**Friends of Staffordshire &West Midlands (North Sector) ACF**

**Access to Education and Employment Bursary**

**Information for Potential Applicants**

The Primary aim of this bursary is to help remove barriers for serving Army Cadets of the Staffordshire and West Midlands (North Sector) Army Cadet Force wishing to engage with education 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.

The bursary is designed to be as flexible as possible and can include support with any costs associated with education or access to employment.

Education related applications must be directly related to engagement in education in a recognised school, academy, Further Education College, Private Training Provider or University. Financial support will not be provided where statutory or other funding is available. Requests for support with any costs associated with access to employment including, but not limited to, transport, interview clothing and interview costs will also be considered. Welfare related costs will also be considered.

The Selection Criteria;

* Open to Cadets of good standing who, normally, have 2\* APC or above and normally aged 16-18 years old.
* 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”.
* Company Commander’s recommendations will be taken into consideration during the process.
* References must be supplied with any application (a minimum of one, maximum three).

A sub-committee has been established to oversee the bursary that includes a serving Cadet with relevant experience. Upon receipt of a bursary application, this sub-committee will;

* Determine the level of financial support to be allocated from the Access to Education and Employment Fund.
* Prioritise applications and will determine who will be the recipients of the available funding, normally, on or before the 31st August each year although applications will be considered outside of this application window if required and if funds are available.
* Seek advice from outside agencies if required
* Interview each shortlisted applicant to assess attitude, outlook, and commitment.

Funds will be set aside and ring-fenced for each successful applicant, for the duration of the approved activity.

When completing the application, you might want to think about the fact that the sub-committee will be looking to support those cadets who are committed to the ACF and best embrace the values of the ACF and provide brief examples to demonstrate your stregths as a cadet. You might also want to think about how, if you receive a bursary, how you can help the Trustees. This might be by agreeing to provide a brief account of how the bursary helped you achieve your goals or maybe agreeing to talk to other cadets about the bursary to help spread the word.

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

* The candidate agreeing the contractual terms of the bursary
* Funds being allocated by the Friends Honorary Treasurer
* The course/activity being confirmed.

Recipients of a bursary must;

* Meet the selection Criteria.
* Sign a contract agreeing to the specific terms of their scholarship.
* Commit to completing the defined course or activity.
* Report back on progress at defined points as determined by the sub-committee
* 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

Expenditure will normally be settled directly with the provider. Where not, appropriate proof of correct use of the bursary will be required.

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.

Applications will normally be made electronically via the form on the Friends website

The sub-committee decisions will be final.