



## **ESGC New Member Medical Form**

Welcome to gliding, an exciting adventure sport, and probably the purest form of aviation for those without feathers. It is an inclusive activity open to all ages, sizes and shapes. It is very real: it is not taking place on a computer screen and getting it wrong can have serious consequences. To this end, it requires a certain basic level of medical fitness as one would expect for any form of aviation. These standards are to reduce the risk of incapacitation in flight, and to make sure participants are able to assess situations correctly, make appropriate decisions and execute them safely. Fortunately, the requirements are not excessive or burdensome and are there to ensure the safety of yourself and others. This form is intended to ensure that before starting training to fly gliders you meet the basic medical requirements for solo flight as laid down by the British Gliding Association under the supervision of the Civil Aviation Authority. It also aims to offer some simple guidance around common medical problems to guide potential pilots and in some instances to allow your instructors to tailor training to individual needs.

Some background helps understand the requirements. Under current UK law, powered aircraft pilots are required to have an aviation medical in order to be initially issued a license. After this rigorous medical examination, pilots are able to self declare their fitness to fly on the basis of holding a DVLA car driving license. At present, glider pilots are excused this initial aviation medical and possession of a car licence is taken as evidence of fitness to fly. We should exercise this privilege with caution as we do not have the medical screening that power pilots receive during their initial aviation medical.

The guidance here cannot be authoritative. The source is the BGA's "Laws and Rules" <https://members.gliding.co.uk/laws-rules/bga-medical-requirements> and in cases of uncertainty you should check with your GP or hospital specialist. In very difficult cases, assessment from an AME (authorised medical examiner for the CAA) may be required. The club can of course offer expert but informal advice and can impose higher medical standards if it wishes.

### **Common scenarios:**

***Can I fly gliders if I hold a driving license but suffer from:***

#### ***- Heart disease or blood pressure?***

Almost always the answer here is Yes. Coronary stenting, bypass graft surgery, valve replacement or repair, arrhythmia ablation therapy, pacemaker insertion and stable angina are all acceptable providing the condition has been fully assessed, treated and is stable.

#### ***- Lung disease such as asthma or COPD?***

Again, the answer is almost always Yes providing your condition is treated and stable. If you are fit enough to walk up a couple of flights of stairs or across the airfield you won't have a problem. The altitudes reached during normal gliding will not pose a problem from oxygen deprivation.

#### ***- Diabetes?***

Diabetes is no bar to learning to fly. Type 2 diabetes is almost never a problem unless there are severe complications which would also prevent you holding a car licence. The same is true for type 1 (insulin dependent) diabetes although special caution is required to avoid low blood sugars as with driving. The extra activity from a day on the airfield could increase the risk of this as with other sports so advice from your diabetes specialist might be wise. There is extensive guidance from the CAA for power pilots which might be helpful.

**- Physical disability?**

Within reason, you can learn to fly with a physical disability, but as with car driving some adaptations to the vehicle (ie glider) might be required. This might need some planning and discussion with the membership secretary.

**- Problems with hearing and vision?**

Provided you satisfy the car licensing regulations these should be manageable although severe deafness would pose particular problems both during instruction and on the airfield. Colour blindness is not a problem for glider pilots as we don't fly in the dark!

**- Neurological illness?**

Neurological illnesses requiring medication may be acceptable for car licensing but are likely to preclude gliding and aviation in general. Examples would be Parkinson's disease or early Alzheimer's dementia. Unfortunately such conditions and their treatments may affect thought processes and decision making and also tend to be steadily progressive. Epilepsy that is completely controlled with medication for many years and meets the car licensing regulations is acceptable. Other conditions such as stable multiple sclerosis with no visual or functional impairment would also be acceptable.

**- Stroke disease (CVA and TIA)?**

These conditions are acceptable for car licensing but unfortunately have a high risk of recurrence even after apparently complete recovery and as the effects of an episode occurring during flight are likely to be very adverse we would suggest they should prevent solo flight.

**- Mental health problems?**

This is a more complex area and again, a higher standard of fitness than specified by the DVLA for group 1 (car) licenses is appropriate. The CAA specifically allows power pilots to self declare their own medical fitness using a car license providing they are not on psychiatric medication. Unfortunately, both mental ill health and medications for the condition can affect speed of thought and decision making. However, well tolerated treatment with non sedating SSRI drugs for control of mild anxiety or low treatment is acceptable. More complex mental health problems such as severe PTSD, bipolar disease or schizophrenia would preclude glider training.

**- Drug and alcohol misuse?**

These are not acceptable in aviation.

**- Learning difficulties (by definition with normal IQ)?**

Examples would include dyslexia and dyspraxia, mild autistic spectrum disorders and attention deficit disorders. Generally these conditions would not prevent training to fly gliders, but it would be as well if the club were aware if you have them as training might need to tailored to suit.

**- Learning disabilities (by definition with reduced IQ)?**

There are many causes of this group of problems including chromosomal disorders and genetic diseases but they are not compatible with learning to fly because of the cognitive impairments they imply.

**If you're under the age of 25, and don't hold a driving license:**

The BGA has a self declaration form for you (or parent /guardian if under 18) to sign, available at annex A.

**ESGC Member Medical Declaration**

I, (print full name) ..... DECLARE  
as follows:

I satisfy the medical requirements of the British Gliding Association as set out in the current edition of Laws and Rules because (tick one or more boxes below):

[Each of the following categories provides acceptable evidence of medical fitness for pilots flying solo or with another solo pilot]

- I hold a full driving licence issued by the United Kingdom or a Crown Dependency or by a nation of the European Union.
- I am under the age of 25 years and do not hold a full driving licence. I have signed the Declaration of Fitness to DVLA Group 1 standard.
- I hold a Civil Aviation Authority private pilot’s medical declaration (CAA PMD).
- I hold a GP endorsed NPPL medical (where held with remaining validity based on age)
- I am a visitor from a nation outside the European Union and hold an ICAO or non-ICAO medical document valid for gliding solo in my country but restricted to flying solo or with another pilot.

I hold one of the documents in the following list (tick the relevant box)

[Each of the following categories provides acceptable evidence of medical fitness for instructors]

- I hold a British Gliding Association Declaration (Annex B in Laws and Rules – Pilot Medical Requirements) countersigned by my GP
- I hold an EASA Class 1, 2 or LAPL, or an ICAO medical certificate which would be recognised by the Civil Aviation Authority in the UK
- I hold an unrestricted NPPL medical certificate countersigned by my GP (where held with remaining validity based on age)
- I hold an Air Cadet gliding medical certificate or a NATO military aircrew employment standard A photocopy of the document is attached. It will expire on.....

I AGREE not to fly at the Club at any time, either solo or with another solo pilot who is not an instructor, unless I comply with the medical requirements referred to above.

To be signed by the member:

DATED ..... SIGNED .....

To be signed by the parent/guardian where the member is under the age of 18:

NAME ..... SIGNED .....

DATED .....

## **Annex A - Young Pilot Declaration Form**

### Declaration of Fitness (BGA only - not valid for SFCL,FCL or NPPL)

This may be signed as an alternative to the holding of a driving licence by glider pilots under the age of 25 years. It expires on the 25th birthday and if by then a driving licence is not held, a NPPL or other medical certificate must be obtained.

I declare that I can read a car number plate at 20m and do not suffer any medical condition that would disqualify me from holding a private driving licence. (In cases of doubt, guidance on the medical standards can be obtained from the DVLA's web site).

Club holding declaration

Full name..... Date of Birth.....

Signature.....

Signature of parent or guardian if under the age of 18 years.....

Date signed.....