

The JAR PPL (H) consists of flight and ground instruction designed to give the experience and competence to pass the flight tests and ground exams. The minimum flying experience required to issue a PPL (H) is 45 hours of flight training, of which 10 hours is solo. Typically, however, at least 55-60 hours should be allowed for. In conjunction with the flight training there are seven ground exams to pass, all being multiple-choice papers. A combination of classroom teaching and home study is used to prepare for these.



After you obtain your PPL (H), and then take your friends and family for flights on a Self-Fly Hire basis. At Rotorflight the most cost-effective helicopter on which to obtain your PPL is the Robinson R22, which is a two-seat helicopter. If you wish to learn on something larger, then we have the four seat Robinson R44 and have available Hughes 500 and five seat Bell 206 Jetranger helicopters.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT OBTAINING A PPL(H)

### HOW DO I OBTAIN A PPL(H) FOR HELICOPTERS?

You are required by the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) to fly a minimum of 45 hours to obtain your PPL (H).

Of these hours at least 10 must be solo, 25 must be dual and 5 hours must be solely on instruments.

The remaining 5 hours can be on any of the above to consolidate your flying.

Most people however invariably take at least 50 possibly 60 hours to obtain their licence. This can be attributed to holidays, sickness, bad weather, business commitments and family commitments. For these reasons students require extra revision if they haven't flown for a while or maybe they have difficulty on a particular lesson that requires additional flight time before progression onto further lessons. Everybody is different.

You can start as early as age 14 but you can't go solo until your 16th birthday. A licence will not be issued unless you are at least 17 years of age.

The frequency at which you fly is dependent on your own commitments and finances.

Some students fly regularly i.e. at least once a week or more depending on their own personal goals.

Some students may do one per month due to finance constraints.

Some may fly as and when business allows them. There are no real constraints as to how often you fly.

The more regular you fly, as a general rule, the less hours you will need to obtain the PPL although even this is not hard and fast.

So, simply, you fly when you like and when you can afford it!

Anyone can learn to fly at any age (as long as you are at least 14). A pre-requisite before going solo is a Class II medical. This medical is like a GP's full health check and the average person should pass this medical. A Class II medical can only be conducted by approved CAA examiners and will be valid for a number of years dependent on your age.

There are several available around the Bristol area and a list can be obtained from the CAA website.

Additionally you must pass seven exams on flight theory.

These are:

- **Air Law:** Regulations and Rules of the Air
- **Meteorology:** Weather and requirements for flight
- **Navigation:** How to plan and fly a flight planned route in UK airspace and arrive at your destination safely
- **Human Performance and Limitations**
- **Helicopter Weight and Balance and Performance**
- **Radio Telephony:** How to use the aircraft radio and communicate with Air Traffic Control. This consists of a multiple choice paper and a practical test consisting of a simulated flight in an aircraft simulator

- **Human Performance and Limitations:** How the human body copes with flying and what your limitations and restrictions are
- **Helicopter Principles of Flight:** How does the helicopter fly and what phenomena's are taking place in flight

All these exams are multiple choice, usually take about an hour and have roughly about 40 questions. There are study books available for each of the above subjects and can be purchased singularly or as a package from Rotorflight or any good pilot shop or website.

There is a time limit of 2 years to complete all the exams. Failure to pass them all in this time (starts from the date of your first exam) means that unfortunately you have to start again!

### **WHAT CAN I DO WITH A PPL(H)?**

Once you have passed your PPL test you can (once you have your licence in your hand from the CAA) fly anywhere in the UK or Europe! You will only be licenced to fly under visual conditions. This is called day VFR flying under the Visual Flight Rules. This means you can not fly into cloud or bad weather conditions and only fly during the day. If you wish to fly at night, then you are required to perform additional flying to obtain a night rating. This is around 5 hours. Again you will only be able to fly under VFR conditions. When you hire a Rotorflight helicopter you will be able to fly between airfields, helipads and private landing sites as long as you have the landowners permission. So this means your own garden as long as it's big enough! You will also only pay for the flying time and NOT the time you have the helicopter. In a day if you only fly for 2 hours (one hour there and one hour back), then that's all you pay for 2 hours!!!

A PPL (H) will enable you as a pilot to fly your friends and family for pleasure. You can also use it for your own business use. This can save the businessman precious time between destinations, being able to fly point to point and avoid congested traffic, holiday traffic and motorway contra-flows. As a PPL(H) holder you can fly to one of the thousands of hotels in the UK and arrive fresh and alert for your business meeting.

### **WHAT HELICOPTERS CAN I USE FOR TRAINING AT ROTORFLIGHT?**

We at Rotorflight use the Robinson R22 helicopter. This helicopter is the cheapest, fastest, most reliable and most economical helicopter on the market for helicopter training. Rotorflight are currently using the Beta II, which is a two-seat trainer, 4-cylinder piston engined helicopter. These helicopters use the same engines as in many light Cessna or Piper aeroplanes and are as tough as old boots!

All helicopters are maintained to a strict CAA schedule and are always spotlessly clean.

If your budget allows Rotorflight can also train on the four seat Robinson R44 helicopter. This is becoming the best selling helicopter in the world and is like its smaller brother the R22, fast, reliable and economical, albeit more expensive per hour.

The R44 is a more stable platform on which to learn to fly. Having said that, it is common knowledge in the helicopter industry, that if you can fly the smaller more nimble R22, then you can fly anything!

### **WHAT STRUCTURE DO THE LESSONS TAKE?**

There are some 27 possible Exercises within the PPL(H) course even though a minimum of 45 hours is required for the issue of a PPL(H). Therefore some exercises e.g. Ex 22 navigation will have more hours allocated to it.

These exercises are as follows:-

1. Aircraft Familiarisation
2. Preparation for the flight and action after the flight
3. Air experience – Probably your first Trial Lesson flight
4. Effects of controls
5. Attitude and power changes
6. Straight and level flight, climbing and descending (including turns)
7. Basic Auto rotations
8. Hovering

9. Take-off and landings
10. Transitions
11. Circuits
12. First solo (usually in the circuit)
13. Sideways and backwards flight
14. Spot turns
15. Incipient Vortex Ring (loss of main rotor lift)
16. Flare recovery landings (simulated engine off landings)
17. Advanced auto rotations
18. Practice Forced landings (PFL's)
19. Steep turns
20. Precision transitions
21. Quick stops (emergency stops)
22. Navigation
23. Downwind transitions
24. Sloping ground landings
25. Limited power operation
26. Confined area operations (landing at a private site)
27. Instrument flying

These exercises would be briefed in full (approx 30-45 minutes) before each relevant flight. This briefing is included with your flying time. There is no additional cost for this.

If any extra schooling is required to pass the exams, then Rotorflight can provide additional ground schooling on a weekly basis (subject to demand) for a nominal cost. See our pricing page for current ground school charges [Pricing](#)

Before a student can go solo, there are several pre-requisites.

1. Student has obtained a Class II medical from an approved CAA examiner.
2. Student has passed the Air law exam
3. Student has covered up to at least Ex 20 i.e. the student has demonstrated PFLs, Auto rotations, simulated engine off landings in the circuit.

The first solo comprises a take-off, one circuit of the airfield and back for a landing under the supervision of your instructor, who remains on the airfield awaiting your safe return!

Having completed all the exercises and passed all the exams and have the minimum or more flying hours, you are eligible for your PPL flight test if your instructor thinks you are ready.

This test takes place with an approved CAA examiner (not your instructor).

This test takes approx. 2 hours and consists of a navigational flight and some general handling to demonstrate to the CAA examiner that you are a safe and competent pilot. The examiner is not looking for a "Top Gun" pilot, but if you are then no worries!

If you have obtained your PPL (H) licence<sup>4</sup> on the R22, you can then, if you wish, convert to the larger R44 by obtaining a Type-Rating. This takes approx 5 hours. After passing another test with a CAA examiner (approx 45 minutes), you will then be able to fly both the R22 and R44. This would be the cheapest way to obtain a R44 licence.

This web page is by no means exhaustive. It is here to give the prospective PPL some idea as to what is involved in obtaining a PPL(H).

If you have any further questions, then please do not hesitate to contact Rotorflight.