

Basingstoke Model Aero Club

Training Arrangements - A Members Guide

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Introduction

The Club wishes to place the minimum of restrictions on Members flying, consistent with safety and consideration to others. Accordingly, A-certificate holders may fly alone. Others must be supervised when flying.

To make this policy work, the Club provides training to help the novice to become a competent and safe flyer and a number of Club Instructors have been identified who can be relied upon to instruct and advise the novice to the standard required for safe solo flight.

To provide maximum flexibility, a novice does not have to be supervised by a Club Instructor. Supervision may be given by any Member who has held an A-Certificate, as described in the Club Rules.

Club Instructors

On the web site, you can find a list of Club Instructors together with the types of model and flying that they can help with. You can contact a Club instructor at the field, or by using their e-mail address shown on the list. If you are unsure who to contact, Alan Haskell is the training co-ordinator for the Club and you could contact him in the first instance.

Don't feel reluctant to approach someone for Instruction or supervision. We all had to learn and passing on the skills is part of the hobby. However, remember that Club Instructors are offering their help as volunteers and need to fit this in with their own flying and with their own home life.

Supervision and Training – What is the Difference?

Any Member agreeing to Supervise a flight should feel confident to assist in the following way:

- Monitoring a flyer during a flight (and the preparation thereof);
- advising the flyer of any unsafe or inconsiderate actions and;
- taking control of the model if needed to prevent a crash or other hazard.

Generally, Supervision is for practicing what you can already do, whereas Instruction is to learn new things. With so many Members able to Supervise a flight, the novice should have no difficulty in finding someone to watch over him whilst he practices. Of course, the Supervisor will often offer advice and guidance as well.

Club Instructors will aim to train the novice flyer in each of the skills required to become a safe and competent solo flyer. This will include preparation for taking and passing the BMFA A-Certificate. Each instructor will use a different approach, based on their own experience, but will broadly follow the scheme set out in the BMFA booklet 'A Flying Start'.

What will training include

The exact sequence and method will vary from instructor to instructor. Also, different students may need to concentrate on some aspects more than others, so there is no rigid training programme.

However, preparation for solo flight will cover all of the following:

For flying, how to

- take off, under full control
- fly steady circuits at a controlled height
- land tidily on the patch
- do simple manoeuvres
- induce and recover from stalls
- cope with turbulence
- compensate for the wind
- cope with engine/motor failures

In addition to the flying, how to

- set up and test the radio
- set up a model for flight
- check it for safety and airworthiness
- handle the model in the pits and on the ground
- communicate their intentions to other flyers
- listen to other flyers communicating to them.

The Instructor will also guide the Flyer to study and understand the Club Rules and the relevant parts of the BMFA Handbook.

The student flyer may wish to keep a log sheet, recording their activities and progress. This can be useful if a different Instructor needs to know what stage the Flyer has reached. Log sheets are available from the Club Instructors and on the Club web site.

In the latter stages of training, the Supervisor or instructor will probably adopt a light touch. Perhaps just watching from the edge of the pilot box and then giving a few comments after the flight. This all helps the Flyer to develop the abilities and confidence needed.

Beyond the A-Certificate

After passing the A-certificate, the flyer will spend a little time consolidating their skills and enjoying the freedom to fly without supervision. However, the Instructors are still there and can help with further advancement. This may be for progression in different types of flying (aerobatics, 3-D flying, scale warbird flying, etc.) Members can seek help with such advancement and different instructors (and others) will have particular skills in each of these areas.

Some Flyers may wish to prepare for the B-Certificate, which is similar to the A certificate but covers a wider range of manoeuvres as well as a greater degree of precision. A wider knowledge of the BMFA handbook is also required. Again, some of the Club Instructors will have the skills needed to help to prepare for the B-Certificate test. The list of Club Instructors shows which are happy to help with B certificate preparation.

The key point is that we never stop learning and Flyers can choose what, if any, further help they may require and seek that help accordingly at any time.