

Conversion from power licence to SPL

Obtaining a Sailplane Pilots Licence (SPL) when you already have a UK CAA pilot's licence.

In many cases the requirements for an SPL can be reduced. These reductions are defined in the UK Sailplane Pilot Licensing rules.

1. Theory Exam

You will always need to take the SPL theory exam even if you have other CAA pilot licences. Some of the theory topics for a UK CAA private or commercial pilot's licence are very similar to those taught for a SPL. These are called **common subjects**.

If you hold an applicable power* licence, or if you have passed the exams for the common subjects for an applicable power* licence within the three years before applying for your SPL, you are exempted from the common subjects in the SPL exam.

The topics from which, if you meet the above requirements, you are exempt when you sit the SPL exam are: **Air Law, Human Performance, Meteorology, Communications**.

[**CAA SFCL.135 SPL Link**](#) Theoretical Knowledge Exam

[**CAA SFCL.140 SPL link**](#) Crediting of Theoretical Knowledge

2. Flying experience requirements

Your experience on other aircraft types may help you to get to solo level as a glider pilot more rapidly than other students. You will still need to complete all the air exercises and theory briefings in the syllabus and on the training progress card and it is not possible to define exactly how many hours of sailplane flying you will need to complete these.

If you have a power* licence, your solo or pilot in command (PIC) flying can be quoted to reduce the number of instructional sailplane hours that you need to qualify for your SPL.

Most SPL instructional flying at Booker takes place in unpowered gliders and, to obtain a SPL, 15 hours of gliding instruction (which includes supervised solo flying) and 45 launches are required by the CAA regulations. The gliding instruction total can be reduced significantly for power* pilots in accordance with a sliding scale calculation. Credits are given up to a maximum of 7 hours, so you will need to complete between 8 and 15 hours of gliding instruction depending on your power* experience.

Any reduction from 15 hours instruction is defined by a 10% rule. For every 10 hours of PIC/solo power* flying you can deduct 1 hour from the total SPL gliding instruction hours requirement up to a maximum of 7 hours.

Your gliding hours must include the following Sailplane Licence requirements:

- a minimum of two hours supervised solo
- cross country flight (50k solo or 100k dual) in a sailplane or TMG.

Example 1. If you have done 20 hours PIC power* then you can subtract 2 hours (10%) from the SPL requirement for 15 hours gliding instruction reducing it to 13 hours.

Example 2. If you have done 120 hours PIC power* then 10% would exceed the maximum credit allowed so you can only subtract 7 hours from the SPL requirement for 15 hours gliding instruction reducing it to 8 hours.

Note 1. Pilots converting from PPL/NPPL/CPL would be advised to make a note of their solo/PIC hours and aircraft types flown and provide this to the club for inclusion in their training record. This would also give visibility to instructors and enable a suitable training programme to be flown.

Note 2. There is an anomaly in regulation CAA SFCL.130 SPL paragraph (b)(2). This paragraph implies that credit can be given for up to 10 of the 45 instructional (including supervised solo) glider flights. No method to achieve this credit is defined and the CAA website regulation summary states that 45 launches are always required.

Note 3. If you hold a licence for a Touring Motor Glider (TMG) the rules above do not apply because you already hold an SPL and the rules for extending this to Sailplanes are defined elsewhere.

Power* or Power* Licence means flying an aircraft while exercising a licence issued IAW Annex I (Part-FCL) to Regulation (EU) No 1178/2011 or with Annex III (Part-BFCL) to Regulation (EU) 2018/395.

CAA SFCL.130 SPL Training Course and Experience requirements