

Information for Chief Flying Instructors



BGA CFI Guide

Dear Chief Flying Instructor

Congratulations on your appointment!

This guide aims to address the organisational and flying responsibilities of being a CFI. It also contains ideas on how you can be a better than average CFI.

You are not alone! You are part of a regional team that aims to support and oversee instructing within a region. Use the table in Appendix 3 to see which club is in which region. It is always a good idea to make contact with your local examiners. They are a friendly bunch, and they can be contacted through the Senior Regional Examiner (SRE). In addition to the local team, the BGA staff, especially myself are on hand to assist wherever they can. Contact details for SREs are found on the BGA website.

This guide is certainly not set in stone. If you wish to make a change or point out an error, please don't hesitate to get in touch via the contact list.

We are living in a time of change at present; EASA Flight Crew Licencing deadlines are delayed until April 2018 at the time of writing. I am confident that the BGA can continue to provide support and advice as well as a framework around which training can be delivered throughout this adjustment.

I hope you enjoy your tenure as CFI. It's a job with a lot of responsibility, but equally holds many interesting challenges. I hope this guide will help you on your way.

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BGA Training Standards Manager
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1. General Responsibilities

Your responsibilities as a CFI can be found on the BGA website under the title 'Requirements and Guidance'. This part of the website points readers towards other relevant information about running a gliding club as part of the BGA. As a CFI, it would be good to review this part of the website at your leisure.

Over and above these documents, you are also part of a team within the club, so it might be a good idea to arrange a meeting with other club officials in order to liaise with them. But let's be clear here. Apart from the managerial side of things, YOU are responsible for all flying that goes on from your airfield (in most cases). You are free to delegate responsibility, but you must do this carefully; engaging people you trust.

Try not to do the job on your own. You are in charge, but your club may well have other very experienced instructors whose advice and assistance will be valuable as you carry out what can easily become an onerous task.

2. The Role of the Chief Flying Instructor

Apart from statutory responsibilities, a CFI is of course at the top of the club instructing tree. That means that the CFI needs to provide a role model for all the other instructors, and indeed other pilots who fly at the club.

This means that in all normal circumstances you are leading the way when it comes to safe and fun flying. By that I mean that if you perform dodgy low circuits with students, no matter the circumstances, others will follow. If you taxi up to the hangar with the wheel brake squealing, others will copy.

However, let's look at the positive. If you engage in some good fun flying; flying the odd competition, organising the odd expedition or club competition, others will follow. If you engage in good, practical, safe instruction, others will follow.

It takes all sorts to make a world, and you will find a cross section in your club. It's important to try to make everyone feel welcome, and embrace the fact that some will be content with a circuit, or even repairing the winch as their 'fix' this week.

It can sometimes be hard to find the time for your own flying, but it's important not to let this aspect of your gliding slip away. It IS important enough to fly a cross country on a nice day rather than an impromptu check with a club instructor.

You can show that safe flying isn't boring – it just requires some thought! It is often easy to forget to keep a perspective when continually being sent safety flashes and guidance from the BGA and CAA. Remember – the BGA is there to help. When it does communicate with CFIs it's normally for the clubs benefit.

CFIs need to be decisive – but not to the point of deciding on too many rules. Gliding is complicated, so it's important not to try to simplify with rules some operations that require an individuals thought and airmanship.

3. Communication

It's important for a CFI to have an effective method of communication with their instructors. Most CFIs have an e-mail list. Once that list is going, it can be used for bi-directional communication. These lists are very useful to communicate training concerns about individuals (with caution – it's normally appropriate to tell the individual concerned that you will be informing other instructors) and new ideas and schemes operating at your club, with standardisation and quality as an aim. You

can also forward on any stuff you receive from the BGA or elsewhere that you wish all your instructors to have sight of.

In addition, instructors meetings are vital to bring together your instructor corps. Many CFIs run these meetings as seminars to introduce new local or national ideas and training. Don't forget to ask your instructors in advance for their agenda items. These meetings are often useful in getting to know your instructors; sometimes with a view to monitor an individual instructor more carefully...

Communication with members is often carried out in the form of news letters or similar bulletins via (separate) e-mail streams. It's essential to keep everyone informed as to decisions made by you and your team.

Internet forums. I would advise caution. Experience shows these often end up in general bear baiting and personal slanging matches.

4. Supervision of Flying

- BGA Guidance on the supervision and care of pilots is available on the BGA website.
- As CFI, all the flying that goes on at the club is your responsibility. Of course, you will delegate some of that responsibility to your team of instructors.
- There is a section in the BGA instructors' manual on Solo pilot supervision.

5. Airfield organisation

- BGA Site operations Manual can be found in sections on the BGA website.
- Consider risks at your individual site, and how to mitigate those risks. For example:
 - Just because the airfield has been running the same way for years doesn't mean that it is set up in the optimum or safest way.

- Ensure that winch launching doesn't endanger aerotowing and motorgliding with launching wires
- Where do the visitors go to get to the launch point? Are they accompanied? Is it safe?

6. Succession Planning

Some thoughts:

- Have I got enough instructors now?
- Will I have enough instructors in a couple of years?
- What might occur to rob me of instructors?
- Can I identify any promising pilots who will make good instructors?
- Can I develop any of my existing instructors?
- Who's going to do my job when for whatever reason I want or even have to stop?
- Train up at least one DCFI to share some of the tasks of CFI; hopefully that person will be able to take on your role, painlessly in future.

7. Provision of Application Forms and Access to Data

- Is there an easy facility (ideally a computer connected to the internet) to facilitate NOTAM, AIS and Weather self briefing?
- All BGA application forms for pilot certificates, licences and badges are on the BGA website.
- Try to limit paper copies of forms – they are updated fairly often.

8. Administration of Your Instructors' Ratings

Instructors operating at BGA clubs are subject to an 'online review' or revalidation by their CFI. This is an annual opportunity for CFIs to check that individual instructor ratings are valid on that day. This online system is used for the same reason irrespective of the

instructor rating held. You will receive an online login, which will list all your instructors. You and the instructor concerned will be sent an e-mail 90 days before the revalidation date for that instructor. Sometime in that period, you will need to confirm the validity (hours – launches – seminars – 3 and 5 year refreshers etc). Just to reiterate – this is a ‘snapshot’ check to see if the rating or certificate is valid on that day.

Each instructor at your club is responsible for his or her own rating validity. In the past, some club instructors have relied on their CFI to tell them when their rating needs a check or test, or even where more hours are needed to comply with BGA operational regulation. It must be communicated to instructors that they are individually responsible for maintaining their own instructor ratings and ensuring that revalidation requirements are met. CFIs need to provide appropriate facilities and courses / access to seminars / flying etc to ensure that it's painless to keep ratings and certificates current.

Notice my choice of words here.

- Revalidation means that the rating has not lapsed, and that the instructor simply needs you to certify that their rating can remain valid as per laws and rules.
- Renewal occurs when an instructor's rating has lapsed for some reason. If the rating has lapsed, an examiner will need to be involved to renew your instructor. Contact your Senior Regional Examiner to arrange this. Contacts are on the BGA website.

9. One, Three and Five Year Refresher Training and Standardisation

One of the biggest jobs of a CFI is to make the three and five year refresher training readily available to club instructors and Introductory Flight Pilots. The aim of this regime links in with the overall job of the CFI – one of keeping all instructing at the club as safe and standard as possible (as well as fun).

There are some guides as to the content of this training on the BGA website and in the relevant training booklets but CFIs are at liberty to add to this training to include new material and local issues as they see fit. And they should! It is essential to include the important exercises that kill pilots when conducting this training, so winch launching and failures as well as stalling and spinning ex's need to be in there. Your instructors are experienced pilots, so bear in mind that just demonstrating the same old flying exercises that they do all the time will not teach them anything new. It might be an idea to concentrate on an instructor's ability to put a lesson together in the classroom and then in the air. In addition, try to pick out exercises that they may not have seen for a while.

The one and three year instructor / IFP / BI refresher training can be done at any time during the year and with reference to the guides available are self explanatory. The 5 year refresher course is a bit more in depth, and part of your ongoing CFI training with the regional team includes running a 5 year refresher with the help of your local examining team.

Notwithstanding the above, CFIs are perfectly at liberty to fly with any of their instructors and IFP's at any time. Indeed, there is always a rush to complete 3 and 5 year checks just before revalidation. This need not be the case, and ad hoc flights (briefed as part of a training structure) can be taken into account at any time during the year. Make sure you keep records of any training given, and that the instructor keeps records in his/her log book.

Organisation of Student Pilot Training

10. Conduct of Trial Lesson Flights or Introductory Flights

This is always a hot topic. Any accident or incident with a temporary member of the club on board is a very serious event. These accidents happen too often, and are perpetrated in **equal measure by Basic, Assistant and Fully Rated Instructors!**

These flights should take place using the **lowest risk possible. They are not 'sporting' flights.** The most common incident with Trial Lessons or introductory flights is a landout. While successfully landing out is to be commended, how could landing out become a possibility if the aim is not a sporting endeavour? The met limits should be adhered to for all categories of instructor or IFP. There is a section in the new (2011) version of the instructors' manual which deals with the conduct of trial lessons. It repeats some of the above, but has additional information.

11. Ab-initio, or pre-Solo Training

This is what we all know and love, and is carried out using the instructor manual as a guide. You can use a BGA progress card as a guide to the syllabus (available on the BGA website). The Formal syllabus is available on the BGA website. Forms for applying for A badges and a whole host of other stuff can be downloaded from the BGA website.

12. Progression from Solo to Bronze and Cross-Country endorsement

Going solo is a big step and a very memorable event in a pilots training career. It is nonetheless just a step. Students should be encouraged to train at least to Bronze badge with a cross country endorsement or licence.

13. Post-Bronze Coaching

At some clubs, bronze level pilots, having flown solo and gone through the supervision of cross country checks and post solo checks, suddenly end up with a badge and no clue what to do next. They have much less interaction from instructors – they are often busy tending to less experienced pilots.

This is one of the best bits of being a CFI. Having a scheme in place to cater for these pilots and watching them progress is fantastically rewarding!

This coaching is not easy, however. It needs to be tailored for the individual. Recognise that the student has been used to being told what's next by an instructor. In the absence of this direction, it is easy to flounder, get bored doing circuits and take up golf.

It might be an idea to have a central point of contact (a club coach) that post bronze pilots are asked to contact to provide tailored 'direction' for pilots. Some ideas:

- Dual cross country training with a suitably experienced cross country instructor (including in two seaters and separate single seaters)
 - Including flight planning, notams, met etc
- Simply converting to different club single seaters
- Confidence building for those who don't want to fly cross country
 - Accurate landing
 - Flying different types
 - Accurate thermalling
 - Recovery from unusual attitudes
- Organising expeditions and club exchanges
- Aerobatics
- Alerting pilots to nationwide schemes – including Juniors

14. Ground School / Briefing Provision

Pupils learn efficiently when:

- They are clear about the aims and objectives of a lesson
- They feel safe as they are content that the instructor has thought about the possible threats and errors that might be made during the flight

- They know what structure the lesson will take
- They know who will fly during each part of the flight
- They understand the point of each upper air exercise flown
- They understand the theory behind what they are being taught in the air
- They receive constructive feedback after the lesson, and a 'way forward' for the next

Notice each point above can only be delivered by a constructive pre flight briefing. Do those facilities exist at your club? If they do, how much are they used at the weekend? Briefing pupils in a quiet atmosphere is an ESSENTIAL part of training. Some instructors do not enjoy performing a formal brief, but I'm afraid that's tough. It's part of instructing.

Pupils who leave the sport halfway through training often cite unstructured training as a reason. Please don't let this happen at your club.

15. Selection and Training of Pilots to Become Instructors

One of the key roles of a CFI is to pick appropriate pilots to become instructors (as mentioned above in succession planning). This is not an easy task. The BGA team of coaches and examiners that run instructors courses are occasionally frustrated by some of the individuals that are sent to them. This is for usually one of two reasons (and occasionally both). The first is that the individual concerned cannot handle the aircraft accurately enough, and the second is that personality wise, they will not be a great instructor.

The first problem is relatively easy to sort out – the record of training for the instructor courses contain the standard of flying expected before each course. Please make sure that the candidate you send to the course satisfies the requirements laid down in the document. If you can't get them to the standard in time – contact the course coach or myself for advice.

In this modern society we need to be very inclusive and make a statement that anyone can be a gliding instructor given enough training. While this is mostly true and a statement we would all love to make, there are some pilots that would not be the most ideal candidates to train to become an instructor.

On a more positive note – if you are looking for the best instructors to train, think back to when you were learning to fly. What were the attributes of the instructors you got the most out of?

An ideal instructor is a pilot who has experienced a cross section of gliding. Perhaps they have carried out a little adventurous flying (cross country, competitions, aerobatics, flying in unusual locations), flown a few different types of glider / aircraft and has flown from a few different locations. After all, we are a sporting organisation. If we want our trainee pilots to aspire to great things, they need inspiration. That inspiration does not come from instructors who have only flown at one or two similar sites, the minimum cross country and hours experience to qualify, and only ever a couple of different types of glider.

16. BGA Course Organisation

BI courses – Normally run by volunteers within the regions. Contact your SRE to organise.

Introductory Flight Pilot courses – Normally run by volunteers within the regions. Candidates for this qualification must have an EASA aircrew glider licence. Contact your SRE to organise.

New 'modular courses' – Run using a combination of club volunteer coaches and central BGA courses. These courses do not require a BI rating as an introduction. Please see the course booklet and record of training for more information.

Completion Courses – These are part of the Assistant instructor course, and should be carried out between 6 and 18 months of completing the Assistant rating course. They are run within regions by volunteers – contact your SRE to arrange.

Full Gliding instructor ratings – This is a test run by your local team. Again – contact your SRE to arrange.

17. Type Conversions for Inexperienced Pilots

As the CFI has the final say about all flying on an airfield, so they can also say which aircraft can be flown by whom. This includes private gliders. There are lots of people out there who could afford an ASW22BLE but can they handle it yet? Advice on type conversion can be found in the Instructors manual.

18. A CFI's Examining Roles

Becoming a CFI often brings into sharp focus the differing roles required to carry out the job. As CFI, you will not only be expected to carry on instructing the basic syllabus, but ensuring that your instructors are delivering said syllabus effectively, accurately and consistently.

Occasionally you will need to sign off your instructors after various checks. These forms all ask whether a candidate has reached the required 'Standard'. Sometimes that standard is easy to define; sometimes not. A thought process that some examiners employ may help:

1. Would I allow the candidate to carry out the exercise in question with someone I care about aboard?
2. Would my 'loved one' learn enough from the instructor to keep them safe when flying solo etc?

If the answer to either of those questions is no, then more training is required. After all; your instructors will almost always be flying with someone's 'loved one'.

Above all, NEVER sign to say that you have done something that you have not. Experience shows this can lead to hot water.

19. A CFI's Safety Role

It is an obvious statement that the conduct of the CFI has a large bearing and responsibility for the safety within a club. The safest clubs have a very proactive safety 'culture'. Please note that in my experience, these clubs are not the most boring – on the contrary, the statistically safest clubs seem to me to be the most dynamic and organised.

The BGA produces an annual report which analyses the common accident categories. This report makes for interesting reading, but clubs sometimes think they must be ok, because they haven't had a serious accident for at least 10 years. However, it's interesting to note that if a crude analysis is conducted of the figures, an average (size and accident proneness) club will only have one serious or fatal accident every 13 years. So if you are a small club and you haven't had an accident where someone was injured for 20 years, you are doing averagely well! Because of these small figures at individual clubs, it's difficult to be reactive as there are actually relatively few accidents (fortunately). However, there are probably 10 near misses for every real accident, so collections of incidents at clubs can be useful to address possible problems unique to your operation.

It's sometimes difficult to be objective when you have been in intimate contact with a club for a number of years – perhaps you could initiate a swap with another local CFI to look at the operation at each club and come up with suggestions?

Another regional team that may be able to help is the team of Regional Safety Officers. The BGA office can provide contact details for your area.

Once a safety issue has been identified, it's a challenge to change procedures. Once again it's the culture and willingness to change that is the biggest help when this time comes. Rewarding proactive behaviour will help in this respect.

20. What to Do when Things Go Wrong

Not a very nice subject to deal with, but we do sometimes have to deal with accidents of variable severity. The BGA website has resources to follow in the event of an accident. The club really needs a policy tailored to its location. The documents that can be accessed from the BGA website have a proforma for clubs to modify.

Instructors involved in accidents either directly or when supervising early solo pilots should not continue to instruct until the cause of the accident has been established and any re-training taken place. Please note that even for the most benign accidents, a full report will be required by the SRE before making any decisions, and they must be consulted regarding decisions about re-training etc.

Please note that it is common that the minor accidents uncover just as many 'interesting techniques' as the major ones! CFIs should, along with their club safety officer carefully analyse accidents to any pilot and try to understand the underlying cause(s).

Please ensure that the accident report, and in particular, your analysis and proposed action are fully set out. Without these, the SRE cannot help and the suspension process can become very drawn out. It is in everyone's interest that the process is completed in a timely manner.

21. Disabled Flying (in particular trial lessons)

Many clubs are very inclusive when it comes to flying with those with disabilities. Some instructors may be understandably nervous of flying with people with some disabilities. The BGA has produced a document in conjunction with organisations that have experience of flying with disabled people. It is available on the BGA website.

22. Care of New Instructors / Introductory Flight Pilots

New BI, IFP and assistant rated instructors need special care and attention. Although examiners endeavour to simulate a pupil on a few flights during the BI and Assistant rating course, as you know, nothing can prepare you completely for flying with and teaching a real pupil! Try to give them support by means of teaming them up with an experienced Full rating or similar. Don't put them under any pressure to deal with any interesting pupils or unusual situations until they have some instructing experience under their belt.

Conclusion

There is a huge amount that you as a CFI can get involved in. It's impossible to cover everything here. Don't forget that you are now part of the local and national team. Local CFIs and examiners are a friendly bunch always willing to advise on best practice.

It's your choice how much work you put into a club. At a medium to large club it's possible to easily make a full time job of running safety initiatives / expeditions / competitions / club exchanges / monitoring and improving instructors etc. In practice you will need to spread these jobs out. Clubs can really prosper with a good CFI. It does take it out of you though – remember that one of your first jobs as CFI is to identify who you can hand the job to when you run out of ideas!

Appendix 1 – Contacts

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NATS Aeronautical Information Services website – contains all the information you would ever want to know about NOTAMS, AICs gliding wave boxes, local airspace agreements, details of Danger areas etc etc. <http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/public/index.php.html> Or just search for AIS NOTAM in Google.

N West&N Wales	East Anglia	Thames Valley	N East	S East	Scotland& Borders	S West& S Wales
Andreas	Anglia	Aquila	Buckminster	Bath Wilts, North Dorset	Borders	Bannerdown
Bowland Forest	Cambridge	Bidford	Burn	Channel	Cairngorm	Black Mountains
Denbigh	Essex	Booker	Cranwell	East Sussex	Deeside	Bristol& Gloucester
Derby& Lancs	Essex&Suffolk	Chilterns	Darlington	Imperial College	Dumfries& District	Cotswold
Lakes	Fenland	London	Lincolnshire	Kent	Edensoaring	Dartmoor
Midland	Norfolk	Oxfordshire Sportflying	Northumbria	Kestrel	Highland	Devon& Somerset
Needwood	Nene Valley	Oxford	Trent Valley	Lasham	Scottish GC	Herefordshire
North Wales	Peterborough& Spalding	Sackville	Wolds	Portsmouth Naval		Heron
Shropshire	Rattlesden	Shennington	York	Shalbourne		Mendip
Staffordshire	Suffolk	Stratford	Yorkshire	Southdown		North Devon
Ulster	Welland	The Gliding Centre		Surrey and Hants		Seahawk
Wrekin		The Motor Glider Centre		Surrey Hills		South Wales
		Upward Bound		Vectis		
		Vale of White Horse		Wyvern		
		Windrushers				