



RECREATIONAL
AVIATION AUSTRALIA

CHAPTER THREE

Choosing An Instructor Candidate

The RAAus Instructor is the fundamental link between the dream and the reality of achieving personal recreational flight. The Instructor is the cornerstone of the skills, behaviours and attitudes that any aspiring pilot should achieve on his chosen path in aviation.



Choosing Instructors

Approved Instructor Trainers and CFIs should look very closely at the applicants they recommend to undertake Instructor Training programs. Thought should be given to the applicants developed skills, attitude to flying and leadership in the local flying community as just some of the key ingredients to evaluate. Being a great pilot is not the only criteria, but few Instructors will be truly successful if they do not have well developed skills in the cockpit and a varied experience to call on in the dynamic and demanding role that is flight instruction.

The RAAus Operations Manual outlines the duties and responsibilities for RAAus Instructors with specific paragraphs addressing the requirements and behaviours expected from all professional Instructors in carrying out their duties. While it is difficult to categorically define a fit and proper person for the role of an Instructor, the candidate should have clearly demonstrated the highest level of airmanship and observed behaviours, an uncompromising safety culture and a willingness to assist and share pertinent knowledge and skills. A calm and level head and willingness to work with others to ensure safety is never compromised is also vital. Instructor Training Approval holders and CFIs nominating candidates for Instructor training should also review the RAAus Member Charter and RAAus Constitution.



Recommended traits for an Instructor

When recommending an applicant for any Instructor rating these questions should be considered:

- Is the candidate willing to devote significant hours most weekends to instructional duties?
- Is the candidates' family circumstances conducive to the time required to be devoted to instructing?
- Is the candidate willing to learn as much as his or her eagerness to teach?
- Does the candidate interact well with others socially and adapt to different personality types in interactions and communications.
- How does the candidate resolve conflicts and maintain respect?
- Is this effective?
- Is the candidate emotionally and physically fit for the role of a flight Instructor?
- Does the candidate take responsibility for their actions or do they attempt to deflect blame and responsibility?
- Is the candidate constantly looking for personal improvement and do they have a measure of adaptability in their attitudes and behaviours?
- Does the candidate have an appropriate level of confidence, yet remain humble regarding their abilities?
- Does the candidate really want to instruct as a means of helping others or is it status seeking?
- Has the candidate demonstrated an appropriate flying history of professional, compliant and safe operations?

Considerations for upgrade to Senior Instructor

When considering upgrading applicants to a Senior Instructor rating, the following additional questions should be considered:

- Is the candidate willing to make difficult decisions in the interest of safety and compliance?
- Can the candidate withstand commercial pressures to ensure safety is not compromised?
- Can the candidate effectively manage the demands of lesson planning, booking schedules, telephone calls, training records, customer interactions, the range of endorsement training, BFRs and operating different aircraft types?
- Can the candidate manage complex situations and multi-task?
- Are they self-sufficient, seeking out the appropriate resources and reference material required to perform the tasks of a senior Instructor?
- Are they willing to seek advice from CFIs and peers?
- Do they have the courage and conviction to stand by tough decisions?
- Will they have the confidence and ethical ability to fail unsuitable candidates if required?
- Have they demonstrated resilience and maintain a positive attitude under trying circumstances?
- Are they prepared to put the responsibilities of the position above established friendships and group influence on the airfield?
- Are they a leader who inspires others to be their best?
- Are they considerate and compassionate when required in their previous instructional roles.
- Were they well regarded or observed to perform all of the above tasks to a professional standard?
- Can they effectively interact and manage others with consideration for personal feelings and emotions?

Very few candidates will tick all of the above boxes and some will rise to the responsibility when it is bestowed upon them. Nevertheless, consideration to all the above elements should be given.

An upgrade to Senior Instructor should not be considered automatic on gaining Operations Manual minimum aeronautical experience and recommendation of three candidates for solo. If warning bells start ringing then advice to the Operations Manager should be considered before pursuing the training any further. It is much easier to refuse a privilege than to take it away later!

This chapter was modified for RAAus purposes with acknowledgment to the original text from the Australian Parachute Federation.

