



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER
EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE COLLEGES**

MONITORING VISIT

FLYING TIME AVIATION

Full Name of College	Flying Time Aviation
Address	Wingfield House, Shoreham Airport, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 5FF
Telephone Number	01273 455177
Email Address	isabelle@flyingtime.co.uk
Principal	Mr Jonathan Candelon
Proprietors	Mr Anthony Realff Mr Dick Rust Mr Jonathan Candelon
Age Range	15+
Total number of students	81
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 18: 2 18+: 79 FE only: 81
Inspection date	10 September 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges, including English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students through Tier 4 of the points based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the quality Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any Action Points and Recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements.

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1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Flying Time Aviation (FTA) was founded in 2006 as a flying club providing flight tuition and self-fly hire. The company's purpose is to deliver the best pilot training in the industry directly to major carriers around the globe.
- 1.2 FTA provides a range of full-time and part-time courses for both commercial and private pilot licences. There are no set dates for most courses, as they are tailored to individual requirements. The exceptions to this are the airline transport pilot licence (ATPL) ground school, which has set dates every eight weeks, and the integrated flight deck programme, which commences at approximately two month intervals.
- 1.3 At the time of inspection there were 81 students enrolled, of whom 52 were full-time and 29 part-time. Almost all students are from the European Union (EU), Middle East or Africa. The vast majority of students are over the age of 18, with very few younger students who undertake the basic private pilot licence (PPL). There were no students identified as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.4 The college was previously inspected on 31 July to 2 August 2012 and was judged to meet expectations.
- 1.5 The recommendations from the previous report are:
 - Improve initial assessment arrangements to ensure individual needs are identified and used by instructors to plan support.
 - Improve systems for developing the quality of theory teaching and learning by giving a greater focus to students' learning and attainment of outcomes.
 - Train all staff in safeguarding to ensure they are all able to recognise possible indicators.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college meets expectations.** The previous inspection of 31 July to 2 August 2012 was judged to meet expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of curriculum, teaching and learning is good. There is no formal initial assessment of student ability, although a recent arrangement with a local language school provides appropriate assessment of English. The impact of this has not yet been determined, as no students have yet been identified as needing remedial support classes. The standard of teaching is good. Well-qualified and experienced instructors provide relevant and useful practical examples to enhance student learning. Students participate actively in theory classes within the ground school, as well as simulator and aircraft flight sessions within the flying school. They make good progress and levels of achievement are high. Progress records are kept separately by both the theoretical learning and practical skills departments, leading to inconsistency in support as students move from theory classes to practical flying. Action planning and target-setting within flight briefings are strong, although ground school records lack developmental comments to improve student learning.
- 2.3 Student welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The premises are furnished to a high standard and are well maintained. Appropriate specialist resources, including single and multi-crew flight simulators, support good learning. The college owns a fleet of modern aircraft, which are regularly maintained to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) standards, ensuring that training of students is up-to-date within the industry. Admission and attendance records are accurate, well managed and meet Home Office requirements. Pastoral care is excellent. Individual tutorial support is strong, allowing students to develop their flying skills well. Welfare and accommodation issues are dealt with effectively. Students receive comprehensive information prior to the start of their course, allowing them to settle in quickly. The social programme is limited, which restricts opportunities for language and cultural development.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. A clear vision and ethos are promoted by senior managers and supported by all staff. Communications are regular and very effective in keeping all staff informed of developments. A recent self-evaluation by senior managers has identified key strengths and areas for development to inform action-planning. Quality assurance processes are documented and audited annually to improve the quality of training provision. Systems for obtaining student feedback are effective and inform quality improvement planning. Classroom observations provide valuable advice to teachers on how to improve their teaching techniques, but give only limited support on improving the quality of student learning. Informal staff appraisals take place, but lack consistency and clarity of targets for individual improvement.

3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Improve initial assessment arrangements to ensure individual needs are identified and used by instructors to plan support.
- 3.3 Satisfactory progress has been made in relation to the above recommendation. The introduction of a pre-study pack has strengthened student understanding of mathematics and science in the initial ground school theory course, resulting in a significant improvement in learning. An arrangement with a local English language centre is now in place to assess students with English language needs and provide appropriate support as required. There is currently no standardised formal assessment to accurately establish student ability prior to entry. Consequently, instructors have little diagnostic assessment to identify detailed support requirements for individual students.
- 3.4 The suitability of course provision and the curriculum is very good, as it is well tailored to meet the career aspirations of individual students. The curriculum meets the requirements of the CAA, who monitor and accredit the courses.
- 3.5 The quality of teaching is good. Theory instructors give relevant examples to prepare students for practical flying. The vast majority of simulator and flying lessons are conducted on a one-to-one basis, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical flight safely and effectively. Most students are engaged with the theory teaching and contribute well in class discussion. They are confident in asking appropriate questions to clarify their understanding and increase attainment. However, a few students do not actively engage in theory lessons. These classes are teacher-led, with a limited range of teaching and questioning methods in use.
- 3.6 Students make good progress through their course, with very few not completing their studies. Pass rates for practical flying are 100 per cent over the past six months. The introduction of an individual pre-examination assessment has significantly improved the pass rates for theory classes from 56 to 74 per cent in the last six months compared to the previous period.
- 3.7 Student progress is very well monitored and recorded in practical sessions, and this helps to increase attainment. Ground school teachers keep detailed progress records for students, although the majority lack clear and specific targets on how students can improve. Records of students' personal information, prior learning and academic progress are kept departmentally, leading to inconsistencies in the provision of effective individual academic support as students move from theory to practical flying.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Train all staff in safeguarding to ensure they are all able to recognise possible indicators.
- 4.3 Good progress has been made against this recommendation. Safeguarding has a high profile with all staff and students. There is a clear and effective strategy in operation for protecting vulnerable students. All staff have completed an appropriate child protection awareness course.
- 4.4 The college maintains excellent health and safety standards. There is a detailed fire risk assessment in place and all appropriate fire safety equipment maintenance is performed regularly by appropriate contractors. There are an adequate number of qualified first aiders. Students are given comprehensive safety information as part of their course, which is reinforced regularly by instructors. This allows them to confidently understand and implement the required safety checks and strategies as part of their flying instruction. Safety concerns and incidents are considered and addressed quickly and effectively by a safety committee, which meets on a monthly basis.
- 4.5 The premises are well maintained and provide a very effective environment for learning. The fleet of modern aircraft owned by the college is regularly inspected and maintained to industry standards. The college provides up-to-date commercial single and multi-crew flight simulators, which are well used to improve students' practical flying skills and safely address areas of weakness. The simulators also allow instructors to re-create a specific flying environment to effectively improve student ability in unforeseen situations. The classrooms contain appropriate displays and practical demonstration equipment to support theoretical learning and improve understanding.
- 4.6 Admission and attendance registers are accurate and well maintained. Appropriate procedures are in place for making the necessary reports to the Home Office for students who fail to meet attendance requirements. Communications with the Home Office are very carefully recorded, including the reporting of students studying on Tier 4 visas who withdraw from their course.
- 4.7 Pastoral care is of a high standard. The vast majority of students are aware of whom to approach regarding welfare issues. Students receive a comprehensive pre-admissions pack and the student handbook at induction, which helps them settle into their course quickly. Students receive effective support from welfare staff to resolve accommodation and visa issues. Although students socialise outside of teaching hours, the lack of an organised social programme limits opportunities for integration, language and cultural development for a minority of students.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Improve systems for developing the quality of theory teaching and learning by giving a greater focus to students' learning and attainment of outcomes.
- 5.3 Satisfactory progress has been made by introducing more interactive learning methods within theory classes. Students are given appropriate individual support to enable them to meet the entry requirements for examinations. However, the system of lesson observations concentrates on teaching, with limited focus on student learning and achievement. Although all flight instructors and theory teachers are regularly observed by their line manager, formal written records are currently only kept for ground school instructors. Thus, flight instructors are not given clear written targets for improving their practice.
- 5.4 The leadership of the college is strong and highly effective. The managing director, as principal, maintains effective day-to-day oversight of operations and develops student recruitment. The owners meet monthly to effectively review performance and make appropriate strategic decisions. A clear staff structure ensures standards are maintained when senior staff are absent. Managers are very supportive and approachable, leading to a good team spirit and low turnover amongst the well-qualified instructional staff, many of whom are previous students.
- 5.5 There is an effective system of recorded weekly staff and management meetings. This ensures the clear exchange of information and makes certain that appropriate actions are taken with regard to the premises, welfare and individual student progress issues.
- 5.6 There are well-designed quality assurance and audit processes in effective operation. Key strengths and areas for improvement have been identified, and an action plan is being developed. The recent internal appointment of a head of standards has strengthened the standardisation of teaching and tutorial input by flight instructors. Staff development for flight instructors is very good, as they are required to refresh and improve their qualifications on a regular assessed basis. Although informal staff appraisals take place, there is no consistent system in operation. As a result, development needs and improvement targets are not clearly identified and recorded for all staff.
- 5.7 The college has effective systems to obtain student feedback on each module and on completion of their course. Matters arising are discussed by management, who take timely and appropriate action to develop the course and improve student learning opportunities.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college has maintained the good standards found at the last inspection.

Suggestions for further improvement

In order to improve the good quality provided, the college is advised to:

- Provide a formal standardised system of initial assessment to identify and meet individual student needs.
- Provide integrated information on student performance for instructors to use in planning appropriate individual academic support.
- Formalise systems of staff appraisal and lesson observations to further improve levels of student learning and achievement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff, including the proprietor. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Mr Mike Coulson	Lead Inspector
Ms Mareve Kilbride-Newman	Team Inspector