

## FAQs for OfS Scholarship for MSc Applied AI & Data Science

### 1. What other options are there other than identifying as Male or Female?

When we monitor gender, individuals have the choice to identify as either 'male' or 'female' or 'prefer not to say'. If an individual has transitioned to a new gender identity or self-identifies as a woman, then they are a woman from a legal and public policy perspective and should be treated as such for the purposes of this funding.

### 2. Why are you prioritising the 3 main areas for the scholarships

The main objective of the PG programme is to increase by a further 2500 the number of highly skilled graduates in AI and data science by 2023/2024, and increase the diversity of the workforce through scholarships for underrepresented groups, particularly female, black and disabled students. Part of the conditions set out to receiving these scholarships are that providers should prioritise female, black, and disabled students before allocating to the other eligible underrepresented groups.

Beyond those three groups, Solent will determine how scholarships are allocated within the parameters of our own project and the aims of the overall programme.

While conversion courses are primarily aimed at converting students from non-computer science first degrees into AI/data specialists, first-degree specialisms will not be taken into consideration above the 3 priority areas outlined.

### 3. Are international students eligible?

27 OfS scholarships will be awarded to home students while 6 Solent funded scholarships will be open to both home and international students who meet the criteria.

### 4. Could my benefits be affected by receiving this scholarship?

OfS are speaking with DfE to confirm any government advice. In the meantime, we have found the following link which may be helpful: <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Benefit-guides/Student-Support/How-does-student-support-affect-benefits>.

Towards the bottom it identifies benefits where student support is taken into account, but goes on to say:

*However, even for these benefits, some grant or loan income is ignored, including:*

- Fixed amounts for travel costs and books/equipment
- Any allowance for tuition fee

### 5. Is there a deadline to apply?

We recommend applying for the course and scholarship as soon as possible in order for these to be assessed in advance of the course start date. However, applications need to be received along with scholarship applications by the deadline specified on the website.

### 6. Can I get a scholarship and apply for a master's loan?

Yes. The OfS sort Agreement with DfE at the outset that scholarships could be received alongside master's loans.

**7. Is there any minimum duration set for placements?**

We encourage students to complete at least 13 weeks in a placement full time or part time.

**8. What will the contact hours be for the part-time route?**

You can expect 10-12 hrs a week class/lab time per week for full time and 5-6 hrs for part time. Full time means coming to university two days a week and part time one day a week in the first two trimesters. However, the third trimester is flexible when you will be doing the master thesis.

**9. How do I apply for the Government scholarship for this course?**

For the OfS scholarship, you need to apply through the University, a form will be provided through the scholarship web page ([Click here](#)) and scroll to bottom of the page

**10. Are there detailed descriptions of the module content?**

It will include exposure to Python programming language, machine Learning models, data science methods and other relevant topics to equip you with the required skills. The course will be very practical, focusing on solving real-world problems.

**11. Do you accept references that are not from a university tutor?**

We would accept non-academic references, for example from your employers etc.

**12. What guidance would you give in terms of what you need for the personal statement?**

The purpose of personal statement is to describe what makes you a suitable candidate for this course. You can include information along these lines: who you are, your educational background, your strengths and weaknesses, provide evidence of any relevant work experience and key skills including, research, critical thinking, planning, communication, time management and organisation, why do you want to do this course, your motivations, your future plans, any potential obstacles, challenges or risks in completing the course and how would you circumvent them.

Additionally, if you applying for OfS scholarship, please describe how the scholarship will help you to complete the course.

### **13. How do you define black students?**

In line with the HESA student ethnicity codes 2018/19

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c18051/a/ethnic>, the following codes in their definition of black students:

- 21 Black or Black British – Caribbean
- 22 Black or Black British – African
- 29 Other Black background
- 41 Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
- 42 Mixed – White and Black African

### **14. How do I know if I am from a PLOAR Q1 or Q2 postcode?**

Please use the following link to type in your post code to see if your area is in Quintile 1 or 2 (Q1 or Q2)

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/search-by-postcode/>

### **15. What is the definition of Care Experienced?**

At Solent University we consider the term care experienced young person or care leaver refers to someone who has spent 13 weeks or more in the care of the local authority (e.g. foster care or children's home) up until the age of 18

### **16. What is the definition of Estranged?**

At Solent we consider the term estranged as students who are aged 18 to 24 and are not communicating with either of their parents

### **17. What can I use the scholarships for?**

The funding can be used towards tuition fees or as a stipend or a combination of both. Stipend can be used to cover expenses like Equipment, living costs etc. You will be asked to specify your preference for this when you apply for the scholarship.

### **18. How will the scholarships be paid?**

The OfS will pay the money directly to the University who will allocate the payments in 4 instalments across the duration of the course. If funds are used towards tuitions fees the University will allocate a credit to your account. If money is for stipend the University will arrange to transfer funds to you. Both will be allocated in line with the 4 instalment dates.

### **19. Do part time students receive the full scholarship?**

Yes, they do. Their instalments should be paid pro rata.