

HCAP GLIDING SCHOLARSHIP 2026

I found out about the HCAP scholarship opportunity through my air cadet squadron and decided to apply. I handed in my application in early January before finding out in March I had secured a virtual interview. I was nervous when I found out that I'd secured a spot as I had no idea what to expect.



I had a long train journey down with many delayed trains along the way but eventually reached Hathersage station where I was greeted by my instructor Alan. When we reached the club, I was greeted by Sylvia and shown my accommodation before meeting the rest of the people on my course. We were given a tour of the airfield by Pete before being shown how to drive the tractors! To end the night, we got to choose our dinner which was prepared by John who is an amazing cook!

The next morning, we were shown how to manoeuvre the gliders out of the hangar and tow them up to the launch point. Then we started launches and from there it was nonstop! If you weren't in the air, then you were on a tractor retrieving a glider from down the airfield. We started off with maintaining straight and level flight, and basic turns.





Over the week, we got to try various things like stalls, launch failures and hill soaring, which was thrilling! It was such a thrilling experience to take control of the glider and manoeuvre it in different ways. Later in the week, it was raining but it meant we got to try their simulator! We all took turns flying a circuit and landing, before getting to do it in the actual gliders when the rain stopped.

By our final day, we were all launching and landing the gliders by ourselves, with minimal help from instructors. This was such an amazing experience, and I learnt so much from Alan! We got 4 launches each on Friday and I even got to fly the glider from the back! (Although my landing was terrible, I couldn't see very well!)



We were presented our certificates by Past Master Robin Keegan which signified the end of our weeklong course, and we found out who had sponsored each of us to make this journey possible.

Overall, this was one of the best experiences I have ever had, and I had the best group of people I could have asked for to complete it with. Thank you to the Air Pilots for giving

me this opportunity and everyone at the Derby and Lancashire Gliding Club for hosting me and being so supportive!

