

Initial CFI check ride brief

The initial CFI check ride is meant to be done via scenario testing. While some examiners use rote memorization questions, the FAA wants DPE to use scenarios as much as possible to determine if the applicant can apply the information and use check lists to verify completeness.

The following is a brief outline and description of what you might expect for the initial CFI check ride about scenarios that you might encounter. Please see the current ACS for details of the scope and breadth of required knowledge for the practical.

New student- outline the training process through check ride- see below

Cover required training and regs

Present a typical ground and flight lesson as assigned by the Examiner, including relevant FOI related to the teaching process

Any areas required for testing not covered can be addressed.

See the details below.

A new student presents to you after discovery flight and wants to begin flight training. Walk through the process. Be sure to include considerations of

Initial contact

- 1) How would you interview the applicant so you can get as much information as possible to provide effective instruction? (use the FOI to help you)
 - a. Assess motivation, time and opportunity
 - b. Assess communication and barriers to communication
 - c. Inhibitors to learning
 - d. determine their background that might be useful to adapt your instruction
- 2) How would you outline the training program and why would you do this (FOI)
- 3) Would you use a training course outline or syllabus? If so, why?
- 4) Manage their expectations and inform them of training requirements

How to start training and the process to train up to the check ride

- 1) TSA endorsements or vetting for both US citizens and foreign nationals
- 2) Eligibility, Required training and endorsements for the following (hint, make check lists for all of these, trying to decipher the regs during a check ride is not a good idea)
 - a. Initial solo
 - i. What should be included on presolo tests

- ii. Student limitations and privileges
 - iii. How do you know they are ready to solo (hint see FOI for how to evaluate a student and CFI monitoring and ensuring safety)
- b. Solo to an airport within 25 nm
- c. Repeat cross country less than 50 nm
- d. Traditional cross country
- 3) Private pilot check ride, eligibility, requirements and endorsements.
 - a. Include process such as IACRA application and examiner
 - b. What to do in case of a failure or retest.
- 4) Be able to describe eligibility, required training, endorsements for
 - a. Commercial pilot
 - b. Sport pilot (you can train now)
 - c. Add on ratings (ie multi engine comm)
 - d. Hi performance, complex tailwheel

CFI quals, limitations etc

- e. How to do a flight review (see FAA AC for guidance)
- f. Required log book entries and records
- g. Recent experience renewal, time line, process
 - i. You have a FIRC done, now what?
 - ii. You have several students that passed, now what?
- h. CFI re-instatement procedures, grace period for REED
- i. Flight instructor quals and limitations including who you can and cant train.
Can you provide instrument training toward private? Comm?
- j. Requirements to endorse for xc/
- k. Qualifications for training initial CFI

After we have walked through the above for the initial applicant, the scenario moves forward to **discuss how to prepare for a ground lesson and also a flight lesson.** Be sure to outline what FOI you would apply to the situation before you dive into a lecture. Consider and outline:

- 1) How you would prepare yourself for providing instruction on a topic
 - a. How would you organize the material and what minimum resources and references would you use?
 - b. How would you structure the lesson plan and what information would you include?
 - c. Where would you conduct the lesson? Why?
 - d. Teaching aids?
- 2) How would you prepare the student for the lesson?

- a. Just a reading assignment or also homework questions? Why?
 - b. When would you give them the assignment and why?
 - c. What are your expectations for the student before you start the lesson?
- 3) The day of the ground lesson:
- a. Student shows up unprepared, how would you handle it
 - b. Student shows up really well prepared, how would you handle the lesson?
 - c. What type of delivery would you do for the material?
 - i. What are some other delivery methods, pros and cons?
 - ii. Which is best for one-on-one teaching, groups or large classrooms
 - iii. How would you make sure it was engaging and effective for each type
 - d. If providing one on one or small group lesson, how would you assess the students before starting the lesson and why would you assess ahead of time?
 - e. Outline the levels of learning and how you are going to get your students to the higher order thinking – analysis, synthesis etc.
 - i. What type of training is this called
 - ii. Give examples of how you would make this work.
 - iii. When delivering your lesson, use scenarios
- 4) Having outlined the teaching process, discuss how you would then approach the technical material and how you would initiate the lesson and learning process
- a. Lecture vs guided discussion
 - b. How you would incorporate scenarios and risk management process

During the lesson, this is an opportunity for the examiner to explore other related technical topics. For example, presenting a lesson on Navigation might easily follow into a discussion on performance or weather etc. be prepared with notes to discuss these related areas.

After working through this lesson, there would be opportunity to then **present ground for a maneuver to be performed in the Air.** Walk through a similar process as above with emphasis on the teaching process for a psychomotor skill (including ground, demonstration and performance, collaborative assessment) and how you would apply this before and during the actual flight lesson. Be sure to include the risk management process, when you would introduce in training and how it would practically work. For the flight lesson, be sure to include:

- 1) Relevant aerodynamics and how they apply to the maneuver
- 2) Specific flight control inputs to make the maneuver work
- 3) Common errors

For the actual maneuvers,

- 1) how you are going to brief and debrief and where
- 2) The teaching technique you are going to use and how to apply
- 3) Evaluation methods, when and where to use them

While the lesson on a maneuver to be flown may be lengthy, in addition be prepared to present a 2 to 3 minute brief on each maneuver that you may have to demonstrate with the key points. Brief the DPE prior to the flight. This can help you clarify questions before you get in the aircraft and hopefully make for a smoother check ride in the air.

The examiner will review any areas that were not covered during the above scenarios or at the end to make sure there is satisfactory coverage of the required testing material.

Initial CFI practical test common errors to avoid.

Relying on cheat sheets and then trying to look up regs on the fly to answer questions. This never goes well. Outline the regs and know them well, especially training requirements, limitations, and endorsements and how to use them. The regs frequently need lawyers to interpret, trying to figure them out on the fly is a deadly mistake in a check ride.

Depending on AC 61-65 to tell you the required endorsements. The AC appendix provides sample endorsements but does not clearly outline the regulatory requirements for endorsements. The CFI applicant must determine ahead of time.

Eligibility

Required Training

Required tests

Endorsements

Make outlines and checklist after reading the regulations carefully. It would also be helpful to make scenarios where you have to apply these.

Pre-paring a lecture when a guided discussion is much better. Lectures are not effective instruction on individual basis or small groups. The CFI applicant is graded on actual effective teaching, not just repeating the definition of effective teaching from the FOI text.

Explaining concepts by waving hands or just talking. Please draw diagrams or use instructional aids.

Failing to evaluate the student BEFORE the lesson is started. If you don't know what the student knows, how can you possibly provide effective instruction? Imagine trying to give a lecture on aerodynamics to a aerodynamic engineer if you didn't ask them what they know? Or imagine giving a lecture to a student who did not do the reading assignment. In both cases you have wasted a lot of time and not provided effective instruction.

Failing to evaluate the student (played by the examiner) for comprehension or understanding after the lesson or discussion of a topic. After presenting information or a concept, asking the student "you got that? Cool." is not effective instruction and not effective evaluation.

Reading Slides but not understanding or being able to explain concepts. Frequently, the explanation is outlined clearly in the PHAK but many CFI applicants are too busy studying cheat sheets to actually read or study the reference.

Using premade slides (back seat pilot) but not knowing how to interpret the charts, symbols or statements on the slides. Recommend editing the presentation to make it your own. Use them as a template to develop your own content so you are familiar. Also, consider using the slides as a way to stimulate a guided discussion instead of lecture.

Repeating rote memorization without looking up or understanding basic definitions. For example, can you explain how to determine where true north is on a sectional and how the EFB determines True course? When talking about density altitude or performance, can you explain what density is? Describing a performance or aerodynamic concept and relate the "airplane feels like it is higher or faster". Airplane don't have feelings. Use standard terms that explain the concept. When discussing weather and stability, can you explain what a stable or unstable air mass is and why?

Not practicing ground lesson ahead of time with an instructor or real student. Nothing will shake up your pre-conceived idealistic approach to teaching like a real student. Get a neighbor or friend and try explaining stuff to them so they understand and then make real assessments to see if they learned and can apply.

Preparing a lesson plan but not including resources (ie POH, PHAK, AFH, ACS, FAR/AIM)

Not familiar with the PHAK or AFH. These should be your primary references. If there are topics in the PHAK you don't understand, then use other material to augment them. Additionally, there are lots of great instructional material in these texts. For example, trying to explain wind correction angle can be difficult if you are only using an electronic E6B. The PHAK has a two-page explanation with diagrams on how to use a wind triangle. It is an effective and simple

teaching concept. The AFH has lots of information on how to perform the flight maneuvers that seem to escape many applicants. There are many more pearls in the PHAK and AFH.

preparing a lesson to be presented on check ride but does not reference the ACS for scope and detail required. Then includes too much, non relevant material. Recommend use of the ACS to determine minimum scope and depth of the lesson, augment with FAA resources such as AFH, PHAK. Add more as required to be thorough but stay on topic. If the examiner needs to explore in more depth or other topics, let the examiner bring up the other areas.

Aircraft systems knowledge and application have been a weak spot for many applicants the last several years. The CFI applicant should be able to discuss various components of the aircraft and how they work in the classroom and on the preflight. If an examiner opened the cowl, can you identify the magnetos, fuel pump, starter, alternator, cabin or carb heat shroud, spark plugs and wires, brake fluid reservoir?

Common Errors During the flight portion.

Stops commenting on what they are doing during a flight maneuver. The applicant concentrates on performance of the maneuver, but can't speak. Be sure you have sufficient proficiency in each maneuver so they are "Automatic" so you can describe as you go. Also, describe the maneuver on the ground and then describe briefly again in the air while flying straight and level just prior to executing the maneuver. Then while executing the maneuver, just report the highlights as you go.

Uncertain how to do a maneuver or not familiar with the ACS standards. This is a deadly thing to not know on a CFI check ride. Make play cards or flash cards on each maneuver for the key ACS standards, when and how to do each maneuver.

No clearing turns before a maneuver. Make it a habit to do clearing turns before every maneuver when you practice. Under the stress of the check ride you will do what you practiced not what you hope to pull out of the bag.

Not looking outside during a maneuver. All the commercial maneuvers are visual or outside references.

Reading out check lists and not describing control inputs. For example, stating "start maneuver at maneuvering speed" is a check list item and not instructional. Better to say "reduce power to 2000 rpm, hold altitude and heading, verify airspeed is V_a ".

Failure of the CFI applicant to call out their deviations and common errors. You will make many during the check ride. It is impossible to demonstrate and talk through every maneuver

without committing common errors. At the end of the maneuver, point out your common error. We need to assess if you know common errors anyway.

Hopefully this helps. If you have any questions about the above comments or the check ride, please call or email ahead of time to discuss and clarify for you.