

Amy Palmer – Air Pilots Benevolent Fund Scholarship 2018

After being awarded the Scholarship from the Air Pilots Benevolent fund, I commenced my PPL training eagerly in the Ulster Flying club in Northern Ireland. The Manager (Rodney Pritchard) and I sat down and block booked lessons to ensure I would complete the Skills test before the deadline of the 2nd October 2018. I booked my lessons around my part time job in a pharmacy.



At the Ulster Flying club, I was lucky enough to fly with a range of instructors which enabled me to hear and learn from their experiences through their flying careers.



My first solo was one of the best experiences of my life. The sensation you get when you can take off and land an aircraft singlehandedly is something I believe everyone should experience.



I have done 2 short solo Navigations round Northern Ireland and one long one which was my qualifying cross country. Seeing Northern Ireland from above proved to me how truly beautiful my country is. I built confidence and felt relaxed throughout my Navigations.

On my first attempt of my qualifying cross country, after taking off from Aldergrove (The International Airport), I realised that I couldn't see my next way point due to bad weather. I requested to Aldergrove Radar that I track directly to Enniskillen Airport from my current position to avoid the bad weather and low cloud. They allowed me to do so, but after readjusting my track due to a diversion, I realised I couldn't get round the cloud at all. I had to make the sole decision to turn back and return to Newtownards Airport, aborting my navigation. This proved to be difficult to make a diversion in controlled airspace of an international airport, however I remained calm and followed their instructions.

It was an unplanned but worthwhile experience in my training as I know what to expect if I ever have to do it again.

I re-sat my Qualifying Cross Country about a week later and completed it with no weather troubles.

After passing my skills test, my examiner guided me on using my licence as a licence to learn. I have never felt more at home than when I am in the air. Looking to the future, I plan to apply to Commercial Airline Scholarships in hopes that I can fly for their airline someday.

I sincerely want to thank The Honourable Company of Air Pilots for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to achieve a life long goal of having a pilot's licence. To me, this was only possible in the distant future and yet you have given me the ability to gain my wings so soon.

