

# Luke Donaldson

2009 - 2016



I joined TGAS in 2009, and went through to the Sixth Form, studying Maths, Physics and German.

It's always been my dream to be a pilot, so I applied for flying schools after finishing Sixth Form.

There are 2 different ways to become a pilot, but I opted for the integrated training route. The application process took around 6 months, including medical exams and skills tests, before I was successfully enrolled on easyJet's MPL (Multi Pilot License) course.

The training took 18 months on an intense full-time course, squeezing 14 exams into the first 6 months. Some of these exams include Air Law, Human Performance & Limitations as well as Meteorology, numerous Navigation exams & more too! After passing all of the exams, I moved onto flight training where I was lucky to spend 6 months in New Zealand. Without a doubt, the entire course is intense but so rewarding. My personal highlight has to be when my course mate and I completed a simulator session focussing on smoke drills and learning to fly an Airbus jet aircraft whilst the flightdeck is filled with smoke.

Once I completed training, easyJet confirmed my job offer as a First Officer and I was assigned my 'base' as Belfast, where I have lived and worked since the end of 2018.

Since starting my career, I have flown around 2,000 hours over many different countries (and airports!) in Europe. I fly the Airbus A319, A320 and A320NEO aircraft, carrying a maximum of 186 passengers. My shortest flight is just 18 minutes to the Isle of Man, and the longest is 5 hours to Dalaman, Turkey.

TGAS taught me a variety of skills including how to study which was imperative for the first 6 months of my training, as well as time management and not only how to work with others but how to work with other people you wouldn't usually work with. Whether this is different ages, or backgrounds but still able to ensure a good level of teamwork.

It is not essential nor a requirement to have a degree to become a pilot, but there is the option for you to get a degree alongside training for the fATPL (Frozen Air Transport Pilots Licence). This option could assist with financing through student loans and means you could leave training with both a pilot's licence and degree under your belt.