



SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

Merle Khoza Memorial Scholarship

2027 Award Cycle

Research • Critical Thinking • Articulation • Ethical AI Use

Purpose of these guidelines

To outline the award structure, candidate requirements, research paper process, interview, award-cycle activities, and final evaluation for the 2027 Merle Khoza Memorial Scholarship.

Scholarship	Merle Khoza Memorial Scholarship
Applicable institutions	Queen's Royal College and Holy Faith Convent (Couva) — one winner from each school
Award date	April 16, 2027
Award cycle	2027
Scholarship award	Total of USD \$5,000 per winner, disbursed via two equal installments; two winners total*

Prepared for eligible sixth-form candidates and scholarship reviewers

**Note conditions apply to receive scholarship funds.*

Scholarship Overview

The Jesus Lifts Foundation's Merle Khoza Memorial Scholarship recognizes a deserving sixth-form student entering the first year of tertiary education at a university or college. The selection process combines a research paper with a live interview so that candidates can demonstrate both written scholarship and personal mastery of their chosen subject.

1. Award

- Applicable institutions: Queen's Royal College and Holy Faith Convent (Couva). Each school will have one scholarship winner.
- The scholarship award is USD\$5,000 per winner. Access to the full award is contingent on sustained enrollment in tertiary education.
- In the first year of enrollment of tertiary education, USD \$2,500 will be awarded to one scholarship winner from Queen's Royal College and USD \$2,500 to one scholarship winner from Holy Faith Convent.
- Each scholarship winner will automatically receive an additional USD \$2,500 for the second year of tertiary education, subject to continued enrollment.
- Award date: April 16, 2027.
- Award ceremony: Date and venue to be determined.

2. Candidate Selection

Five candidates will be selected by each applicable institution based on Lower 6 academic performance. Each school must submit the names of its five selected candidates to the Jesus Lifts Foundation by October 30, 2026. Candidates will then be invited to complete the research paper within the timeframe outlined in section 3. Each selected candidate will also participate in the interview component, the specific date for which will be confirmed according to the timeline identified within section 5. Candidates will be evaluated within their respective school cohorts, and one winner will be selected from Queen's Royal College and one winner from Holy Faith Convent.

3. Research Paper Submission

Each candidate must conduct independent research and submit a paper on one of the Foundation-approved scholarship topics. The specific 2027 scholarship topics will be communicated to selected students by November 15, 2026.

Research Paper Requirements

- Length: 1,000–1,200 words, excluding references.
- Format: typed, 12-point font, double-spaced.
- Academic style: APA, MLA, or CMS. The chosen format must be declared.
- Due date: February 15, 2027.
- Papers will be assessed for plagiarism and improper use of AI tools. Violations will result in disqualification.

4. Use of Generative AI

Use of generative AI is permitted when it is transparent, documented, and consistent with the academic format selected by the student. Candidates remain responsible for the accuracy, integrity, reasoning, and final expression of their work.

- Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini may be used.
- AI use must be properly cited within the chosen academic format.
- Students must submit a log of all prompts used in preparing the paper.
- A minimum of five (5) prompts is required.

Candidate responsibility: AI may support the research process, but the student must be able to explain, defend, and extend the paper's ideas in their own words during the interview.

5. Student Interview

During the first week of March 2027, each student will participate in a live individual interview based on the topic of the submitted essay. Interviews will be conducted by members of the Jesus Lifts Foundation or designated reviewers.

The interview is intended to:

- Assess depth of understanding.
- Evaluate the student's ability to articulate ideas, defend arguments, and extend insights beyond the paper itself.
- Explore practical implications, creativity, and critical thinking.

6. Final Evaluation and Selection

The research paper and interview will both be evaluated using a standardized rubric. The candidate with the highest combined score from each participating school will be named a Merle Khoza Memorial Scholar, resulting in one scholarship winner from Queen's Royal College and one from Holy Faith Convent. The scholarship awards will be announced on April 16, 2027.

The rubric will consider:

- Research quality
- Argument strength
- Writing clarity
- Documentation and ethical use of AI
- Verbal articulation during the interview
- Originality of insight and depth of thought

7. Award Cycle Activities

In addition to the research paper and interview, the 2027 award cycle will include an award ceremony and a tertiary education preparation workshop for scholarship participants.

- **Award Ceremony:** The two school winners will be formally recognized as Merle Khoza Memorial Scholars. The ceremony date and venue will be determined and communicated to Candidates.
- **Tertiary Education Prep Workshop:** Scholarship participants will take part in a practical preparation session designed to help them transition successfully into university or college. The workshop date and detailed program will be communicated separately.

8. 2027 Scholarship Timeline

Date	Milestone
October 30, 2026	Each participating school submits its five selected candidates to the Jesus Lifts Foundation
November 15, 2026	Foundation-approved 2027 scholarship topics communicated to candidates
February 15, 2027	Research paper due
First week of March 2027	Individual student interviews
April 16, 2027	Scholarship winners announced; official scholarship award date
Date to be announced	Tertiary education preparation workshop for scholarship participants
Date to be announced	Award ceremony and formal recognition of both school winners

9. Approved Research Topics

2027 TOPICS TO BE ANNOUNCED

The Foundation-approved 2027 scholarship topics will be communicated to selected students by November 15, 2026. Detailed topic descriptions will be provided at that time.

10. Submission Checklist

- ☐ Research paper on one approved topic
- ☐ 1,000–1,200 words, excluding references
- ☐ 12-point font and double spacing



- ☐ Declared APA, MLA, or CMS format
- ☐ Proper documentation of generative AI use
- ☐ Prompt log containing at least five (5) prompts
- ☐ Submission by February 15, 2027

Jesus Lifts Foundation

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