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Going solo is just one step in every glider pilot's journey.

After your first solo, you remain under the control of the club's Duty Instructor while you complete Solo Consolidation. You cannot leave the immediate airfield area but can undertake local soaring and build up your flight times while mastering thermal, convergence and wave lift mechanics within comfortable gliding range of the airfields. Daily check flights flying with an instructor at the start of each flying day are required to confirm your currency and the ability to handle changing weather patterns before being cleared for solo.

Soaring Pilot is the next step and to achieve this milestone, you will typically require about 15-20 hours of dual training, spread over 20-30 flights. In addition to this dual training, you will build up solo time in the same 2-seater in which you have flown dual. Once you are ready, you can get a Glider Type Conversion and progress from flying two-seater trainers to single seat gliders. Our club has a PW5.

This step should also include a dual Cross-Country Flight which is a flight beyond gliding range of the airfield where further lift must be used to return to the airfield. Pilots need to help plan how an outlanding would be conducted if lift was not obtained and the decision point at which the search for lift would be abandoned and a safe outlanding carried out. A Simulated Out-Landing, which is a landing on a different part of the airfield, or on another field where space is less than the usual runway and where the approach path is unfamiliar is also required. The

exercise tests that the Pilot is not relying on the altimeter or landmarks on the home airfield to plan the circuit. A pass of an oral exam of 10 questions can then let you be permitted to fly solo without a dual training flight first.

The Cross Country Pilot step sees you take even more responsibility for your own learning and progress and allows you to discover the great adventure of soaring beyond gliding range of the airfield. This includes multiple choice written theory exams on Aviation Law (glider specific), Meteorology, Navigation & Flight Planning, Radio & Signals, Principles of Flight and Human Factors. You can then get a rating to take passengers for flights.

Task Pilot, Alpine Pilot and a life time of learning follow.

If you are interested in trying soaring yourself, come and join us to learn more about gliding, the weather, the wave and the “air pockets” you fly through in powered aircraft and save fuel! Aeroclub members can fly at gliding club member rates.

Further details about the club and learning to glide are on the gliding club website at http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/