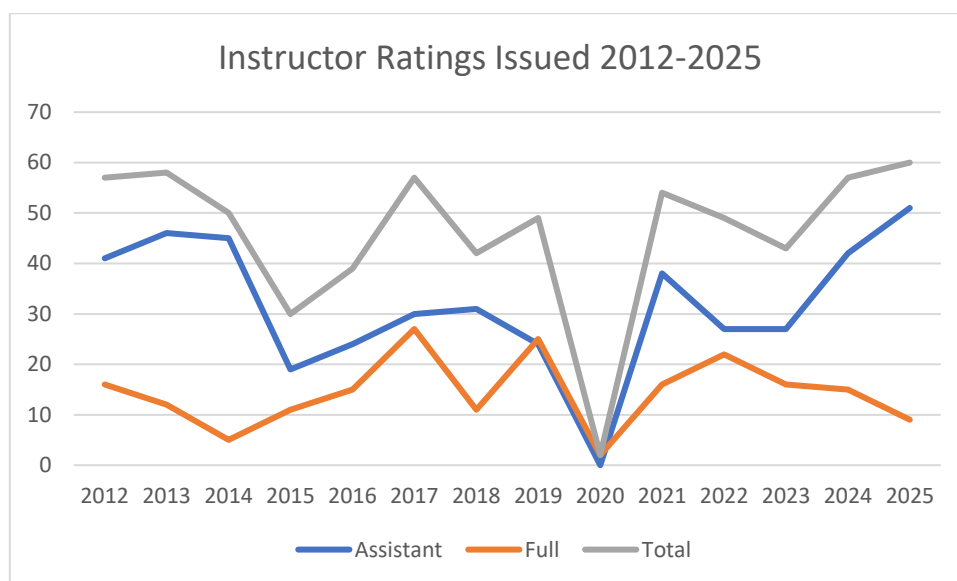


Introduction

Congratulations to everyone who undertook the challenge of becoming an instructor in 2025, and a big thank-you to all the clubs—especially Chief Flying Instructors—for encouraging and nurturing pilots into the instructor role. Thanks also to the Flight Instructor Coaches for your continued support in making this possible.

This year saw the highest number of instructors completing training and gaining a rated qualification in more than 15 years, with **51 new Assistant Instructor ratings** issued and **9 Full Category Instructors** upgrading. There was also a late surge in Basic Instructor applications following the introduction of the **Basic Instructor (Sailplanes)** rating under SFCL.

Across the movement, there are now **882 FI(S)** and **332 BI(S)** active in UK gliding across 70 BGA clubs.



All of this has been expertly supported by **Liz at the BGA office**, who ensured everyone crossed the line as an FI(S) or BI(S) under transition arrangements—often working long hours and weekends and skilfully navigating the licensing process. A huge thank you for your tireless work.

SFCL is Here!

Despite some serious 'doom mongering' the new era SFCL has arrived, and due to considerable hard work and preparation the world did not stop gliding on 1st October.

To support the transition, updated training cards and programmes aligned with the SPL syllabus are available for students and instructors:

- **SPL Student Training Card (from 1 Nov 2025)**
👉 <https://members.gliding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2025/07/SFCL-SPL-student-pilot-training-card-1-Nov-2025.pdf>
- **SPL Training Course**
👉 <https://members.gliding.co.uk/bga-training-organisation/spl-training-course/>
- **Basic Instructor (Sailplanes) Course**
👉 <https://members.gliding.co.uk/library/instructors/bis-course/>
- **Flight Instructor (Sailplanes) Non-TMG Course**
👉 <https://members.gliding.co.uk/library/training-organisation/fis-non-tmg-training-course/>

As each gliding club operates as its own Devolved Training Organisation (DTO), you may add local items and club branding as long as the materials remain compliant with SFCL requirements.

Real clarity can be found via the CAA's regulatory portal. With guidance—often offered during FI(S) refresher seminars—the underpinning requirements for recent syllabus changes become clearer. Your **CFI** or **SRE** should be able to help:

https://regulatorylibrary.caa.co.uk/2018-1976/Content/Regs/00750_PART-SFCL.htm

FI(S) Initial Rating Restrictions

New FI(S) holders will already be aware of the initial restriction on their rating (SFCL.350), requiring supervision by an unrestricted FI(S) nominated by the club. To remove this restriction, instructors must complete:

- 15 hours instructing, or
- 50 launches


Once completed and verified, submit the form and payment to the BGA:

👉 <https://members.gliding.co.uk/library/training-organisation/application-to-the-cao-to-remove-sfcl-fis-limitations/>

It is a BGA priority to with the CAA to streamline this process so that a re-issue of the SPL (and hence an additional fee) is not required.

Safe Start 2026-Updated Materials

The BGA has released updated Safe Start 2026 self-briefing materials designed to prepare pilots for the new soaring season. This is vital pre-season refresher training for all pilots and the updated package includes:

- Revised accident-prevention insights based on 2025 incident trends
- Scenario-based training modules
- QR-linked refresher animations for pre-flight checks
-  <https://members.gliding.co.uk/library/safety-briefings/safe-start-presentation/>

Standardisation

To help with standardisation a set of videos utilising a simulator are available for Flight Instructor Coaches and Instructors alike. Rose is leading this and would welcome feedback:

 <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLysKF3lzzaqtqDb1eu5GNz8ly67FLm7Ds>

In addition to these video's, the dire weather has led to Midland Gliding Club using their simulator for one to one refresher with booked slots specifically for the simulator, this has seen simulator usage significantly increase at their club.

Instructor Coach Standardisation

The BGA runs several residential instructor courses each year, delivered by experienced Flight Instructor Coaches. If you are an FIC and would like to support these courses, please review the dates at the end of this newsletter and contact the office.

To promote consistent instructor training, those who transitioned with FIC privileges (the "A7" on your licence) but were **not** required to attend a seminar are encouraged to join an upcoming FIC Seminar via the BGA Office.

Flight Instructor Refresher Seminars

Please don't get caught out—under the rolling recency requirements, all FI(S) holders must have completed an **FI(S) seminar within the previous three years**.

The BGA is organising:

- Two **online seminars** each month
- A programme of **regional in-person seminars**
- A shared format for experienced FICs interested in delivering the seminars locally
- Adapted seminars for FICs who would benefit from additional refresher topics

 https://members.gliding.co.uk/events/?event_category=4897

BGA Instructor Manual

Following extensive work by a very dedicated team, the **BGA Instructor Manual** was published in October 2025 and is now available to download. Please make full use of it and continue sending feedback to Rose or Stu. We have already received several helpful observations and expect to refine the manual further as it beds in.

🔗 <https://members.gliding.co.uk/bga-training-organisation/instructor-resources/instructor-manual/>

Given the pace of change, a printed edition is not planned, though clubs are welcome to print their own copies.

Please also use the **Student Pilot Manual** to ensure you are familiar with the material your students are using. It is available both in print from the BGA Office and online:

🔗 <https://gliding.world/index.php/home>

Theoretical Exams

The SPL theoretical exams will continue to be operated and supervised by the BGA, with CFIs acting as local guardians. This system mirrors the previous Bronze exam process. The CAA has placed significant trust in the gliding movement to deliver secure and effective assessment—an alternative would be requiring students to sit the nine CAA PPL theory exams, with all the associated cost and complexity.

Our sincere thanks to **Andrew Watson (Cambridge GC)** for continuing to lead this demanding and essential work.

Please respect the integrity of the examination system. Gliding remains under scrutiny to demonstrate robust and secure assessment practices.

For theoretical knowledge aligned with gliding, we recommend *Licence and Beyond* by John McCullagh.

A major package of **independent** sample questions is being finalised by **Claudia Hill** and will shortly be available via the BGA website. Our sincere thanks to Claudia for delivering this valuable resource.

Volunteer Instructor Assistance

Several clubs are currently seeking volunteer instructor support due to local shortages. If you can help, please contact the CFIs at:

- **North Wales Gliding Club**
- **Northumbria Gliding Club**

Both clubs operate from superb sites and would greatly value visiting instructor support.

BGA Led Instructor Training Course Schedule 2026

The course schedule for the remainder of 2025 is below, a big thank you to the clubs hosting BGA facilitated instructor training.

Date	Course	Location
Teaching & Learning Seminar – BI(S) & FI(S)	10–12 March 2026	Online
Part 1 FI(S) Course	30 March – 4 April 2026	London Gliding Club
Part 2 FI(S) Course	13–18 April 2026	Cambridge Gliding Centre
Part 2 FI(S) Course	11–16 May 2026	The Gliding Centre
Part 2 FI(S) Course	18–23 May 2026	Southdown Gliding Club
Part 2 FI(S) Course	14–19 September 2026	Devon & Somerset Gliding Club
Part 2 FI(S) Course	21-27 September 2026	Cotswold Gliding Club

Conclusion

Thank you for your continued support as instructors. Without your commitment, this sport would not remain the accessible and affordable route into flying that it is for so many.

The BGA instructing team wishes you a safe and enjoyable 2026. Please contact us with anything you feel will be of interest, and we look forward to meeting many of you at the forthcoming conference and during the coming months.

Stu Naylor, BGA Training Standards Manager

Grinner Smith, DTO Head of Training

Rose Johnson, Chair, BGA Instructors and Examiners Committee

February 2026

stu@gliding.co.uk