

Guidelines for the preparation and submission of your application for the Rhodes Scholarships for New Zealand Students

Applications for the Rhodes Scholarships for 2011 will close on

1 AUGUST 2010

These guidelines are intended to assist with your application for these awards. If you have any questions that are not answered here you should contact your Scholarships Officer who will either help you, or put you in touch with the Chairperson of your University Rhodes Scholarships Committee.

General information:

There are three scholarships awarded to New Zealand students each year. You should submit your application to the Scholarships Office at the University you graduated from or are currently enrolled at.

After applications close and referees' reports have been received by the Scholarships Officer at your university, your Universities' Rhodes Scholarship Committee will prepare a short list of candidates to be interviewed. These preliminary interviews take place around August each year. Each university panel may nominate up to three scholars whose applications will be sent for further consideration by the National Rhodes Scholarship Selection panel. Interviews at national level will be held in October or November.

The interviewing panels, at both regional (university) and national level are composed of people drawn from the arts, academic, business, and Maori communities, along with Rhodes Scholar Alumni.

Important considerations:

1. Entry to Oxford is becoming increasingly competitive and the academic quality of applicants is normally very high. Unless you can demonstrate outstanding strength in the other selection criteria you are unlikely to be regarded as a strong candidate unless you have, or are expected to obtain, an honours degree at the **very highest level**. You will probably be reading for an honours degree or, if you are not formally enrolled in an honours year, you expect to be awarded Honours on graduation (such as is the practice in some Law schools). Applicants with a lesser average will find it extremely difficult to make the short list. The first thing the Selection Committee looks at is your academic record.

You should either have already completed your degree, or expect to do so this year. If you do not expect to complete your degree until the end of the first semester next year, you should discuss your application with the Secretary to the National Selection Committee. Please contact the NZVCC for their contact details.

2. Watch the age limit. You must not have reached your 25th birthday by 1 October in the year *for which you are nominated* (ie. in New Zealand this is the year after you apply and are interviewed). For those candidates applying for the 2010 round, you should not have been born before **1 October 1986**.

- Note: The age limit has been increased one year for those candidates undertaking a MB,ChB course and pre-registration year. They should therefore not have passed their 26th birthday by 1 October in the year for which they are nominated.

3. Referees should be chosen carefully. In preparing a short list of candidates for interview, the Selection Committee has to rely heavily on what referees have to say about the candidate.

You are required to provide the names of six referees:

- at least three under whom you have studied (and that does **not** include school teachers)
- one who can write of your school days (such as your school principal, a subject teacher, etc.)
- at least one who can write of your other activities

This means if you have, say, three academic referees and one from school, you will need two who can write of your other activities; or, if you have four academic referees and one from school, you will need only one who can write of your other activities. The combination of referees will vary from candidate to candidate, and what might be appropriate for one person may not be appropriate for another. Much will depend on your course of study and the nature of your extra-curricular activities. The Secretary of your university scholarships committee can offer guidance, but the final decision is yours.

You should try to choose referees (other than your academic referees) who hold a position of respect in the community. Obviously, it would be difficult for the Selection Committee to make a judgement about a reference from someone unknown to them by reputation or position, no matter how much a pillar of the local community the referee may be.

On the other hand, although your local general practitioner or clergyman, solicitor, school principal or school teacher may not be known to the Committee, either personally or by reputation, such positions usually carry the community's respect and trust with the result that, in general, a reference from persons holding these positions can be relied upon. Other persons of public prominence, respected people in the business community, solicitors, barristers, judges, senior public servants, and university college wardens or principals are all potential referees, as well as those mentioned earlier. There are also sports coaches, people for whom you may have worked, and so on. This list gives examples, and is not intended to be either exhaustive or prescriptive; the final choice must rest with the candidate.

It sometimes happens that a referee may seem to be a little "obscure" (perhaps because he or she has retired). In such cases, it can be helpful to the Committee if these referees include a brief paragraph about themselves at the start of the reference.

This helps add authority to their reference.

Tip: In choosing your referees, you should resist the temptation to ask somebody to be a referee *simply because* he or she happens to have a high profile. There should be a positive relationship between you and your referees: it is important that the referee knows you well enough to write an informed reference.

NOTE CAREFULLY: *You must send each of your referees a copy of the 'Letter for Referees' found on the NZVCC website. It is important that your referees cover certain aspects about you that the committee will consider when making their assessments. This letter outlines the particular format that your referees need to follow. Please get your letters to them promptly so that they have sufficient time to write their references and get them in on time.*

Fax numbers/E-mail: Wherever possible, include fax numbers or e-mail addresses for your referees. This ensures that your Scholarships Officer can contact your referee promptly if their reference does not arrive by 1 August.

4. The curriculum vitae gives you an opportunity to include details about yourself which, if they were included in your Statement, might appear trivial. It helps the Selection Committee form a balanced view of you as an applicant for the Scholarship. The curriculum vitae enables you to tell the Selection Committee about any awards and prizes you may have received at school and prizes, scholarships and other distinctions you may have earned at University that might not appear on your academic transcript. While it is useful to include your high school results in the curriculum vitae, do NOT recite your university academic record as that will be shown on the transcript elsewhere in your application.

Include sporting achievements, outdoor activities (both at school and now), community and voluntary work (both at school and now) and don't forget to mention your other interests, such as music, concerts, films, gardening -- whatever you do for relaxation.

After preparing your curriculum vitae, you can then run through it and pick out the important items for inclusion in your statement. The curriculum vitae are not to be used as a means of extending your statement: it should be in dot point form, **not narrative form**, and it must not exceed **two** pages of single-spaced typing (to ensure readability, the type size should not be smaller than 12 point Times). Curriculum vitae of a greater length than two pages will be returned to you for editing.

5. Statement on your general interests and activities, the course of study you wish to pursue at Oxford and the character of work you intend to pursue: this is an important document. Not only does the Selection Committee have to consider what your referees have to say about you as a candidate, it also has to consider very carefully what you have to say about yourself. For example, what have been the major influences on your life, what drives you, why you have chosen the path you have, what your plans are for the future, and so on. A statement is a very personal thing. It should reflect your views and aspirations and, certainly, you should avoid writing what you think people want to hear or read -- when probing candidates during an interview, Selection Committees are very good at separating fact from fiction!

After you have written your statement, read it critically. You may find it helpful to have, say, your honours supervisor review it as well.

6. Presentation of your Statement is important: Typing should be one-and-one-half spaced and **it should not exceed 1,500 words**. Do not use a font smaller than 12 point Times.

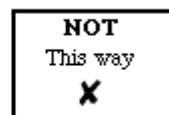
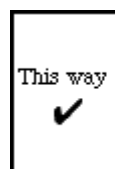
7. Academic transcripts. The Scholarships Officer at your university will add a copy of your transcript to your application.

8. Birth certificate. If it is easier for you, you may bring in your original birth certificate to the Scholarships Office, this will enable the staff to take a copy and return the original to you immediately.

9. Presentation. Remember, it is in your interest to make the best possible presentation. That does not mean including unnecessary cover sheets and excessively large headings (which can waste valuable space on your curriculum vitae, in particular). Do not include a cover sheet with your statement. Use A4 paper only.

- **Do not put cover sheets** on your statement/s. We will simply discard them to avoid unnecessary copying.
- **Use A4 paper only.**
- **Use white bond paper** if possible, or bond-weight paper produced from unbleached pulp. This is the usual weight of paper used by photocopiers and laser printers. The automatic photocopying equipment we use handles this type of paper best.
- **Print on one side only.** Please do not try to conserve paper by using both sides. We will only have to take two extra copies to make a master copy and nothing will have been saved.
- **Submit your application in an envelope.** Do **NOT** bind it. We will only have to pull it apart to copy it, and the binding holes can cause the photocopier to jam!
- **Staple or paper clip** your application together in the top left hand corner.
- **Include 2 photographs** (head and shoulder shots preferred) approx. 12 cm x 10 cm in an envelope with your name on the envelope and on the back of each photograph.

Photographs should be taken in portrait format rather than landscape format (that is, use the long axis of the photograph, not the wide axis).



10. Check your application for completeness:

- Have you included the certified copy of your birth certificate?
- Have you included the certified copy of academic transcript?
- Have you included your written statements?
- Have you signed your statement?
- Have you included fax numbers/email addresses wherever possible for referees?
- Have you signed and dated the application form?
- Have you written your name on the back of the photographs?
- Have you kept a copy of your application?

When you are confident it is complete:

Deliver your application or send by registered mail or courier to reach the scholarships office by the **closing date of 1 August 2010.**