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Law . Tax

# CMS Law Scholarships 2020

**Everything you need to know**

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

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The Scholarships scheme has given me a fantastic boost in confidence and knowledge by introducing me to amazing new people. My mentor has been very helpful in aiding me in the overall process of applying to university and connecting me to people in the office who have helped me with LNAT preparation, interview preparation and book recommendations. It has also been great to connect to other Scholarship winners who have recently been through the university application process. Everyone who has reached out has given me amazing practical advice that has helped me to make a competitive and confident application.

*Sekela, 2017 winner*

# Welcome to CMS Law Scholarships

At Top 10 Global law firm CMS, we believe that a career in law should be open to everyone with the right talents. To realise the full potential of our offering, we are committed to attracting and developing a new generation of the brightest and most creative legal minds. Since 2012, our scheme has been helping Year 12 students onto the path to the legal profession by providing financial support, mentoring support and paid work experience to students from across the UK.

Students from the CMS Law Scholarships scheme have gone on to study at some of the UK's most prestigious universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, and to win training contracts to become lawyers at some of the world's largest law firms, including CMS.

This booklet tells you more about what the CMS Law Scholarships could do for you, who is eligible and how to apply. You can find out more at:

<https://cms.law/en/GBR/About-Us/Corporate-Responsibility/CMS-Law-Scholarships>  
and you can contact us at [Law.Scholarship@cms-cmno.com](mailto:Law.Scholarship@cms-cmno.com).

If you live in Scotland, you should look at CMS Law Scholarships for Scotland. You can find out more at:

<https://cms.law/en/GBR/About-Us/Corporate-Responsibility/CMS-Law-Scholarships>.

We look forward to reading your application and, if yours is one of the best applications, meeting you at our assessment day in London in September 2020



**Alison McHaffie**  
Partner Champion



**Sarah Hyde**  
Scheme Leader



CMS is proud to be one of  
The Times Top 100 Graduate  
Employers for 2019

# How CMS Law Scholarships could help you

## Financial support



- GBP 2,500 per year for each year of your degree
- Travel and accommodation paid for Assessment Day and work experience

## Mentoring



- Support from one of our lawyers with UCAS and LNAT
- Connection with one of our trainee lawyers

## Work experience



- 2 days' paid work experience in 1st year at university
- The chance to experience life in an international law firm

If you are invited to our assessment day in September 2020 you will be offered:



- A chance to come to our London office for the assessment day, to meet some of our lawyers and experience the type of assessment process that law firms use for recruiting their trainee solicitors, giving you confidence and a head start when you come to apply for legal jobs.
- Free travel and (if appropriate) hotel accommodation for you and an adult for the assessment day.
- A mentor to support you with your UCAS application and with preparing for the LNAT test.
- A trainee lawyer as a “buddy” to help you with any questions you have about a career in law.
- Two days' paid work experience in December of your first year at university, to give you a taste of life in an international law firm before you start to apply for jobs at law firms.
- Free travel and (if appropriate) accommodation for your work experience.
- If government guidance means we cannot host the assessment day in our offices, we will hold a virtual assessment day.



Being allocated a mentor at CMS enables you to receive expert advice on how to improve your university application, which can be particularly valuable for anyone who does not have a careers advisor at school or parent in the legal profession. Meeting my mentor and the trainee solicitors at CMS really helped to dispel the myths surrounding commercial law firms that I have heard about ... everyone I met at CMS was incredibly friendly and welcoming.

*Nicole, 2018 finalist*

In addition, up to four students will be offered a Scholarship of GBP 2,500 for each year of your undergraduate degree. (If you are offered a Scholarship, it will be subject to certain conditions which will be set out in the offer.)



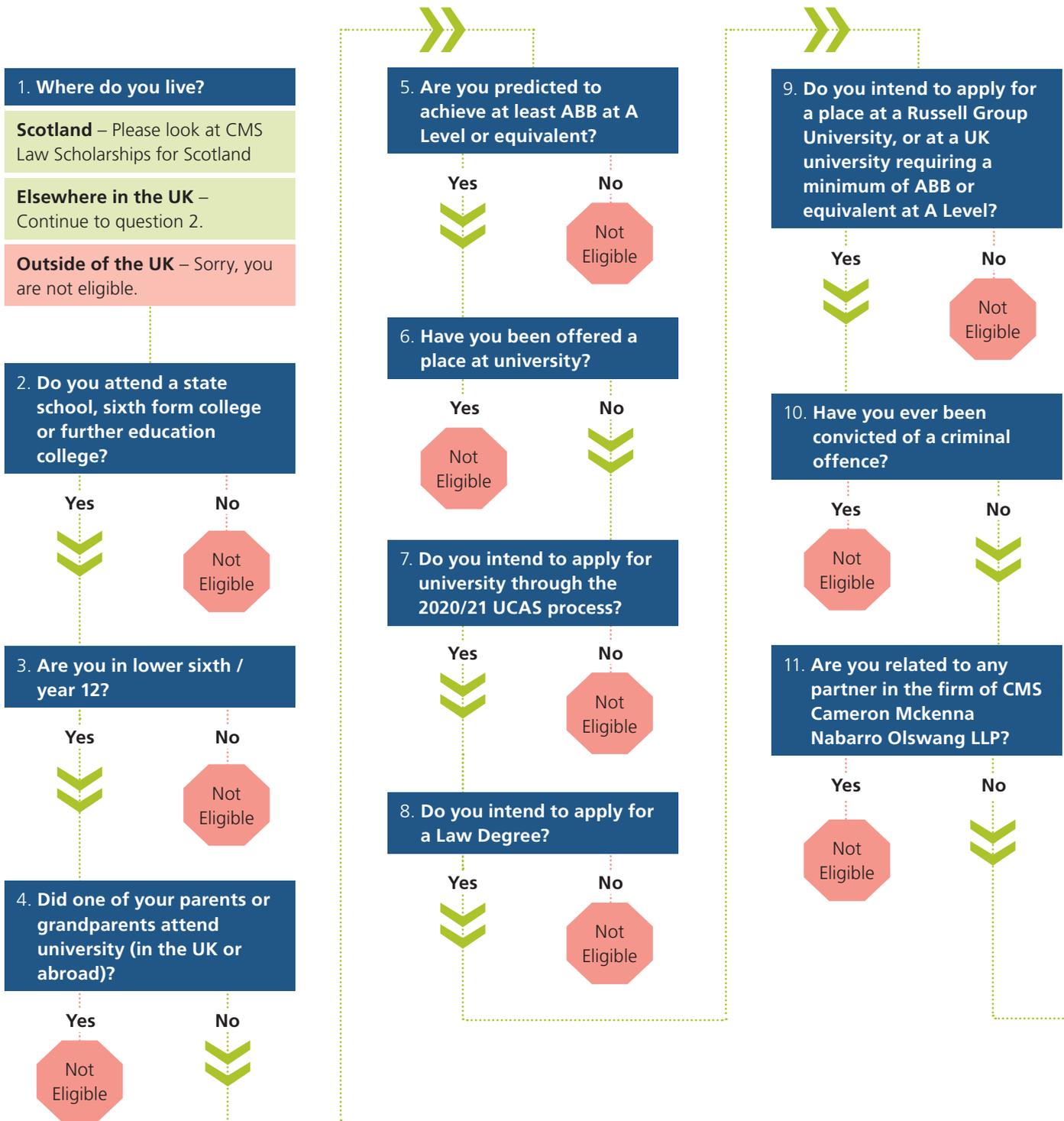
The Scholarship money helped me immensely. It has meant that I don't need to have a job whilst at university so I can focus on my academics and extra-curricular activities. Whilst at university, I have started a gymnastics club, been on the gymnastics club committee ..., become a law ambassador and a young-carers ambassador. ... Without the Scholarship, I wouldn't have the time to do all of these fantastic activities if I was working just to pay my rent.

*Abigail, 2015 winner*

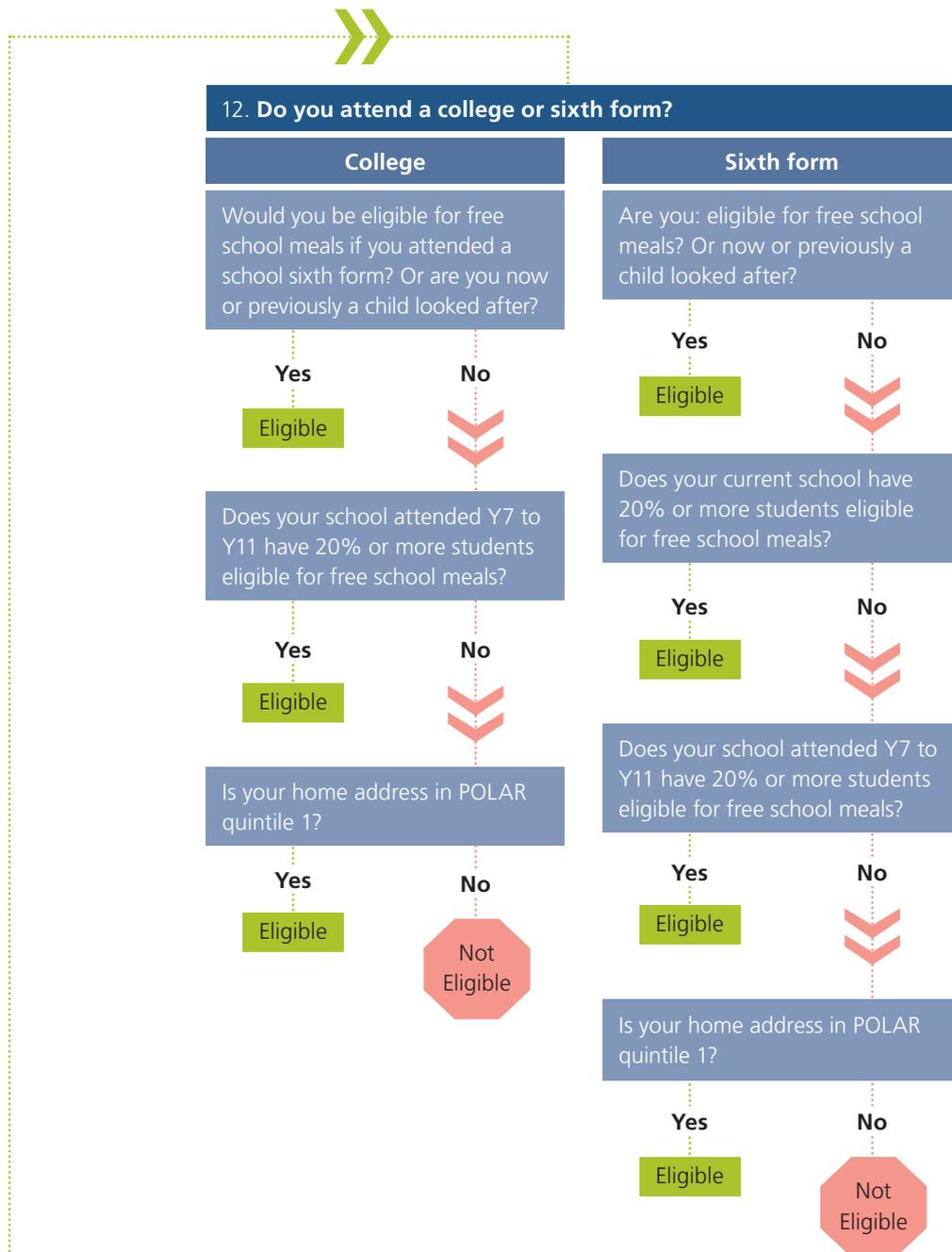
As you would expect, there are some conditions that apply to the support we offer and we will tell you about these at the assessment day.

# Who can apply?

Use this flowchart to check your eligibility:



CMS Law Scholarships are aimed at students who have the potential to and want to become lawyers and who come from backgrounds from which research shows are less likely to achieve a place at a prestigious university and less likely to make it into the legal profession. We therefore have some criteria about your academic and family background and some financial criteria.



# More about who can apply

We will check your eligibility using the information that you provide to us, so it is important that it is accurate. If you have any questions about your eligibility before you apply, please email us at:

**Law.Scholarship@cms-cmno.com.**

## Academic and family background

**You can apply for CMS Law Scholarships if you fulfil *all* of the following:**



- You attend a state school, sixth form college or further education college in the UK.
- You are in Year 12/Lower Sixth Form when you apply.
- You will be in the first generation of your family to go to university.
- You are expected to achieve ABB at A Level or equivalent.
- You are going to apply through the 2020/21 UCAS process for a place on an undergraduate law degree
- You are planning to apply for a place at a Russell Group university or at another UK university requiring a minimum of ABB or equivalent at A Level.
- You have never been convicted of a criminal offence
- You are not related to any partner in the firm of CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP

**To help you understand whether you are eligible, please note that:**

1. If your parents or grandparents attended university in the UK or abroad, you will not be eligible. You can be eligible if your brothers, sisters or cousins went to university, as they are in the same generation as you.
2. We will ask your teacher to confirm your expected A Level grades.
3. Your undergraduate course must be a “qualifying law degree” as defined by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. You can find the full list of qualifying law degrees at: <http://www.sra.org.uk/students/courses/Qualifying-law-degree-providers.page>
4. A list of the Russell Group universities can be found at: <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/our-universities/>

## Financial background



**If you meet all of the academic and family background requirements, we will then look at your financial background. You need to be able to answer “yes” to at least one of the following questions to meet our financial criteria:**

- If you attend a school sixth form, are you eligible for free school meals?
- If you attend a college, would you be eligible for free school meals if you attended a school sixth form?
- Are you, or have you previously been, a child looked after by a local authority?
- Does your current school or the school that you attended from Year 7 to Year 11 have 20% of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- Is your postcode in the POLAR4 1st quintile for Young Participation?

### **To help you understand whether you are eligible, please note that:**

1. You do not need to be claiming free school meals, just to meet the eligibility criteria. You can find information about eligibility criteria at the following web pages:
  - England & Wales: [www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals](http://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals)
  - Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/parents/schools-learning-and-development/school-life-parents/nutrition-and-school-lunches.htm](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/parents/schools-learning-and-development/school-life-parents/nutrition-and-school-lunches.htm)
2. You can check the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals at your school at: <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>
3. POLAR4 Young Participation scores are a way of identifying how many students go on to university from a particular postcode. You can check the POLAR4 score for your home address at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/postcode-search/>



I was at first wary of applying to the CMS Law Scholarships scheme, but I was happily surprised. Retrospectively, I had immensely grown by the end of the application process. From the essay competition to the interview day, I gained many skills of which I continue to harbour. The scheme allows you to delve into a topic of interest, meet and make new friends, engage and discuss legal material, amongst many other things. You are also allocated to a mentor who will help and guide you through your university application and beyond. This is why you should apply: whether you win the bursary or not, it is an immensely worthwhile experience that will certainly guide your future pursuits. Overall, the scheme gave me a boost of confidence and helped me to make a competitive application. Coming from a low socio-economic background, it is also reassuring to know that I will have this financial support going into university.

*Sofia, 2018 winner*

# How to apply

We invite students to apply for a Scholarship by entering an essay competition and writing a short piece about what winning a Scholarship would mean to them. We look at your essay, your academic achievements and what you have told us about yourself to decide which 12 students to invite to an assessment day at our London office. After the assessment day, we offer up to four Scholarships to the students who have impressed us most.



## Essay Competition

- Submit an essay of 750 to 1000 words on a choice of 2 topics
- Tell us what a Scholarship would mean to you



## About You

- We read your essay and application
- We ask your teacher for an academic reference



## Assessment Day

- 12 top students invited to Assessment Day at CMS London
- Up to 4 students offered Scholarships

## Essay competition

**15 June to 22 July 2020**

The essay competition opens on 15 June 2020 and the essay questions will be published on that day. You can register for the competition now through our website.

The closing date for submitting your essay is Wednesday 22 July 2020, at 23:59. You must complete our application form and submit your essay through our website, at: <https://cms.law/en/GBR/About-Us/Corporate-Responsibility/CMS-Law-Scholarships>

We are unable to return any essays, or to provide any comments on them.

**You will have two essay questions to choose from. You should write the essay subject at the top of the first page of your essay. Your essay must:**



- Be no shorter than 750 words and no longer than 1,000 words.
- Be typed / word-processed (not handwritten) and double line-spaced.
- Be in English.
- Be all your own work and not copied or based upon any other person's work. (we have the absolute discretion to decide whether this is the case and we may make such further enquiries to check this as we consider necessary).
- Refer to any sources used, and include any extracts from them in quotation marks. You may also use footnotes. Please note that extracts will be included in the word count; footnotes will not be included in the word count.
- Be marked clearly, at the top-left hand corner of the first page, with your full name.



I had a lot of fun participating in the essay competition, as you really have a lot of freedom to take your essay wherever you want it to go (which is something that you don't often get to do when writing essays at school).

*Nicole, 2018 finalist*

## Academic reference by 10 September 2020

On your application form, we will ask you to provide the name and contact details of a teacher that we can ask about you in order to obtain academic references or other information relevant to consideration of your application which we consider appropriate. This should be a teacher at your current school or college who will be able to confirm your predicted A-Level grades. Please note that if no suitable academic reference has been received by us by Thursday 10 September 2020 then we will not be able to consider your application any further. Please let your teacher know that you have given us their name to be your academic referee.

## Assessment Day 22 September 2020

Our assessment day will take place on Tuesday 22 September 2020 at our London office. (No alternative date can be offered.) We will tell you by email by Wednesday 16 September 2020 whether you are being invited to the assessment day. If government guidance prevents us hosting the assessment day in our offices, we will host a virtual assessment day.

On the assessment day, you will meet some of our lawyers, including a trainee who will be your “buddy” and your mentor. You will have a chance to look round our offices and to get a feel for what goes on in an international law firm. You will have a 30 minute interview with one of our partners and someone from our Early Talent team. And you will get the chance to show your teamwork skills in a group exercise working with some of the other finalists.





The interview day was also unexpectedly not as terrifying as I had imagined it would be. I really enjoyed meeting the other candidates and working in teams with them for the negotiation exercise. We also had the opportunity to have a tour around the building and to sit down for lunch with some of the trainee solicitors, who shared a lot of useful, insightful, and reassuring advice about their individual pathways to a legal career at CMS. The interview itself leaned more towards being a discussion about my interests and why I wanted to study Law, rather than the terrifying interrogation that I had expected. ... I would really recommend avoiding getting too stressed over the interview as it is (probably) not as bad as you may think.

*Nicole, 2018 finalist*

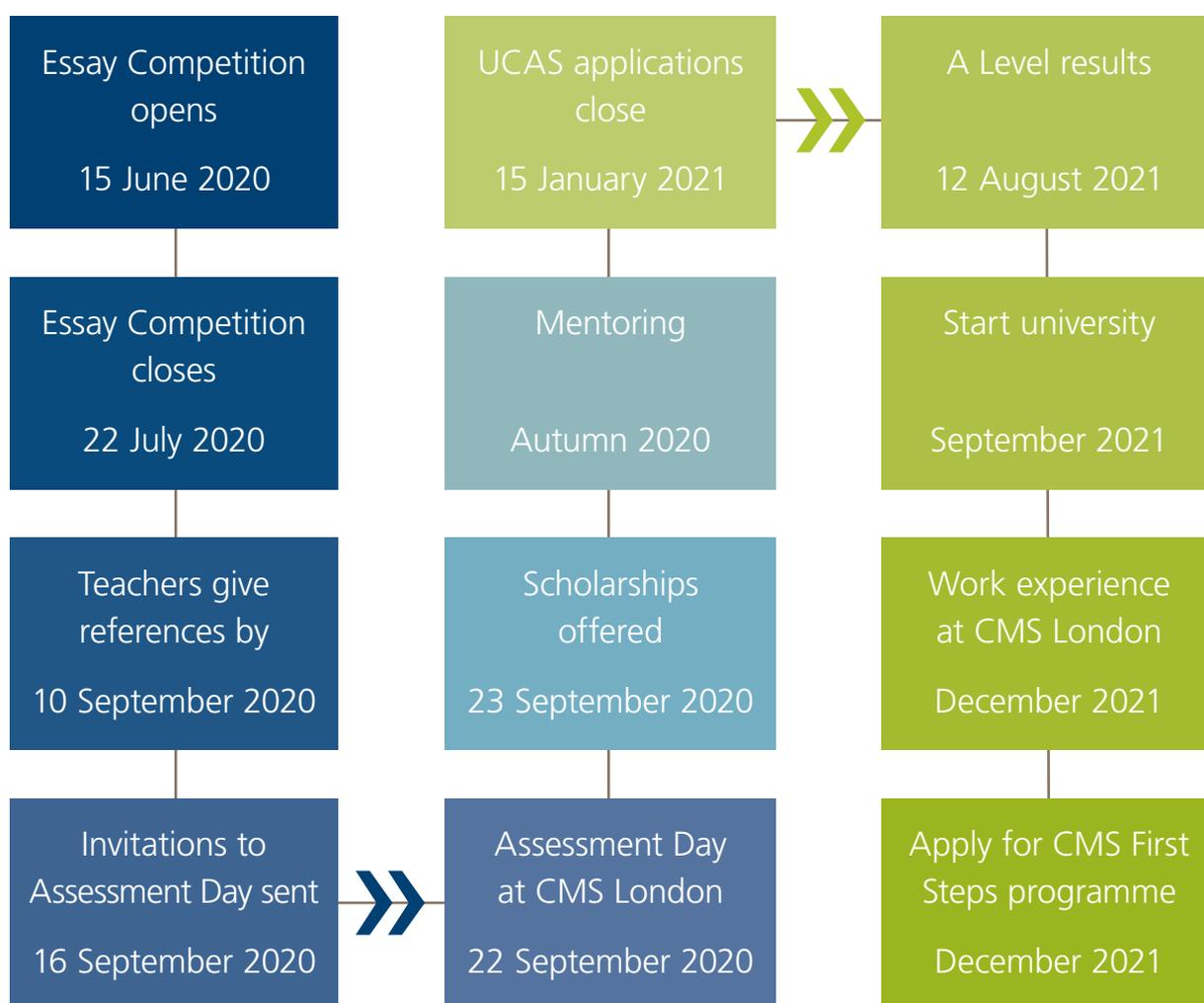


We believe that no student should miss out because they cannot afford to come to our assessment day. That is why we will arrange and pay for you and one accompanying adult to travel to our office. We may also arrange and pay for overnight hotel accommodation for you and any accompanying adult on the night before the assessment day, where appropriate. Any decision to provide accommodation and as to where you will stay is at our complete discretion, but will take into account factors such as the distance to be travelled and available transport links.

We will be taking photographs at the assessment day. By attending the assessment day, you agree to be photographed and for your name and image to be used in materials promoting CMS Law Scholarships.

# Starting your journey with CMS

If you have what we are looking for, applying for a CMS Law Scholarship can be the beginning of your relationship with CMS. This is what your journey to the start of CMS' Early Talent programme could look like:





Having work experience at CMS was an amazing experience. It wasn't just attending talks and workshops but you actually assisted lawyers in their cases. You are paired with a trainee in a department (I was in insurance) and they might give you work to do, or you will have to use your initiative and ask anyone if they needed any help. This helped boost my confidence and also allowed me to get involved with some interesting cases. I learnt about topics that I had never experienced before and it was great to learn from experienced lawyers.

*Abigail, 2015 winner*



I never really believed that I would get further than the essay portion of the scheme, and got increasingly prouder and more confident with every portion I made it through. Making it to the final 12 is one of my proudest achievements, and something that has really helped me grow as a person, and become more confident to apply to university ... Most of all, though, I encourage everyone considering applying to the scheme to do it because you just might surprise yourself. I did.

*Megan, 2015 finalist*



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