

Conversion of third country instrument rating to a European competency-based instrument rating to be included in a Part-FCL PPL(A) or CPL(A)

The rules covering non-European licences to fly aircraft in Europe are changing with the implementation of the European Aircrew Regulation.

From 8 April 2015, holders of 'third country' ICAO-compliant licences will no longer be entitled to exercise the privileges of their licences and associated ratings on aircraft registered in an EASA country, even if the flight is for private purposes only. If they do not intend to operate an EASA aircraft in Europe for more than a single year, pilots can obtain a validation of their third country licences as a one-off from the EASA country where they are resident or where the aircraft operator is established. However, for any operations beyond that pilots will have to convert their licences and ratings to EASA Part-FCL equivalents. These rules have applied to any commercial flight of an aircraft registered in any EASA country since 2012.

From 8th April 2015, the flight crew of any aircraft that is registered in a third country (i.e. not an EASA state) and that is operated by entities or persons resident in an EASA state will have to hold all of the appropriate EASA FCL qualifications to fly the aircraft as if it were registered in Europe, as well as licences that are valid under the law of the third country where the aircraft is registered. This will apply to all flights including private flights.

The necessity for pilots holding third country licences to obtain European qualifications because of these changes has led to a number of questions being raised on the process for including the recently introduced competency-based instrument rating (IR) in an EASA Part-FCL PPL or CPL, based upon a valid IR held on a third country licence. This document sets out some common questions and answers on this subject.

Q1 How much logged flight time under IFR do I need?

A You will need to provide evidence of a minimum experience of at least 50 hours of flight time under IFR as PIC on aeroplanes.

Q2 Do I need classroom training for the theoretical knowledge requirements and do I need to sit a theory exam?

A No, there is no formal requirement for theoretical knowledge training. During the skills test you must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the examiner that you have an adequate level of theoretical knowledge of air law, meteorology and flight planning and performance (IR). You are responsible for being suitably prepared for this element of the skills test and may wish to consult an ATO or an EASA instrument instructor or examiner accordingly.

Q3 Who do I need to contact in the first instance? The CAA, an approved training organisation (ATO), an EASA instrument rating instructor (IRI) or can I contact an instrument rating examiner (IRE) directly?

A There is no requirement for training, and therefore the candidate may contact the CAA directly to have an examiner designated for the CB IR skills test. Where a candidate considers that they need training to successfully complete the skills test, they should contact an ATO approved for the conduct of IR training or an EASA instrument rating

instructor who will assess their experience and competence and advise them accordingly.

Q4 Can I contact any ATO or IRI in any EASA State for this?

A Yes. You are not restricted to UK ATOs and instructors.

Q5 Can I use any IRE? Can I use IRE with a non-UK issued EASA licence?

A You can use an examiner with an IRE certificate issued by any EASA Member State. The examiner has an obligation to consult the information for examiners published on the EASA website and in particular the national information included in that document by the state of licence issue of the candidate. The IRE should be able to guide you on the UK CAA system for the designation of examiners for holders of Part FCL licences issued by the UK CAA.

Q6 Do I need to take a flight test?

A Yes. You will need to take and pass the EASA IR skills test. Details can be found at appendix 7 to Part-FCL and also in CAP 804.

Q7 Can I use my own aircraft for the skills test?

A Yes, as long as it is suitably equipped for the route to be flown in accordance with the ANO schedules 4 (equipment) and 5 (avionics).

Q8 Does the aircraft need to be fitted with vision-limiting panels?

A No, a standard vision limiting device such as an IFR 'hood', or 'foggles' will normally be sufficient. The examiner will decide on the acceptability of the vision limiting used and may require an alternative standard view-limiting device to be worn by the candidate, but he may not insist on view-limiting panels.

Q9 Must the skills test be carried out within the UK FIR and must the en-route section be flown in controlled airspace?

A This is not specifically required by EU regulation. The examiner will brief you on the route to be flown. In UK airspace, it is normally required to plan a flight along a published route in CAS.

Q10 If the route chosen by the examiner requires the use of equipment which is not fitted to my aircraft (e.g. ADF, DME) can I request an alternate route?

A Yes. The examiner will select an appropriate route such that the requirements of the Skills Test may be met, based on weather and accessible training airfields and your aircraft equipment. Note that without DME, an appropriate route may not be available that complies with these requirements. Without an ADF, the route may be a longer one than otherwise.

Q11 Can an LNAV approach with advisory glideslope be counted as a non-precision approach for the purposes of the skills test?

A No. However, if SBAS is disabled in the GPS unit used for LNAV approach guidance, this will disable the advisory glideslope and thus an “LNAV only” approach may be counted as a non-precision approach for the purposes of the skills test.

Q12 My aircraft’s primary instrumentation is ‘glass’. Which instruments are acceptable for the for the limited panel section of the skills test?

A Whatever fall back or secondary presentations fitted to the IFR legal aircraft are acceptable. You must furnish a means to cover or deny use of primary heading and attitude displays.

Q13 What fees and charges are involved?

A ATO and/or instructor fees as agreed by you; CAA fees, including examiner fees, as published on the CAA website.