The Matthew Bacon Bursary

– Call for Applications 2027

30th October 2026

Background - Matthew Bacon Bursary

1. Major Matthew Bacon was a former cadet in Surrey ACF who went on to be a career soldier in the Intelligence Corps. In September 2005 he was tragically killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq. He was a keen participant in many types of adventurous training, as this formed an important part of his life.

2. Together with the Army Cadet Charitable Trust (ACCT UK) and the Outward Bound Trust (OBT), Matthew's parents set up a bursary in their son's name to celebrate his life. The Matthew Bacon Bursary enables young people to take part in an OBT 14-day 'Summit' Adventure; an activity chosen because of how much adventurous training developed Matthew during the time he was a cadet.

Aim of the Bursary

3. The aim of the Matthew Bacon Bursary is to enable army cadets to build their confidence and develop their ability to take advantage of opportunities that life offers to them through completion of a challenging 14-day OBT 'Summit' Adventure.

General Information for ACF Counties

4. ACF Counties are asked to identify suitable candidates, who are cadets:

   a. With low self-confidence; or,

   b. Who have not achieved their potential in the ACF; or,

   c. Who tends to hold back from engaging in cadet activities or other opportunities.

   d. Who will be aged between 15 years and 17 years of age by the start date of the course (**dates and locations available to candidates can be found at Annex A**).

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5. There are sufficient funds available from the bursary to fund up to five places this year. However, if more worthy applications are received ACCT UK will work with OBT to try and fund additional places, but this is subject to the funds available.

6. Whilst the bursary is aimed at the personal development of older cadets, the ACF may benefit in the long term from the training given on the 14-day 'Summit' Adventure, particularly if bursary recipients return as Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, possibly having gained adventurous training experience in preparation for undergoing formal qualifications.

Funding

7. The terms of the bursary require a contribution from other sources as well as funding from the Matthew Bacon Bursary itself. The funding is apportioned as follows:

    a. **Bursary – £1,529 (85%)**

    b. **Personal contribution from the cadet – £250 (15%)**

8. The concept of a personal contribution from the individual is important because it ensures that the cadet is a stakeholder in the event. Ideally the **contribution will be raised through the cadet's own fundraising efforts, with support and resources available from ACCT UK.**

Raising the Personal Contribution

9. Raising the personal contribution is a challenge, particularly considering the target audience of cadets who may not have the confidence to raise money. Some of the funds must be raised by the cadet and their detachment. **Detachment Commanders should work with the cadet to plan how they will raise the funds.**

10. This is an excellent opportunity for community activities organised and run by their detachment for Community Engagement and Duke of Edinburgh's Award themes.

11. Fundraising support and materials can be provided by ACCT UK and the Fundraising Team. This can be arranged after the selection process has taken place.

12. County welfare funds may be used in part, but only once an effort has been made by the cadet to contribute to the activity themselves.

13. Cadets will be required to submit a paragraph on the fundraising activity they have undertaken, accompanied by a photograph.

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Outward Bound Trust – 'Summit' Adventure

14. The OBT 'Summit' Adventure is a 14-day course. It is a highly adventurous course featuring climbing, canoeing, gorge walking, plus two separate expeditions, the second one being self-led. The course is designed with all experience levels in mind and is suitable for cadets of all levels.

15. As this is a physically demanding course, the OBT have created the following documents to aid in preparing potential candidates for their Summer Adventures; at Annex B – Summer Adventure Fitness Guide and at Annex C – 'Summit' Adventure Itinerary. **Please read through these documents in advance to ensure your candidate is suitable for this course.**

16. There is a high level of action planning and goal setting, with a number of 1:1 interactions with the instructors. All bursary recipients will leave with a personal action plan and development feedback from instructors that will be useful in future career planning and further personal development.

Selection Criteria

17. To ensure that the spirit of the bursary is fulfilled, candidate cadets must:

    a. **Be an enrolled cadet of the ACF; and**

    b. **Have low self-confidence; or,**

    c. **Have not achieved their potential in the ACF; or,**

    d. **Who tends to hold back from engaging in cadet activities or other opportunities; and,**

    e. **Between 15 years and 17 years of age by the start date of the course; and,**

    f. **Have a strong recommendation from their Commandant.**

18. In order to support each individual application, we require two citations, **one from the candidate's Detachment Commander and one from the Commandant.** Both citations are extremely important to the application and should offer supporting information not provided by the candidate. In most cases, the citations provided determine the overall success of the application.

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Application Process

19. **All candidates should complete the application form found at Annex D** and, once the Commandant has written their detailed endorsement, send it to grants@acctuk.org. All parts of the application form must be completed in full.

20. It is imperative that the parent/guardian of each candidate is informed of the entire process from the outset, to encourage this ACCT UK have included their consent within the application form. A parent/guardian information letter can be found at Annex E.

21. To avoid disappointment candidates should **specify three courses** which they can attend in their priority order, as well as listing any known dates they are not available i.e. Annual Camps or Family Holidays etc. They will be allocated their first choice wherever possible.

22. The deadline for applications is **Monday 25th January 2027**.

Selection Process

23. All eligible applications will be put forward to a Selection Panel Meeting, of ACCT UK staff, Trustees, subject experts and member(s) of Matthew's family, where the successful recipients will be selected. The candidate's personal statement and citations will be important factors.

24. Candidates will be informed as soon as possible before the end of March as to whether they have been awarded a bursary.

25. Those awarded a bursary, and therefore a course place, will be required to pay their personal contribution one month prior to the start of their allocated course.

Travel, Clothing and Equipment

26. **The bursary recipient's unit is responsible for arranging travel and will be able to charge this against their UIN.** Collection from railheads and airports can be arranged by the OBT for an additional cost which will be financially supported by ACCT UK. ACCT UK will confirm Travel Plans with each successful bursary recipient's ACF County Headquarters.

27. **Specialist clothing and equipment will be supplied by Outward Bound Trust.** It would be prudent for cadets to have good quality hiking socks, walking boots and some items of warm clothing. Further information will be emailed by the Outward Bound Trust.

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Important Warning

28. ACF Counties are responsible for briefing cadets and their parent/guardian so that they understand exactly what they are committing themselves to when they accept a bursary.

29. Bursary recipients should be absolutely certain that they are able to attend the course that they have been allocated. If they cannot attend due to unforeseen reasons, it may be possible at the discretion of the OBT to transfer from one course to another. If a bursary recipient wishes to amend the terms of their bursary, then ACCT UK must be informed immediately.

30. Failure to inform ACCT UK of a cancellation may result in the bursary being financially penalised and will influence our ability to award bursaries to other cadets in the future.

Summary

31. The Matthew Bacon Bursary represents a superb opportunity for cadets. Those who receive this prestigious award will benefit from a life-changing adventurous training experience.

32. There will only be a few places available, so those chosen must be the most deserving. By taking part, the successful cadets will be celebrating the life of a fine soldier who started his career in our movement.

33. Funds are always needed to support the Matthew Bacon Bursary. If any units wish to fundraise on behalf of the bursary fund, then please contact fundraising@acctuk.org. We can offer fundraising advice and marketing material for your event.

34. If you have any further questions, please contact Lara Henwood, the ACCT UK Grants Officer on the details provided below.

020 4586 8186
grants@acctuk.org

Annexes:

A. Summit Adventure Course Dates & Locations
B. OBT Summer Adventure Fitness Guide
C. OBT Summit Adventure Itinerary
D. Application Form
E. Parent Information Letter

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