



The Ultimate
CHEVENING
Guide

Chris Agape (MD)

The Ultimate Chevening Guide by Chris Agape (MD)

Published by Chris Agape

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*Essay examples used except otherwise stated are fictitious, any resemblance to
real life stories or events are totally co-incidental*

Essay Examples taken from <https://agriculturefirstblog.wordpress.com>

by Samuel Ndungu Wairimu

Additional reference material from AFM Stories Youtube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/c/AFMStories> By Faith Agboola

Cover by Chris Agape

*This book is dedicated to every person
who has a dream to leave an impact on their world.
Cheers to seeing those dreams come true
and hoping this book gives you a leap forward.*

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Hello there,

I made this guide specially for you to help you on your Chevening journey. I received guidance during my application process and I believe in paying it forward to provide you the support you need to win this award.

Please note these views are mine and based on my experience and **do not represent the views of the FCDO or the Chevening Body**. This book is intended to help guide you, ensure you do your own research. It may be a bit lengthy, so take your time and digest it gradually. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO READ THIS GUIDE ALL AT ONCE, pace yourself.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A good application hinges on one major thing, RESEARCH!, RESEARCH!!, RESEARCH!!

Research is the key to a successful application. Research Chevening, research your course , research your chosen university, research trends in your industry, research yourself and your past endeavors and experiences, research, research and more research, the more research and information you have the stronger your application.

Take time to go through attached links and materials in this guide and understand them thoroughly. You're also not limited to this material feel free to look beyond it.

Your number one place of research is the chevening website, 80% of questions are answered there and we would be referring to it frequently <https://www.chevening.org>.

1.1 WHAT IS THE CHEVENING AWARD?

The Chevening Scholarship Awards is an initiative by the UK government, through its Foreign Commonwealth And Development Office, to **foster partnership** with other countries through training and development of leaders from these countries in a one year taught master degree programme at any UK university of their choice.

These scholars are then expected to return to their countries and **create change** in their chosen field of endeavor.

The Awards also aims to build and increase **a global network** of leaders across various developmental fields across the world.

Please note the highlighted words, as that should be the focus of the communication in your essay-how you would contribute to these objectives.

NB- There are other types of Chevening Awards and Fellowships, but this guide would focus on the one year fully funded masters scholarship in the UK.

To see the priority areas for international development by the UK, which should guide your field and choice of masters,
Visit : <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk>.

For more understanding on what Chevening is,
Visit : [What is Chevening all About?](https://youtu.be/G60Ayo_khwY)

https://youtu.be/G60Ayo_khwY
<https://www.chevening.org/faqs/what-does-a-chevening-scholarship-cover/>

1.2 QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

The Chevening Awards is open to anyone who meets the following criteria

- Are over 18 years of age (minimum), no maximum age
- Have at least 2 years working experience (volunteer experience also included)
- Have secured an unconditional offer to a UK university for a one year taught masters degree program. You don't need to have secured admission before applying, but you would need to have an offer of admission by the time of the interviews. As a Chevening scholar, your processing timeline is generally earlier than other students. As soon as you start applying for Chevening, start applying to your schools. My advice is to complete your **school application before December**, so you have a better chance of **having an offer by the interviews in March**.
- Can prove leadership and networking experience in impact lead endeavors in any given field.
- Can communicate a clear career plan.
- Can communicate clearly why you want to study in the UK.
- Ready to return back to your country for at least 2 years.
- IELTS is NOT a Chevening criteria but is often needed for most applications to UK schools, ensure you confirm while applying.

For complete chevening qualification Criteria,

Visit

[eligibility](#)

<https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/who-can-apply/work-experience/>

<https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/guidance/common-errors/>

Watch this Video where the programme officer for Nigeria goes In depth on the requirements of the award amongst other things. It's quite long, about 2hrs, so best take it in bits, the qualification requirements are covered in the first 17 mins.

<https://youtu.be/BHL81pJSaps>

1.3 APPLICATION TIMELINE

The Chevening application timeline is released yearly on the Chevening site, for this year it can be found here:

<https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/application-timeline/>

What does this mean for you?

Please **do not wait till last minute** to start working on your application, you can always start and come back to update.

A **great essay never comes on the first trial**, you would have to revise the drafts many times. I edited my initial essay over 10 times before I submitted and it took me about a month. This may not be the case for everyone, but please give ample time to revisit your essays over and over again before submission. Once you have decided to apply for Chevening, start the application process.

Take **note of the time and time zone**. Chevening deadlines are usually in BST/GMT, so do well to convert to your region appropriately. Don't wait till the last day to submit as the site may become crowded.

Start **applying to your schools concurrently as you apply for the Chevening scholarship**. It's best you're done with all school applications by December, so latest by March, you would have secured an offer when the interviews come. Chevening allows you submit up to 3 schools, so send your applications to all 3 schools for your desired programs.

You **would need references and your passport** for both Chevening and school applications. Start contacting your likely referees immediately and renew your passport.

1.4 WHAT DO I NEED TO APPLY?

- Valid Passport
- 2 References
- Your CV
- Academic Certificate
- 3 Chosen UK universities and courses you would like to attend
- Proof of work experience that meets required hours minimum of 2 years. Kindly study the hour limit for work accepted by Chevening. Find more details on this here:
<https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/who-can-apply/work-experience/>
<https://www.chevening.org/news/work-experience-four-key-points-to-help-you-apply/>
<https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/guidance/>
- A **compelling story** that proves current and future impact in any chosen field as demonstrated in 4 Essays on:

Leadership skills
Networking skills
Studying In the UK
Future Career Plans

Each essay has a maximum of 500 words, and would be looked at in depth as we go. Your essays must be cohesive and flow into each other.

CHAPTER 2

APPROACHING THE ESSAYS

2.0 Each Essay Has A 500 Word Limit

This means you have limited space to convince the reading committee. Make every word count! Chevening receives thousands of applications yearly, so you must ensure every word makes you stand out and has 'earned its place'. If a sentence can be replaced with a word that gives the same or stronger meaning, replace it.

Example:

I created and developed a guideline for my team members at work that increased our output greatly, generating 2million dollars in revenue. A 40% increase from the previous year.

While this is a great statement, they are lots of duplicate words and can be shortened thus:

I developed new guidelines that increased our team's annual output by 40%, a total of 2million dollars. (fictitious)

Make every word count.

2.1 Be Bold And Audacious

Chevening wants distinctive leaders, hence, promote yourself unashamedly in your essays. Use phrases that highlight yourself such as 'I made', 'I created' 'I organized'. In Chevening it's all about **YOU!** Avoid non-specific words that do not highlight your contribution. If you worked in a team, highlight your role in that team and not the communal efforts of the team. A key principle to keep in mind is **to highlight personal efforts and connect them to group results**. What did you do that helped generate the results?

For example:

As finance secretary, I ensured the product launch plan remained on budget and optimized cost control for the launch team. These efforts helped the company release four new products that are ranked amongst the top ten globally. It also positioned The International Group as the foremost production firm in Nigeria, all within 18 months. (fictitious)

(Here you can see I linked the personal role of finance secretary of the launch team to the overall results of the company).

2.2 Show Don't Tell

No one knows your story as well as you do, so you must give proper context for everything that you describe. **Be specific and detailed. Give names, places and locations. For every achievement, find ways to quantify them. Using numbers and percentages is always a good idea.** Don't just tell what you did, show what you did- the size of its impact and the magnitude of change created.

An Example that 'tells' only

I connected with a senior colleague and SAN at our national conference who provided me coaching and guidance. This helped improve my performance at work by introducing a new system for managing criminal cases called Legalize.

Same Example that 'Shows'

At the 2016 National Legal Conference, I connected with Barrister John James (SAN), then chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association during the breakout session over questions on his presentation. This began a mentor-mentee relationship, where via frequent calls and emails over the span of a year, he helped me solve the criminal case management challenge in my firm. Together, we created a sorting framework called legalize. Legalize now caters to over 500 cases yearly and has reduced court hearing wait time from 14weeks to 5weeks for non-murder trials. (fictitious)

2.3 Use the STARR Approach

The STARR approach refers to a guided system for communicating your experiences across the four essays. Even beyond the Chevening application, the STARR approach is a great way to describe your achievements in a strong and compelling manner in any application.

STARR is an acronym that stands for:

Situation

Task

Action

Results

Reflection

Let's look at them:

2.3.1 Situation

In your situation sentence or paragraph, you are aiming to describe the problem or situation you tried to solve. It focuses on describing how things were before you came along. It also explains the need for the action or intervention you took

Generally, especially in your leadership and networking essay, the situation should describe a developmental problem or challenge within your field or the field you would like to study in where you then used your leadership skills or network to solve. As always, be specific and make it clear the particular problem you addressed.

To give a strong situation statement, you may need to research current statistics in your field. What is the current population of out of school children? How much is lost due to gas flaring and environmental damage? Etc etc . Research global, national, local events or even happenings in your company to give a strong situation statement.

In simple terms, the situation statement describes the problem.

Here's a sample situation statement:

Lagos ranks as one of the most polluted cities in Africa. In a BBC 2022 global ranking, it's listed as the second worst city to live in, producing an estimated 870 000 metric tonnes of waste annually -according to freecycle. The majority of this waste washes into the Atlantic ocean.

Or say something at work

The absence of clear guidelines for my company's annual review conference costs us an estimated 5 million yearly in missed delegates and participants. This happens due to the absence of an efficient structure and timeline.

2.3.2 Task

The task sentence simply states the action that needs to be taken to address the problem in the situation. It is usually generic and states a non-specific idea of the solution. It also leads into the action statement which is more specific to you.

Here's a sample task statement:

This alarming situation calls for more initiatives to address increasing environmental threats and promote sustainability.

2.3.3 Action

The Action statement then states specifically, what you did about the problem. This is arguably the most important part of the approach. This is where you promote yourself and your work, this is where you expatiate what you have done, this is what the reading committee are looking for the most. Like i've mentioned, be specific and detailed, show don't tell, give metrics and numbers, give context and quantify the impact.

Here's a sample action statement

In response to this, I created the Great Environment Initiative(GEI) , an NGO that focuses on reducing pollution in 2016. Through this initiative, I raised a team of 30 volunteers across 7 local governments (Yaba, Mushin, Lagos mainland, Alimosho, Surulere, Somolu and Ikorodu) in Lagos State.

2.3.4 Results

The results statement shows the impact of what you did and what change you created. It is a great place to use numbers and percentages.

Here's a sample result statement:

Since inception, the initiative has reached over 15 local communities and conducted 25 clean up exercises. It has helped properly dispose 200 bags of mixed-pollutant waste (majorly plastic and metal debris), estimated to

weigh 700 metric tonnes. For these efforts, I was selected as one of the top 10 leaders (Of 65 entries), and awarded the Young Change Makers Award in 2021 by the Nigerian Ministry of Environment.

2.3.5 Reflection

This may not always be present, but basically highlights the lessons learnt from the experience and possible areas you plan to explore going forward.

Here's a sample reflection statement:

Working in underserved communities unaware of the threat they face in their environment, has refueled my commitment to do more for environmental transformation and education.

Putting all STARR statements together,

Lagos ranks as one of the most polluted cities in Africa. In a BBC 2022 global ranking, it is listed as the second worst city to live in, producing an estimated 870 000 metric tonnes of waste annually -according to freecycle. This alarming situation calls for initiatives that address these environmental threats and promote sustainability. In response to this, I created the Great Environment Initiative(GEI), an NGO that focuses on reducing pollution levels in 2016. I raised a team of 30 volunteers across 7 local governments (Yaba, Mushin, Lagos mainland, Alimosho, Surulere, Somolu and Ikorodu) who have impacted over 15 local communities and conducted 25 clean up exercises. GEI has properly disposed of 200 bags of mixed-pollutant waste (majorly plastic and metal debris), weighing 700 metric tonnes since inception. For these efforts I was selected as one of the top 10 leaders (Of 65 entries), awarded with the Young change makers award in 2021 by the Nigerian Ministry of Environment .Working in underserved communities unaware of the threats posed by their

environment, has refueled my commitment to do more for environmental transformation and education. (fictitious)

The STARR approach **should be used for each paragraph or example you want to give in any of the essays**. Sometimes a segment of the approach can be just a one liner and doesn't have to be a long sentence. Make sure all parts of the approach are covered and brought together in a powerful and convincing way.

2.4 Arrange Events/Examples Chronologically

It is best to arrange your examples chronologically. This helps the examiners mentally picture your progress and appreciate the timeline of events and your growth.

2.5 Use Grammarly

Grammarly is a very helpful tool in writing strong essays, if you can, go for the paid version as it gives you access to the AI suggestions. It would also give an idea of the general strength of your essay, if it sounds convincing or persuasive enough. You can split the grammarly premium costs with a friend and both of you use it for your essays.

2.6 Avoid Plagiarism!!

Do not copy essays or paragraphs from previous submissions for your entry. All essays would be tested with anti-plagiarism software and if yours is found to be too identical, your application would be disqualified.

You can also cross check your essays yourself using sites like:

Scribbr

https://www.scribbr.com/plagiarism-checker/?scr_source=knowledgebase&scr_medium=sidebar&scr_campaign=prevent-plagiarism-run-a-check

Grammarly

<https://www.grammarly.com>

Most importantly tell your story in an original, creative and powerful way.

2.7 The Essay Assessment Guide

The essay assessment guide shows what parameters are being used by the reading committee to decide which applications go to the next round. The highest points allocated is 4 and the least point 0.

To get to the interviews, you should aim for 4 points in each of the essays.

Download the guide Here

 [Chevening Scoring Guide \(unofficial\).pdf](#)

We would use this guide to dive into the essays.

For more Guidance on the Essays

Visit - <https://www.chevening.org/news/application-advice/>

CHAPTER 3

THE LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE ESSAY

The leadership essay attempts to answer this question

Chevening is looking for individuals who will be future leaders or influencers in their home countries. Explain how you meet this requirement, using clear examples of your own leadership and influencing skills to support your answer.

Using our assessment guide, a 4 Point leadership essay

Leader ship	• Held a position of leadership in a professional context including in a voluntary organization (e.g. a political party, university society, NGO, charity or professional association). • Provided strong evidence that they have shaped opinions in their home country through debating, politics, blogs, lecturing and education, social media or policy work. Applicant has provided a multiple number of examples to demonstrate their strong leadership and influencing skills.
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From this, its is clear that chevening favors examples that show

- Leadership in **a professional context** i.e your job or career.
- In a **voluntary organization** eg NGO or associations , university bodies etc or others of such.
- Where **opinions were shaped**, ie you influenced a new guideline, process, policy , document etc.
- Multiple examples of leadership.

This is my recommendation and it isn't the only way to approach the essay, however it's a method that worked for me and I've seen play out in different ways for other scholars. You should approach your leadership essay with a minimum of 3 leadership examples (I'd say no more than 4), with each example covering the above listed domains in a paragraph. Don't forget to **arrange your examples chronologically**.

Before going any further, I'd like to clarify that **leadership and execution of a task aren't the same thing**. Leadership, especially in the context of Chevening, has to do with **influencing other people, processes or systems towards a particular line of action or cause**. Carrying out an action or performing a duty isn't leadership, changing how it is done or recruiting others to join you is.

3.0 Leadership Essay structure

- **Paragraph 1**-Introduction
- **Paragraph 2** -Career/professional context
- **Paragraph 3**- Work in a voluntary organization or setting
- **Paragraph 4**- Influencing opinions/processes/systems
- **Paragraph 5**-Reflection/future leadership opportunities/?4th example/Conclusion

3.1 Introduction

Start with an **introduction** that gives a one liner definition of leadership and then an overview of your leadership examples which you plan to expatiate in following paragraphs. This should be no more than 3-4 sentences in all.

Example

Leadership for me is the ability to drive change. From training farmers to optimize production, creating new guidelines for predicting crop yield, to increasing sales via social media, I have always sought ways to be a changemaker and continue to do so.

3.2 Leadership Examples

In paragraph 2,3 and 4, using the **STARR** approach for each, highlight 3 leadership examples from the above domains. Always highlight your influence, not just what you did.

In a professional context

Joining Jegun Agric in 2018, one challenge faced by our farmers was that of declining yield. They couldn't optimize production amidst unpredictable seasons, so I created the Jegun farmers workshop to tackle this challenge. I persuaded the company leadership to include the event as part of our yearly Corporate Social Responsibility by connecting it to our focus on human empowerment. The event taught farmers various skills such as mixed farming, fertilizer application and seed selection in practical informative sessions. Two years ago, it included soft loans and credit facilities. It has now trained over 300 farmers from 15 communities across Lagos state. These farmers have gone back to teach these methods to their colleagues, multiplying the impact. Participants recorded up to 40% increase in crop production and have received over 6 Million naira in loans. These efforts positioned Jegun Agric as one of the top 20 agriculture companies in 2020.

Work in voluntary association

In response to shrinking distribution due to rising insecurity, I partnered with the Lagos Farmers Association on its annual fresh produce sales in 2021. Held across mile 12 and Ikorodu markets, I multiplied reach for the event by creating e-fliers for the program using Canva. I taught participating farmers how to share their produce on social media platforms and created a 2 week ad campaign on facebook and instagram. The campaign recorded a 15% conversion rate that helped bring over 3000 consumers and 30 vendors together to perform transactions worth N25 Million (a 200% increase from the previous year). I continue to coach many farmers today, on how to leverage new media to improve sales.

Influencing thoughts ideas/process

In January, I began sharing about food production to help consumers better understand the food industry. Through weekly articles on medium and now a full blog site (foodjourney.com), I educate my followers on current agricultural trends. I also challenge stakeholders such as government and community rulers to play their part towards food security. I now have over 800 followers and a monthly reach of 4000 views. My articles have been cited in The Nation and Guardian Newspaper reaching over 6million people. This has encouraged more people into agriculture with over 60% of my audience admitting getting to an aspect of the food production chain via my posts in a recent poll.

3.3 Conclusion

The 5th paragraph is basically a conclusion and can be your learnings from all these experiences, future leadership opportunities you plan to explore, a conclusion etc. It is strongly recommended you **use this paragraph to show how Chevening can contribute to your leadership journey or what leadership opportunities the chevening award would afford you that you wish to explore.**

Winning the Chevening scholarship would help me connect with other global leaders in the agricultural space and contribute significantly to the UK's efforts towards food security in Nigeria.

All Together

Leadership for me is the ability to drive change. From training farmers to optimize production, creating new guidelines for predicting crop yield, to increasing sales via social media, I have always sought ways to be a changemaker and continue to do so.

Joining Jegun Agric in 2018, one challenge faced by our farmers was that of declining yield. They couldn't optimize production amidst unpredictable seasons, so I created the Jegun farmers workshop to tackle this challenge. I persuaded the company leadership to include the event as part of our yearly Corporate Social Responsibility by connecting it to our focus on human empowerment. The event taught farmers various skills such as mixed farming, fertilizer application and seed selection in practical informative sessions. Two years ago, it included soft loans and credit facilities. It has now trained over 300 farmers from 15 communities across Lagos state. These farmers have gone back to teach these methods to their colleagues, multiplying the impact. Participants recorded up to 40% increase in crop production and have received over 6 Million naira in loans. These efforts positioned Jegun Agric as one of the top 20 agriculture companies in 2020.

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Winning the Chevening scholarship would help me connect with other global leaders in the agricultural space and contribute significantly to the UK's efforts towards food security in Nigeria. (fictitious)

Please Note

I have shared this example so you can see how a great essay is built from the scratch and understand the principles behind it. **This is a fictitious example** and the semblance to real events or stories is purely coincidental.

Use this template to guide you to **tell your own story** convincingly.

Dont forget to cross check english accuracy with grammarly and stick with the word limit.

For more Details on the Leadership Essay,

Visit

<https://www.chevening.org/news/what-leadership-qualities-do-you-need-to-become-a-chevening-scholar/>

<https://www.chevening.org/news/application-advice/>

 How To Score High In Chevening Leadership Essay | Over 100 Select...

CHAPTER 4

THE NETWORKING ESSAY

The networking essay attempts to answer the following questions

Chevening is looking for individuals with strong professional relationship-building skills, who will engage with the Chevening community and influence and lead others in their chosen profession. Please explain how you build and maintain relationships in a professional capacity, using clear examples of how you currently do this, and outline how you hope to use these skills in the future.

From our assessment guide, a 4 point networking essay

Networking	• Demonstrated exceptional networking skills at work, professional associations, personal contacts or social media (e.g. blogs, Facebook, Twitter). Provided strong evidence of their ability to use their contacts to achieve a positive outcome, influence, or lead others. Applicant has provided a multiple number of examples to demonstrate their strong networking skills. • Made multiple references to the Chevening community and has identified a number of benefits accessing this network will bring to them personally, professionally and their home country on their return
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From this guide it is clear Chevening prioritizes networking examples that

- Show networking skills at work to achieve impact.
- Networking through professional associations.
- Networking through social media.
- Makes multiple references to the Chevening network and how this network would benefit their goals and impact in their country.

The goal of the networking essay is three fold, 1) to show your **ability to foster and make new connections**, so it is important to show your **HOW**, how did you **create** and **maintain** this network? And 2) How this network has **helped you solve a problem** or create impact and 3) how the Chevening network would help you create impact currently and when you're back. Don't forget to always use the STARR approach.

Here's my suggested Outline

- **Paragraph 1**-Networking example at work
- **Paragraph 2**-Networking example through an association or body
- **Paragraph 3**-Networking using social media
- **Paragraph 4**-How you are engaging the Chevening network and how being a part of the network would help you contribute to development in your country

For No 4, a good way to always start is how you joined various support groups that have helped you prepare for the Chevening scholarship application process. I believe you're also reading this guide because of a connection you made in the Chevening space, so it's worthy of mention. You start with that and then build into how you would use the Chevening network to execute your plans when you return back to the country. You should mention and refer to the Chevening network in Nigeria through its alumni and the work of the UK in Nigeria.

My networking experience has been diverse, with the most significant moment being when I organized a financial literacy training for a group of women from (location) in July 2017. The training was conducted by the Founder and Chief Executive Officer (Name of the Organization) – a Microfinance institution based in (location). I had interacted with her while working at (Name withheld) Bank since I was her account relationship officer. When I later resigned from formal employment to actively campaign for the election, at my request, she agreed to personally conduct the training. Among other things, she shared success stories of other women groups to inspire them. (Location) was one of the six wards where I received the highest number of votes in the General Election which was attributed to this initiative. As of September 2018, over one hundred women who benefited from the training are now clients with the micro-finance institution which is now planning a new office in the area due to the increased number of clients.

My networking skills led to my appointment to the Jubilee Party Secretariat in Murang'a County where I led a team in coordinating constituency activities in the repeat presidential campaign of October 2017. Our task was to ensure a huge voter turnout of which we led in the country at 87%. I would make weekly presentations to a team composed of (titles of senior government officers). My negotiation skills were sharpened by the then Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade who was later promoted to the Cabinet Secretary in the same docket. My immediate supervisor was Irungu Nyakera, the then Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning in

charge of the State Department of Planning and Statistics. He was impressed by my skills and in August 2018, he joined a group of professionals to revive one of the oldest political parties in multi-party Kenya-the Democratic Party, he selected me to join its youth caucus known as 'Young Democrats' where I have continued to network.

*As a prospective Chevening Scholar, I plan to engage the Kenya Chevening Alumni Network to develop initiatives that will address poverty and unemployment in the country. I will combine my business banking experience to transform viable small-scale farms into thriving businesses to achieve food security and create jobs. I also plan to develop global linkages and networks through active participation in Chevening events necessary for my contribution to Kenya's development in the future.
(from agriculturefirstblog.wordpress.com by Samuel Ndungu Wairimu)*

(Please note that the networking essay is a very personal one and would often involve naming specific people and organizations who may not be comfortable with their details in a general forum like this. The above example (a real one) just gives an idea of how it should flow, has 2 examples instead of 3 and excludes some key details)

For more information on the networking essay,

Visit :

 [How To Score High In Chevening Networking Essay | Over 100 Selec...](#)

CHAPTER 5

THE STUDY IN THE UK ESSAY

The Study In The Uk Essay attempts to answer the following question:

Outline why you have selected your chosen three university courses, and explain how this relates to your previous academic or professional experience and your plans for the future. Please do not duplicate the information you have entered on the work experience and education section of this form

From our assessment guide, a 4 point Study in the UK essay

Studying in the UK	• Applicants clearly demonstrate that they have thoroughly researched their 3 chosen courses • Already hold an offer of admittance from one or more of their preferred universities. • They provide excellent and detailed arguments on the relevance of the master's programmes to their future career and the development of their sector and country. • Has demonstrated a strong aptitude for studying and professional development. • Has already achieved or is in the process of undertaking academic awards, training, short courses, or producing publications. • Applicant has provided a multiple number of examples to demonstrate their commitment to their personal and professional development.
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This is one of those dynamic essays where it is not exactly as straightforward as the others. From the guide we can see , Chevening favors essays that

- Show thorough research of your 3 UK schools and the course choices
- Hold an offer of admission (not a must at this stage)
- Highlight how these courses would help develop your country/your capacity in your field
- Also show why this masters is in the UK and not anywhere else
- Shown ability/aptitude to study and personal and professional development

Now there are many parts to this, but let me start with saying, you need to **show that you are committed to learning and not just waiting for your masters before developing yourself**. Chevening requires at least 2 years work experience, have you taken any professional courses within that time? Any certifications? Accreditation? Do well to highlight these and align them with what you intend to study in the UK. You also need to mention why you want this masters in the UK and not anywhere else.

The next part is researching your 3 schools. It is very important for this essay. You can either select **3 similar courses in the same school or similar courses from 3 different schools, the latter is advised**.

When choosing a program, choose one that **aligns with your academic qualification and/or your experience so you tell a cohesive story**. If you want to pivot to a different field from what you studied in school, it is usually better to have some experience in that area to support the transition and explain why.

Here are some key areas to research about:

5.1 The ranking of the school

Research how the school is ranked globally and in the UK, not just generally but in **that specific field**. The ranking is a bonus point when describing your motivation for that course.

5.2 The Course Modules

It is important to research the course modules. Now typically, each program you select would have multiple course modules. It would be unwise to try to talk about all of them, focus on 2-3 key modules for each of your choices that aligns most with the impact you want to make (which would be discussed in detail in your final essay).

5.3 The Academic leaders

Find out about the Head of department of your program, has he/she done any research or notable work you'd be interested in learning from? Are there other professors or academic leaders in the school who you believe can be beneficial to your growth? Do well to search these and add as points to why you selected a particular school.

5.4 Additional Services

What other services are the school notable for that would enhance your learning experience? Career fair? A well equipped library? Internship Programs? Do well to research these also.

5.5 Host City

Chevening expects you to have a well-rounded academic experience which includes exploring whatever city your school is located. Do well to research unique features of your host UK city, monuments, relaxation areas, tourist spots etc Also research such features in your school.

Now it is unwise to touch all these points for each school example as that would be too long. You can pick some points and discuss per example, however more priority and points should be given to your first choice school. With all these factors in mind here's my suggested outline for this essay:

Paragraph 1- Talk about your experience and personal/professional development towards your desired goals/or the course you're studying and **why you're going for a UK masters.**

Paragraph 2- Discuss your first choice school and course, highlight ranking, discuss 2-3 course modules and how these modules would help you achieve your goals, and additional services e.g library etc.

Paragraph 3- Discuss Second choice school, Academic leaders, additional services and highlights of the city/course/school.

Paragraph 4- Discuss 3rd choice, ranking, 1or 2 course modules, additional services and/or highlights of the city.

Paragraph 5- Short Conclusion on how this masters would help you contribute to the development of your country through her partnership with the UK.

Here's an example of a Study in the UK Essay

Despite being among the top ten destinations for foreign direct investment in Africa and initiating reforms that have led to economic growth since 2003, Kenya faces a high poverty rate and a widening inequality gap. This is due to the lack of evidence-based policies, corruption and political instability during elections. The fact that the number of millionaires is expected to increase while the number of poor people is increasing in the next decade should be a concern for any policymaker in the country. This has motivated me to pursue a Master's degree in International Development to gain knowledge and skills on poverty reduction, development and addressing inequality. Though much of my career has been in banking, my experience with poor rural communities as a parliamentary candidate in the 2017 General Election makes my case to switch careers.

The MSc Applied International Development offered at the University of Reading is my first choice. The university is among the top twenty institutions in the United Kingdom by research intensity and top thirty by research power which will develop my research competencies to come up with effective evidence-based poverty reduction policies. I plan to specialize in their Agriculture and Social Development pathway as this will be in line with my goal of addressing poverty using agriculture. In addition, the course is offered at the Graduate Institute of International Development, Agriculture and Economics (GIIDAE) where I can take electives in agriculture such as Agriculture Project Planning and Management in Developing Countries taught by Dr. Chittur Srinivasan.

My second preferred course is MSc International Development: Poverty, Inequality and Development offered at the University of Manchester. Apart from learning strategies and policies being implemented to advance equality, development and reduce poverty, I will also have a chance for a field trip to experience the global challenge of inequality in another country as part of the course. Based on the 2018 World QS universities rankings by subject, the university is rated 14th in the world and 3rd in the United Kingdom on Development Studies.

My third choice is MSc International Development at the University of Edinburgh. The course is appealing because apart from learning about the historical approaches of international development and politics associated with the subject, there is a whole unit on contemporary issues and organizations of importance to development policy and practice. The university also offers an eight-week research-based project where one is attached to an institution either in the United Kingdom or overseas with an option of completing a research dissertation based on the fieldwork or print and library sources. This will also provide practical experience to complement coursework. The University also has beautiful classic buildings and surrounding scenery that would provide a perfect getaway after lectures to refresh the mind.

*Overall studying in the UK will provide an opportunity to build collaborations to achieve Kenyan Vision 2030 which aims to industrialize and transform the country into middle-income status while ensuring high-quality life for her citizens
(from agriculturefirstblog.wordpress.com by Samuel Ndungu Wairimu)*

For More on Studying in The UK Essay

Visit : <https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/why-study-in-the-uk>
<https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/find-a-course/>
<https://youtu.be/75LFWFqZtrl>

CHAPTER 6

THE CAREER PLAN ESSAY

The career plan essay attempts to answer the following question:

Chevening is looking for individuals who have a clear post-study career plan. Please outline your immediate plan upon returning home and your longer term career goals. You may wish to consider how these relate to what the UK is doing in your country.

From our assessment guide, a 4 Point career plan Essay

Career Plan	• Applicant is working at a senior level in his/her field and working to achieve ambitious/innovative goals in his/her chosen sector. • Provides a number of examples of how the Chevening programme would help them to develop their sector and demonstrates strong understanding of UK priorities. • Demonstrates how a Chevening Scholarship would increase his/her ability to have influence and make changes in his/her work and home country.
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From this guide it is clear chevening favors an essay that:

- Shows you have ambitious/innovative goals in your field. It's important you show you're not just another doctor/lawyer/banker etc, but you have a clear goal and purpose which you seek to achieve in your career.
- Show clearly how the chevening programme/network would help you achieve your goals. How would you use your access to the chevening network to achieve your goals?
- Shows understanding of the activities of the UK in your country and aligns future plans with them. Chevening at its core is focused on **helping build partnerships with various countries** and you must show you understand this and will contribute to it. To see what the UK is doing in your field/country , Visit <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk> Plan your career goals around contributing to the projects in your fields.
- Show how Chevening would help increase your influence in your country.

Now when approaching this essay, it is important that these components are included in each segment of your career plan. Your career plan should be segmented as follows:

6.1 Short term Plan

Your short term plan refers to what you plan to do in the period immediately following the end of your award. Don't forget, you're expected to come back home, this plan focuses on the 0-5 years after your return.

It's important you are clear and realistic, keep in context you're just returning to your country after a year of being away, may or may not have a job etc. A good place to start is to say you would continue your previous job (as this is quite realistic), start a blog post, register your foundation etc etc . Then state how what you've learnt in your masters and the chevening network would help you achieve this plan or expand the impact. Also relate

it to what the UK is doing in your field. Research what the Chevening body or the UK in your country is doing, do they have seminars or conferences for businesses? Incubators? Loans? Whatever details you can find that the UK is doing specifically to develop your country should reflect in your plan.

It is worth mentioning again that you avoid ambiguous terms like “i will transform youth development” “I would empower underserved communities” etc. Be specific on what you would do, then link it to a broader goal and then connect to what the UK is doing in that field or in your country. It is therefore important that you do our favorite word....**Research**, what the UK is doing so you can align it. Let me give an example

*Upon my return, I would continue my work at The Groove Associates (TGA) as a Business Management Executive. Using the learnings from the Business Development modules of my MBA program, I would deploy strategies that would help increase our client turnover such as direct advertising and partnership-based product embedding. I will leverage my access to the Chevening network (both the global alumni and the alumni in Nigeria) to help gain clients internationally by partnering with fellow scholars, leaders and alumni in the space. I would do this through alumni meet-up events and sessions. These efforts would improve the economic prospects of our clients and stimulate growth in the Nigerian economy. It would also contribute significantly to the UK's goal of increasing the GDP growth rate in Nigeria to 5% by 2025.
(fictitious)*

6.2 Mid-term Plan

Your mid term plan focuses on what you plan to do 5-10 years after you return. Generally it is expected that at this point you are rising in your career and gaining more influence. Here you can begin to talk about taking higher positions in your organization, higher positions in other organizations, expanding your work nationally or working in government. There's room for your plans to be a bit bigger, however you still need to be specific. Also relate it to the impact you want to make, the chevening network and what the UK is doing in your field and/or country.

6.3 Long term Plan

Your long term plan simply captures what a peak of influence and leadership would mean for you. It could be to be the President of the World Bank, President of your country, Minister of Environment, whatever it is, this is where to put your idealistic dream. Ideally, this should be the last paragraph and should be a few lines. Besides stating your grand vision for yourself, don't forget to add how you would use this position of influence to further drive change for your country, continent or the cause you're passionate about.

Based on these , i would recommend this outline for this essay:

- **Paragraph 1-** state the problem you intend to solve, give local and national statistics that show why what you're about to say about your career is important. It shouldn't be too long, 3-4 sentences. Half of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the essay,
- **Paragraph 2-** Short term plan. What would you do immediately when you return? Be specific , be detailed and explain how you would leverage the chevening community and training from your masters to do this. The more detailed the better. Give names, programs , projects and endeavors. Should be $\frac{2}{3}$ of the essay.

- **Paragraph 3-** Mid term plan, what you plan to do in 5-10 years, should highlight higher levels of influence, detailed and can spread to national dimensions. This is also a great place to show how your work would support work the UK is doing in your country. Research on this and be specific. Also show how it relates to the development goals. Should also be $\frac{2}{3}$ of the essay.
- **Paragraph 4-** Long term plan. Final goal or what fulfillment in leadership and influence in your career would mean to you. Should be short and related to how this position would help champion your goals on a national or international level. Should be the 2nd half of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the essay.

Here's an example

According to a 2017 report by Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, over 70% of Kenya's poor and hunger-stricken people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Growth in the agricultural sector has been estimated to be over ten times more effective in reducing poverty compared to growth in other sectors in poor countries. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the sector employs over 40% of Kenya's population. This could increase if more efforts are directed there and this is why I am seeking to build on my experience with rural poor communities to pursue a career in International Development. This will impart me with knowledge and skills to influence policies on poverty reduction through small-scale agriculture, rural development and research

In the short term, I see myself starting a community-based organization in Murang'a County that will endeavor to transform agriculture into a viable business for rural small-scale farmers. I will achieve this by seeking

partnerships with the county government and relevant social enterprises such as Juhudi Kilimo to increase smallholder farms productivity, enhance marketing systems and business, safety standards and technical skills training. These initiatives will turn small-scale farms to businesses, link them to regional and global food chains and create job opportunities.

I plan to serve in the next Murang'a County Government as a County Executive Committee Member in charge of Agriculture and Cooperatives. In this role, I will work with the County Assembly to improve the reliability of water supply for irrigation for small-scale farmers, build more wholesale market sheds, employ more extension officers, identify and invest in first-mover crops and improve on feeder roads to support agriculture.

In the long-term, with experience and skills gained in the local government, I plan to serve as Member of Parliament in the National Assembly, chairing the Agriculture, Trade and Cooperatives Committee. In this role, I will build on my success with the County Government to work closely with the Executive arm of government to spearhead legislation to transform Kenya's Agricultural sector to ensure food security and create more jobs. I will lead negotiations with United Kingdom Multinationals such as Marks & Spencer to increase their fair-trade products in Kenya and rope in more tea and coffee factories in their supply chain. In addition, I will advocate for Diageo to replace imported grains with local crops such as sorghum and cassava for their beers. This will promote trade between Kenya and the United Kingdom, deepen our relations and create jobs in the country. By following this career progression, it will be possible to make necessary adjustments based on my experience and the prevailing circumstances.

Generally, training in the United Kingdom will help me develop networks and collaborations that will contribute to Kenya's agenda on food security while creating jobs especially among rural women and the youth. This is in line with DFID's initiatives in Kenya on hunger and prosperity which are also part of global goals for sustainable development.

(from agriculturefirstblog.wordpress.com by Samuel Ndungu Wairimu)

For more details on your career plan essay

Visit : <https://www.chevening.org/news/application-advice/>

📺 How To Score High In The Chevening Career Plan Essay | 100 Select...

CHAPTER 7

FINAL THOUGHTS

There you have it, all you need to put in a successful application. Please note that the opinions expressed here are mine and secondary to any instructions given by the Chevening body for applicants this year. As always, do your own personal research.

Here are some other tips

- Join support groups for chevening applications. They help provide you with tips and information you may have missed on your own. Plus it comes in handy in your networking essay. Here's a link to one of the largest chevening support groups on telegram <https://t.me/+UEPPvd6pEKkse0-m> .
- If you have a trusted friend, both of you can apply together. It always helps to share thoughts and resources with someone on the same journey.
- Mentorship is key. If you can get direct mentorship from a scholar to review your final essays that would be great. However if you don't, attend webinars and spaces organized by scholars. Deploying all that is outlined in this guide is more than enough to achieve success.
- Watch the AFM stories playlist for Chevening on Youtube. It helped a lot of us. I've added some of her videos to this guide but you can access the entire list here <https://youtu.be/kEPU4YZMZW8>
- Finally have Faith and believe in yourself, success always starts from the inside-out, you're worth it and can win this scholarship, don't be discouraged , your story is powerful and your scholarship dream is and can be actualised

All the very best and see you on the other side!!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr Chris Agape Ajah is a medical Doctor and Public health professional with a focus on solving health challenges using technology.

An Alumnus of the West-African Institute of Public health and member of the young professionals in Public Health, he has spent most of his career developing health products and services for underserved communities using both traditional and technology driven methods.

He graduated from the College of Medicine of the University of Lagos and has post graduate certifications in Global Health Policy, Leadership and Management in Health, Health Systems Strengthening and Health Financing from University Of Washington, Harvard University, University of Melbourne and the WHO respectively.

He currently works as a Growth Executive at Wellahealth technologies where he provides solutions, strategies and products that help improve health access for low-income earners through micro-insurance. He bridges the gap between health and technology by fostering pertinent conversations around intersecting pain points to drive innovation on *Linked-in* and *Medium*.

In 2022 he won the prestigious Chevening Scholarship Award in recognition of his efforts in healthcare development and is currently studying for an MSC at the London School Of Hygiene And Tropical Medicine. His latest book, '*The Ultimate Chevening Guide*', chronicles in a detailed fashion the principles that helped him and other scholars achieve success in the application process.

In his spare time he loves to write songs, read books and meet new people.

**THIS GUIDE WAS CREATED BY
CHRIS AGAPE (MD)
2022/2023 CHEVENING SCHOLAR
LSHTM.**

Email: chrisagape@yahoo.com

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-chris-agape/>

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