**Ashford Borough Council higher education bursary and work placement scheme (up to 3 or 4 years)**

**Purpose**

The council is keen to support the growth of local talent and recognise that the cost of higher education can make the decision to go to university more difficult.

The purpose of this scheme is for the Council to provide financial support to a ***local person*** in meeting some of the day to day costs of undertaking higher education whilst also providing good quality paid work experience during the summer holiday period to support their programme of study.

We want to help individuals develop skills and experience and build an attractive CV ideally for a role at ABC if there is an appropriate opportunity on graduation. We also see this as an opportunity to build on our work of making opportunities accessible to all.

**Overarching Conditions**

1. You must be resident in the borough, for a minimum of 5 years[[1]](#footnote-1), and be committed to working up to 12 weeks of the summer holidays in a placement at the council.
2. You must be enrolled/have an offer of a place at an educational establishment for at least one academic year and you must attend the course for at least twenty weeks in that academic year. Or if the course is longer you must attend for at least twenty weeks on average, in an academic year over the period of the course.
3. The educational establishment must be a recognised university, technical college or similar educational establishment, which is open to members of the public generally and offer more than one course of practical or academic instruction.
4. You must complete the full application process to be eligible for the bursary and the work placement; and satisfy eligibility to work in the UK checks.
5. You will be paid a rate of £10.60 per hour for the period of the placement and you will be an employee of ABC.
6. We will pay a bursary up to £3,000 per year, this will be a tax free payment made upon commencement of the academic course of study (subject to any new taxation rules). This will be repayable if you drop out of your course before the end of the academic year.
7. If the summer work placement is not completed satisfactorily the offer of the bursary will be withdrawn. Examples of unsatisfactory completion will include issues relating to conduct, capability or attendance. Any future commitment to a work placement will also be withdrawn. If you are unsuccessful in securing a place at university the offer of the bursary and future placements will be withdrawn. *Typically* this will be due to lower than expected A Level results. We will usually honour the current placement if it has commenced.
8. If you are successful in being awarded a bursary you agree to take part in publicity about the scheme.

**Application process**

You must complete submit a CV and supporting statement to [recruitment@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@ashford.gov.uk) by the advertised date, this will detail the course and educational establishment that you have a confirmed place at (or a conditional offer of a place),a supporting statement highlighting why you should be considered for the work placement scheme and bursary.

Applicants who are shortlisted will be invited to present their application to a panel who will make a decision on whether the council is able to offer an opportunity of a bursary and placement scheme.

At times the council may decide to focus on specific professional backgrounds, especially where there is a scarcity of new graduate talent. Where possible we will highlight this in the invitation to apply details. However on occasions we may not have made this distinction but it could become a deciding factor when making decisions about successful candidates.

**The placement**

The placement will be in our Planning service where we will be able to provide you with a better understanding of the Planning area of local government. We will be able to help you develop knowledge and skills in the workplace and to support your programme of study.

You will have a placement buddy and where possible we will try to link a key area of study to the placement to help embed learning or prepare you for your upcoming programme.

**After graduation**

Consideration will be given to a further 12 week placement at the end of your course, should there be an appropriate vacancy we will also encourage you apply for this role too.

**Approximate timings**

**The first year of placement will need to fit around school/college commitments so the timetable for placement year 1 will be shorter.**

* Applications open in April and close 31 May 2022
* Interviews will commence late June
* Offers made early July
* Placement year 1 commence end of July to mid-September 2022 – up to 8 weeks

Future year’s placements run from beginning of July - up to 12 weeks.

1. Armed Forces Service Personnel and their families will not be required to meet this condition under our commitment to the Borough Council’s Armed Forces Covenant [↑](#footnote-ref-1)