied to and note that it is to be confirmed with "TBC". You must inform us as soon as possible once you know to which college you have been accepted.

**How many reference letters do I have to provide and are they part of the application?**

Two academic reference letters are required but you do not need to provide them with the application. If you are short-listed to be interviewed by the Awards Panel, you will be asked to provide these two reference letters to the Panel for consideration before the actual interview takes place. We strongly advise that you secure your letters of reference in advance just in case you are short-listed for an interview.

**To whom should my academic referees address their letters?**

They should address their letters to the Awards Panel of the China Oxford Scholarship Fund.

**Can my referees send their letters of support directly to you by email or by post?**

Yes. We must receive the letters directly from your referees' email addresses or by post from them. If you have possession of the reference letters, they must be sent to us in sealed envelopes.

**If I am short-listed, can I provide photocopies of pay slips or bank statements to the Panel?**

Yes.

**How many month's worth of bank statements and pay slips are required for short-listed applicants?**

Copies of the most recent three month's worth of bank statements and payslips will be sufficient. Financial factors form only part of the assessment process and we will consider your overall presentation. Awards are not necessarily given to the student with the greatest financial need.

**My parents' pay slips and bank statements are in Chinese. Is this a problem?**

No. Documents in Chinese are acceptable.

**My employer does not provide pay slips. Will bank statements be okay?**

Yes. Bank statements will be fine as long as they are recent and reflect your financial status accurately.

**Will you accept copies of my online bank statements?**

Yes.

**My parent's income is irregular and they do not have pay slips. What should I do?**

Please explain on the application form why their income is irregular. You must also indicate how much your parents earn on average on a monthly basis on the application form. This will assist the Awards Panel in reviewing your financial status and need.

**I am married. Do I need to state the income of my spouse?**

Yes.

**Do you accept photocopies or original transcripts?**

We prefer the original transcripts. If these are not available, photocopies will be accepted. If you are short-listed for an interview, you will be required to present your original transcripts to the Awards Panel for verification. Existing graduate students at Oxford are not required to provide their undergraduate transcripts.

**Do those with greater financial receive preference over those who have less need?**

No. We will make the selection based on the merit of each application. The Awards Panel assesses candidates on their financial need, leadership qualities, academic excellence, proficiency in English and their ability to contribute towards the further development of China.

**I have been short-listed for funding from another scholarship. Will this jeopardise my chances of securing a China Oxford Scholarship Fund award?**

No. The Awards Panel will make its selection based upon the merit of each applicant. The financial status of each student, as well as their access to other scholarships, is taken into consideration. Please ensure that you provide an accurate reflection of the scholarships that you have won.

**Which offer letter is required to support my application?**

We require a copy of the official offer letter from either Oxford University or the relevant Department which has offered you a place. If you are already attending Oxford, an official letter from your department to confirm your status will be required.

**What are the supporting documents that need to go with my application?**

The official offer letter from Oxford University, the personal statement, a passport-style photo which should be attached to the application form, transcripts from your undergraduate studies, copies of any scholarships and certificates or financial aid awarded.

**Some of the awards have a preference for certain areas of study or college. Does this mean I am not eligible for those awards?**

No. These are preferences and not conditions unless otherwise stated.

**Your awards are listed as up to £20,000. Does this mean I have a chance to receive an actual award of that amount ?**

We state the maximum that may be offered. The exact amount for the various awards depends on the financial circumstances of the successful applicants in a given year.

**If I do not receive my official offer letter before the application deadline. Can I send a copy of the letter after my application has been posted?**

Yes. Please send the copy of your official offer to us as soon as possible and ensure you note that the document is part of your application.

**I have a conditional offer from my department at Oxford and am worried I won't receive my official offer before the application deadline. Can I send a copy of the official letter after my application has been posted?**

Yes. Please send the copy of your official offer to us as soon as possible and ensure you note that the document is part of your application.

**I need to commit to my place and my accommodation before the successful COSF Scholars are announced. Can you please speed up the process?**

We receive a high number of applications each year. The selection schedule is structured to ensure that it allows due care and attention to each application.

**How will I know that you received my application in Hong Kong?**

We will confirm receipt of your application as soon as it is possible for us to do so.

**Is there a postal code for the G.P.O. Box address in Hong Kong?**

No.

**Do you accept applications via email?**

No. At present this is not possible.

**Is the closing date the postmark date?**

No. All applications must be received by the closing date at the Hong Kong postal address.

**My application will arrive in Hong Kong after the closing date. Will it still be accepted?**

Your application will be marked as "late" and arriving after the closing date. It will then be up to the Awards Panel whether it will consider your late application.

**If I don't hear from you after I have posted my application, should I follow-up with an email?**

We prefer applicants not to contact us as this impedes the whole awards process. We receive a high number of applications and examine each application with due care. This calls for time so please be patient. We will confirm receipt as soon as possible.

**Can I send my application by using a private express or courier mail service?**

No. We are unable to accept private express courier mail services such as DHL, Federal Express or UPS. However, we can accept express mail from China via its local postal offices with its EMS service. We also are able to accept express mail service provided by Royal Mail in the United Kingdom and any express mail service provided by a local postal office service in any given country.

**The EMS service in China requires a contact telephone number for the G.P.O. Box address in Hong Kong. What is the telephone number?**

The Hong Kong General Post Office telephone number is (852) 2921-2222.

**I have sent my application packet using EMS. I have tracked the EMS package online but it says it hasn't been collected at your Hong Kong address. Does this mean my application has not arrived or received?**

No. This means your application has been delivered to our G.P.O. Box address in Hong Kong and is awaiting collection from COSF staff.

**If you don't receive private special delivery at the G.P.O. Box address, can I send my application to a friend in Hong Kong and then he or she can send it by regular post to the G.P.O. Box address?**

Yes. This is acceptable. Please ensure that your friend in Hong Kong sends your application with your name and address clearly marked in English on the back of the package.

**Can I submit my application in person to your office address in Hong Kong?**

No. All applications must be sent and received by post at the G.P.O. Box 2755 address in Hong Kong.

**Why do you ask for the application form and all the supporting documents to be unstapled?**

Stapled documents significantly impede the processing of the application. Please use paperclips.

**Can I send my application in very early before the opening date of January 1<sup>st</sup>? Will my application be accepted and would this mean I would have an advantage over others who apply later than me?**

No. We will only accept applications from January 1<sup>st</sup> onwards. Applications that arrive before this date will not be accepted and returned. Applications received in Hong Kong from January 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> will be treated equally.

**If I am short-listed but am unable to attend the interview, what can I do?**

A telephone or Skype interview will be arranged if this situation arises for a short-listed candidate.

**When do the interviews take place?**

Interview dates will vary according to the location. The interviews normally take place from late May to late July.

**When will I find out if I am a successful scholarship recipient?**

Successful award applicants will normally be informed in late July or August.

**Does COSF require the funds to be used in a specific manner?**

We expect the awards to help defray a student's tuition.

**Will the scholarship cover all my living expenses in Oxford?**

This is unlikely. Students are expected to have other resources to support their studies at Oxford.

**Are successful award winners required to return to China immediately after their studies at Oxford?**

We expect award winners to gain work experience overseas and that scholars will eventually return to China to make a meaningful contribution in their respective area of study.

**When do applicants find out if they have been short-listed?**

Short-listed candidates will be informed as soon as possible.

**If I am unsuccessful, can I find out the reasons why I didn't get an award?**

This will not be possible as the assessments of applicants are confidential.

**If I am an award winner, how do I receive the funds?**

A cheque will be issued to you and sent to your college at Oxford. You will then be required to sign a receipt of confirmation letter of the payment and return the form to us.

**If I am an award winner, do I have to deposit my cheque right away?**

We expect that your award cheque will be deposited within 60 days of your receipt of the payment.