This document is a short description of the glider private or commercial flight test for you and your instructor. My plan of action involves following the practical test standards. The test is not weighted toward one type of flying over another. The PTS is followed to the exclusion of adding or subtracting things since deviating from it would be against the conditions of my designation.

Before we start the oral questioning you will work on some flight preparation problems. Be prepared to show me the glider logbook entries that make it correct for us to fly. There will be a weight and balance problem to work, for a non-existent Schweizer 2-33. There will be across-country go-no-go decision point calculation. Instructions for it are included in the handout and solving it takes a piece of graph paper. Again, this calculation shows that you understand glider performance in headwind and tailwind situations and promotes good judgement even if the calculation is seldom or never performed on real cross-countries. There will be a thermal forecast for you to work. There are instructions for it too. You need the necessary data from FSS to complete this so you'll probably call them before you leave home the day of the test.

The most common reasons for disapproval relate to errors controlling the glider. There will be a low- altitude emergency simulation of one type or another. Applicants frequently display their biggest coordination and pitch control problems during this low-altitude emergency and in fact low-altitude errors account for many bad accidents in aircraft of all sorts. Failing to maintain adequate airspeed is the biggest mistake, followed by skidding the turn; I'll disapprove for either error. I firmly disagree with the idea of ‘using extra airspeed from the towplane to climb a little before turning back around' since climbing involves a near-stalling flight attitude and stalling close to the ground is a killer.

I prefer not to call out your maneuvers during the test, since I want to see how you exercise your PIC privilege during the test. Please have a sequence of maneuvers planned in advance and perform them without prompting for as long as you can, ending up with an accuracy landing. You don't have to remember every maneuver for the test but any that I call out may be a test of your judgement instead of skill, like knowing to say, ‘let's wait until we're high on the next flight' to show me your turning stall with divebrakes open instead of doing it on the entry leg of your pattern on the first flight.

I won't necessarily watch you as you do your pre-flight but there will be some discussion of the preflight and you must tell me or show me how to check for proper assembly of the structure and flight controls.

On tow there will be a slack-line recovery. I will induce the slack with you following me through and say, ‘all yours!' for you to take over and complete the recovery. You may use whatever method you have been taught to get the rope tight. Reasons for disapproval include getting lower than the towplane since only when you are lower does a loop of slack or a length of broken rope present a hazard. Breaking the line doesn't constitute a reason for failure by

itself, depending on how you have handled the controls. Getting into a worsening oscillation or taking away the control of the towplane do, of course. Boxing the wake is on the test too, just talk your way through it.

Slow flight and stalls (straight and turning, incipient and full-breaking, with and without spoilers) should be straightforward. Do show me vigilance for air traffic throughout the test. Pulling up into a stall without clearing first - both doing it and announcing it - are reasons for an automatic disapproval and I should see a clearing effort before you roll into every turn.

Steep turns are as advertised but please choose an exact bank angle from 45 to 60 degrees without getting outside those limits - people who choose 45 degrees are forever going out of their range on the shallow side (or on the high side if they choose 60) instead of choosing an angle in between the limits (50 or 55) giving themselves some leeway. Choose a comfortable airspeed and call it out in advance also.

For slow flight please avoid the stall buffet. My take on slow flight is that it is faster than stall and slower than minimum sink speed. If you want to get to the buffet before performing slow flight to find out where it occurs and choose your speed for the maneuver accordingly, make it clear that is what you are doing and do not get into the buffet at any time during your demonstration of straight or turning slow flight.

You have to load me in the cockpit and help me with the seatbelts and give me the basic info that you will share with your passengers as if I were not an experienced pilot. I know how much of a stretch that is but I want to hear the most basic precautions, not "I would tell them ..." but rather tell me the stuff directly, like, "if you pull back real hard on this big broom-handle-thingy in the middle the wings will fly off so don't touch it" etc. etc.

Are there launch assistants? If not, have your instructor check you out on launching unassisted or else be sure to have an experienced knowledgeable helper.

My flight test fee is $120 for private and $140 for commercial, for travel expenses let me ask for $50 in addition. If there was a disapproval I do not charge the flight test fee a second time. Instead you would pay $27/hr for whatever (short) time we spent together on the retest. If you got in trouble with some detail of the exam that doesn't require much additional training or experience it is possible to be re-recommended for the exam the same day. This would require an instructor present.

Feel free to call with any questions.

Sincerely,
Galen Fisher
P.O. Box 3001
Hemet, CA 92546

(909) 766 1393