

Zoe Burnett - Air BP Scholarship Report

I started my training in the beginning of June 2016 at Tayside Aviation in Dundee. My training was completed in a PA-28-161 aircraft and I was allocated my own instructor for the duration of my course. I travelled down to Tayside for my first lesson, however poor weather did not allow me to fly but I met my instructor and was given an Induction. On arrival, I received my bag containing all the theory books and all the navigation and flying equipment. I could already see my summer was going to be busy, but I couldn't wait to start. A few days later I undertook my first flying lesson and loved every minute. The first few flights involved climbing and descending, turns and stalling. Due to still being at school, I had to juggle attending and completing school work with flying and travelling to Dundee and this continued for the duration of my course. I quickly discovered that the weather was going to be a challenge with my slots and schedules for my flights often being cancelled or delayed due to poor conditions. Tayside Aviation was always busy and available for studying or support if needed and I enjoyed meeting more young people with similar goals and interests. In addition to the practical flying I also started to study and work through the 9 theory exams on topics such as Air Law, Navigation and Aircraft General Knowledge.



In July, I completed my first solo flight. I landed with my instructor who then told me I was ready to go solo so he jumped out, went up the tower and watched me as I completed my first solo circuit. Flying solo for the first time was the most amazing feeling and experience ever, I had a smile on my face for the whole day! I had flown solo before I had driven by myself! After my first solo, I went on to complete the solo circuit consolidation section of the course which included 3 more 45 minute solo flights in the circuit.

After finishing the circuit section I progressed onto the navigation phase of the training. My instructor gave me the navigation brief which taught me how to plan a route and use the flight computer. I then undertook my first navigation flight with my instructor which went well and I quickly progressed onto my first solo navigation flight. After this I moved onto landing away at Glenrothes Airport and Cumbernauld Airport. I found the land away the most challenging part of the course as being based in Dundee I was used to a much longer and wider runway than these other airports had. However, I managed and I was able to do my solo land away at Glenrothes Airport quickly afterwards. By this stage I had completed all the theory exams and was thoroughly enjoying every minute of the course. Due to this stage including a lot of solo flying I often stayed at Dundee for days without ever flying as I needed very good weather conditions. This was challenging and frustrating however it allowed me to study and learn how to read the weather conditions.

Finally, the weather was good enough for me to complete my solo cross country, consisting of landing at Fife (Glenrothes) and Cumbernauld and navigation. This was another monumental flight which I thoroughly enjoyed. Re-joining back into Dundee was challenging however very cool as the airport was so busy due to a Golf competition in Angus meaning there were many private aircraft. Transiting though the Edinburgh Zone was also very exciting due to the commercial aircraft and flying over the Forth Road and Rail Bridges. I was delighted it went well.



By this time I had completed my mock skills test and only had my actual skills test left to complete, however again the weather delayed my test greatly. Every day I was hoping for good weather allowing me to sit the test and gain my PPL. Finally, the day arrived and I was able to carry out my skills test with an examiner from Tayside. I was given a route to plan and calculate mass and balance before setting off. The test consists of a navigation section, general handling section and circuits. The route took me north towards Stonehaven and then I was given a diversion to plan and

fly. Once I had landed I was over the moon when the examiner said that I had passed!

All my hard work and support from Tayside and my family has been worth it! I am still at school and I am grateful for their support too as I have missed so many classes whilst trying to complete the PPL. I am now looking forward to continuing to learn and enhance my skills and continuing to fly. I think my parents will be my first passengers! Having my PPL means I can apply for the degree course at Tayside Aviation but I am also applying



for commercial airline cadetships as to fly commercially is my dream.

I am truly grateful to Air BP and the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for giving me this opportunity and fulfil a dream!