

## Marshall Scholarship Guide

The Marshall Scholarship is one of the most prestigious forms of funding for American Masters students in the UK, providing financial support for up to two years (with the possibility in some cases of a third-year extension). Scholarships are available for postgraduate study in any discipline at any British university but candidates are particularly invited to apply for programs at [Marshall Partner Universities](#), which have strong links with the scholarship scheme.

This page will introduce the benefits offered by Marshall Scholarships, as well as explaining how the application criteria and interview process work.

### What is the Marshall Scholarship?

The Marshall Scholarship was established in 1953 by the British government and named after General George C. Marshall, the man who lent his name to the Marshall Plan which distributed economic aid from the USA to Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War.

In the decades since, more than 2,000 American students have attended university in the UK with the help of a Marshall Scholarship. Among their number are two US Supreme Court Justices, 14 MacArthur Genius Grant recipients, six Pulitzer winners and one Nobel Prize winner. [UMBC has had 2 Marshall winners.](#)

There are currently up to 50 Marshall Scholarships available each year, offering the following financial benefits to successful applicants:

- Tuition fees payment
- Personal allowance – £1,116 per month (USD \$1,465) or £1,369 for London universities (USD \$1,800)
- Travel to and from the UK
- Grants towards books, as well as your thesis and research expenses
- Daily travel allowance

In total, the financial value of a Marshall Scholarship is around **£38,000 per year (USD \$49,945)**.

The Marshall Commission also has partnerships with a selection of colleges at University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge.

There are a few different pathways you can take during a Marshall Scholarship:

- **One-year Masters scholarship**, which can be used to study a one-year Masters and cannot be extended
- **Two-year Masters scholarship**, which can be used to study two one-year Master's program, one two-year research Master's program or two years of a PhD program
- **Two-year scholarship** (with the possibility of a third-year extension), which can be used to combine Masters and PhD study

If you opt for the third option, you can either begin a PhD in the first year or upgrade from a Masters to a PhD, before applying for a third-year funding extension.

### Who is eligible for a Marshall Scholarship?

In order to fulfil the eligibility criteria for a Marshall Scholarship, you'll need to:

- Be an American citizen
- Have completed a four-year undergraduate degree from an accredited university in the USA by the time of taking up the scholarship
- Have a GPA of 3.7 during your undergraduate degree
- Be a 'recent' graduate, having graduated no earlier than three and a half years before taking up the scholarship (e.g. April 2020 for September 2023 applicants)

Also, you can't have previously studied in the UK (whether that's at university or for secondary education).

### Course eligibility for Marshall Scholarships

Generally speaking, Marshall Scholarships are tenable for most kinds of Masters and PhD program at UK universities. However, there are a few key exceptions in which courses aren't eligible for funding. These include:

- MBAs
- Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates
- Distance learning courses
- Courses that begin in January
- Courses that involve an international placement

You can see a full list of ineligible courses on the [Marshall website](#).

A Marshall Scholarship can't be deferred.

### How can I apply for a Marshall Scholarship?

Applications for Marshall Scholarships usually open in June, with a deadline for submission at the end of September.

Once you've completed your application, it will need to be endorsed by your undergraduate university. Please contact Dr. April Householder to discuss how to obtain the nomination ([aprilh@umbc.edu](mailto:aprilh@umbc.edu))

As part of your application, you'll need to submit the following short essays:

- Personal statement
- Statement about your proposed study plans
- Statement about your post-scholarship plans
- Leadership statement
- Ambassadorial potential statement

You'll also submit several other documents:

- Academic transcripts
- CV
- Three letters of recommendation (one primary academic, one general academic and one that focuses on your leadership skills)

### Marshall Scholarship selection criteria

**Academic merit.** You'll need a GPA of at least 3.7 but you should also show evidence of extra-curricular success, through achievements like prizes, publications and scholarships. It's also important to provide a coherent study plan that shows how your proposed Masters (or PhD) program will help you achieve your academic and career goals.

**Leadership potential.** This is about showing your influence on others and your track record in delivering valuable results. Evidence of self-awareness, determination, courage and persistence is also important – whether that's in your studies or as part of your extra-curricular pursuits. Ultimately, you should show that you have a significant capacity to make a contribution to society through your leadership qualities.

Strength of purpose and creativity are also important.

Ambassadorial potential. Demonstrable knowledge of US/UK relations is a must, along with evidence of extra-curricular activities that can be put to use in the UK in order to develop those relations. Inter-personal skills, confidence and the ability to engage others around you are other key aspects of this criteria.

### *Marshall Scholarship interviews*

The interview itself usually takes around 30 minutes and will be before a selection committee (normally made up of previous Marshall Scholars).

It's important to tailor your answers to the Marshall Scholarship selection criteria mentioned above – it's a relatively short interview, so don't waste your time talking about things that aren't relevant to the scheme. Avoid generic answers that could easily apply to any other country around the world; make sure you show a meaningful affinity with the UK.

Expect to be asked probing questions about current events – both local and global – as well as the motivations behind your choice of program and institution. It's a good idea to be clued up on the latest news stories, social trends and cultural movements in the UK. You'll probably be asked about General George Marshall and the Marshall Plan, so make sure you've done your homework!