

# PHASE CHECK GUIDELINES

The phase checks consist of both a written test and one or more flights during which the student should demonstrate mastery of the appropriate lessons.

The purpose of the phase checks is to:

- Verify the student's progress in both knowledge and flight training
- Find any areas of weakness that the primary instructor may have missed
- Determine how the student performs under the extra pressure of a "check" ride
- Provide the student with a sense of accomplishment in reaching a goal

To achieve these goals, the phase check instructor should only test knowledge and flight areas appropriate to the phase being checked. It is recommended that the phase check instructor not be the student's primary instructor. This allows the phase check to perform double duty. First, it verifies the student's progress, and second, it verifies that all the instructors are teaching to the same standards.

The phase check flights are evaluations, not instruction. The phase check instructor should keep verbal feedback to a minimum during the flight. The instructor should take note of any shortcomings, and bring them up both with the student, and the student's primary instructor after the flight.

## Phase Check I

Phase Check I consists of a short written test, and one flight. The purpose of the Phase I check is to make sure the student has the basic skills and knowledge to safely pilot the glider through the takeoff, tow, pattern, and landing.

Before the flight, the instructor should brief the student on where and how high to tow. The instructor should then let the student perform the prescribed flight without input from the instructor (unless necessary for safety).

## Phase Check II

Phase Check II consists of the Pre-Solo Written Test, and three flights. If successfully completed, the third phase check flight will be followed by a solo flight.

The first flight is used to evaluate the student's ability to fly the glider while simultaneously making contingency plans, responding to signals, and maintaining situational awareness. The student will also demonstrate the ability to recover from abnormal flight situations, such as slack line on tow and stalls. The student should be evaluated not just on flying skills, but also on situational awareness, judgment, and self-discipline.

The second and third flights should be "simulated solo" flights, where the instructor tells the student to tow to a specific height, release, and descend to a standard pattern and landing. This should be the same plan that the student will fly during their first solo flights. This allows the student to become comfortable and confident before they solo.

## Phase Check III

Phase Check III consists of a written test, followed by a simulated "Practical Test" consisting of 1-2 hours of oral questioning and three flights. When the student successfully completes this phase check, they should be ready to pass the FAA Practical Test.

The Phase III Knowledge Test should be completed by the student and reviewed by the instructor prior to the simulated check ride. The student should review any deficiencies before scheduling the simulated practical test.