



# **AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (ATCO) LICENSING MANUAL**

**Second Edition - 2021**

Issued under the authority of the Director  
Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority

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	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Table of Contents	Chapter:	Page: ii

## Table of Contents

Record of Revisions .....	i
Table of Contents .....	ii
Foreword .....	iv
Chapter. 1 Definitions and Abbreviations .....	1-1
1.1 Definitions .....	1-1
1.2 Abbreviations .....	1-3
Chapter. 2 BCAR ATCO-PEL .....	2-1
2.1 BCAA air traffic controller licensing regulation.....	2-1
2.2 Subject matter and scope.....	2-1
2.3 General Requirements - structure of this document.....	2-1
2.4 Authority .....	2-2
2.5 Responsibility.....	2-2
Chapter. 3 General requirements .....	3-1
3.1 General .....	3-1
3.2 Suspension of ATC license .....	3-1
3.3 Revocation of ATC license .....	3-2
3.4 Role and responsibility of the air traffic controller .....	3-2
3.5 Role and responsibility of the ANSP .....	3-2
Chapter. 4 Licences, Ratings and Endorsements.....	4-1
4.1 Student air traffic controller .....	4-1
4.2 Air Traffic Controller Licence .....	4-2
4.3 Trainee air traffic controller .....	4-2
4.4 Ratings.....	4-3
4.5 Unit Endorsements .....	4-3
4.6 Unit Competence Scheme (UCS).....	4-5
4.7 Language proficiency endorsement .....	4-6
4.8 Flow charts to demonstrate concept of licensing .....	4-6
Chapter. 5 Requirements for Instructors and Assessors .....	5-1
5.1 Theoretical Instructors.....	5-1
5.2 Practical Instructors.....	5-1
5.3 OJTI.....	5-1
5.4 Temporary OJTI.....	5-3

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Table of Contents	Chapter:	Page: iii

5.5	Assessors .....	5-3
5.6	Assessments and examinations .....	5-5
5.7	Temporary assessors .....	5-5
Chapter. 6	Training of Air Traffic Controllers .....	6-1
6.1	General .....	6-1
Chapter. 7	BCAA Procedures and Processes .....	7-1
7.1	Maintaining an air traffic controller licence.....	7-1
7.2	Requirement for assessments of previous competence (APC).....	7-2
7.3	Arrangement for an APC.....	7-3
7.4	BCAA Licence administration .....	7-3
7.5	Application forms and fees .....	7-4
7.6	Arranging an initial UE assessment and examination.....	7-5
7.7	Disclosure of information.....	7-5
Chapter. 8	Medical Requirements .....	8-1
8.1	Medical fitness .....	8-1
8.2	Medical certification .....	8-1
8.3	Decrease in medical fitness .....	8-2
8.4	Use of psychoactive substances .....	8-3
8.5	Medical examinations .....	8-3

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Foreword	Chapter:	Page: iv

## Foreword

This Air Traffic Controller Licensing Manual has been published in accordance with the Bhutan Civil Aviation Requirement for Personnel Licensing (BCAR-PEL) and the Bhutan Civil Aviation Requirement for Air Traffic Controller – Personnel Licensing (BCAR ATCO-PEL).

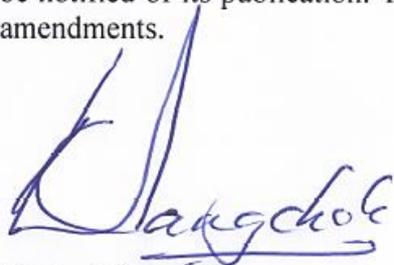
The Civil Aviation Act of Bhutan 2016 and Bhutan Air Navigation Regulations (BANRs) 2021 requires air traffic controllers to hold a valid air traffic controller licence to be an eligible controller. Bhutan being a signatory state to ICAO convention, requires that standard and recommended practices (SARPs) are met as a minimum for the safe and efficient air operations.

This manual is composed of following reference documents, customized and adopted to suite the local authority's ANS personnel and personnel licensing in their day-to-day functions.

### Reference Documents:

- ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPS), Annex 1: Personnel Licensing (12<sup>th</sup> edition, July 2018);
- Bhutan Civil Aviation Requirements - Personnel Licensing (BCAR-PEL) (Third issue, 01 May 2018);
- Bhutan Civil Aviation Publication (BCAP) - Personnel Licensing Procedures Manual (Initial issue, November 2017);
- ICAO Doc 10056 - Manual on Air Traffic Controller Competency-based Training and Assessment (1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2017);
- ICAO Doc 9654-AN945 (1995) Manual on Prevention of Problematic Use of Substances in the Aviation Workplace (1<sup>st</sup> edition).

While this manual is published for use by the ANS and PEL section of BCAA, and ATS providers, the personnel of relevant divisions within the BCAA and other relevant ANSPs, will be notified of its publication. This document will be updated regularly to incorporate further amendments.



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 Director  
 Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA)  
 Date: 01/09/2021

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Definitions and Abbreviations	Chapter: 1	Page: 1-1

## Chapter. 1 Definitions and Abbreviations

### 1.1 Definitions

#### **Abnormal and Emergency situations**

The collective term referring to situations, including degraded situations, which are not routinely or commonly experienced and for which automatic skills have not been developed, and serious and dangerous situations requiring immediate actions.

#### **Abnormal Situations**

Circumstances, including degraded situations, which are neither routinely nor commonly experienced and for which an air traffic controller has not developed automatic skills.

#### **Acceptable Means of Compliance**

A non-binding standard adopted by the Agency to illustrate means by which to establish compliance with Regulation.

#### **Air Traffic Control service**

A service provided for the purpose of:

- Preventing collisions between aircraft and in the manoeuvring area, between aircraft and obstructions;
- Expediting and maintaining an orderly flow of air traffic.

#### **Air Traffic Control unit**

A generic term meaning variously area control centre, approach control unit or aerodrome control tower.

#### **Assessor endorsement**

The authorisation entered on and forming part of the licence, indicating the competence of the holder to assess the practical skills of student air traffic controller and air traffic controller.

#### **Emergency situation**

A serious and dangerous situation requiring immediate actions.

#### **Examination**

A formalised test evaluating the person's knowledge and understanding.

#### **Initial training**

The training which leads to the issue of a student air traffic controller licence or to the issue of an additional rating and providing basic and rating training.

#### **Language proficiency endorsement**

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Definitions and Abbreviations	Chapter: 1	Page: 1-2

The statement entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the language proficiency of the holder.

### **On-the-job training instructor endorsement**

The authorisation entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the competence of the holder to give on-the-job training instruction and instruction on synthetic training devices.

### **Provisional Inability**

A temporary state in which the licence holder is prevented from exercising the privileges of the licence when ratings, endorsements and his medical certificate are valid.

### **Psychoactive substances**

Alcohol, opioids, cannabinoids, sedatives and hypnotics, cocaine, other psychostimulants, hallucinogens, and volatile solvents, whereas caffeine and tobacco are excluded.

### **Renewal**

The administrative act taken after a rating, endorsement or certificate has expired that renew the privileges or limitations of the rating, endorsement or certificate for a further specified period subject to the fulfilment of specified requirements.

### **Revalidation**

The administrative act taken within the period of validity of a rating, endorsement or certificate that allows the holder to continue to exercise the privileges of a rating, endorsement or certificate for a further specified period subject to the fulfilment of specified requirements.

### **Synthetic training device**

Any type of device by which operational conditions are simulated, including simulators and part-task trainers.

### **Trainee air traffic controller**

An air traffic controller licence holder who is training to obtain additional ratings and/or unit endorsements.

### **Training Course**

The theoretical and/or practical instruction developed within a structured framework and delivered within a defined duration.

### **Unit Competence Scheme**

An approved scheme indicating the method by which the unit maintains the competence of its licence holders.

### **Unit Endorsement (UE)**

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Definitions and Abbreviations	Chapter: 1	Page: 1-3

The authorisation entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the ICAO location indicator and the sectors and/or working positions where the holder of the licence is competent to work.

### **Unit Endorsement Course**

A training course for each UE established at the ATC unit as defined in the unit training plan.

### **Unit Training Plan**

An approved plan detailing the Unit Endorsement Course(s), processes and timing required to allow the unit procedures to be applied at the unit under the supervision of an on-the-job training instructor.

### **Validation**

For the purpose of this document the process by which, through the successful completion of a UE course associated to a rating, the holder may start exercising the privileges of that rating.

## **1.2 Abbreviations**

AMC	Acceptable Means of Compliance
ANSP	Air Navigation Service Provider
APC	Assessment for Previous Competence
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATM	Air Traffic Management
ATS	Air Traffic Service
ATSU	Air Traffic Services Unit
BCAA	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority
BCAR	Bhutan Civil Aviation Requirements
DME	Designated Medical Examiner
GM	Guidance Material
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ITO	Initial Training Organisation
MATS	Manual of Air Traffic Services
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OJTI	On-the-Job Training Instructor
Pre-OJT	Pre On-the-Job Training
TWR	Tower Control
UE	Unit Endorsement
UEC	Unit Endorsement Course
UCS	Unit Competence Scheme
UTP	Unit Training Plan

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAR ATCO-PEL	Chapter: 2	Page: 2-1

## **Chapter. 2 BCAR ATCO-PEL**

### **2.1 BCAA air traffic controller licensing regulation**

2.1.1 BCAR ATCO-PEL details the Air traffic Controllers' licensing rules.

2.1.2 Acceptable Mean of compliance and Guidance Material have been published by BCAA.

2.1.3 The BCAA, all ANSPs who provide ATS and air traffic controllers including student air traffic controllers are required to comply with this regulation.

### **2.2 Subject matter and scope**

2.2.1 BCAR ATCO-PEL lays down detailed rules for:

- the conditions for issuing, suspending and revoking air traffic controllers' and student air traffic controllers' licences, associated ratings and endorsements, and the privileges and responsibilities of those holding them;
- the conditions for, limiting, suspending and revoking air traffic controllers' and student air traffic controllers' medical certificates, and the privileges and responsibilities of those holding them;
- the conditions for validating, revalidating, renewing and using such licences, ratings, endorsements and certificates.

2.2.2 BCAR ATCO-PEL shall apply to:

- student air traffic controllers and air traffic controllers exercising their functions;
- persons and organisations involved in the licensing, training, testing, checking and medical examination and assessment of applicants in accordance with this Regulation.

### **2.3 General Requirements - structure of this document**

2.3.1 This document details the processes to be followed by an individual or organisation in order to comply with BCAR ATCO-PEL.

2.3.2 The structure of this document follows that of BCAR ATCO-PEL, which is divided into four chapters:

- CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
- CHAPTER 2 - LICENCES, RATINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS
- CHAPTER 3 - REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTRUCTORS AND ASSESSORS
- CHAPTER 4 - AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER TRAINING

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAR ATCO-PEL	Chapter: 2	Page: 2-2

2.3.3 BCAR ATCO-PEL is applicable to all air traffic controllers and identifies the requirements for the issue, exchange, privileges, revalidation, renewal and training (both initial and unit) of the air traffic controller.

## 2.4 Authority

2.4.1 BCAA is responsible for the certification and oversight of ANSPs including the approval of Unit Training Plans (UTPs) and Unit Competence Schemes (UCSs). The BCAA is also responsible for the issue, limiting, suspension and revocation of air traffic controller licences.

## 2.5 Responsibility

2.5.1 The individual air traffic controller is responsible for ensuring that their licence:

- issued in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL and applicable requirements of BCAR-PEL;
- contains their correct details;
- has been signed.

2.5.2 Prior to exercising the privileges of their licence they must ensure that they have:

- a minimum current language endorsement of level 4;
- a current medical certificate;
- hold the relevant rating(s);
- hold the relevant UE(s).

2.5.3 An air traffic controller shall ensure that their licence is available at the unit at all times when they are exercising the privileges of their licence.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	General Requirements	Chapter: 3	Page: 3-1

## Chapter. 3 General Requirements

### 3.1 General

- 3.1.1 Chapter 1 of BCAR ATCO-PEL identifies some general requirements and confirms that the licence is the property of the person to whom it is issued and that the licence must be signed.
- 3.1.2 ATCO.A.015 refers to provisional inability. This process allows for both the ANSP or a licence holder to declare provisional inability in a variety of circumstances, such as temporary withdrawal of a UE or medical certificate, or if competence is in doubt.
- 3.1.3 The ANSP is required to have a procedure to manage the declaration of a provisional inability which includes a process for advising the BCAA in certain circumstances when provisional inability has been declared. This procedure shall be published in the unit competence scheme.
- 3.1.4 ATCO.A.020 refers to the revocation and suspension of licences, ratings and endorsements. The processes for this are captured below.

### 3.2 Suspension of ATC license

- 3.2.1 Suspension is the act of placing an air traffic controller licence, or its associated rating(s), or UE(s), in abeyance. Normally, conditions would be set whereby the controller may seek withdrawal of the suspension of rating(s) and/or endorsement(s).
- 3.2.2 The BCAA will issue a proposal to suspend the rating(s), or UE(s) of a controller where a more extensive investigation of an incident or accident indicates that the controller actions were a contributory factor.
- 3.2.3 A proposal to suspend, including the conditions for the removal of the suspension, is subject to appeal under section 114 of Civil Aviation Act of Bhutan 2016.
- 3.2.4 An air traffic controller who satisfies the conditions for the removal of a suspension will have the suspension removed.
- 3.2.5 The BCAA will suspend the air traffic controller licence, or its associated rating(s) or UE(s) of an air traffic controller who does not appeal or who is unsuccessful at an appeal. If the appeal is successful, the suspension will be lifted.
- 3.2.6 Conditions for the removal of a suspension will normally involve:
- An APC conducted at the unit where the controller is employed;
  - successful completion of any training and further assessments identified by the assessor and the BCAA as being required;

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	General Requirements	Chapter: 3	Page: 3-2

- successful completion of unit training and for the award of a UE in the rating that was suspended.
- Any other conditions set by the BCAA.

3.2.7 An air traffic controller whose rating(s) or UE(s) have been suspended must not provide the air traffic service associated with those rating(s) or UE(s) except to comply with the conditions for the removal of the suspension and under the supervision of an OJTI who holds a valid rating appropriate to the air traffic service being provided.

### **3.3 Revocation of ATC license**

3.3.1 Revocation is the act of withdrawing an air traffic controller licence or its associated rating(s) or UE(s).

3.3.2 The BCAA will propose to revoke the licence of an air traffic controller whenever it considers that air traffic controller is not a fit person to hold an air traffic controller licence. The BCAA may propose to revoke the air traffic controller licence or associated rating(s) or UE(s) of a controller who is unable to demonstrate their competence to provide the air traffic control services associated with their licence, rating(s) or UE(s).

3.3.3 The proposal to revoke an air traffic controller licence, or associated rating(s) or UE(s) is subject to appeal under section 114 of Civil Aviation Act of Bhutan 2016. If the appeal is successful, the proposal to revoke will be withdrawn.

3.3.4 The BCAA will revoke the licence, or associated rating(s) or UE(s) of an air traffic controller who does not appeal or is unsuccessful at an appeal.

3.3.5 A controller whose ATC license is revoked shall not provide an air traffic control service even under supervision.

### **3.4 Role and responsibility of the air traffic controller**

3.4.1 An air traffic controller whose licence has been suspended must not provide an air traffic service.

3.4.2 An air traffic controller whose rating(s) or UE(s) has been suspended must not provide the air traffic service associated with those rating(s) or UE(s), except to comply with the conditions for removal of the suspension and under the supervision of an OJTI who holds a valid rating appropriate to the air traffic service being provided.

### **3.5 Role and responsibility of the ANSP**

3.5.1 ANSPs must have approved processes, procedures and competent personnel in place to ensure that:

- the unit has written procedures:

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	General Requirements	Chapter: 3	Page: 3-3

- detailing the action to be taken following the withdrawal of a controller from duty in the event of their involvement in an incident or accident; and
- for conducting a local management assessment or, in the situation of single manning, the action to be taken by the controller involved in the incident or accident.
- the BCAA is advised whenever there has been a significant incident and of the action taken by the unit;
- the air traffic controller complies with any conditions relating to the suspension;
- the BCAA is advised of the outcome of any training and assessment of the air traffic controller required for the removal of a suspension.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Licences, Ratings and Endorsements	Chapter: 4	Page: 4-1

## Chapter. 4 Licences, Ratings and Endorsements

### 4.1 Student air traffic controller

4.1.1 The requirements to hold a student air traffic controller licence are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.001.

4.1.2 The BCAA will grant a student air traffic controller licence to an applicant provided they meet the requirements laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.001.

4.1.3 A student air traffic controller licence will be issued for a period of 12 months and may be extended at the discretion of the BCAA in consultation with the unit training manager.

4.1.4 In accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.A.020 when an exchange of a student air traffic controller licence takes place for an air traffic controller licence, the student licence is considered to be revoked and must be returned to the competent authority prior to the air traffic controller licence being issued to the individual. The exchange may take place with the ATS Inspector in attendance at the initial UE assessment and examination.

4.1.5 A student air traffic controller who provides an air traffic service under supervision is responsible for ensuring they comply with the requirements of BCAR ATCO-PEL and in addition:

- a) is not fatigued to an extent that may endanger the safety of aircraft to which they are providing an air traffic service;
- b) is not under the influence of any psychoactive substance and alcohol or suffering from any illness or injury to an extent that may endanger the safety of aircraft to which an air traffic service is being provided.

4.1.6 ANSPs must have processes, procedures and competent personnel to ensure that:

- a) Student air traffic controllers:
  - hold a current student controller licence;
  - have successfully completed an approved course of initial training in the rating discipline in which they will be providing an ATC service under supervision;
  - hold a valid medical certificate of the appropriate class;
  - hold a valid English language proficiency certificate of appropriate level;
  - complies with 4.1.5 and in addition commence the unit training plan within twelve months of their having completed the initial course of training in the rating discipline in which they will be providing an air

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Licences, Ratings and Endorsements	Chapter: 4	Page: 4-2

traffic service under supervision, if this period exceeds twelve months an APC is required;

- b) the OJTI supervising the student air traffic controller licence holds a valid rating appropriate to the air traffic service being provided;

## **4.2 Air Traffic Controller Licence**

4.2.1 The requirements to hold an air traffic controller licence are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.005.

4.2.2 The BCAA will grant an air traffic controller licence to an applicant provided they meet the requirements laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.005.

4.2.3 An air traffic controller licence holder who provides an air traffic service shall be responsible for ensuring they comply with the requirements of BCAR ATCO-PEL and in addition shall ensure they:

- a) are not fatigued to an extent that may endanger the safety of aircraft to which they are providing an air traffic service;
- b) are not under the influence of any psychoactive substance and alcohol to an extent that may endanger the safety of aircraft to which they are providing an air traffic service;
- c) are not suffering from any illness or injury to an extent that may endanger the safety of aircraft to which they are providing an air traffic service;
- d) are not distracted due to personal circumstances.

4.2.4 ANSPs at units where they are responsible for the provision of air traffic service(s) must have processes, procedures and competent personnel to ensure that air traffic controllers:

- a) are appropriately licensed;
- b) are competent to provide the air traffic control services for which they hold valid ratings;
- c) comply with requirements for maintaining competence;
- d) hold a valid medical certificate of the appropriate category;
- e) hold a valid English language proficiency certificate of appropriate level;
- f) are not under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication or suffering from any illness or injury to an extent that may endanger the safety of aircraft to which an air traffic control service is being provided.

## **4.3 Trainee air traffic controller**

4.3.1 In accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.005 the holder of an air traffic controller licence shall include the privileges of a student air traffic controller licence.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Licences, Ratings and Endorsements	Chapter: 4	Page: 4-3

4.3.2 For ease of identifying the role of an air traffic controller who is undertaking training for an additional rating, they shall be known as a trainee air traffic controller.

#### **4.4 Ratings**

4.4.1 An air traffic controller licence shall contain one or more of the ratings listed in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.010.

4.4.2 In accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.010 (b) if the holder of a rating has not exercised the privileges of that rating for a period of four or more years an APC is required in that rating.

**NOTE:** In accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL the requirements for an APC must ensure the candidate meets the terminal objectives level of initial training.

#### **4.5 Unit Endorsements**

4.5.1 The requirements for UE(s) are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.020.

4.5.2 Applicants for a UE must have completed an approved UEC.

4.5.3 The validity period of a UE shall be specified in the UCS. This shall not exceed three years.

4.5.4 A UE may be revalidated during a three month period prior to the expiry date.

4.5.5 An initial UE assessment and examination shall be conducted by a BCAA authorised assessor.

4.5.6 To enable the BCAA to appropriately allocate resources it is important that the ANSP advise when student or trainee air traffic controllers commence UEC.

4.5.7 An application for a UE assessment and examination must be made to the BCAA at least 14 days prior to the requested date, giving the number of hours the candidate still has to undertake to complete the unit training plan.

4.5.8 **An initial or subsequent UE shall only be issued if the candidate has successfully completed both the assessment and examination.** No part credit can be issued if a candidate was unsuccessful in an assessment or examination, a full re-sit must be undertaken.

4.5.9 Successful completion of the practical assessment will lead to the oral examination being conducted.

4.5.10 An individual who is unsuccessful in the assessment and/or examination for the initial issue of a UE shall not be permitted to retake the assessment and/or examination until a period of at least 30 days has elapsed.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Licences, Ratings and Endorsements	Chapter: 4	Page: 4-4

- 4.5.11 If a candidate for the revalidation of UE is unsuccessful in either the assessment and/or the examination they cannot continue to exercise the privileges of that UE.
- 4.5.12 If a UE has expired, the process to renew the UE will require a UEC to be successfully completed in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL, Chapter 4, Section 3.
- 4.5.13 Revalidation of the UE requires that refresher training is successfully completed in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.D.080(b). The details of refresher training will be included in the UCS document.
- 4.5.14 Refresher training consists of three subjects:
- standard practices and procedures training, using approved phraseology and effective communication;
  - abnormal and emergency situations training, using approved phraseology and effective communication; and
  - human factors training.
- 4.5.15 A UE may not be revalidated if the required minimum number of hours of operational duties have not been completed during the validity period of the UE. The minimum number of hours will be defined in the UCS document.
- 4.5.16 Associated AMCs and GMs of BCAR ATCO-PEL are published to assist with the composition of unit and refresher training.
- 4.5.17 Except where approved by the BCAA, the use of simulators to demonstrate competence at a UE assessment is not permitted. When approved by the BCAA, a simulator may be used to demonstrate the application of procedures not seen during any assessment.
- 4.5.18 UEs may be cancelled where a controller is no longer required to provide an air traffic service on a particular sector and/or operational position, or when sectors are reorganised and sector names or designations change. The licence holder shall inform ATS licensing administration (by letter or email) in the event that a UE is withdrawn, cancelled or not renewed unless the unit has procedures to inform BCAA on the licence holder's behalf.
- 4.5.19 Where it is intended that an air traffic controller should hold UEs concurrently at more than one unit, the ANSP(s), concerned are to inform the BCAA.
- 4.5.20 An air traffic controller who already holds a UE will be issued with additional UEs for additional sectors or operational positions associated with that rating upon:
- successful completion of the relevant UEC, and
  - demonstrating that they are competent to provide the air traffic service associated with the additional sectors or operational positions.
- 4.5.21 When an air traffic controller moves to a new unit, their previously held UEs are still current until the expiry date of the UE(s). If the licence holder subsequently returns to the original unit, the process to ensure competence is dependent upon the time that has

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Licences, Ratings and Endorsements	Chapter: 4	Page: 4-5

elapsed since they last exercised the UE at that unit. The requirements for remaining in current and recent practice at a unit is to be identified in the approved UCS.

#### **4.6 Unit Competence Scheme (UCS)**

4.6.1 The requirements for a unit competence scheme are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.025.

4.6.2 All ATCUs are required to have a UCS and relevant documentation.

4.6.3 At units where ATS Inspectors assess all air traffic controllers for the issue, renewal, and/or revalidation of the UEs, the assessments and examinations will be undertaken in all the operational positions for which the air traffic controllers hold current UEs.

4.6.4 The UCS shall satisfy all the requirements laid down in Chapter 2 on UCS and Chapter 4 for Continuation training, of BCAR ATCO-PEL, and all the requirements in associated AMCs. A UCS shall detail the process by which controllers are monitored or regularly tested to ensure they maintain their competence and should include details of continuation training for controllers and a competence assessing system. Fifteen elements are required to be included in the UCS document as laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.025.

4.6.5 In addition to the requirements of ATCO.B.025, the following shall also be included in the UCS:

- Revalidation process for the OJTI endorsement;
- Revalidation process for the assessor endorsement;
- Renewal process for the OJTI endorsement;
- Renewal process for the assessor endorsement;
- Renewal requirements for a UE;
- Revalidation process for a Level 4 (operational) or Level 5 (intermediate) English language endorsement;
- Arrangements for the introduction of licence holders into the roles of Assessors and OJTIs and for their continued competence in these roles;
- An individual shall be nominated as the person responsible for formally accepting that the process has been correctly conducted;
- the formal mechanism by which the controller will be notified of the result of any competence assessment and/or examination;
- the method by which the unit keeps controllers' competence records.

4.6.6 In accordance with ATCO.B.025 (b) units shall keep records of hours during which the individuals exercise the privileges of their air traffic controller licence.

4.6.7 ATCUs shall submit their proposed UCS to the BCAA for approval.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Licences, Ratings and Endorsements	Chapter: 4	Page: 4-6

#### **4.7 Language proficiency endorsement**

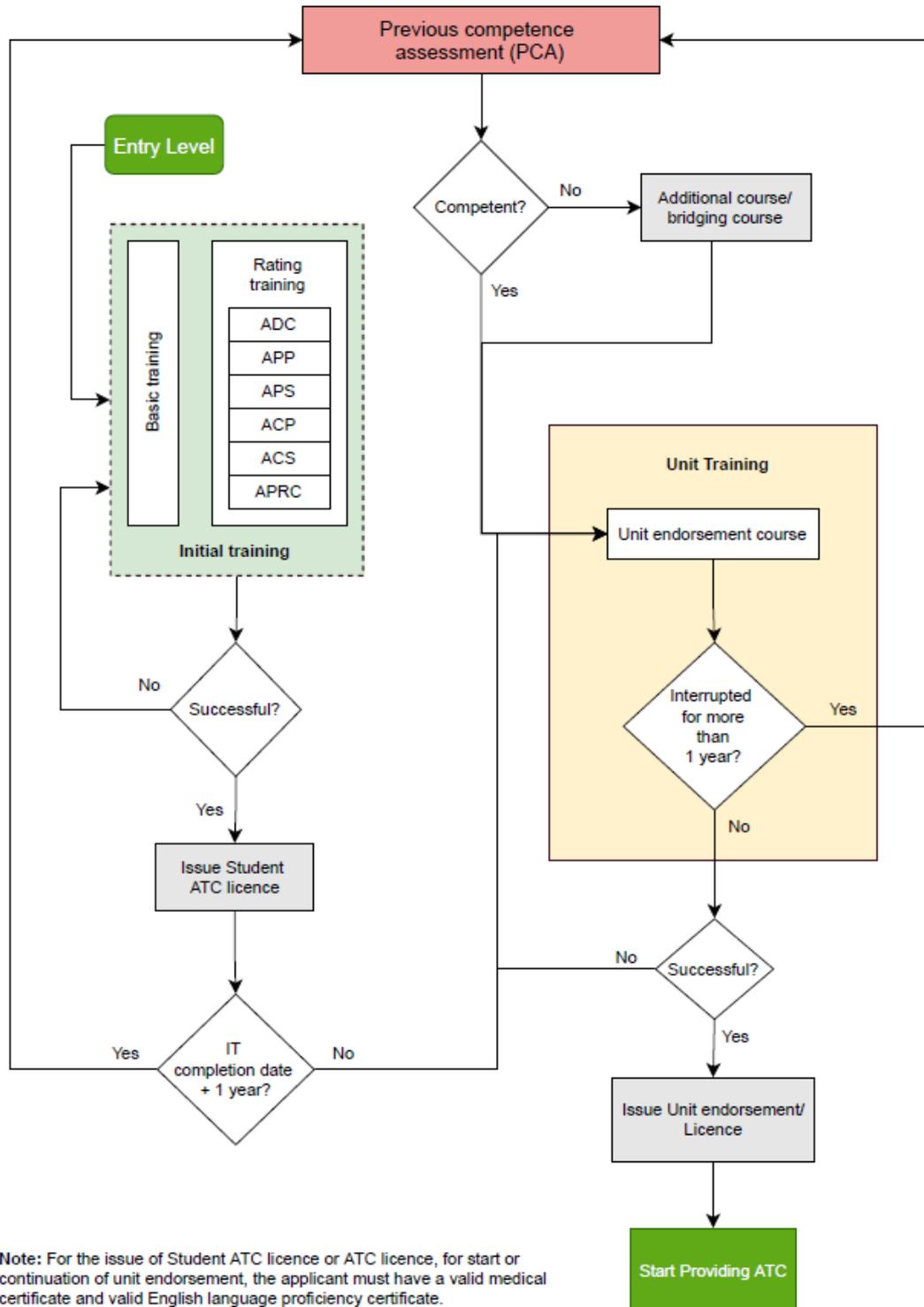
- 4.7.1 Student air traffic controllers and air traffic controllers shall have demonstrated a minimum of operational level 4 on the ICAO language proficiency rating scale.
- 4.7.2 The requirements for the language proficiency endorsement are detailed in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.030 and BCAR-PEL, Section 1.2.9.
- 4.7.3 A Level 4 endorsement is valid for a period of three years; a Level 5 endorsement is valid for a period of six years.
- 4.7.4 Under BCAR-PEL, there is no validity period associated with a Level 6 English language endorsement.
- 4.7.5 An air traffic controller who fails a competence assessment for the revalidation of the English language endorsement, must not provide an air traffic service. In such circumstances the controller shall be permitted to undertake a further assessment, typically following an appropriate period of linguistic training. Should an air traffic controller fail a second assessment, providers of an ATS(s) are required to advise the BCAA.
- 4.7.6 If an air traffic controller fails to revalidate their English language endorsement before the date of expiry, they must not provide an air traffic service until such time as they have successfully undertaken a competence assessment for English language proficiency.

#### **4.8 Flow charts to demonstrate concept of licensing**

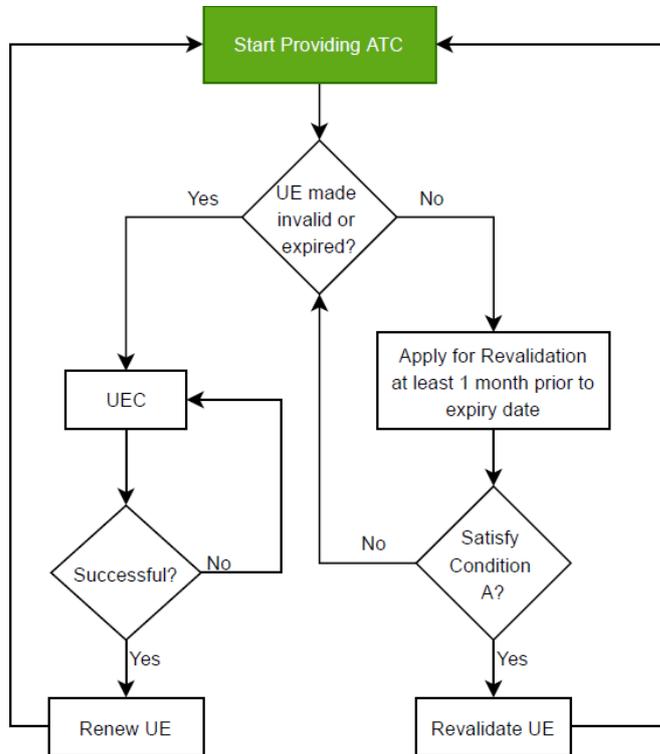
- 4.8.1 The flow charts demonstrating the concept of licensing for traffic controllers and student air traffic controllers are provided below.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

**Figure 1.** Issue of Student and Air Traffic Controller License



**Figure 2.** Renewal and revalidation of Unit endorsement (UE)

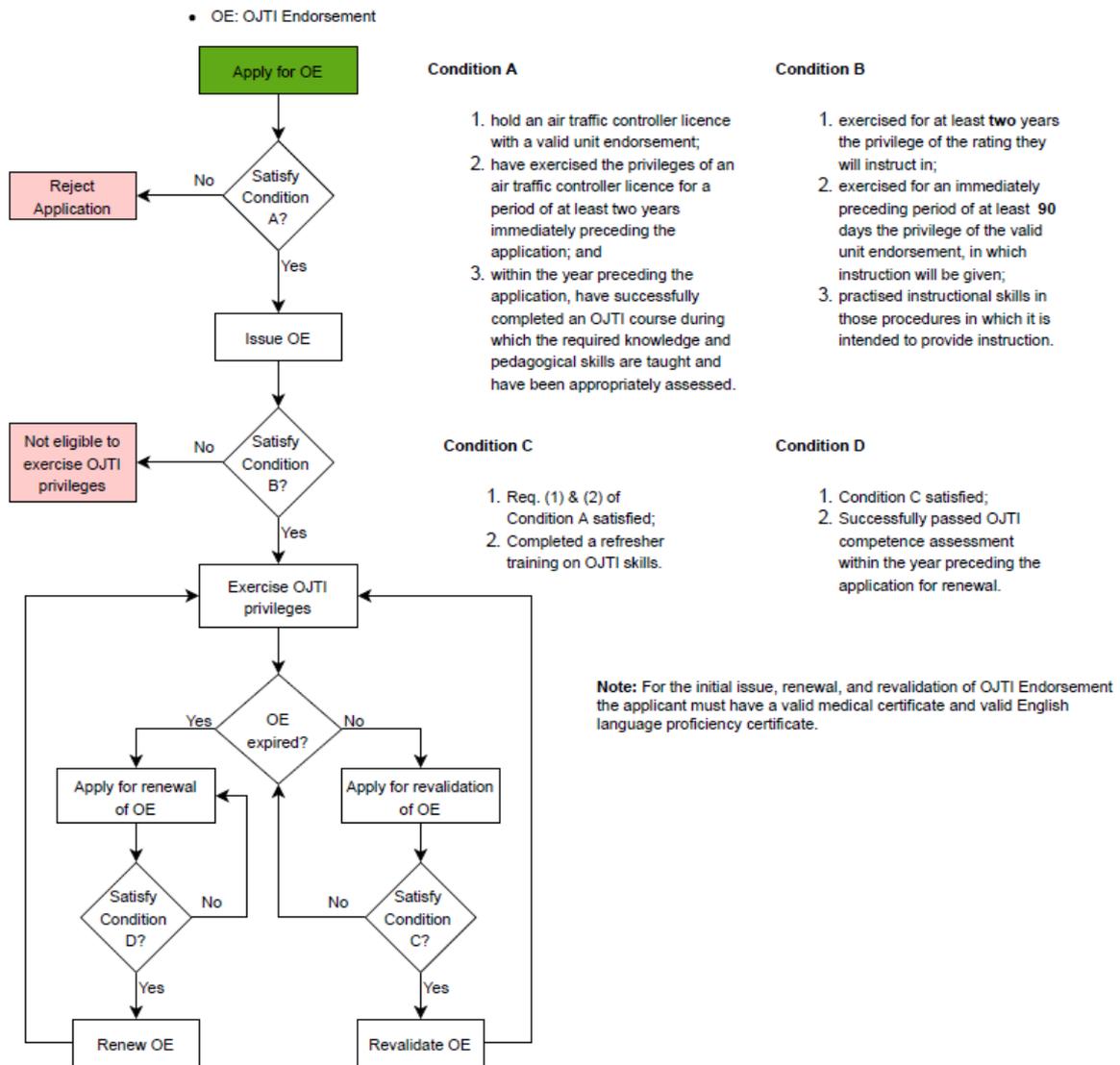


**Condition A**

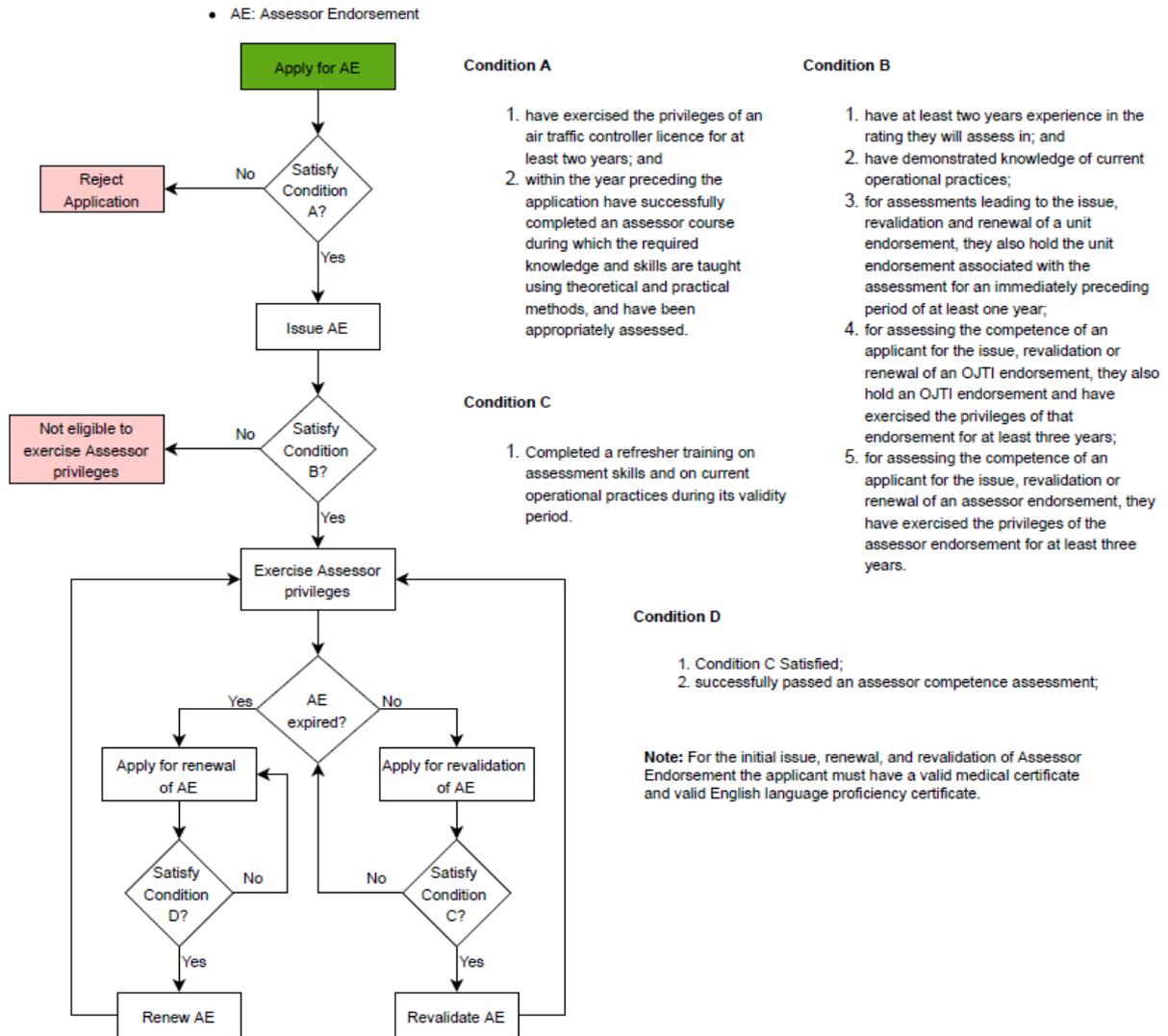
1. exercised the privileges of the licence for a minimum number of hours as defined in the UCS;
2. undertaken refresher training within the validity period of UEC; and
3. competence has been assessed in accordance with UCS not earlier than 3 months prior to the date of application.
4. the applicant has not interrupted exercising the privileges of the endorsement for a maximum continuous period as defined in the unit competence scheme;

**Note:** For the renewal and revalidation of ATCO licence the applicant must have a valid medical certificate and valid English language proficiency certificate.

**Figure 3.** Issue of OJTI endorsement



**Figure 2.** Issue of Assessor endorsement



	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Requirements for Instructors and Assessors	Chapter: 5	Page: 5-1

## **Chapter. 5 Requirements for Instructors and Assessors**

### **5.1 Theoretical Instructors**

- 5.1.1 The requirements for theoretical instructors are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.001 and the associated AMC1 ATCO.C.001(b)(2).
- 5.1.2 The ANSP shall assure themselves of the skills and competence of a theoretical instructor in accordance with the regulation and have in place a process for continued competence.

### **5.2 Practical Instructors**

- 5.2.1 The requirements for practical instructors are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.005. This is relevant to an on-the-job instructor (OJTI).
- 5.2.2 There is a requirement under the UCS that practical instructors are given time to practice their instructional techniques and this process will be identified in the UCS.

### **5.3 OJTI**

- 5.3.1 The privileges of an OJTI are listed in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.010.
- 5.3.2 The qualifications for the application of an OJTI are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.015.
- 5.3.3 An OJTI course can only be completed within the preceding year prior to application for the OJTI endorsement to be issued in the licence.
- 5.3.4 The requirements for maintaining the validity of the OJTI endorsement are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.020.
- 5.3.5 The period of validity of the OJTI endorsement is three years. The OJTI revalidation process shall be identified in the UCS document.
- 5.3.6 In the event of the expiry of the OJTI endorsement, a renewal comprises of OJTI refresher training and an assessment of competence in the OJTI role shall be completed. An ANSP must include the process which is required to be undertaken for the renewal of the OJTI licence endorsement in the UCS, this may include an approved course of OJTI refresher training and assessment.
- 5.3.7 The OJTI is responsible for:
- the safety of the air traffic service that the student air traffic controller or trainee air traffic controller is providing under their supervision;
  - in conjunction with the ANSP ensuring that student air traffic controllers:

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Requirements for Instructors and Assessors	Chapter: 5	Page: 5-2

- hold a student air traffic controller licence, with a relevant English language endorsement and current medical certificate issued in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL and BCAR-PEL;
- have successfully completed an approved course of initial training in the rating discipline in which they will be providing an air traffic service under supervision;
- in conjunction with the ANSP ensuring that trainee air traffic controllers:
- hold an air traffic controller licence with a relevant English language endorsement and current medical certificate issued in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL and BCAR-PEL, which includes the rating(s) appropriate to the air traffic service being provided under supervision and have exercised their privileges within the preceding four years; or
- have successfully completed an approved course of initial training, in the rating appropriate to the air traffic service being provided under supervision;
- determining and reporting on the training progress;
- identifying any deficiencies in knowledge or skill and recommending remedial training;
- recommending student and trainee air traffic controllers as being at an appropriate level of competence where they should be successful at a UE assessment and examination;
- supervising controllers who have had their rating(s) and/or UE(s) suspended;
- reviewing and monitoring the UEC(s) and UTP and proposing changes to the training.

**NOTE:** If the ATCU has procedures which check and ensure that the licence and training record of individuals are correct and current, then the OJTI will not be required to check the student or trainee's licence, training record or medical status.

#### 5.3.8 ANSPs must have processes, procedures and competent personnel to ensure that OJTIs:

- hold an OJTI licence endorsement and valid ratings entitling them to provide the air traffic service(s) in which they are supervising student or trainee air traffic controllers;
- have received specific training on the conduct of the UEC;
- are competent to supervise student or trainee air traffic controllers;
- are revalidated at least every three years for their competence to train and supervise student or trainee air traffic controllers;
- shall have the opportunity to practice their instructional skills, particularly where the training workload is light. This process shall be identified in the UCS.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Requirements for Instructors and Assessors	Chapter: 5	Page: 5-3

5.3.9 ANSPs shall ensure that an OJTI is permitted to provide an air traffic service without any training responsibilities for sufficient time to remain competent on the specific sector(s) or operational position(s) for which they provide OJT. An OJTI can only count 50% of their time acting as an OJTI towards the minimum operational hours required for the revalidation of a UE.

5.3.10 An OJTI who is assessed as not competent to train and supervise student or trainee air traffic controllers shall not undertake duties as an OJTI until they have been assessed as competent to do so. Should a controller be unable to demonstrate competence as an OJTI, the ATSU must inform the BCAA.

#### **5.4 Temporary OJTI**

5.4.1 The requirement of temporary OJTI authorization is laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.025.

5.4.2 AMC1 ATCO.C.025 Temporary OJTI authorisation paragraph (a), requires that the ANSP provides a safety analysis on how the equivalent level of safety will be ensured if a temporary OJTI is issued.

#### **5.5 Assessors**

5.5.1 The privileges of an assessor are listed in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.045.

5.5.2 The emphasis on conflict of interest has become a key area in recent years, and is reflected in ATCO.C.050. This is a generic statement and therefore the ATSU should ensure that their assessors are aware of declaring any vested interests prior to any assessment or examination taking place.

5.5.3 The qualification for the application of an assessor endorsement is listed in ATCO.C.055.

5.5.4 The BCAA may vary the requirements outlined in 5.5.3 on a case by case basis and where appropriate to do so. Therefore, ANSPs are recommended to contact the BCAA to discuss specific requirements.

5.5.5 The period of validity of the assessor endorsement is three years as laid down in ATCO.C.060. The requirements for revalidation of the assessor endorsement include the successful completion of refresher training. The ANSP shall ensure that the revalidation process is identified in the UCS document.

5.5.6 In order to comply with BCAR ATCO-PEL the assessor endorsement will now be issued upon successful completion of the approved assessor course.

5.5.7 An assessor endorsement does not confer on the holder the authority to revalidate, renew or issue a UE that has been suspended by the BCAA except in accordance with conditions set by the BCAA for the removal of the suspension.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Requirements for Instructors and Assessors	Chapter: 5	Page: 5-4

5.5.8 An assessor is responsible for ensuring that they comply with the unit's assessment and examination processes.

5.5.9 Assessors are responsible for determining if controllers are competent to exercise the privileges of their air traffic controller licence on particular sectors or operational positions at that unit.

5.5.10 Assessors shall ensure that controllers whose competence they are assessing towards the issue of a UE hold a current student air traffic controller or air traffic controller licence issued in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL with the relevant rating, together with an English language endorsement Level 4 or above and a current medical certificate.

5.5.11 An assessor shall ensure that:

- the student air traffic controller or trainee air traffic controller is fully briefed on:
- the schedule for the assessment and examination and its constituent parts;
- the persons involved and their roles in the assessment and examination;
- the right to appeal under section 114 of Civil Aviation Act of Bhutan 2016 in respect of the conduct of the assessment and examination.
- the student air traffic controller or trainee air traffic controller has successfully completed a UEC which includes abnormal and emergency situations and human factors;
- the student air traffic controller or trainee air traffic controller has been recommended by the OJTI as being at an appropriate level of competence to be successful at the assessment and examination;
- the student air traffic controller or trainee air traffic controller and those involved in the assessment and examination are appropriately licensed;
- the assessor meets all the licensing requirements to act as an assessor;
- a controller who is appropriately licensed acts as safety controller of the candidate during the assessment. This may be one of the assessors provided they are an OJTI and holds a valid UE appropriate to the air traffic service to be provided.
- the student air traffic controller or trainee air traffic controller is fully debriefed following the completion of the assessment and examination with, if appropriate, the reasons for failure;
- the necessary licensing documentation is completed.

5.5.12 An assessor who has a vested interest in the candidate, must not conduct the assessment and/or examination. They shall declare the vested interest to the unit management so that a different assessor can be appointed.

5.5.13 ANSPs must have processes, procedures and competent personnel to ensure that:

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Requirements for Instructors and Assessors	Chapter: 5	Page: 5-5

- the unit has an appropriate number of suitably qualified assessors;
- assessors hold the relevant rating appropriate to the assessments and/or examinations they are conducting;
- assessors are competent to conduct the assessment and/or examination;
- assessors are required to successfully complete refresher training at least every three years for their competence to exercise the privileges of their assessor endorsement.

5.5.14 ANSPs that are authorised to conduct UEs, must have processes, procedures and competent personnel to ensure that:

- they are authorised by the BCAA;
- assessors involved in the UE assessment and examination hold the appropriate air traffic controller licence, ratings and relevant endorsements;
- PEL section, BCAA is advised of the result of the assessment and examination.

5.5.15 An assessor who is assessed as no longer competent to conduct assessments and/or examinations shall not undertake duties as an assessor until they have been assessed as competent to do so. Should a controller be unable to demonstrate competence as an assessor, the ANSP must inform the BCAA.

## **5.6 Assessments and examinations**

5.6.1 BCAR ATCO-PEL identifies a minimum pass mark of 75% for all examinations.

5.6.2 All records of assessments and examinations shall be retained for future use.

## **5.7 Temporary assessors**

5.7.1 Requirements for the authorisation of temporary assessor are laid down in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.C.065. It is considered that temporary assessors will only be appointed in exceptional circumstances, GM1 ATCO.C.065(b) Temporary assessor authorisation, lists the type of exceptional circumstances that can be considered.

5.7.2 ATCO.C.065 Temporary assessor authorisation paragraph (d), requires that the ANSP provides a safety analysis on how the equivalent level of safety will be ensured if a temporary assessor is issued.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Training of Air Traffic Controllers	Chapter: 6	Page: 6-1

## Chapter. 6 Training of Air Traffic Controllers

### 6.1 General

- 6.1.1 The requirements for the training of air traffic controllers are listed in BCAR ATCO-PEL, Chapter 4.
- 6.1.2 Air traffic controller training includes theoretical courses, practical exercises, including simulation, and on-the-job training required in order to acquire and maintain the skills to deliver safe, orderly and expeditious air traffic control services.
- 6.1.3 The initial training for the issue of a licence and/or additional rating in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL, is delivered by an ICAO recognized ITOs that is acceptable to BCAA.
- 6.1.4 The ITOs also deliver approved training courses leading to the issue of an OJTI and/or assessor endorsement(s).
- 6.1.5 Unit training will consist of UECs in the UTP.
- 6.1.6 Continuation training which is refresher training and conversion training, shall be detailed in the UCS. Refresher training required for the revalidation of an OJTI and assessor endorsement shall also be captured in the UCS document.
- 6.1.7 The renewal of an OJTI and/or assessor endorsement(s) requires that refresher training and an assessment is undertaken. This process is to be detailed in the UCS document.
- 6.1.8 Unit training requirements are detailed in BCAR-ATCO-PEL, Chapter 4, Section 3, and includes the composition of unit training together with performance objectives, the ANSP shall ensure that they comply with these requirements.
- 6.1.9 BCAR-ATCO-PEL, Chapter 4 also details requirements for assessments and examinations including the 75% pass mark required for the demonstration of theoretical knowledge and understanding.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAA Procedures and Processes	Chapter: 7	Page: 7-1

## Chapter. 7 BCAA Procedures and Processes

### 7.1 Maintaining an air traffic controller licence

- 7.1.1 An air traffic controller licence is issued without any expiry date. A licence holder may not exercise its privileges unless it contains: a rating, relevant UEs, a current language endorsement for the English language and a current medical certificate.
- 7.1.2 An air traffic controller licence must **not** be cut up into sections, it must be retained whole and folded accordingly to an eighth of an A4 page. An air traffic controller licence which has been cut up is void and the individual shall not exercise the privileges of that licence.
- 7.1.3 An ATCO is responsible for ensuring that they hold a current licence, which contains current residential home address. There will be a charge for any replacement licence in the event of loss or damage.
- 7.1.4 Following the initial issue of a UE, a controller will be required to demonstrate continued competence to exercise the privileges of that rating by revalidation of the UE(s).
- 7.1.5 The revalidation of a UE may be carried out within a three month period preceding the date of expiry of the current UE. Provided the air traffic controller is assessed as competent, the UE will be renewed for the validity period as stated in the UCS from the date of expiry of the current endorsement. Where the unit wishes to align the expiry dates of all UEs held by a controller, a UE may be revalidated for a shorter period.
- 7.1.6 If necessary, the revalidation of a UE may be carried out more than three months before the date of the expiry of the current UE. In such cases, provided the air traffic controller is assessed as competent, the UE will be revalidated for the validity period as stated in the UCS from the date on which the assessment process was completed. There is no provision for the revalidation of a UE that has expired. Under these circumstances a UE must be renewed in accordance with the provisions of the UTP and for which a charge is payable to the BCAA.
- 7.1.7 Air traffic controllers must maintain their competence in accordance with the requirements contained in BCAR ATCO-PEL.
- 7.1.8 An air traffic controller must ensure they comply with the requirements of their licence and rating and must not exercise the privileges of their licence and ratings without a current UE for the unit they are operating as endorsed on their licence.
- 7.1.9 An air traffic controller who fails a competence assessment, or fails to renew their UE, must not provide the air traffic service(s) associated with the UE.
- 7.1.10 ANSPs shall advise the BCAA when a controller is no longer considered competent to provide the air traffic service associated with a valid rating.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAA Procedures and Processes	Chapter: 7	Page: 7-2

7.1.11 ANSPs must have procedures to ensure that air traffic controllers returning from extended periods of planned or unexpected absence are competent to provide the air traffic service(s) for which they hold valid ratings.

7.1.12 ANSPs shall ensure that a controller who is assessed as medically unfit to hold an air traffic controller licence is withdrawn from operational duty.

7.1.13 ATCUs must have procedures to ensure that controllers satisfy the unit requirements relating to the maintenance of operational competence. These procedures shall include requirements for controllers to at least:

- complete a minimum specified number of controlling hours within a specified period on the sectors or operational positions for which they hold valid ratings; and
- be subject to an assessment of their continuing competence by continuous assessment, by a dedicated competence check, or by a combination of both.

7.1.14 Subject to approval by the BCAA, part of the requirements detailed above for the maintenance or renewal of competence may be satisfied by the use of a simulator.

7.1.15 ANSPs shall ensure that the BCAA is informed in the event that a UE is not renewed or is withdrawn.

## **7.2 Requirement for assessments of previous competence (APC)**

7.2.1 A student air traffic controller and an air traffic controller shall undertake an APC in accordance with the requirements in BCAR ATCO-PEL, ATCO.B.005 paragraph (e) and when specifically required by the BCAA.

7.2.2 An Air traffic controller shall undertake an APC in accordance with the requirements in ATCO.B.010 paragraph (b).

7.2.3 An air traffic controller is responsible for ensuring their licence and ratings are current in accordance with BCAR ATCO-PEL prior to exercising the privileges of that licence.

7.2.4 ANSPs must have processes, procedures and competent personnel to ensure that controllers comply with the requirements of BCAR ATCO-PEL for APCs and if an APC is required by the BCAA.

7.2.5 The BCAA may require an air traffic controller to undertake an APC when their ability to provide a safe air traffic service is in doubt. The level of competence, against which the controller is assessed, shall be identified in the UTP and UCS.

7.2.6 Where on-the-job training has commenced within the required twelve months of a successful initial rating course or completion of an APC, but is then subsequently interrupted or stopped, an ANSP shall:

- advise the relevant ATS Inspector of the interruption or cancellation of the training and,

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAA Procedures and Processes	Chapter: 7	Page: 7-3

- assess whether any additional training is needed by the air traffic controller prior to recommencing a UEC or starting a UEC at a different unit. The assessment should include, but not be limited to, factors such as the length of time that training has been interrupted, whether the controller affected has remained within the ATM operations environment in some other capacity and, at what stage in the UEC the previous training ceased.

7.2.7 If the elapsed time exceeds twelve months a subsequent APC is required.

### **7.3 Arrangement for an APC**

7.3.1 Any weak areas in any relevant topics and sub topics shall be identified through APC and will make a recommendation, if any training is required to bring the individual up to the relevant standard prior to the commencement of the UEC.

7.3.2 ANSPs must inform the BCAA when an APC is due to be conducted giving 30 days notice unless otherwise authorised.

7.3.3 An ATS Inspector may attend any APC.

### **7.4 BCAA Licence administration**

7.4.1 The BCAA may issue or amend student and air traffic controller licences. Licence administration is undertaken by the BCAA's PEL section.

7.4.2 Licence administration is the process by which the BCAA ensures that student and air traffic controller licences are issued and maintained. To carry out this function the BCAA maintains the licensing records, including personal details, of all licence holders.

7.4.3 The BCAA maintains the following personal details of all licence holders:

- full name;
- date and place of birth;
- nationality;
- residential address; and
- the address of the unit(s) where the student or air traffic controller licence holder is providing an air traffic service.

7.4.4 In the case of the first application for a student and air traffic controller licence, a copy of a Citizenship identity card (CID) or passport is required as legal proof of the applicant's name, date of birth and nationality.

7.4.5 In the event of a change of name acceptable proof would be a certified copy of the relevant documentation (Marriage certificate or Citizenship identity card, etc.).

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAA Procedures and Processes	Chapter: 7	Page: 7-4

7.4.6 In the event of a change of permanent residential address, BCAA's PEL section must be informed to facilitate the issue of an updated licence.

7.4.7 Each student and air traffic controller licence issued is uniquely numbered. Licence holders should quote this number, in all communications with the PEL section.

7.4.8 The BCAA maintains the following licence records on student air traffic controller licence holders:

- details of the successful completion of initial training, including the date of completion and the results of any associated assessments and/or examinations;
- the rating discipline, in which the licence holder may provide an air traffic service under supervision;
- the unit where the licence holder is providing a service under supervision and the expiry date of the licence.

7.4.9 The BCAA maintains the following licence records on air traffic controller licence holders:

- details of the successful completion of any initial training and the results of any associated assessment(s) and/or examination(s);
- current valid rating(s) and UE(s);
- licence endorsements;
- the unit(s) at which the controller is providing an air traffic service;
- previously held rating(s), and UE(s) including the units where the controller previously provided an air traffic service;
- details of any action taken by the licensing authority to suspend or revoke an air traffic controller licence or its associated rating(s), or UE(s);
- the date when any current medical certificate expires.

7.4.10 ANSPs are to inform the PEL section of the renewal of all UEs and also in the event that a UE is not renewed or is withdrawn.

## **7.5 Application forms and fees**

7.5.1 Applications for issue, renewal or revalidation of air traffic controller licences, rating(s), and UE(s) must be made using BCAA form **BCAA/ATC/F001**.

7.5.2 The same form must be used for the application for student air traffic controller licences and application for issue, renewal and revalidation of assessor and OJTI endorsements.

7.5.3 The form is available on the BCAA website (<https://www.bcaa.gov.bt/>)

7.5.4 The correct fee must be included with all applications for the licences, ratings and associated endorsements referred to above. Including the fee for loss/damage.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	BCAA Procedures and Processes	Chapter: 7	Page: 7-5

7.5.5 Details of the BCAA's Scheme of Charges for the issue, renewal and amendment of licences and endorsements are published in BANRs 2021, Section 12.

7.5.6 All applications must be sent to:

Personnel licensing (PEL) Section  
 Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA)  
 Paro International Airport  
 Telephone Enquiries: **(975) (08) 271347**  
 e-mail: [bcaa@bcaa.gov.bt](mailto:bcaa@bcaa.gov.bt) or [bcaa-techdiv@bcaa.gov.bt](mailto:bcaa-techdiv@bcaa.gov.bt)

## **7.6 Arranging an initial UE assessment and examination**

7.6.1 The ANSP should notify the BCAA when student or trainee air traffic controllers commence unit training. This is to enable the BCAA to appropriately allocate the necessary resources for assessments and examinations.

7.6.2 Application for an initial UE assessment and examination must be made to the BCAA at least 30 days prior to the requested date.

## **7.7 Disclosure of information**

7.7.1 Upon request from a licence holder, the BCAA will make available records of previously held ratings and UEs.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Medical Requirements	Chapter: 8	Page: 8-1

## Chapter. 8 Medical Requirements

### 8.1 Medical fitness

8.1.1 The holders of student ATCO and ATCO licences are required to have a minimum standard of medical fitness to ensure they are fit to provide an air traffic service and to minimise, as far as possible, the risk that they will become suddenly incapacitated to an extent that the safety of aircraft could be compromised.

### 8.2 Medical certification

8.2.1 In order to provide an air traffic service, ATCOs and student ATCOs are required to hold a valid Class 3 medical certificate in accordance with BCAR-PEL. An ATCO or student ATCO licence is not valid when the holder is assessed as being unfit. In such circumstances the holder of an ATCO or student ATCO licence is not to provide air traffic services even though the medical certificate held may not have expired or been returned to BCAA.

8.2.2 Holders of a medical certificate should:

- ensure that their medical certificate is revalidated by the due date (to avoid controlling without a valid certificate/licence);
- ensure that investigations and special tests are completed when required as failure to meet the requirements can mean that the medical certificate is rendered invalid.

8.2.3 The holder of a student or ATCO licence is to notify their unit management when:

- there is either a decrease in their medical fitness that might render them unable to safely and properly exercise the privileges granted by their licence, or is assessed as unfit at a medical examination; or
- any operational medical limitations or conditions are placed on the medical certificate.

8.2.4 Air traffic service providers are advised to have procedures and competent personnel to check that student and ATCO licence holders hold valid medical certificates and are compliant with any operational limitations.

8.2.5 A list of medical examiners authorized to assess the medical fitness of ATC licence holders and issue renewal certificates is available from the BCAA PEL Section.

8.2.6 A medical certificate issued in association with a student air traffic controller licence remains in force following the grant of an air traffic controller licence.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
----------------	-------------	---------------------------------	------

	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Medical Requirements	Chapter: 8	Page: 8-2

### 8.3 Decrease in medical fitness

8.3.1 Licence holders shall not exercise the privileges of their licence at any time when they:

- are aware of any decrease in their medical fitness which might render them unable to safely exercise those privileges;
- take or use any prescribed or non-prescribed medication which is likely to interfere with the safe exercise of the privileges of the licence;
- receive any medical, surgical or other treatment that is likely to interfere with the safe exercise of the privileges of the licence.

8.3.2 Holders of Class 3 medical certificates shall, without undue delay and before exercising the privileges of their licence, seek medical advice from designated medical examiners (DME) when they:

- have undergone a surgical operation or invasive procedure;
- have commenced the regular use of any prescribed medication;
- have suffered any significant personal injury involving any incapacity to exercise the privileges of the licence;
- have been suffering from any significant illness involving any incapacity to exercise the privileges of the licence;
- are pregnant;
- have been admitted to hospital or a medical clinic;
- first require correcting lenses.

In these cases, the DME shall assess the medical fitness of the licence holder or student air traffic controller and decide whether they are fit to resume to exercise their privileges.

8.3.3 When a licence holder whose medical certificate has been suspended believes that they are fit to resume their functions, they should seek advice from their DME.

8.3.4 The holder of the medical certificate shall comply with any limitations or conditions on their medical certificate.

8.3.5 If an applicant for a medical certificate has been assessed as unfit or a limitation has been placed on their medical certificate, they may request a secondary review or appeal of the medical decision.

8.3.6 Any limitations or conditions imposed will be clearly indicated on the medical certificate to the extent that unit management can tell from the medical certificate if the controller concerned is complying with those limitations or conditions. An example of a condition notified on a medical certificate would be to require a controller to wear correcting eyeglasses.

Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
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	<b>ATCO Licensing Manual</b>		
	Medical Requirements	Chapter: 8	Page: 8-3

#### **8.4 Use of psychoactive substances**

- 8.4.1 The holder of a student or ATCO licence shall not exercise any of the privileges of their licence while under the influence of psychoactive substances, including any medicine that renders them unable to exercise the privileges of their licence safely and properly.
- 8.4.2 An ATCO or student ATCO who is exercising any of the privileges of their licence while under the influence of psychoactive substances may not be aware that their judgement and skill have been degraded to the extent that the service being provided is unsafe or their actions inappropriate. This may be the case where psychoactive substances are being abused, or where medicines have been prescribed by a doctor, or non-prescription medicines obtained for a minor illness.
- 8.4.3 In such circumstances, licence holders must obtain advice from their DME and/or information to enable them to decide if they should, or should not, exercise the privileges of their licence while taking specific medication.
- 8.4.4 A controller who is suspected of being under the influence of psychoactive substances shall be immediately withdrawn from operational duty by the unit.

#### **8.5 Medical examinations**

- 8.5.1 Unit Medical Examinations are conducted by DME in accordance with BCAR-PEL.
- 8.5.2 ATCOs must take their most recent medical certificate with them when attending medical examinations or assessments.
- 8.5.3 Applicants should ensure that:
- communication can be established with their DME without language barriers;
  - they are aware of the consequences (including suspension or revocation) of providing incomplete, inaccurate or false statements on their medical history;
  - they provide the DME with a complete medical history and the evidence necessary to make a full and proper assessment of their case. Additional tests or reports may be required;
  - they comply with the medical advice provided.
- 8.5.4 The Validity of medical certificates shall be in accordance with the provisions contained in BCAR-PEL.
- 8.5.5 ATCOs must return the medical certificate to the BCAA when it is revoked, or on request when temporarily or provisionally suspended.

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Second Edition	Revision 00	Bhutan Civil Aviation Authority	2021
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