

# Responses to clarification questions for the MA Scholarships for English language teachers grant award programme

26 November 2021

## Objectives and purpose of the scholarship scheme

- ***HESA shows very little demand for TESOL courses in India and Pakistan over the last 5 years. What led British Council to propose scholarships in this area beyond seeing that countries struggled with digital education during the pandemic?***

The British Council is committed to supporting the development of English language teaching, learning and assessment in India and Pakistan, as elsewhere. We recognise the value of a UK MA degree to support capacity building in this area, but also the fact that pricing often excludes participation from many working as practitioners within the field. The scholarship scheme is therefore proposed to help to bridge this gap. The inclusion of a focus on educational technologies is due to the growing demand for this in both countries, both prior to and as a result of the pandemic.

- ***Is there a formal national/regional government agenda in India and Pakistan to send teachers to the UK for capacity building in this area? Is the focus more on English language teaching or more on digital education (often two different courses).***

There is a strong appetite for improving teaching and learning in general with the use of educational technologies in both countries. There is also a clear demand for improving English language skills among the young population. We have seen interest from some state/provincial governments in sending teachers and school leaders to the UK for capacity building in these areas, as well as other aspects of education. We are confident of the support from government departments for advertising the opportunity and supporting teachers to participate through a sabbatical.

## Targeted audience for the scholarship programme

- ***Who will the scholarships be targeting exactly – what is the profile of applicants we can expect to see? What education and work experience they might have (will they meet MA entry requirements e.g. 2.1 bachelors equivalent)?***

We are targeting individuals who are working as English teachers, ideally within the government sector. We would expect them to meet the minimum criteria set by the university in order to be accepted onto the programme. There are further details provided on the eligibility of scholars on pages 8-9 of the call for proposals document.

- ***How sure is the British Council of the demand – did the British Council do any market research for demand for full-time and online courses in this subject?***
- A separate recently launched scholarship scheme for English teachers globally (i.e. not specifically targeting these countries) attracted a sizeable number of applications from

India and Pakistan and we would expect to do much more promotion for these new ones as they link with the India-UK and Pakistan-UK cultural seasons as outlined in the call for proposals. In addition, we have seen excellent results in terms of long-term capacity building in the sector by individuals who benefitted from English language teaching scholarships in the past.

## MA course content and eligibility

- ***Would the degree MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages be acceptable for this programme? / Is there a requirement of the percentage of the teaching content focus on 'the use of technology in English Language Teaching'?***

The degree title is of less concern than the inclusion of a substantial amount of focus on the use of educational technologies for English language teaching and learning. We would expect at least one core module to have this focus and that this would be mandatory for the students under these scholarships to complete. In cases where it is possible to provide a focus on appropriate educational technologies as part of the dissertation study and/or with any placement/wraparound programme focus, this would also be welcomed.

It is important to also note that we would expect an emphasis on educational technologies that are appropriate for the context which we expect these scholars to be teaching in on return to India and Pakistan. While the use of technology is gathering pace in classrooms in both countries, there is an emphasis on, for example, the use of mobile phones rather than interactive whiteboards. We would need to ensure that any focus on edtech encourages the students to think carefully about application in their context and adjustments that may need to be made. This would be an excellent topic for dissertation study.

- ***Does corpus linguistics count as "ELT and technology"?***

No. We are looking for a focus on the practical use of educational technologies in the classroom by the teacher and learners to develop English language skills.

- ***Will you consider a programme that is new for 2022-23, with track record in separate areas of education and English language teaching already established?***

Provided the programme has a substantial focus on the use of educational technologies and how these can effectively support English language teaching and learning, then we can consider this, yes.

- ***Would the British Council prefer a face-2-face course over the online?***

We are looking for two different types of MA scholarships to offer to teachers of English in India and Pakistan: an MA that is offered f2f in the UK and an MA that is offered online by a UK university. We'd like to be able to offer both types to be more inclusive for people who are unable to take a year out to travel to the UK. For the online MA, we would be particularly interested in offers which include a short (up to 3 weeks) study visit to the UK as part of the programme.

- ***We are still not entirely clear whether it would be better to offer courses focussing on digital education or TESOL courses in the bid. Would it be best to include all***

***courses we think would be suitable and let applicants decide which courses suit them?***

We are looking for MA programmes that combine both the English language teaching / TESOL aspect with the educational technologies element, as a single programme. They can end up with an 'MA TESOL' which doesn't specify in its title that it has a focus on educational technologies, however we need to be sure that the focus of their study will include the edtech component as a significant element. We would expect at least one core module to have this focus and that this would be mandatory for the students under these scholarships to complete. In cases where it is possible to provide a focus on appropriate educational technologies as part of the dissertation study and/or with any placement/wraparound programme focus, this would also be welcomed.

## **Additional costs / support outside of tuition fees**

- ***What do the insurance costs cover and what are they for students from India and Pakistan?***

The reference to insurance costs on page 5 of the call for proposals refers to travel insurance for the participating scholars. Costs for this would need to be established with the supplier your institution uses for this service. I understand that health insurance costs will be covered by the NHS surcharge costs which also need to be factored in.

- ***Does the host university need to provide guarantee accommodation for successful scholars?***

Ideally yes we would expect that the host university will support the scholars to secure appropriate accommodation.

- ***For Lot 1 and Lot 2, UK Universities should demonstrate how they will connect scholars with industry partners and provide opportunities for internships, placements or networking for the students – including support for the scholar to stay in the UK via the Graduate Route, if desired and as per current UKVI rules. Do we need to provide a fixed number of opportunities for students? Will students expect a guaranteed placement after having completed the course?***

This is very open – there are no fixed numbers here and we are really looking for universities to suggest what might be a good wraparound programme for these scholars. Students will not expect a guaranteed placement after the course – this can be made clear to them through the comms around the scholarship opportunities. We are considering a clause in the scholarship agreement which will state that students are not allowed to pursue the graduate visa route. The pros and cons of this will be discussed with the successful institutions.

## **Promotion of the scholarships**

- ***How will these scholarships be promoted?***

We will promote the scholarships through our government and other sector partners in the two countries, as well as through our corporate social media channels and via press/media.

## Eligibility of institutions to apply for the grants

- ***Does the host university need to take ALL 6 ( 3 for India and 3 for Pakistan) scholars if the application was successful? Or they can take one scholar or however many depends how much the host university can fund the shortfall in funding?***

For each Lot we would expect a minimum of three scholars to be supported by the host university.

- ***How many partner institutions is the Council looking for?***

We are looking for between 1, 2 or 4 partner institutions depending on the number of institutions that apply to implement the four different lots. If we have a strong submission from a university who is able to implement all four lots then we would consider a single partnership. However, we think it is possible that the online / face-to-face courses may need to be offered by different institutions and/or that we will split the grants for scholars from India and Pakistan across two universities.

## Application process

- ***Does the host university need to prioritize the applications or the application can go through the central admissions process?***

Applications to the MA programme can go through the central admissions process as long as there is a clear deadline for applications for the scholarship applications agreed with the British Council and clearly communicated to applicants.

- ***What documents would we need to submit to provide our response to the call for proposals?***

In order to participate in this call, UK institutions are requested to send the required supporting documents listed below to [Education.SouthAsia@britishcouncil.org](mailto:Education.SouthAsia@britishcouncil.org), with the subject line “Scholarships for EL teachers-Eol” by 13 December 2021 (12.00 GMT), and complete the online [Expression of Interest](#) form.

Along with the online form linked above there are three documents for completion and submission as attachments.

The templates for your supporting documents are provided on the Education Services website ([https://education-services.britishcouncil.org/news/opportunities/ma-scholarship-grants-english-language-teachers-india-and-pakistan-call-uk-higher?utm\\_source=alert&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=immediate&utm\\_content=news%3A%20Opportunities%20](https://education-services.britishcouncil.org/news/opportunities/ma-scholarship-grants-english-language-teachers-india-and-pakistan-call-uk-higher?utm_source=alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=immediate&utm_content=news%3A%20Opportunities%20)). The documents are:

- Application to Lots

- Track record (plus folder of evidence)
- Budget calculator

UK Universities participating in the call must submit the online form(<https://forms.office.com/r/xGe6NdvfSy>) and all three supporting documents. Submissions which are incomplete or have made in a format other than the templates provided will be dismissed.

- ***Please provide more detail about what is counted as significant evidence for managing previous scholarships?***

Here we would like to hear the experience of the team who will manage these scholarships. Evidence of track record in this area including similar programmes where scholarships have been externally funded, how the partnership with the funding organisation(s) has worked, any key lessons learned, etc. We are particularly interested to understand how the scholars will be supported while in country or studying on the programme online and any wraparound activity that might offered as part of their scholarship programme.

## Amount of funding available

- ***How many scholarships in total (not per university) is British Council funding under this scheme i.e. what is the total budget?***

We expect to fund a total of 12 scholarships divided among the four lots:

- X 3 scholarships for scholars from India studying face-to-face
- X 3 scholarships for scholars from Pakistan studying face-to-face
- X 3 scholarships for scholars from India studying online / distance
- X 3 scholarships for scholars from Pakistan studying online / distance

There is a possibility that we may have more funding available than originally planned. As a result, we are interested to hear from universities whether they would be able to increase the number of scholars provided for under the lots they are applying to host, in case this additional funding does become available.

- ***Is the British Council funding for this scheme likely to continue longer term or is this a one-off opportunity for Sept 2022 intake only?***

This is the first time we have run a scholarship scheme like this which is specifically focused on English teachers in these two countries. However, we have some other very successful scholarship programmes that have been running over several years. While this iteration of the scholarships is linked to the India-UK and Pakistan-UK cultural seasons in 2022, we think there is some potential to offer a similar programme in future years. This will, of course, depend on the success of this first iteration.