

Sponsorship for Study

Sponsorship could allow your son/daughter to take a course of study otherwise out of their reach. An occupationally-relevant qualification approved by a well-established employer is the most popular kind of sponsorship and backing is usually financial, though it may constitute other benefits e.g. free use of facilities. It may even come from one or more individuals, rather than an organisation. In any case, the probable benefits are:

- sufficient money for fees and/or living expenses
- insights helpful to career choice or direction
- a job offer or much-improved prospects of this

Sponsorship in Britain is possible from age 16. This is long-established within the Armed Services, being normally intended for aspiring officers, where those selected typically start on the scheme during their first or second year of A-levels (or equivalent). Not least because financial backing is often well over £1000 annually, this route attracts considerable interest. However, your son/daughter should not view it seriously unless they know - and favour - what Service life entails.

The commercial sector has a range of sponsorship to someone at (or about to enter) University. This is deeper-rooted in certain occupations, such as Engineering, than others. Either before or within a first degree, it could enable your son/daughter to see at close quarters, and participate in, work which attracts them. This might even be enough to secure a job offer well ahead of graduation, and perhaps holiday work in the interim.

Advantages to being sponsored by a large organisation:

- a well-established training programme
- relatively high salary/payments
- a broad range of opportunities
- Possible drawbacks are:
- strong competition for places
- high company expectations
- being only 'a small cog in a big wheel'
- By contrast, a smaller organisation may make it easier to:
- exercise your own preferences
- form links with colleagues
- see how the organisation really works
- The 'down' side here may be:
- less economic security
- relatively modest salary/payments
- a narrower range of in-house work or roles

Your son/daughter can boost their chances of obtaining funding (especially from an organisation new to sponsorship) by illustrating how both parties will benefit. The best way to communicate this must be decided ahead of any contact. Demonstrating a good basic grasp of the business is part of this, so a thorough perusal of its website is essential.

If hesitant about approaching an organisation for financial support, your son/daughter could broach it after being recruited for a non-sponsored opportunity. In fact, this may improve their chances, since

- they'll already have had opportunities to impress
- they'll know what specific study will be most useful
- their employer won't want to disappoint with a refusal

If yet to experience Higher Education, your son/daughter might consider a foundation degree. Linked to work, this qualification closely involves the employer. However, if your child already holds good A-levels (or equivalent), a full (probably part-time) degree may offer better prospects.

Any arrangement should include a written agreement stating:

- fee charges, and who will pay these
- any allowance for books or equipment
- time off for classes, revision, exams etc.
- whether earnings will be affected by study
- any obligation to remain with the organisation once study is complete

Enquiries about sponsorship are usually best made through an organisation's Human Resources department. Even initially, your son/daughter should be ready to speak convincingly about what they'd like from the experience, and how it might advantage the company.

Your son/daughter may need a sustained effort to find sponsorship, but if successful, financial and career rewards can be considerable.

Resources

[The Scholarship Hub](#)

[The Guardian](#)

[Brightside](#)

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