



# AZIZ FOUNDATION

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BUILDING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIP BROCHURE



## BACKGROUND

The Aziz Foundation was established in 2015 by the Aziz family, and is inspired by the values and teachings of Islam to support the most disadvantaged communities in Britain. It commenced its operations in delivering a dynamic programme of philanthropic work that included scholarships, research grants, grants for individuals and projects, and organisational development for charities.

The Foundation's grant making until 2018 focused on supporting innovative projects and building sustainable partnerships with charitable organisations. The projects the Foundation has supported was reflected in its three workstreams: Community Empowerment, Leadership Development and Public Engagement.

Following a strategic review of the Foundation's work and the prevailing external realities, from 2019 onwards the Board of Trustees decided that the Foundation would focus on one area; supporting Muslim individuals by offering Masters scholarships. We are excited about enabling each scholarship recipient to progress in their career and make meaningful contributions to their industry, community and society as a whole.

# INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE AZIZ FOUNDATION

The Aziz Foundation wishes to partner with universities by offering scholarships schemes for British Muslims wishing to pursue postgraduate study at the Masters level. Your institution can assist the Foundation in meeting the demand – stimulated over the time of its operation – for its scholarships.

We are looking to partner with forward looking, inclusive institutions that take the principle of widening participation seriously and are taking the necessary steps to diversify their student cohorts at the postgraduate level.

We believe Aziz Scholarships offer myriad benefits to institutions:

- The scheme is generating demand for university courses amongst British Muslim communities that would not otherwise exist.
- The scholarships reduce the fee burden on universities. There is a greater likelihood that scholars will complete their degrees as they possess financial security.



Figure 1. Scholarships awarded by gender (2020)

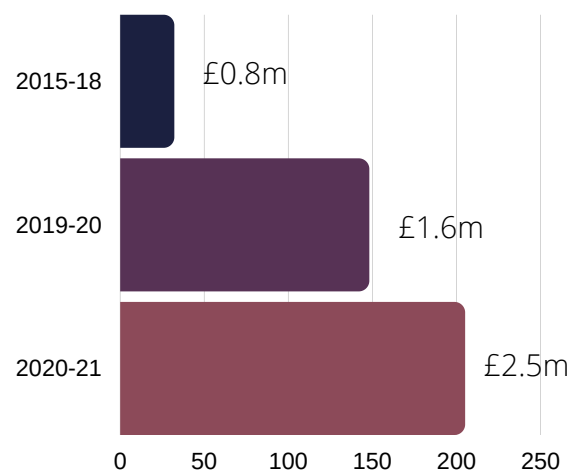


Figure 2. We've awarded over 350+ scholarships over the past five years and over £4.9m in awards.

# 350+

## Scholarships awarded since 2015!



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- We are plugging a funding gap at this level: undergraduate courses are covered by student finance and at the doctoral level by readily available research funding (e.g. research councils).
- The scheme is helping institutions meet their commitment to the Widening Participation agenda and access agreements, diversifying student cohorts, albeit at the postgraduate level. While the obligation ends at the undergraduate level, the principle of WP extends to the postgraduate level.
- The regulator, the Office for Students (OfS), has set the ambitious sector-wide target to eliminate the BME awarding gap by 2038. Third sector organisations with deep knowledge of disadvantaged communities - such as the Aziz Foundation - will have a role to play in helping universities achieve these targets.
- The OfS is, in a preliminary manner, exploring the possibility of extending WP to postgraduate provision. This will most likely happen in the next 4-5 years and will become a focal point for HE institutions that wish to take this matter seriously. The scheme is designed to assist institutions in achieving their widening participation objectives.

**For 2020/21, the scholarships programme will be confined to our preferred partner institutions and selected courses/programmes that are rated highly by our scholarship cohorts.**

# AZIZ FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS: AN OVERVIEW

## 1. Vision

The Aziz Foundation is awarding 100% tuition fee Masters scholarships to Muslims lacking the financial means to complete postgraduate degrees at British universities. These scholarships aim to empower British Muslims to bring positive change to their communities and beyond.

Thus, they are aimed at those who:

- Aspire to make a positive contribution to society - people who want to help others
- View themselves as future British Muslim leaders - change makers

## 2. Courses

The scholarship scheme is open to Masters courses at any British University. Emerging leaders must show how the course will increase their effectiveness in one of the following areas relating to British Muslims.

### a. Effective Advocacy and Enhance Public Perception

Facilitate better representation and contribution of Muslims to civil society and positively transform perceptions of British Muslims.

### b. Community Service and Social Development

Raise aspirations and standards within British Muslim communities.

## 3. Personal Qualities:

We are looking for candidates who are authentic; aspirational; confident; courageous; resilient.

### Application Process:

The applicant must meet the above criteria and submit:

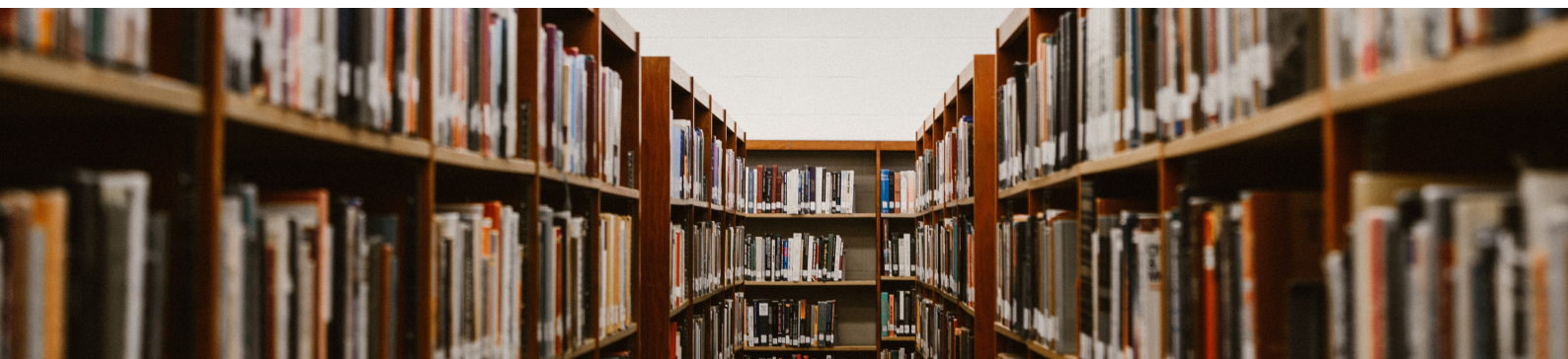
- An application form
- A statement of no more than 1,000 words
- The details of two referees

If the applicant is short-listed, they will be invited to attend an interview. The interview will be 30-45 minutes exploring questions around their aspirations and understanding of British Muslim communities:

- Challenges facing British Muslims
- Vision and hopes for change
- Personal qualities needed to succeed
- Financial barriers faced

### Means Testing:

The Foundation will apply a means test to determine the finances of the candidate. We will consider the secondary school(s) they attended, amount of student debt, financial commitments and available government data about their background.



# 2020/21 SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME OVERVIEW: ANALYSIS & DATA

According to the data below, the vast majority of the Foundation's scholarship cohort, in the first year of the Masters scholarship schemes operation, were **young women in their twenties, recently graduated**.

Application Process Figures:			Gender Breakdown			Mode of Study:		
Number of applicants	869	100%	Female	131	65%	F/T	70%	
Number interviewed	413	48%	Male	71	35%	P/T	28%	
Number awarded	202	23%	Total	202	100%	D/L	2%	

Age Range:				POLAR Data:		
20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	Total	Quintile	Applicants	Percentage
166	26	10	202	Q1 - 2	31	16%
82%	13%	5%	100%	Q3 - 5	838	84%

First Generation Students: 46%			Ave. Student Debt: £23,353		
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Our 2020 scholarship cohort have been categorised into the following based on their vision and intentions:

**Social change-makers** - committed to improving social conditions for under-represented communities

**Medics/Health Workers** - driven to help others through the science of medicine and therapy

**Educationalists** - passionate about the power of education

**Imam/Religious leaders** - engaging with wider society and in touch with the youth

**Increasing Representation/Role Models** - pursuing careers in underrepresented sectors

**Journalists/Media practitioners** - determined to enhance the portrayal of Muslims in the media

**Legal Professionals** - aspiring to reform the criminal justice system by becoming barristers and judges



# PROPOSAL AGREEMENT WITH UNIVERSITIES

**The Aziz Foundation Masters Scholarships programme offers** Masters scholarship awards (tuition fees only) to Muslims who qualify for home fees at UK universities. It has become clear to us that the number of awards offered does not meet the demand that is being generated by the programme, therefore the Foundation is looking at ways to extend its scholarships offer through seeking concessions from Higher Education Institutions (see below).

The awards will be allocated to **Preferred Partner institutions and selected courses** – this will constitute the majority of scholarship awards and have a wide application window.

**Preferred Partner institutions will be listed on our website and applicants will be encouraged to apply to them.** The Foundation will leverage its networks and engagement with Muslim civil society and representative communities to promote these scholarships. Preferred Partner institutions:

- share **core values** with the Aziz Foundation and **actively promote Widening Participation** at the postgraduate level
- are aware of concerns of **unconscious bias** and address the **BME awarding gap**
- provide **specific cultural and social support to BME students**
- are committed to **adopting the working definition of Islamophobia** within a reasonable timeframe\*
- offer to cover the costs of a living stipend (maintenance) or financial discount on tuition fees** according to the sliding scale:

Number of Scholarships Awarded:	Discount Offer per award**:
1 - 3	20%
4 - 9	30%
10+	50%

If you meet the conditions of being a Preferred Partner and would like to join the scheme please contact us on **[scholarships@azizfoundation.org.uk](mailto:scholarships@azizfoundation.org.uk)**

\*For the full definition of Islamophobia please see [here](#)

\*\*Please note that the discounts are applied by bands, so the 20% will only be applied to scholarships 1-3, 30% on 4-9, and 50% on scholarships 10 and above



# APPENDIX

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## Appendix 1: Statistics demonstrating the structural disadvantages faced by British Muslim communities

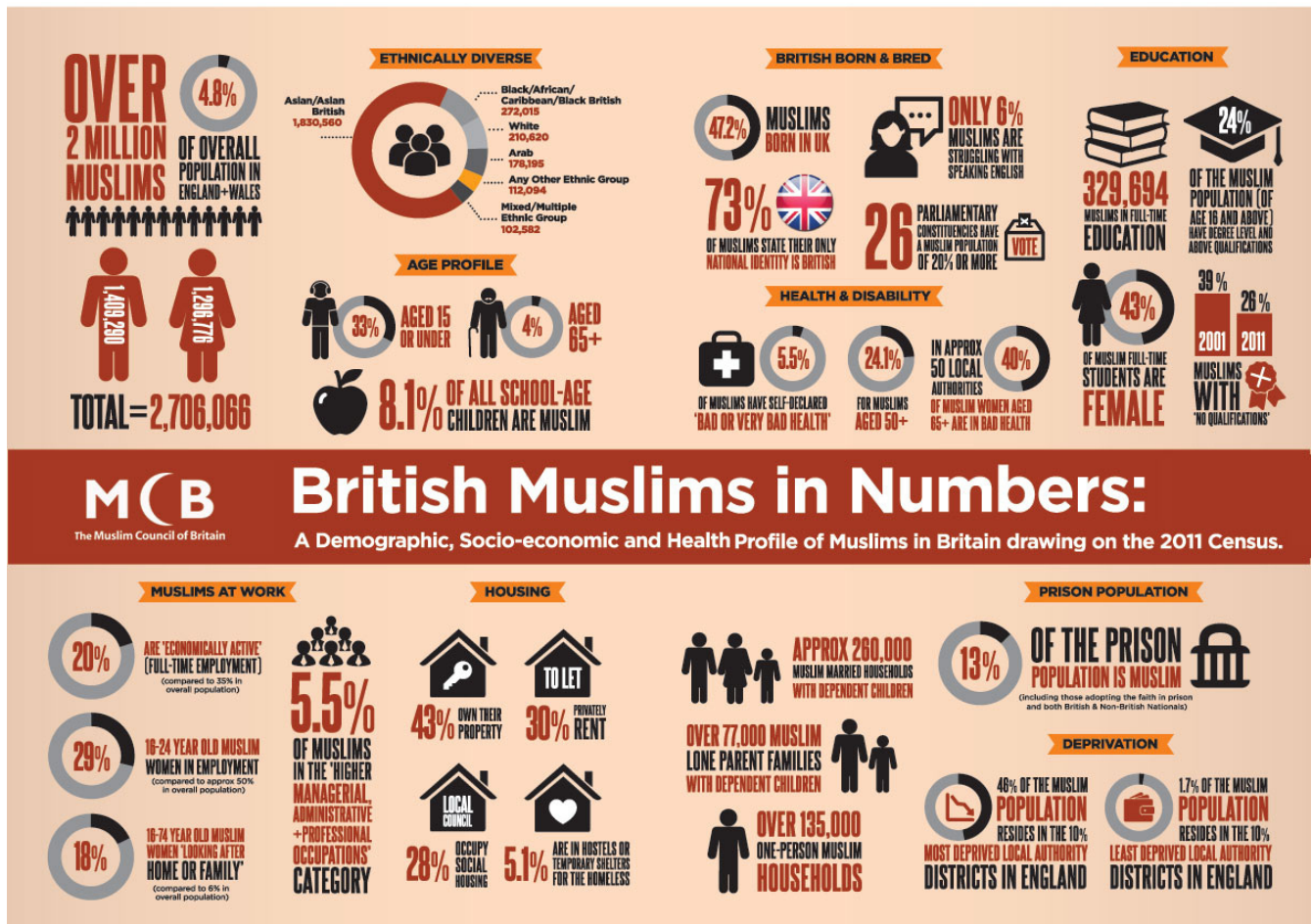
The statistics below, taken from authoritative sources and produced through rigorous research and data collection techniques, demonstrate some of the structural disadvantages faced by British Muslim communities. These focus on the lack of upwards social mobility realised by these faith communities, particularly in education and employment, and lends credibility to the claims British Muslim communities have on special programmes and initiatives at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that increase access and participation, most specifically at the postgraduate level.

- 18% of Muslim students achieved First Class degree classifications at the undergraduate level, compared to 30% of those from non-faith backgrounds. British Muslims also represent the smallest faith group at Russell Group Institutions (AdvanceHE, Research Insight: Religion and Belief in UK Higher Education, 2020).
- A recent report has also found that Prevent has reinforced negative stereotypes of Muslims and encouraged a culture of mutual suspicion and surveillance on university campuses (Alison Scott Baumann, 2020, see full report [here](#))
- According to NUS, one in three respondents reported having felt negatively affected by Prevent, with almost 43% of students feeling unable to express their views or disengaged from political debate altogether (Ghani & Nagdee, NUS, 2018) full report available [here](#)
- Muslims feel invisible in HE; there is an institutional failure to recognise their identity (Bridge Institute, Muslim Students in UK HE Report, 2018: Full report available [here](#))
- 46% of the Muslim population live in the 10% most deprived areas (Social Mobility Commission, Social mobility challenges faced by young Muslims' report, 2017: See full report [here](#))
- More than a fifth (21.3%) of Muslims between the ages of 16-74 have never worked (excluding full time students) compared to 4% of the overall population (The Missing Muslims, Report by the Citizen's Commission on Islam, Participation and Public Life, 2017, p.23: See full report [here](#))
- Those of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin (of whom a large majority are Muslim) find it difficult to secure employment in the UK, despite outperforming (educationally) many of their counterparts from white British backgrounds and are less likely to be offered managerial and professional roles. In particular, there is ongoing discrimination against Muslim women (Ethnicity, Gender and Social Mobility, Social Mobility Commission, 2017, p.8: full report available [here](#))
- Only 6% of Muslims are in 'higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations' compared to 10% of the overall population. In contrast, 24% of Muslims are classified as having 'Never worked/long-term unemployed' compared to just 6% for the overall population (Nomis/Office for National Statistics, 2013, and see: Employment opportunities for Muslims in the UK: second report of the HoC Women and Equalities Committees, Session 2016-17, HC 89)
- Muslims are under-represented in the 'top professions' higher and lower managerial and professional occupations) compared with other religious/non-religious groups, with only 16% of British Muslims holding professional or managerial jobs compared to a national average of 30% (ONS, 2015)

# APPENDIX

- Muslims also have slightly lower levels of qualifications, with approximately a quarter of Muslims over the age of 16 having 'Level 4 and above' (i.e. degree and above) qualifications (The Muslim Council of Britain, 2015: Full report [here](#)). As a consequence, Muslims, as a whole, are the most disadvantaged faith group in the UK labour market
- Muslims experience the greatest economic disadvantages of any group in UK society. Analysis of the 2011 census (Nomis/Office for National Statistics, 2013) shows that within the economically active population (age 16-74 years) only one in five (19.8%) of the Muslim population is in full-time employment, compared to more than one in three (34.9%) of the overall population (in England & Wales)
- Although the data on Muslim students are limited, research into Muslim students studying in HE business schools found that 77% of Muslim students attended post-1992 universities, 4% attended Russell Group institutions and 19% attended other pre-1992 universities (Dean and Probert, 2011)

## Appendix 2: General figures on British Muslims taken from the MCB Report, *British Muslims in Numbers*





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