



Higher Education Scholarships for Palestinians - HESPAL

Guidelines for Application

1. HESPAL Introduction

The **HESPAL** scholarship programme is dedicated for Palestinians and is developed in partnership with Palestinian Universities to cater for their needs and priorities. **HESPAL** aims at contributing to the advancement of the Palestinian Higher Education sector through supporting the creation of the next generation of senior academics. We aspire that the HESPAL scholars upon their completion of studies and return to Palestine will contribute towards endorsing international academic quality standards at Palestinian universities and work to develop renewed and sustainable links between Palestinian and UK universities. The programme offers scholarship opportunities for Masters Degree and PhD studies to members of the academic staff of Palestinian universities.

HESPAL is supported by multiple international and UK funders; with the main two funders being; the UK Higher Education Institutes (UK HEIs) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development in Kuwait. Our current funders also include the UK Department of Education (DfE), the Pears Foundation and The Amjad and Suha Bseiso Foundation.

HESPAL is managed and administered by the British Council - Occupied Palestinian Territories.

HESPAL scholarships cover main expenses for its selected scholar specifically including:

- Academic fees (in the form of a fee waiver offered by participating UK HEIs);
- Living allowances for scholars covering the period of 12 months' for Master Degree scholars and 3 years for PhD scholars (subject to the availability of multi-year funding);
- Thesis grant;

Scholars **are expected to cover all other expenses** including travel costs, visa fees, health insurance, IELTS examination fees, and any other unperceived costs.

Partner **Palestinian Universities**: All universities in the West Bank and Gaza.

Partner **UK HEIs** for 2023 are: King's College London, University of Bolton, University of Essex, University of Sussex, Liverpool Hope University, University of Birmingham, University of Glasgow, St Mary's University London, University of Dundee, University of Warwick, University of Roehampton, York St John University, Brunel University London, University of Exeter, University of East Anglia.

Recommended fields of study, as per the priorities of the Palestinian universities and preferences of our donors include (but are not limited to):

Agriculture and agricultural research, Architecture, Art, Art Management and Creative Industries, Business, Finance and Economics, Energy Management, Clean Energy and Conservation Strategies, Educational Management and Technology and Special Educational Needs, Environmental Sciences and Sustainable Infrastructure, Human Rights, Law and Governance studies, ICT fields (information and communications technology), **Linguistics and literature studies, Nanotechnology, Nursing, Public Health and Medical Studies, Political Sciences and International Relations, STEM fields** (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), **TESOL**, (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages).

2. Eligibility Criteria

Eligible candidates are:

- ❖ Resident citizens of the Occupied Palestinian Territories;
- ❖ Currently employed by one of the Palestinian partner universities;
- ❖ Nominated by his/her employer Palestinian University;
- ❖ Have a written commitment to return to work for their Palestinian university after the completion of their studies, for a duration agreed upon with their university.
- ❖ Have a recent and up-to-date English language IELTS certificate with a grade appropriate for their selected course of study or a minimum of 6.5 grade.
- ❖ Applicants who have a Masters degree from a Palestinian university with a minimum grade of very good are eligible to apply.
- ❖ HESPAL welcomes applications from students with disabilities.

** For more information regarding the IELTS exams test dates, fees and locations please visit our website <https://www.britishcouncil.ps/en/exam/ielts/dates-fees-locations>
Please note that our Nablus test centre is currently closed.*

3. HESPAL - How to apply

The application process is essentially facilitated through our partner Palestinian Universities. Once the HESPAL call is open, Palestinian universities nominate their candidates from their cohort of academic staff, or graduates that they wish to hire. Nominated candidates are then expected to fill in their application, prepare their supporting documents and apply for UK HEIs participating in the HESPAL programme. The process of application takes the following steps:

1) Fill in the **HESPAL application form**:

The application should be completed **with the approval of the the applicant's home Palestinian university.**

Before you start filling the application form you are advised to 1) carefully read and understand each section of the application and the overall requirements for your candidacy, 2) think through the qualification you wish to acquire (Master Degree or PhD) and if you are eligible for it, 3) think through and clearly define the subject area/s you wish to study and conduct a thorough research on the programmes offered in the UK HEIs and if they match your field and the degree you are interested in, 4) prepare and collate all the supporting documents required and detailed in section 4 in this guidelines.

The HESPAL scheme is highly competitive and based on merit. It is therefore important that you complete the application form in full, giving as much details as possible.

The application form is set in 6 parts (A to F) that requests personal, professional and academic information. As you fill the application, please carefully note the following:

- In **Part B**, present your full academic record stating the various degrees awarded to you, the institution, the subject area and the years of study.

- In **Part C**, provide clear details and dates of your professional career (if you have professional experience which is relevant and adds to your application. If you don't have professional experience, please leave this section blank. This will not affect your application status
- In **Part D**, indicate the subject area(s) or specific courses that you wish to study, and list them in order of preference, such that number one indicates the first preference.¹

Allocate at least three and up to five UK HEIs that you are interested in, and list them in order of preference.²

- In **Part E**, name two academic referees who will provide recent references about your suitability to study in the UK. They should know you personally and be familiar with your professional and academic career and competencies.
- In **Part F**: you are required to write essay statements about yourself and your plans. You should answer each question on the application form in the number of words specified. This is a very important aspect of the application and you are advised to give it considerable thought.

2) Applications for all candidates are to be submitted by the **Partner Palestinian university**, each for their specific nominees, with all supporting documents, indicated in item 4 below, to the British Council HESPAL team to the email: information@ps.britishcouncil.org. We only accept applications processed and submitted through the partner universities.

3) **Apply to the UK HEIs** participating in the HESPAL programme. Simultaneously, each applicant should directly apply for each of the UK HEIs listed in her/his application. Please make sure to attach the HESPAL application form to the overall documents sent to the UK HEIs.

4. Required Supporting Documents

The following documents must be submitted by the Palestinian Universities for each of their candidates:

- ❖ Complete HESPAL application form (including details of 2 academic referees);
- ❖ Certified proof of Palestinian nationality and Occupied Palestinian Territories residency (copy of ID, Passport);
- ❖ Nomination letter from the Palestinian university;
- ❖ Proof of employment at the university;
- ❖ Proof of previous academic record – i.e. Certified copies of degree certificates and transcripts, translated into English including grades of each year of study of bachelor's degree;
- ❖ Up-to-date IELTS certificate;
- ❖ Signed contract between each candidate and his/her university declaring that they will return to Palestine on completion of their studies to be employed at their Palestinian university;

Late or incomplete applications will be disqualified.

¹ Please note that we hope to offer a maximum of 3 PhD scholarships, subject to availability of multi-year funds.

² Please refer to our website <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/> to see the list of partner UK HEIs.

5. Selection Process

Each Palestinian university nominates up to 5 scholars and agrees with their nominees on the areas of study.

Palestinian universities send applications of all their candidates to the British Council OPT.

The British Council checks if eligibility requirements are met.

The British Council sends application forms and accompanying documents to the relevant UK HEIs as defined by the scholar's applications.

UK HEIs provide the British Council with a list of applicants they would be willing to accept, and ranks the top three in order of preference.*

The British Council is responsible for final placement of students, based on the student's acceptance and ranking by the UK HEIs and HESPAL funding partners' priorities for scholar selection.

Awards for PhDs will also depend on confirmation of multi-year funding for this by HESPAL funding partners.

If more candidates are placed in UK HEIs than HESPAL scholarship funding can cover, then the British Council reserves the right to initiate additional selection procedures and/or develop a reserve list in line with ranking. If selected scholars drop out then reserve candidates may be offered a place.

The British Council informs the Palestinian Universities of the final results.*

Successful applicants follow up on necessary communication and arrangements with the UK HEI offering a place.

- * *Please note the placement of a student at their preferred UK HEI cannot be guaranteed.*
- * *Please note that due to the high number of applications, we are unable to discuss the status of any application at any time during the process of selection.*

General Information

You can find out about the participating UK universities and courses of study at <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/>. You can also contact British Council Customer Services or Scholarships Coordinator.

For enquiries contact us:

Telephone: +970 (0)2 296 3293

Email: information@ps.britishcouncil.org