

Background

The Air Cadet Development Scheme (formally RAF Air Cadets Development Trust) was conceived as part of the Air Training Corps' (ATC's) 75th anniversary celebrations in 2016. It aims to provide a legacy for current and future generations of cadets and junior adult volunteers which will support their transition into full time employment.

The scheme prioritises applications for training, courses, and qualifications that demonstrate a clear, practical pathway into a specific career or employment. This includes, but is not limited to, apprenticeships, vocational qualifications, and professional development courses. This policy and guidance deals only with the award of cash bursaries to eligible cadets and junior adult volunteers.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible for a bursary, cadets need to be:

- Aged 16 or over
- Have been a member of either the ATC or CCF(RAF) for a minimum of 2 years.

Junior adult volunteers wishing to apply for a bursary need to be:

- Aged under 25.
- Have been a member of either the ATC or CCF(RAF) for a minimum of 4 years.

Cadets and junior adult volunteers applying for a bursary must be able to detail and explain the training or personal/professional development course they wish to fund via the bursary. The application form can be accessed through the Air Cadet Charity website www.aircadetcharity.org.uk and applicants will note the requirement for a supporting statement from their chain of command.

2. Timing of Applications

There are two application submission windows where cadets and junior adult volunteers can apply for a bursary:

- Window 1 – 1 October – 24 January
- Window 2 – 1 April – 24 July



3. Number and Value of Awards

The number of bursaries available each year will be determined by the Trustees of the Air Cadet Charity who will assess the amount of funding available in the Scheme. Funding derives from sponsorship, donations and other fundraising activity and cannot be guaranteed from year-to-year.

Cadets and junior adult volunteers can apply for a bursary up to a maximum of £2500. All costs involved with the proposed training and development course, or placement and total associated costs must be clearly detailed in the application.

4. Application Process

Applicants are to complete the application form found here

<https://www.aircadetcharity.org.uk/air-cadet-development-scheme-applications>. All applications need to be commented on by the Squadron/Section Commander before being submitted.

Completed applications should be submitted via our online portal which can be accessed through our website www.aircadetcharity.org.uk

The Air Cadet Charity Grants Committee will review every application following each application window deadline. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by email in line with the timescales detailed in section 5. iii.

5. Assessment process

All grant applications will be subject to initial assessment by the Air Cadet Charity team to ensure all relevant information is included.

- i. Other information may be required, therefore applicants must be prepared to provide such information as is reasonably required to assist the Committee in the decision-making process.
- ii. All grant applications will be reviewed by the Air Cadet Charity Grants Committee before a final decision is made.
- iii. The Committee aim to inform applicants of the outcome of their application within four weeks of the decision being made at the Grants Committee review. Please see below for information:

Application window	Grants Committee review	Decision
1: 1 October – 24 January	February	No later than 30 April
2: 1 April – 24 July	August	No later than 31 October



- iv. Applicants should note that the Air Cadet Development Scheme can receive more applications than it has funds to support. The Grants Committee may award a lower level of bursary than requested.
- v. The Grants Committee will provide feedback on unsuccessful applications. This will be included in the email detailing the decision.
- vi. Following feedback, unsuccessful applications can be resubmitted in the next application window if appropriate.

6. Payment

All bursary funds will only be paid into the bank account provided by the applicant when accepting the Terms and Conditions of the bursary. The Air Cadet Charity must be informed of any changes to bank details, and a new bank details form submitted. If the bursary is to be released in instalments, then payment of subsequent bursary instalments will only be paid once evidence of the use of the previous instalment has been provided. The Charity will email the applicant to confirm the amount and date(s) of the payment(s).

7. Monitoring, Recognition and Feedback

It is the policy of the Grants Committee and Trustees of the Charity to monitor all bursaries awarded. Therefore, before a bursary can be paid:

- **Conditions:** Appropriate conditions may be stipulated to the application and must be agreed by the applicant.
- **Evidence of Activity:** Evidence of involvement in the activity stated in the application must be provided.
- **Instalments:** If the bursary is to be payable in instalments, subsequent payments are dependent on satisfactory evidence of the appropriate use of the previous instalment.

Reporting and accountability

As part of the terms and conditions of the bursary, recipients will be required to submit a feedback report relating to the use of the bursary and its impact, which may be used by the Air Cadet Charity for marketing purposes.

Applicants will need to demonstrate that:

- The bursary has had a positive impact on the personal/professional development of the applicant.
- The bursary has been fully utilised; evidence of expenditure is required.
- Any underspend of the bursary will be returned to the Air Cadet Charity.

Trustees reserve the right to withdraw the bursary offer if:

- Reports are not received by agreed timings.
- Evidence of expenditure cannot be provided.



- Failure to submit reports at the time specified may also jeopardise any further support from the Air Cadet Development Scheme.
- Bursary recipients should contact the Charity in the event of any extenuating circumstances which will contribute to the submission of the report being delayed to allow a mutually acceptable date to be agreed.

Bursary Acknowledgment and Publicity

The Air Cadet Charity encourages all bursary recipients to publicly share news of their funded activity or course. Sharing your success helps us raise funds to support future bursaries and grants.

Written and Online Acknowledgment

Any publication, report, or online feature about the activity or course funded by this bursary must include proper acknowledgment of the Air Cadet Charity as the donor.

Social Media and Imagery

- **Tagging:** Please tag the Air Cadet Charity in any social media posts relating to the **bursary** using the following handles:
 - Instagram/Facebook: **@aircadetcharity**
 - LinkedIn: **@Air Cadet Charity**
- **Imagery:** The Air Cadet Charity welcomes any high-quality imagery related to the funded project. An Air Cadet Charity banner to include in your photos can be provided upon request.
- **Permission:** You must ensure that permission is granted from all identifiable persons featured in any photos sent to or shared publicly about the bursary.

Sharing Outputs

The Trustees request that you send copies of any published articles, papers, or other official outputs (digital or print) which result from or feature the funded bursary activity.



Application Guidance Notes

To enhance the potential success of an application, the following guidance is provided:

➤ Focus on Employment and Career Pathways

- Applications that clearly demonstrate a practical, direct pathway to full-time employment, an apprenticeship, or a specific career will be prioritised.
- Support for training that leads to a recognised professional qualification or trade certification is encouraged.
- While university applications may be considered, preference will be given to vocational training, trade qualifications, and apprenticeships that offer a more immediate route into the workforce.

➤ Breakdown of costs

Please break down the overall costs referenced in your statement.

- For example, if you are citing the total cost of a Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) course, please detail the hours of simulator time, dual flight hours, ground school exam fees, study materials, and medical certificate costs.
- *Alternatively*, if you are citing costs associated with a Level 4 Engineering Apprenticeship, please detail the required tools and equipment, essential textbooks, professional body registration fees, and required protective gear.

Please mention if other grants, employer contributions, loans, or subsidies are also being used. This allows the Committee to assess what level of support is needed.

➤ Personal Development

- In your statement, please include details of the benefit the personal development would bring.
Specifically, how it will improve your job opportunities, career progression, or provide a new skill that can be used to benefit the wider community.
- Include clear details of what you have already achieved as a cadet or volunteer.
This shows your commitment to the RAF Air Cadet Organisation.

➤ Special Circumstances

- If not receiving a bursary would put financial pressure on you or your family, please include details of the actual impact it would have.
- If you have special circumstances that hinder your ability to undertake part time work to help fund your course, or there are simply no opportunities in your geographical location, please include details in your statement.
This information allows the Grants Committee to consider applications accordingly.



➤ **Welfare Support Escalation Process**

The Air Cadet Development Scheme Bursary is focused mainly on career and professional training, prioritising applications that demonstrate a clear, practical pathway into a specific career or full-time employment (e.g., apprenticeships, vocational qualifications, and professional development courses).

Therefore, requests for financial support related to general welfare needs or personal hardship must first follow the internal escalation process below. Local unit, Wing, and Region funds must be exhausted before the Air Cadet Charity's Grants Committee will consider an application for welfare assistance:

1. **Squadron/Section Commander:** All initial requests for welfare support must be directed to your Squadron/Section Commander for consideration against local non-public funds.
2. **Wing Escalation:** If the Squadron cannot fully support the request, the application should be formally escalated to the Wing HQ.
3. **Region Escalation:** If the Wing cannot fully support the request, the application should then be formally escalated to the Regional HQ.

The Air Cadet Charity Grants Committee will only consider a dedicated welfare application when it can be demonstrated that local (Squadron), Wing, and Region non-public funds cannot meet the full financial need.

➤ **Qualifications**

Bursaries will not be granted for training qualifications that can be gained through current RAFAC opportunities. If there are valid reasons why you cannot achieve via that route, you should articulate reasons for this in your supporting statement.

If a case can be made as to why this is not achievable then the Committee would be willing to consider.

➤ **Expeditions**

The Committee recognises that RAFAC overseas expeditions provide experiential personal development. If your application is for funding to support your attendance on a RAFAC overseas expedition, please ensure:

- You have shown in your application that you have sought Squadron, Wing and Region support and that none was available to you.
- You have included details of financial hardship that would prevent you joining the expedition.



➤ **Driving Licences**

Applications for driving courses to achieve a driving licence are not supported by the bursary. The Committee feels that a driving licence should remain as a self-funded activity and since most 17-year-olds want to learn to drive it would set a very expensive precedent.

➤ **Flying Training**

The Committee's support for flying training is focused on professional career development, not recreational flying.

- Private Pilot's Licences (PPL) or other non-professional flying training will no longer be supported.
- The Committee will consider applications for advanced pilot training (e.g., ATPL or CPL training) where an applicant can clearly identify and demonstrate a pathway into a professional career in aviation.
- Applicants must first demonstrate that they have utilised any RAF Air Cadet Pilot Scholarships or other flying scholarship schemes. If not successful in securing a scholarship, you could consider applying for a bursary for advanced training.
- In your application, include details of any advanced training requirements with a specific career or professional goal attached.
- If there is no access to local flying training opportunities, the Committee may consider awarding small bursaries to assist with the cost of travel and accommodation.

This policy and guidance will be reviewed in September 2026.

