

Access to Education and Employment Bursary





Friends of Staffordshire & West Midlands (North Sector) ACF

Introduction

The Primary aim of this bursary is to help remove barriers for those Army Cadets of the Staffordshire and West Midlands (North Sector) Army Cadet Force wishing to engage with education, in its broadest form, and/or employment but are precluded from doing so through personal financial circumstances.

The secondary aim is to help the Friends of Staffordshire and West Midlands (North Sector) Army Cadet Force in their fund-raising activities through the generation of case studies that demonstrate the positive impact of the Trusts activities.

Access to Education and Employment Bursary

The Army Cadet Force is made up of young people, from a cross-section of local communities. A number of Cadets come from less advantaged backgrounds and because of their personal circumstances, possibly may not be able to achieve their true potential; the repercussions can have a profound affect upon the rest of their lives.

The Friend's Trust is well established and respected by the Cadet Force for being able to offer cadets support not normally available from elsewhere. This bursary is an extension of what the Friend's aim to provide.

The Friends of S&WM (NS) ACF will set aside funds for the purpose of supporting Cadets by developing an Access to Education and Employment Fund from which the bursary will be funded. This will be managed, audited and governed by Trustees, according to existing governance arrangements. This programme will be co-ordinated with other complementary initiatives such as "Cadet to Careers".

Governance

- a) The Board of Trustees will allocate an appropriate budget to the bursary fund from within its general funds in the spring of each year.
- b) The Board of Trustees will appoint a sub-committee to oversee the arrangements. This will operate subject to the existing Governance arrangements and will comprise;
 - Three current Trustees of the Friends of S&WM (NS) ACF none of whom are the Chair of The Board of Trustees
 - The Commandant
 - A currently serving Cadet with relevant experience.
- c) The Chair of the sub-committee will be drawn from its Members.
- d) The Sub-committee will be deemed as quorate when at least three of its members are present, two of which are Trustees. In the event of the Chair being absent, a Chair for



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the meeting will be chosen from the two Trustees. The views of sub-committee members, when they are not able to attend, will be taken into account in the decision making process providing they are made known to the members prior to the start of the meeting. The Chair will be responsible for recording notes of any meetings.

- e) The sub-committee will determine the level of support to be allocated from the Access to Education and Employment Fund and will ensure no overspend without the prior approval of the Trustees.
- f) The sub-committee will implement the agreed criteria set by the Board of Trustees of S&WM (NS) ACF as detailed below, which will be reviewed after one year and from time to time after that point as the need arises.
- g) The sub-committee will prioritise the applications and will determine who will be the recipients of the available funding, normally, on or before the 31st August each year.
- h) The sub-committee will receive and consider applications, which are supported by the Company Commander, outside of the normal annual application window in exceptional circumstances.
- i) Each applicant will be informed of the outcome of their application as soon as practicable after the decisions have been made.
- j) The sub-committee decisions will be final.
- k) The sub-committee Chair will present a summary report to the S&WM (NS) ACF Board of Trustees at the first meeting following the decisions being made.

The committee will openly seek to provide financial support for students most likely to benefit. Financial support will not be provided where statutory or other funding is available such as for course costs, essential equipment, trips and visits etc. including student loans.

The Offer

The amount of support will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis, the actual amount distributed by the sub-committee dependent upon funding available in any year. The closing date for applications to the scholarship fund will normally be the 30th June each year. Applications will normally be made electronically to aid the evaluation process but paper-based applications will be accepted. The amount of financial support allocated will be dependent on the availability of funding and the number of prioritised requests that are supported each year.

The sub-committee will consider requests from serving cadets for support with any costs associated with their learning including transport, equipment, annual education fees (for a full or part of a programme of study), books, IT equipment, accommodation, subsistence, childcare (if applicable) trips and visits. Education related applications must be directly related to engagement in education in a recognised school, academy, Further Education College, Private Training Provider or University. The sub-committee will also consider requests from serving cadets for support with any costs associated with access to employment including, but not limited to, transport, interview clothing and interview costs.



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The sub-committee will normally interview each shortlisted applicant to assess attitude, outlook, and commitment and to identify how the recipient will enhance the work of the Friends of S&WM (NS) ACF following the completion of the supported activity. This will include the applicant's willingness to engage with post-scholarship activities aimed at supporting the Friends through the demonstration of the positive impact of the Trust.

Eligibility

The Friends are mindful of the Army's drive to encourage greater diversity within the armed forces and welcome diversity among applicants. The friends also recognise that many young people face personal and socio-economic disadvantage regardless of their gender, ethnicity and ability, so the main focus will be on supporting and encouraging all young cadets who have faced disadvantage or personal challenges to seek support from the bursary to support them in their next steps.

The Selection Criteria

- a) Open to Cadets of good standing who, normally, have 2* APC or above and normally aged 16-18 years old.
- b) Funding will be assessed based on length of service, attitude, outlook, previous achievement, commitment and offer of service enhancement following the completion of the funded "event".
- c) Company Commander's recommendations will be taken into consideration during the process.
- d) References must be supplied with any application (a minimum of one, maximum three).
- e) Funds will be set aside and ring-fenced for each successful applicant, for the duration of the approved activity.
- f) The selection procedure will be transparent, open to inspection and constant review by The Board of Trustees of S&WM (NS) ACF. It will be devoid of any considerations relating to ethnic background, sex, gender, and religion or outside influence.
- g) If felt appropriate, the sub-committee will seek advice from outside bodies e.g. Education Departments, Universities, schools, potential employers etc.

Funding

Dedicated funding will be sought from donors and a sum will be allocated from within the Friend's current financial resources. This funding will be "ring fenced" to ensure that any agreed programme can be fulfilled. This initiative will have a rolling five-year provision at any one time to provide resilience.



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Once a candidate has been selected and approved an offer will be made subject to:

- a) The candidate agreeing the contractual terms of the bursary
- b) Funds being allocated by the Friends Honorary Treasurer
- c) The course/activity being confirmed.

Terms of the Scholarship

- a) Recipients of a bursary must;
 - i. Meet the selection Criteria.
 - ii. Sign a contract agreeing to the specific terms of their scholarship.
 - iii. Commit to completing the defined course or activity.
 - iv. Report back on progress at defined points as determined by the sub-committee
 - v. Behave appropriately, perform in class and/or in employment, conduct themselves with dignity and respect the laws of the educational establishment whilst upholding the traditions and ethos of the ACF
- b) Expenditure will normally be settled directly with the provider. Where not, appropriate proof of correct use of the bursary will be required.
- c) In the event that the participant drops out, changes or extends the agreed activity for any reason or the applicant is shown to have not to have behaved appropriately, has under-performed in class, has not conducted themselves with dignity and with respect to the laws of the educational establishment and not upheld the traditions and ethos of the ACF the sub-committee reserves the right to terminate any allocated funding and if appropriate to seek repayment from the applicant of any funds allocated.