

## UCB VC Scholarships 2026/27 – Supporting your application

### Purpose

This document is designed to help you complete your University College Birmingham (UCB) scholarship application. It will explain each of the five sections and give you prompts to help you demonstrate why you should be selected to go through to the in-person selection day.

### Use of AI

It is recommended that you do not use AI to generate your application based on the criteria that we have chosen to assess you. This application is about you, your career aspirations, and how you will make an impact if you are given a scholarship. AI may be used to help you set out the structure of your own written work and to check your grammar and spelling.

#### 1. Alignment with UCB values.

In this section, you need to demonstrate how you, as an individual, align yourself with the three UCB values: excellence, empowerment and equity. Give clear examples that support the three values and how they have shaped you. For example, your commitment to excellence may come from a willingness to learn outside of your classroom and undertake additional qualifications that will help you achieve your career goals. This additional education does not have to be in a formal setting, it could be online (e.g., EdX, Coursera) or could be linked to other areas such as Duke of Edinburgh, Combined Cadet Force or sporting excellence. Clearly show your experiences and perspectives and avoid just listing achievements.

#### UCB Values

In a fast-moving world, it is our values that anchor us and guide our approach to achievement in each of our strategic spheres as we navigate change and complexity.

- **EXCELLENCE** – striving to achieve the very highest standards
- **EMPOWERMENT** – enabling of all students to engage in, shape, and benefit from, education and wider society
- **EQUITY** – creation of an environment for work and learning that is accessible, tackles inequality and promotes fairness

#### 2. Aspirations and goals.

The second section requires you to articulate where you want to be. This could be on graduation, in 5 years or 20 years. Avoid stating unrealistic aspirations, but do not be too conservative. We want to really see a deep, personal connection with your career goals and how these will impact you and society. Make sure that they tie in with your chosen field of study, and you demonstrate more than just a job title e.g., tax analyst, chief engineer, IT consultant etc.

### 3. Contribution to UCB life.

UCB is a vibrant, multicultural university in the heart of Birmingham. We have a diverse student population and are very proud of our heritage (<https://www.ucb.ac.uk/about-us/history-of-university-college-birmingham/>). We are also pleased to work in partnership with the Guild of Students (<https://ucbguild.co.uk>) who organise a range of social events, support student-led clubs/societies, and work with Course Representatives to promote students' needs. As part of the scholarship, you are expected to engage with the UCB community and demonstrate a strong link to our culture and values. Therefore, this section requires you to spend time looking at what UCB offers and demonstrate how you would engage with any existing opportunities or even create new ones in order to make an impact.

When writing your answer, avoid listing things that you could do. Instead, we suggest you focus on the personal impact that you would like to make and how. Here are some examples to get you started:

- Being an Ambassador to inspire future students, or a Mentor to support current ones
- Being a Course Rep to represent your peers or running as an elected Officer at the Guild of Students
- Participating in events on campus or leading a society with the Guild of Students to organise your own activities
- Volunteering with your academic Department or the Guild to support communications with other students or maintaining the campus surroundings

### 4. Overcoming challenges.

In this section, we would like you to demonstrate how you have overcome challenges in your life. These should be personal challenges that have impacted you in any aspect of your life, and what you did to overcome them. We want you to show how you accepted the challenge(s) and how you dealt with them. Avoid listing challenges and then just stating that you overcame them. An example could be an external commitment that you were required to fulfil outside of your schooling or college, that had an impact on your ability to study. You could demonstrate that you recognised the impact this was having on your study, how this could affect your grades, and then what steps you took to address the problem. Did you maximise your time better? Did you show resilience and determination to undertake additional study? All of these would show a desire to work hard to enable you to study in higher education and fulfil your career goals.

### 5. Communication and presentation

The final section is where we will judge your overall submission based on your ability to engage with the criteria and persuade us that your application is genuine and compelling. Therefore, it is important that you revisit your application several times and make sure that you have given sufficient detail and made explicit reference to what we are looking for. Avoid general statements that lack supporting evidence e.g., "I have shown a commitment to excellence by always working hard." We want to see detail that supports this statement. How

have you demonstrated a commitment to working hard? What did you do? What impact did this have i.e., did your subsequent grades exceed the initial prediction?

### Summary

This is your application. It is your opportunity to convince a panel that you deserve a fully funded scholarship at University College Birmingham. Write clearly, concisely and give supporting evidence that enhances your application. Avoid generalised statements that do not provide enough context or detail.

## Appendix 1. Scholarship application rubric

**Purpose:** This rubric is designed to evaluate scholarship applications.

### Scoring criteria

Each criterion will be scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest level of achievement.

Criteria	1 - Poor	2 - Fair	3 - Good	4 - Very Good	5 - Excellent
<b>Alignment with UCB Values</b> <i>Excellence</i> <i>Empowerment</i> <i>Equity</i>	Applicant demonstrates minimal understanding of UCB's values.	Applicant shows some understanding but does not clearly align with UCB's values.	Applicant shows a general alignment with UCB's values with some supporting evidence.	Applicant provides strong evidence of alignment with UCB's values through their experiences and perspectives.	Applicant provides outstanding evidence of alignment with UCB's values through deeply personal and impactful experiences.
<b>Aspirations &amp; Goals</b>	Aspirations are unclear, unrealistic, or not well articulated.	Aspirations are somewhat clear but lack a clear connection to their field of study.	Aspirations are clear and linked to their field of study with some rationale.	Aspirations are well thought-out, realistic, and connected to their field of study with strong rationale.	Aspirations are exceptionally well-articulated, with a strong personal connection and a clear pathway to achievement.
<b>Contribution to UCB Life</b>	Little or no mention of how the applicant will contribute to university life.	Some mention of contributing but lacks specific details or feasibility.	Clear explanation of how the applicant will engage in UCB life with some specific examples.	Strong evidence of planned involvement in extracurriculars, societies, or community service at UCB.	Exceptional and innovative ideas for contributing to UCB life, with clear evidence of impact and leadership potential.
<b>Overcoming Challenges</b>	No discussion of personal challenges or obstacles.	Minimal discussion of challenges with no clear resolution or reflection.	Discussion of challenges with some reflection on overcoming them.	Strong reflection on challenges, demonstrating resilience and determination.	Exceptional reflection on challenges, showing remarkable resilience, growth, and motivation for higher education.
<b>Communication &amp; Presentation</b>	Application lacks clarity, coherence, and structure.	Some structure, but ideas are not well-developed or clearly communicated.	Well-structured application with clear ideas and logical flow.	Strongly structured, well-written, and compelling application.	Exceptionally well-written, highly engaging, and persuasive application.

**Final scoring and decision**

Each application will receive a total score out of 25. Applications scoring **20-25** will be considered highly competitive, while those scoring **15-19** will be considered for further review. Applications scoring below 15 may require additional evaluation or may not be considered for the scholarship.

**Reviewer notes:**

- Strengths of the applicant
- Areas for improvement
- Final recommendation

**Reviewer Name:****Date:**