

Frequently Asked Questions

Aviation Language Proficiency Test for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers

1. Why do I need an Aviation Language Proficiency Qualification?

Following some international aviation accidents and incidents, where human factors - including language proficiency - were contributory factors, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) introduced measures designed to increase the safety of air travellers.

In March 2008, ICAO confirmed English as the language for standard use in international aviation communication and introduced standards of compliance requiring all international pilots, flight navigators, air traffic control personnel and aeronautical station operators to have an Aviation Language Proficiency (ALP) qualification.

The CAA NZ Advisory Circular [AC61-1](#) provides the ALP requirements for pilot licence group and Advisory Circular [AC65-1](#) provides the same requirements for the air traffic controller (ATC) licence group. In all cases the AC's should be referred to where any uncertainty exists.

2. Are all pilot and ATC licence holders required to have successfully completed an ALP test?

No, as a result of their participation in the NZ civil aviation system, licence holders issued a licence under Part 61 or Part 65 before 8th May 2008, are considered to have demonstrated sufficient English language ability to adequately continue to exercise the privileges of that licence within the NZ Flight Information Region. These persons do not need to be assessed unless they wish to have a language proficiency level endorsed on their licence.

3. Are there pre-requisites required for the ALP test?

- a. **Pilot:** no, but applicants are recommended to hold at least:
 - a written examination credit for RPL, PPL, CPL Glider or CPL Balloon; or
 - a New Zealand aeroplane or helicopter pilot licence; or
 - a valid armed forces flight experience and qualifications assessment indicating that the person meets the criteria for issue of a New Zealand pilot licence; or
 - a current foreign aeroplane or helicopter pilot licence.
- b. **ATC:** yes, the prerequisites are:
 - hold a flight radiotelephone operator rating; and either:
 - have passed examinations required by rule 65.103 (a)(5) or have passed examinations required by rule 65.203 (a)(4); or
 - hold an aeroplane or helicopter pilot licence issued in accordance with Part 61; or
 - hold a current foreign air traffic service licence.

4. What are the ALP tests that Aspeq provides?

Aspeq's tests are aligned with the ICAO document - Manual on the Implementation of the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements - Doc 9835-AN/453 second edition 2010.

There are separate tests designed specifically for *pilots*, and *air traffic controllers*. For each group there are two types of tests available, they are:

- **The Level 6 Proficiency Demonstration (L6PD)**. This semi-direct test is taken over the telephone and is designed to confirm proficiency to Level 6 only. The test is intended for native English speakers and foreign language speakers who have acquired a high level of English language proficiency.
- **The Formal Language Evaluation (FLE)** - This test is conducted over the telephone and contains both semi-direct elements and a direct interview. The test is intended for non-native English speakers whose proficiency may not be at Level 6.
 - **Semi-direct**: The exam is delivered over the telephone by connecting to Aspeq's delivery platform. Questions and prompts are delivered over the phone using a recorded human voice.
 - **Direct**: Questions are delivered and responded to in a live interview conducted over the telephone.

5. What is the ALP test testing?

The tests are designed to assess candidates' proficiency in English language in an aviation context. ICAO has determined the following categories are used for testing a candidate's language proficiency:

Pronunciation	Manner of speaking, stress, rhythm and intonation. Influence of dialect or first language on ability to be understood.
Structure	Basic and grammatical structures and sentence patterns.
Vocabulary	Vocabulary range and accuracy.
Fluency	Ability to speak at length. Ability to vary speech for effect.
Comprehension	Ability to understand spoken language.
Interactions	Interaction with another speaker/listener.

Proficiency is measured against each category using the following scale:

Level 6	Expert	Qualification valid for life
Level 5	Extended	Qualification valid for 6 years
Level 4	Operational	Qualification valid for 3 years
Level 3	Pre-Operational	No qualification issued
Level 2	Elementary	No qualification issued
Level 1	Pre-elementary	No qualification issued

Note: A candidate's lowest rating for any of the categories is the rating applied as the overall test result.

6. Should I take a L6PD or a FLE test?

See comments at question 4 above as well.

The FLE test is more comprehensive than the L6PD and assesses candidates over the full proficiency scale from Levels 1 to 6. This test contains both direct and semi-direct elements and will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The FLE test requires increased staff involvement (interviewer and two raters to complete the assessment) and is therefore more expensive.

The L6PD test is designed to confirm proficiency to Level 6 only. The only outcomes for this test are 'achieved Level 6' or 'not determined'. It is expected that only those candidates believing they have this level of proficiency should undertake this test. The test takes approximately 10 minutes and can be taken only once; a 'not determined' result will require the candidate to undertake the FLE test.

7. How much does an ALP test cost?

Refer to the Pricing tab.

8. What are the locations where a test can be taken?

Auckland (East Tamaki)	Hastings	Rotorua
Blenheim	Invercargill	Tauranga
Christchurch	Motueka	Timaru
Dunedin	North Shore	Wanaka
Gisborne	New Plymouth	Whanganui
Greymouth	Oamaru	Wellington (Lower Hutt)
Hamilton	Palmerston North	Whangarei

9. How do I book an ALP test?

ALP tests are booked on request and are generally arranged alongside other exams that are being delivered on the same day. An application form is available under the same tab as this document and needs to be completed and returned to Aspeq for processing.

Once your application is received, we will book your test or come back to you beforehand with alternative date options.

Once the booking is confirmed you will receive an email confirmation of the booking – refer Question 10. Your booking confirmation can also be accessed at your Aspeq online account.

10. Can I get a test done urgently?

If you require a test urgently give us a call and we will do our best to help you.

Our ability to arrange an urgent or special sitting is dependent on invigilator, venue and interviewer availability and may incur a special sitting fee particularly if no other exams are running on the same day.

11. What happens on test day?

Candidates are required to report in person to the Aspeq examination centre (as pre-booked by the candidate). At the time of your exam booking, you will receive an Examination Booking Confirmation notice with key instructions including: Test reporting time, date and location for your test and acceptable forms of identification that you must present to the exam invigilator before the test can commence. Incorrect or no identification will result in your test being cancelled and fees forfeited.

The tests are conducted individually in a supervised environment. At the conclusion of your test you are free to leave.

12. How are the ALP tests conducted?

The exam invigilator will connect you via telephone link to Aspeq's computer-based platform where the direct and/or semi-direct interaction will commence. Questions are randomly selected, and your responses are recorded. On completion of the test, a rater (examiner) assesses your proficiency in accordance with the ICAO criteria – refer question 5 above.

13. Is there any advice or guidelines you can provide me with to undertake the test?

You are encouraged to speak continuously when responding to the questions and to provide detailed responses from your knowledge and experience as best you can. Your responses should address the questions that have been put to you using plain language – the interviewer will stop you if you are going on too long.

In the live interview always speak clearly and not too fast. Listen carefully and respond to exactly what the interviewer asks; if you are not sure ask for a repeat, if it is outside your experience then say so.

The overarching requirement is that the rater has enough recorded evidence to be able to make a fair and accurate judgment on your level of proficiency.

14. When will my results be available?

Following your test, the recordings are available for the rater to commence the rating process. Your result will be available at the candidate's booking portal three to five business days following the test, if not sooner, and in a printable (PDF) format.

Candidates are able to access their results by logging on to <http://caanz.aspeqexams.com/> and accessing their personal results page by clicking on 'My Account' then 'My Results'. Candidates are expected to print their results and submit to CAA NZ with any other forms as may be required.

15. Can I retake the test if I fail?

The L6PD can only be taken once. Candidates who fail the L6PD will be required to undertake the FLE test. Candidates who fail the FLE can re-sit the test.

16. Can I appeal my results?

Only the FLE test result can be appealed. A review may be requested up to one month after completion of the test. The review application is made online via the candidate's Aspeq profile. The review will be conducted by a rater who was not involved with your test.

There is a review fee which will be refunded should the review result in a significant change to your result - refer pricing tab.

Note: If lodging a review, the exam should not be retaken until the outcome of the appeal is known. The result of your most recent test is deemed to be your current result. If a further test is taken the result of this test will stand and becomes your most current result regardless of the outcome of the review.

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