

Initial Class 1 Medical – notes for applicants

1. If you attend for an initial Class 1 medical we will expect you to have read these notes! Preparation and organisation prior to the medical generally allows us to finalise your certification and issue your certificate with the minimum delay. Presenting yourself for a medical without medical reports which are likely to be required leads to unnecessary delays and anxiety, and creates more work for all concerned. We suggest allowing 3 – 4 hours from your appointment time to completion of the medical.

2. Medical conditions where reports are not generally required:

Childhood illnesses, eg measles, mumps, chickenpox

Sporting injuries, accidents resulting in sprains, fractures which have fully healed without disability.

Routine surgical procedures, eg appendicectomy, cholecystectomy, arthroscopic meniscus surgery, cosmetic surgery where a full recovery has been made and there is no likelihood of future complications.

Asthma which is mild, stable, easily controlled and not requiring specialist supervision, and no history of hospital admission or oral steroid (eg prednisolone) treatment.

Hay fever without asthmatic symptoms – make a note of medications/nasal sprays/eyedrops.

3. Medical conditions where reports are usually required:

Most psychiatric and psychological conditions.

Any conditions requiring use of psychoactive medications (eg antidepressant, tranquilliser, sleeping pills, pain killers/analgesia).

Most conditions requiring regular medication.

Asthma which is not mild, stable, or has resulted in hospital admission or referral to a specialist.

Any laser treatment of the eye, or refractive procedures or any other eye surgical treatment.

4. Running kit: If an applicant has a history of asthma, or spirometry is not reasonably normal, a 6-minute free running test is carried out. This consists of a 6-minute outdoor run round the block, followed by spirometry immediately afterwards and 10 minutes afterwards. If it is raining you will get wet! So best to bring suitable running attire, ie trainers/running shoes, track suit or whatever you usually wear for a short run, and watch with second hand or mobile phone with suitable timing display. No need for a towel – we will supply if necessary.

5. Scheduling of medical: It is often possible to issue the medical certificate on the day of the examination, but this cannot be taken for granted. It may be necessary to obtain reports of past medical history, or a specialist referral may be required, for example following an abnormal ECG or lung function test, or past or current medical history. Liaison with CAA Medical Department may be necessary, and further consultations or investigations may be required. Flying training establishments often require applicants to hold a Class 1 medical certificate before confirming a place on a training course. It therefore makes sense to apply for the medical certificate in good time prior to the anticipated date of starting training.

6. Minimum age: Whilst there is no statutory minimum age for applying for a Class 1 medical certificate, it should be noted that a professional licence cannot be issued before the

applicant's 18th birthday. Our practice policy is to carry out initial Class 1 medical examinations and colour vision tests no earlier than the applicant's 17th birthday.

7. Please download the Medical Certificate Application form (Form MED 160) and bring the completed form to your appointment. If you are not sure what to enter on any parts of the form, leave them blank and seek guidance on administrative aspects from the staff, eye and vision aspects from the optometrist, and medical aspects from the doctor when you attend. Please enter your FULL NAME, in its entirety, EXACTLY as it appears in your passport.

8. Brief description of the various components of the medical examination:

(a) Optometry examination: This is a thorough examination of the eyes and vision by an optometrist. It includes testing of visual acuity, automated and manual measurement of refractive error, slit lamp microscope examination, eye internal pressure measurement, detailed visual field analysis, and corneal topography mapping. In addition, contrast sensitivity testing is carried out in the case of applicants who have had refractive surgery.

(b) Applicants who have had refractive surgery (LASIK, LASEK, PRK, RK, CCL etc) must declare this by answering “Yes” to question 101 on the application form (MED 160) and giving details in box 30 “Remarks”, and will need to provide a report from the centre that carried out the surgery – this report should be obtained in advance and brought to the medical. (see “CAA Guidance following eye surgery” link on webpage). It should be noted that we are obliged to report failure to declare such a history to the CAA, this leads to questions of integrity and fitness in the general sense to hold a professional pilot’s licence, possible prosecution, delays and additional case management fees.

(c) Urinalysis – for glucose, blood, protein.

(d) Audiometry – this is carried out in a sound attenuating booth, and measures auditory acuity in each ear separately from 500 Hz to 6000 Hz.

(e) Spirometry – a lung function test, measuring respiratory volumes and flow rates.

(f) ECG (Electrocardiogram) – measures the electrical activity of the heart muscle, providing a baseline (it is checked periodically throughout a flying career) and provides adequate assurance of satisfactory blood supply to the heart muscle, normal electrical conducting system and heart rhythm.

(g) Blood tests to measure haemoglobin and lipids (Total cholesterol (TC), high density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol and low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, and triglyceride – lipids are relevant in estimating cardiovascular risk. Avoid a heavy meal prior to the blood test – a light breakfast or lunch is fine.

(h) The doctor takes a medical history and carries out a clinical examination, including examination of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems, abdomen, skin, nervous system, ears. Height and weight are checked.

9. If all aspects are satisfactory, the medical certificate can be issued on the day, however it will frequently take several days longer whilst minor anomalies on an ECG are reviewed by

our cardiologist or the CAA cardiologist, and will take longer still if further reports, investigations or referrals are required.

10. Checklist of items to bring to Initial Class 1 medical

- (a) Passport.
- (b) Any flying licences or medical certificates (eg Class 2) already held.
- (c) CAA Reference Number if already issued (eg if you have applied for any ground exams, any sort of CAA medical or licence since 1988).
- (d) Completed Form MED 160 – completed clearly and legibly – especially phone numbers, e-mail addresses!
- (e) Latest spectacle prescription or optometry report if you have seen an optometrist in the past few years.
- (f) Current spectacles if worn.
- (g) **Contact lens users** – please come to the appointment **wearing** your contact lenses. For users of non-disposable contact lenses, please **bring your own solutions and case**.
- (h) Medical reports if required – these must be in English. Reports written in any other language must be accompanied by a certified professional English translation.
- (i) Trainers/running kit (unless you are reasonably confident that your lung function will be within normal limits, and no history of asthma).

If you have any further questions not covered above, please speak to a staff member before or during your medical.

Dr David Tallent
15 January 2016