

**Office for Students Funded Scholarships Application Form for** **Postgraduate Conversion Course in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science:**

[**MSc Health Data Science**](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/postgraduate-courses/health-data-science-msc/)

**Guidance Notes and Terms and Conditions 2024**

Please ensure that you read all the guidance notes and terms and conditions below **BEFORE** completing a scholarship application form to make sure you are eligible to apply.

**Background Information**

In June 2019 the government announced that it would support the development of degree conversion courses in artificial intelligence (AI) and data science technologies to help address the shortage of AI and data specialists in the UK. In response, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Office for Artificial Intelligence (OAI) are providing funding through the Office for Students (OfS) for providers to develop postgraduate conversion courses in these areas.

The primary goal of the new conversion courses is to respond to the shortage of data science and AI specialists in the UK. The Government's Digital Strategy, predicted that within 20 years, 90 per cent of all jobs will require some element of digital skills. According to research from the Open University, the skills gap is costing UK businesses more than £2 billion a year in higher salaries, recruitment costs and temporary staffing. Their 2019 Bridging the Digital Divide, highlights the extent of digital skills gaps and the impact they are having on organisations and their employees. To address this need, we strongly encourage students’ resident in the UK to apply for the scholarship.

The supply of skilled graduates would need to increase significantly to keep pace with current demand, and it is expected that demand will also increase rapidly in the next few years.

The other important aim for this programme of work is to increase the number of people from groups currently underrepresented in the AI and data science fields, and to encourage graduates from diverse backgrounds to consider a future in these occupations. This lack of diversity was highlighted in the government's AI Sector Deal, which acknowledges that increasing diversity in the AI workforce is vital to ensure that everyone with the potential to participate has the opportunity to do so. For example, women represent 49 per cent of the workforce, but hold less than 19 per cent of all available technology jobs.

More information can be found on the scholarship pages on the [Office for Students website](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/skills-and-employment/postgraduate-conversion-courses-in-data-science-and-artificial-intelligence/).

**Eligibility criteria and the selection process**

Successful applicants will be provided with a £10,000 scholarship which will be paid in instalments, one per semester of the course (three instalments if full-time and six instalments if part-time).

 If you wish to be considered for a scholarship, you **MUST:**

* Have a current application for the [MSc Health Data Science](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/postgraduate-courses/health-data-science-msc/) course at Lancaster University;
* Be self-funding your degree, and not in receipt of any other scholarship or sponsorship

(this does not include loans, including a Postgraduate Master’s Loan);

* Apply for the scholarship before the posted deadline;
* Meet at least one of the below eligibility criteria set out in the table below.

The scholarship will only be awarded to students who enrol and study on the Lancaster University MSc in Health Data Science**. Note that the scholarship must be applied for separately**

Please ensure that you meet at least one of the below eligibility criteria and can provide evidence if requested.

 **Eligibility Criteria Table:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A)  | 1. - Black or Black British - Caribbean
2. - Black or Black British - African

29 - Other Black background 1. - Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
2. - Mixed - White and Black African

  | In line with the HESA student ethnicity codes 2018/19: [Student 2018/19 - Ethnicity | HESA](https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c18051/a/ethnic) |
| B)  | Female  | Applicants who are ‘female or identify as female’ gender.  The Office for National Statistics describes female gender as “a social construction relating to behaviours and attributes based on a label of femininity. Gender identity is a personal, internal perception of oneself and so the gender category someone identifies with may not match the sex they were assigned at birth where an individual may see themselves as a woman.”  |
| C)  | Disabled  | You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.  ‘Substantial’ is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed.  ‘Long-term’ means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.  There are special rules about recurring or fluctuating conditions, e.g. arthritis.  |
| D) | Student from postcode areas Q1 & Q2  | Check to see if your area is in quintile 1 or 2 (Q1 or Q2): [Young participation by area - Office for Students](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/) |
| E)  | Care experienced  | A care experienced person is someone who has spent time in care during their childhood.  |
| F)  | Estranged  | An irreconcilably estranged person is someone who has not had any verbal or written contact with their parents for a significant period of time, and this is unlikely to change. This can include your biological or adoptive parents, or your only living parent. A significant period of time is usually considered to be twelve months or longer, but this can also depend on your circumstances.  |
| G)  | Gypsy, Roma, Traveller  | The term Gypsy, Roma and Traveller encompasses a wide range of individuals who may be defined in relation to their ethnicity, heritage, way of life and how they self-identify. This may include: * English or Welsh Romany Gypsies
* European Roma
* Irish Travellers
* Scottish Gypsy Travellers
* Show people such as people linked with fairground or circus professions
* People living on barges or other boats
* People living in settled (bricks and mortar) accommodation
* New Age Travellers
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| H)  | Refugee  | The definition of a Refugee as defined on the UKCISA website is:  1. you must be ordinarily resident in

England on the first day of the first academic year of your course; **AND**  1. you must:
* have been recognised as a refugee by the UK Government and have remained ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands since then;

Or * be the spouse/civil partner of such a refugee and have been in that relationship on the date on which he/she made his/her application for asylum;

Or* be the child of such a refugee, or the child of such a refugee's spouse / civil partner, and be able to show that on the date that refugee made his/her application for asylum, you were: under 18 years of age; and the refugee was your parent, or your parent's spouse / civil partner.
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| I)  | Child from UK Military family, veterans or partner of UK Military personnel  | From a military family, where an immediate family member (partner, child, sibling) is or was part of the UK military/ military personnel/a veteran.  |

**All applications will be assessed and priority will be given to criteria A), B) and C) in the above criteria table.**

**Applicants who do NOT meet any of the criteria above will not be considered for a scholarship.**

If you have any questions about eligibility for a scholarship please contact: n.caldwell@lancaster.ac.uk

**How to Apply**

* The applicant should **read the guidance notes fully** before completing the scholarship application form.
* All questions on the form **MUST** be answered
* Incomplete forms will be disregarded
* All forms must be signed and dated (electronically signed forms will be acceptable)
* Applications submitted after the deadline date will not be accepted
* Submit your application form to: e.giorgi@lancaster.ac.uk

**Completing the Application Form**

 ***Section One: Personal details.***

Please complete the personal information section of the form – we need this information to contact you about your application.

***Section Two: Criteria Eligibility***

Scholarships are aimed specifically at supporting graduates from underrepresented groups in the Artificial Intelligence and Data Science fields stated by the Office for Students. Hence, the information you provide us with in this section will help us in establishing your eligibility for the scholarship.

Please note that this section is an important part of the selection process. Please be sure to tick the box(es) that best describes your situation and that you can provide the necessary proof if requested.

***Section Three: Course Details***

Please confirm the title of the course you have applied for.

***Section Four: Personal Statement***

When answering the questions in the personal statement section of the form please consider the following. In making a judgement about your application, the selection panel will base their assessment on:

* Your personal and family circumstances and the barriers that you have faced in continuing your education - with particular reference to the underrepresented group(s) you belong to.
* Your ambitions for the future, why you have chosen to study this course and how the Scholarship Award will help you to achieve your ambitions.

Your application for the Scholarship Award is completely confidential and the selection panel will only be able to take into account information that you provide on your application form. Whilst the selection panel do need some details of personal circumstances, with particular reference to the underrepresented group(s) you belong to, please note that we do not need to know about the circumstances that led to you being included in particular groups if you do not wish to provide this information (although it may help in some circumstances).

Please also note that, as the scholarship is funded by the OfS, anonymised data may be supplied to OfS for accountability purposes.

 **The supporting statement should NOT be more than 500 words in total.**

# Data Protection

We will process any personal data supplied to us in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016, and the Data Protection Act 2018.

As part of your application you are required to confirm which of the criteria apply to you. In doing so you may disclose to us special category personal data, for example you may declare your ethnic origin or a health condition. We process that special category data under Article 6 GDPR on the basis of our public task, and under Article 9 GDPR on the basis of Substantial Public Interest.

All personal data supplied to us will be stored for the duration of the academic year for which the scholarship has been awarded. The stored data will be safely and securely destroyed at the end of the same academic year.

Public Interest – the exercise of a function of a governmental department, in this case The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and The Office for Artificial Intelligence (OAI) to ensure more diversity in data science and AI specialists.

If you are currently enrolled in a course at Lancaster University or are applying for a course, you can find more information on the processing of your data in the [Lancaster Privacy Note](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/privacy/student-privacy/). The Privacy Notice contains information on how we secure your personal data, your rights in relation to your own personal data, how long we will retain your data for and details of who to contact should you have any queries about the use of your personal data by Lancaster University.

**Informing you of the outcome of your application**

Please note that this is a competitive process and not all scholarship applications will be successful. There is no appeals process if you are not successful as the panel’s decision is final; also, please note that we will not be able to offer feedback. You are welcome to reapply next intake (if scholarships are available) and if you are unsuccessful.

**If your application is taken forward, you may be contacted by an academic member of staff to discuss the information you have provided in your application.**

If you are successful in being offered a Scholarship, you will be notified soon after the assessment period.

For further information on any aspect of completing your application please email both Emanuele Giorgi (e.giorgi@lancaster.ac.uk) and Nicola Caldwell (n.caldwell@lancaster.ac.uk).

**Terms and Conditions**

These terms and conditions shall apply to all students enrolled as a student with Lancaster University who have been awarded the Office for Students Funded Scholarship for Postgraduate Conversion Course in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science (Scholarship).

 A student who successfully secures support under this Scholarship will receive a £10,000 scholarship which will be paid by the University in instalments, one per semester of the course (three payments if full-time and six payments if part-time) subject to these terms and conditions and any further terms and conditions set out in the Scholarship Funding Letter you receive from the University’s finance team.

In order to qualify for a Scholarship, the Student must meet the Eligibility Criteria and requirements set out in the Guidance Notes and have completed the application form. The awarding of Scholarships is a competitive process and the Scholarships shall be awarded in the University’s sole discretion.

Changes to study. If you change to another course your scholarship may be withdrawn and you may be required to repay sums to the University.

Monitoring of attendance. You must successfully enrol at the start of the course and maintain your attendance throughout, including meeting assessment deadlines and engaging in the course delivery, to ensure your scholarship instalments are awarded to you. Your course attendance may be monitored and reported.

Suspensions and withdrawal from studies. If you suspend or withdraw from your studies then you may not be eligible to receive any future payments in that academic year and your scholarship may be re-calculated.

If you are the subject of any investigation (to include criminal), form of proceedings (to include disciplinary or fitness to study proceedings) this will be considered by the University on a case by case basis, and the University will have full discretion to determine whether or not the you shall continue to receive the Scholarship or and when such support shall be withdrawn.

All scholarships paid will be calculated on a pro rata basis and any overpayments may need to be repaid to the University should you suspend, withdraw from studies, transfer to a non-eligible programme, or are no longer eligible for a particular scholarship for any other reason.

Repeating, extending or deferring your studies. The scholarships outlined herein will not be paid during any extension/repeat period(s) to your programme.

The scholarships outlined herein are for October 2024 entry only. If you defer or withdraw and restart, any scholarship already offered will become void. If eligible, you may apply for a scholarship for a subsequent entry, but this will be subject to the terms of those scholarships then in force. There is no guarantee that postgraduate students will be eligible for funding in future years. The application would then be considered along with any other applications for scholarships for that entry point, and there is no guarantee of outcome.