

Gaining a Pilots Licence at Hull Aero Club

Contrary to what you may think, nearly everyone can learn to fly. The principal requirements are commitment and patience. Flying is not cheap but the costs are spread out over time and are not excessive when compared with those of other recreational pursuits. To find out more about flying, whether for leisure or as part of a flying career, you should visit the club and talk to us. You will be very welcome. In the meantime, the notes on this page will give some idea of what is involved.

Having been granted ATO status in March 2014 we are now able to offer the new LAPL(A) licence which provides a quicker route to light aircraft flight within the EU territories.

Hull Aero Club offers training on light aeroplanes and microlights, each having their own merits and distinctive benefits. There are three qualifications that provide a private pilot's licence for these aircraft: the **EASA PPL(A)** the **LAPL(A)** and the **NPPL(M)**. 'EASA' stands for 'European Aviation Safety Agency'. The 'A' denotes aeroplanes and the 'M' denotes microlights.



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EASA PPL(A) This is an internationally recognized qualification. It allows the holder to fly aeroplanes up to 5700Kg powered by a single piston engine and can be extended to allow flying under instrument conditions in the UK. The EASA PPL(A) licence is a necessary starting point for those who wish to become commercial pilots.

LAPL (A) This is the basic licence for recreational flying of light aircraft within the EU. It allows the holder to fly aeroplanes up to 2000Kg powered by a single piston engine with a maximum of 4 seats, under visual flight rules. Holders of the LAPL(A) can, however, upgrade to an EASA PPL(A) licence with further training.

NPPL (M) This is the licence for microlight flying, both flexwings and 3-axis. It is a UK qualification that is currently valid only in this country but may be used in certain other states by individual agreement. It allows the holder to fly aeroplanes up to 450Kg with a maximum of 2 seats under visual flight rules.

Hull Aero Club offer the opportunity for holders of light aircraft or microlight licences to convert to alternative modes with additional training. The summary below outlines the requirements for the licences listed above. More detailed information will be found by following by speaking with members of the instructional staff.

1. The EASA Part FCL PPL(A)

The student must complete a minimum of 45 hours training before the licence may be applied for. Within this time there must be a minimum of 10 hours solo flying as well as other basic training in aircraft handling, aerodrome procedures and navigation. The training culminates in a 'skill test' by an external examiner.

There is no lower age limit for learning to fly but students must be 14 to log hours towards the licence, 16 to fly solo and the licence cannot be awarded before their 17th birthday. There is no regulatory upper age limit but insurance and medical conditions may prevail.

Students may not fly solo without a valid medical certificate. For an EASA PPL(A) licence this requires an examination by a CAA approved medical examiner. It is therefore advisable to have the medical at an early stage in the training.

In addition to the practical flight training and skill test, there are nine multi-choice written examinations which can be taken at Hull Aero Club. Additionally there is a radio practical test which can also be taken at Hull Aero Club. A combined programme of directed self-study and classroom activity is provided to help you prepare for the exams.

2. The LAPL(A)

The course is effectively a shortened version of the EASA PPL(A) with the following distinctions: A minimum of 30 hours training is required with 6 hours solo flying. The written work is identical. The medical examination may be conducted by your GP or a CAA approved medical examiner.

3. The NPPL(M)

The course is essentially similar to the LAPL(A) with the following distinctions: A minimum of only 25 hours training is required. Five ground examinations are necessary. The skill test may be conducted by the local examiner who will also be your instructor. For the NPPL(M) a medical declaration is required which may be fulfilled by your GP and corresponds with the standard for professional driving. The possession of a radio licence is not essential for an NPPL(M) but we encourage microlight students to gain this qualification and provide the necessary facilities to achieve this. For further details on this qualification, please visit www.rmaviation.co.uk

4. How long does it take ?

You may take as long as you like to complete the training for either a PPL(A), LAPL(A) or NPPL(M) but the medical examination has a limited validity dependent on age and certain of the written examinations have a validity of 18 months or 24 months for NPPL(M). This means you may have to retake certain exams and have further medicals if you take longer than this to complete.

Taking on average a lesson a week, most students can obtain their licence within a year. This is a little dependent on the starting time as certain training (particularly solo work) requires favourable weather.

It is possible to take a break and resume training later. The hours accumulated can be used for up to 10 years but, as explained, further medicals and retaking of exams may be required.

5. How much must I fly to retain my licence ?

Depending on the type of licence you have, a certain number of hours flying will be required every two years. One hour must be with an instructor, who signs your logbook to state that your flying is of an adequate standard. If you do not manage this, you can reinstate your licence by re-taking your skills test.

6. How much does it all cost ?

You should budget for something like £7k to obtain an EASA Part FCL PPL(A), £5k for an LAPL(A) and £5k for an NPPL(M). A detailed breakdown of costs is available separately. It is worth noting that costs are usually greater during training than afterwards because you have to pay for instruction, books and equipment and the fee for the issue of the licence itself.