

# **The Air Pilots Flying Club Gliding Scholarship**

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I originally discovered this particular scholarship through the Air Training Corps, where my Squadron was advertising it to cadets. I was the only one from my Squadron who applied, and ended up submitting my application on the night before the deadline, as my Squadron only notified me of this scholarship a few days before submissions closed.

I worked hard on my written application, gathering advice from both my Squadron staff and previous scholars. When I received an email notifying me that I had been invited to an interview, I was thrilled. I knew the competitiveness of the application process and was delighted that I had been chosen for the next stage which I prepared thoroughly for. Ironically, I found the wait after the interview to be the most stressful part of the entire process. However I was ecstatic when I received the excellent news: I was one of the candidates chosen for the scholarship.

Anyway, fast forward to the fun part: the gliding course itself. I was chosen for a five day course at London Gliding Club (Dunstable) along with seven other scholars. When I first arrived at the course, I did not know what to expect. Myself and the other scholars were briefed by the three instructors, allocated our rooms and then immediately got to gliding.

The five days of the course followed a similar schedule: Breakfast (8am), briefing (9am), gliding (9am to 1pm), lunch

(1pm to 2pm), gliding (2pm to 6pm). Over the course I progressed not only through lessons in the glider itself, but through practicing on the flight simulator and taking detailed notes at briefings. By the fifth day, I had managed to complete three independent landings and had greatly improved my general flying such as the use of rudder with turns and hill soaring.

One thing that particularly stood out with me was how incredibly quickly myself and the other seven scholars bonded together. By the first night, we had climbed Dunstable Downs and already created nicknames for each other.

What surprised me is the vast amount of multitasking required to fly a glider. As there is no engine, pockets of hot air (thermals) need to be found in order to stay in the air, as well as managing altitude and airspeed. My instructor, Simon, as well as the other instructors and staff at the gliding club were incredibly polite and welcoming, and I would like to thank the entire gliding club, as well as the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for the invaluable experience that I got over the five days.

