

Airways Aviation helicopter student born to fly

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SHE flew across the globe before the age of five and now Airways Aviation student Ebonie Sheldon is one step closer to taking to the sky full-time.

The 19-year-old, who is studying her Certificate 4 in Aviation for helicopters, realised her dream of flying solo during a routine session with her instructor on May 27.

"The instructor took his seatbelt off and said he was getting out," Ms Sheldon said.

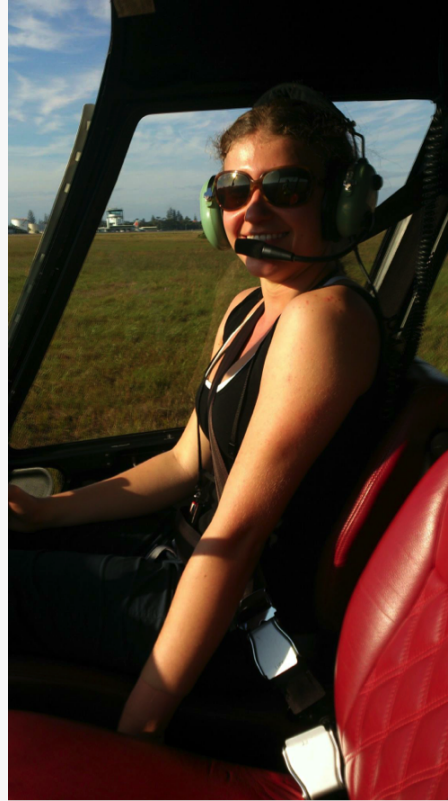
"I wasn't expecting it but I was more excited than nervous and it went really well."

Ms Sheldon's love for flying stems from early childhood trips around the world where she spent time living in Japan, Taiwan and Indonesia.

"I've always loved flying and I think it comes from the experience with airliners when I was so young," Mrs Sheldon said.

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Airways Aviation helicopter student Ebonie Sheldon at the Gold Coast base.



"The first time I got on an aeroplane I was six months old and didn't cry. I was so comfortable with it and think I was the only baby on the plane not crying.

"I knew half way through my last year of school I wanted to do

a trial helicopter flight and after doing it I absolutely fell in love with it and knew that's what I wanted to do."

The Southport resident is passionate about the air and sea and can be found diving when she isn't too busy flying.

"It's funny because I seem to just not like being on land," she said.

Ms Sheldon is one of many Airways Aviation students taking advantage of its Tangalooma-based scenic flight operation, which allows students to engage with clients and gain real-world experience.

"It was a great experience working at Tangalooma and helping with loading and things like passenger briefings, re-fuelling and washing the helicopters," she said.

"It was awesome and it gave me confidence to go out into the real world because you are meeting people and finding out what it is like in the industry."

Mrs Sheldon said she was hoping to have her license by September before finding a place in the work force through Airways Aviation.

"I'm really happy with the decision to choose Airways Aviation and the career path," Ms Sheldon said.

"I've loved my journey and I've never been as happy as I am now."

For More Information Contact:

AIRWAYS AVIATION

+61 7 5599 3445

email us here

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Ebonie Sheldon