



# VATSIM UK

Division Staff Group

Division Policy v7.0

30th September 2017

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## Scope

VATSIM United Kingdom (VATSIM UK) is a Division within the VATSIM Europe Region (VATEUR). In addition to this policy, global VATSIM policies AND VATEUR Region Policy are in effect within VATSIM UK.

This document shall govern the operations of VATSIM UK, including controlling any network position under the jurisdiction of the Division.

### Acronyms used in this Document

VATSIM UK: VATSIM United Kingdom (Division)

VATEUR: VATSIM Europe Region

ATC: Air Traffic Control

### Rating Abbreviations

Inactive / INA

Suspended / SUS

Observer / OBS (also called 'Pilot/Observer')

Student / S1 / STU

Student 2 / S2 / STU2

Senior Student / S3 / STU+

Controller / C1 / CTR

Senior Controller / C3 / CTR+

Instructor / I1 / INS

Senior Instructor / I3 / INS+

Supervisor / SUP

Administrator / ADM

### Terms

#### *'Full division member'*

A member assigned to the UK Division that is not in the process of transferring and is therefore valid up to their present permanent controller rating.

#### *'Transferring controller'*

A member assigned to the UK Division that is in the process of transferring and therefore not valid up to their permanent controller rating.

#### *'Visiting controller'*

A status granted to a controller of another Division to allow them to control certain positions within VATSIM UK. The ability to control a VATSIM UK position does not necessarily require nor result in visiting controller status.

#### *'Position Level'*

A category indicating the services provided by a specific controller position and therefore what rating is required to control that position; limited to: DEL, GND, TWR, APP and CTR/FSS.

#### *'International member'*

Any member of VATSIM that is not a home member of VATSIM UK.

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### Section 1. Ratings

#### 1.1 Global Ratings

- 1.1 a A *rating* is defined for each user on the VATSIM network. This is sub-divided within this document.
- 1.1 b A '*permanent controller rating*' is a non-administrative rating defined by the Global Ratings Policy. A user not holding one of these ratings (S1, S2, S3, C1 or C3) is considered an OBS (Pilot/Observer).
- 1.1 c A *permanent controller rating* does not provide a user automatic permission to log onto corresponding controller positions within the UK. Such permission is specified within this document.
- 1.1 d I1, I3, SUP and ADM are non-permanent ratings held in addition to and independent of a *permanent controller rating*. I1 and I3 are both termed an '*Instructor Rating*'.
- 1.1 e Where a *permanent controller rating* requirement is published in VATSIM UK, a user must hold that *permanent controller rating* (or higher).

#### 1.2 Instructor Ratings

- 1.2 a ATC Instructors are appointed as members of the ATC Training Department staff. These members shall be granted the rating of I1 or I3 as defined by the VATSIM UK ATC Instructor policy for the duration of their staff position. This staff position is the only significance of such a rating.
- 1.2 b The VATSIM UK ATC Instructor Policy outlines the appointment, requirements and duties of an Instructor position.

### Section 2. Staff

#### 2.1 General

- 2.1 a Only *full division members* may be appointed as VATSIM UK staff. A member of staff that leaves the division is automatically removed from their staff role(s).
- 2.1 b A '*Division Director*' shall be appointed by the *Region Director of VATEUR* to run the division and appoint staff.
- 2.1 c The *Division Director* may only be removed by the *Region Director of VATEUR*.
- 2.1 d The *Division Director* may appoint a '*Deputy Division Director*' with the approval of the *Region Director of VATEUR*. The *Deputy Division Director* shall assume the responsibilities of the *Division Director* if the *Division Director* declares him/herself to be absent or is declared absent by the *Region Director of VATEUR*.
- 2.1 e The *Deputy Division Director* may be removed by the *Division Director*, with the approval of the *Region Director of VATEUR*.
- 2.1 f Staff will be delegated responsibility as outlined within their job description or as defined by the *Division Director*.

- 2.1 g One member of staff shall be designated overall responsibility for events. This member of staff must approve all organised events utilising a position in VATSIM UK. An event is defined as any time when advertising is published on VATSIM systems to attract pilots to a VATSIM UK airport, with the exception of mentoring, practical exams and validations, or for members to attend a certain physical location and utilising the VATSIM network.
- 2.1 h Members designated '*Division Staff*' are allowed to utilise a network callsign of the format VATUKn where n is a positive integer published for each individual on the VATSIM UK website. The callsign VATUK1 shall only be used by the *Division Director*. The callsign VATUK2 shall only be used by the *Deputy Division Director*.
- 2.1 i *Division Staff* shall participate in the decision-making process and development of VATSIM UK.

### 2.2 Rating Requirements

- 2.2 a The head of the ATC Training Department shall hold a minimum rating of Controller (C1).
- 2.2 b Other staff positions may be required to hold a specific or minimum rating if considered appropriate by the *Division Director*. Such a requirement will be published during any application process.

## Section 3. Network usage

### 3.1 Controller/Observer Callsigns

- 3.1 a When providing ATC services, members may only log on to positions approved for use and either displayed on the VATSIM UK website or in documentation published on the website.
- 3.1 b When not providing ATC services and not connected as a pilot, a member shall use one of the below callsign formats:
  - (i) XX\_OBS / XXX\_OBS - approved for use by all members. Members shall preferably log in displaying initials (e.g. XX\_OBS), though may use the controller prefix that they are observing (i.e. EGZZ\_OBS);
  - (ii) XX\_INS / XXX\_INS - shall only be used by members of the UK Division that hold an *Instructor Rating* under the VATSIM UK ATC Instructor Policy. When using such a callsign format, Instructors shall log in with their initials and this suffix (e.g. XX\_INS or XXX\_INS), and;
  - (iii) Callsigns containing 'VATUK' shall only be used by the *Division Staff*.
- 3.1 c When receiving an ATC mentoring session, students shall log in with a callsign containing an insert of 'T' except as outlined in 3.1 e. For example: EGZZ\_T\_APP.
- 3.1 d When mentoring a controller, the mentor must use a callsign with an insert of 'M' except as outlined in 3.1 e. For example: EGZZ\_M\_APP.
- 3.1 e During mentoring on positions whereby the callsign is key to sector/station identification, the student may use the published callsign without the addition of a 'T'. The mentor shall use a callsign that identifies their student and includes the letter 'M'.

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- 3.1 f Where the above is not possible due to callsigns already in use, the mentor/student is permitted to log on with another appropriate callsign. If possible and workload permits, the mentor/student should revert to the preferred layout if the correct callsign becomes available.
- 3.1 g Only ATC examiners may use the callsign layouts: xxxx\_X\_xxx, xxxx\_Z\_xxx or xxxx\_Y\_xxx.

### 3.2 Area Control Callsigns

- 3.2 a The following prefixes are reserved for UK area control: EGGX, EGPX, LON, LTC, MAN, SCO and STC.
- 3.2 b For the purpose of this and other documents, the VATSIM UK website shall define '*primary sectors*' for the EGTT and EGPX FIR.
- 3.2 c Correct callsigns for all approved area positions shall be published on the VATSIM UK website or in documentation published on the website.
- 3.2 d Temporary sectors that are not published on the VATSIM UK website may be used by controllers during events or during other special circumstances. In such a situation, an announcement shall be made by an approved member of staff detailing the temporary sectors that may be used.

### 3.3 Controller Positions

- 3.3 a In all cases, a controller shall familiarise themselves with the local procedures before logging on.
- 3.3 b Members holding an S1 rating are permitted to control DEL/GND positions subject to restrictions as defined by ATC Training Department policy.
- 3.3 c *Full division members* with a rating of S2 or higher are allowed to control any UK position corresponding to their *permanent controller rating* with the exception of:
  - London Heathrow (EGLL)
  - London 'Bandbox' (LON\_CTR)
  - Shanwick Oceanic (EGGX)
  - Military Airfields
- 3.3 d A *full division member* may not log on to a VATSIM UK position above that certified by their *permanent controller rating* unless specified within this document or accompanied by an approved (and current) mentor or examiner during an official ATC Training session.
- 3.3 e Members other than *full division members* may control only those positions for which they have received an appropriate endorsement.
- 3.3 f London Heathrow (EGLL) is designated a "Major Airport" and as such requires an endorsement in order to provide ATC services. Members shall undertake a validation to obtain each endorsement as defined within ATC Training Department policy.
- 3.3 g A Heathrow endorsement (at all levels) shall be required to control the *primary sector* that covers Heathrow top-down. Likewise, this endorsement shall be required to open a split or bandbox of this sector.
- 3.3 h 'London Bandbox' (LON\_CTR) and Shanwick Oceanic (EGGX) are both designated a "Special Centre" and each require an endorsement for a member to control.

- 3.3 i Members with a Shanwick endorsement may also control Gander Oceanic only when a Shanwick position is already open. Equally a member holding a Gander Oceanic endorsement (issued by VATSIM Canada and displayed on their official website) may control Shanwick only when a Gander Oceanic position is already open. When logging on as the only Shanwick or Gander Oceanic controller, a member may choose to cover both the Shanwick and Gander Oceanic FIRs.
- 3.3 j A user shall only control a *Major Airport* or *Special Centre* position if they have obtained the relevant endorsement and this endorsement is displayed in the relevant part of the VATSIM UK website.

### 3.4 ATC Training Sessions

- 3.4 a During an ATC mentoring session, validation or practical exam (hereafter referred to as a '*ATC Training Session*'), the express permission of the mentor/validator/examiner (hereafter referred to as '*ATC Session Mentor*') must be obtained before:
  - (i) A split or underlying Ground/Delivery (GND/DEL) position is opened during a GND session;
  - (ii) A split or underlying Tower (TWR)/GND/DEL position is opened during a TWR session;
  - (iii) A split Approach (APP) position is opened during an APP session, and;
  - (iv) A split Area (CTR) position is opened during a CTR session.
- 3.4 b ATC Training Department policy may grant exceptions to 3.4 a.

### 3.5 Solo Endorsements

- 3.5 a *Full division members* holding a *permanent controller rating* of S2 and undertaking training on an APP position may be granted an endorsement to control an APP position without a mentor present. Similarly, S1 rated members undertaking training on a TWR position may be granted an endorsement to control a TWR position without a mentor present. These endorsements shall be granted in accordance with ATC Training Department policy and are valid for a limited period of time.
- 3.5.b *Full division members* holding a *permanent controller rating* of S3 and undertaking training on a CTR position may be granted an endorsement to control an CTR position without a mentor present
- 3.5 c A solo endorsement may not be used to control adjacent to an exam unless the prior express permission of the examiner is obtained.
- 3.5 d A solo endorsement may not be used to control during an official event (controlling the event traffic) without the approval of the staff member designated overall responsibility for events.

### 3.6 Controller Requirements

- 3.6 a Members controlling VATSIM UK positions (*'controllers'*) shall do so in accordance with ATC procedures defined within ATC Training Department documentation.

- 3.6 b Controllers shall abide by the policy of the ATC Training Department, current at the time when they log on. Policy relevant to controllers will be displayed on the VATSIM UK website.

### 3.7 Controller Performance

- 3.7 a If a VATSIM UK ATC Instructor or member of *Division Staff* deems that a controller is not up to the required standard for a controller position, they may ask the controller to seek mentoring prior to logging on and/or vacate that position. Unless otherwise stated, the member shall not log onto a position of the same type (i.e. DEL/GND, TWR, APP, CTR) or higher within VATSIM UK until such mentoring has been obtained. Alternatively an Instructor may offer some time to mentor in an attempt to redress problem areas.
- 3.7 b The member in question shall be allowed to log on again when authorised by the ATC Training Department.
- 3.7 c In case of disagreement on the outcome of a performance check, the member concerned must comply with any instruction to vacate, but may appeal the decision to the ATC Training Department.

### 3.8 Controller Bookings

- 3.8 a A booking on the VATSIM UK website shall reserve a position on the VATSIM network during the time period specified. Bookings may synchronise to external sources, however must appear on the VATSIM UK website in order to be considered valid. Restrictions on controller bookings not specified herein shall be displayed on the VATSIM UK website.
- 3.8 b In addition to rules specified herein, the VATSIM UK website shall detail when certain types of booking can be overridden by others.
- 3.8 c A controller may only make a booking if they are currently allowed to control that position and will be allowed to do so at the time booked.
- 3.8 d A controller must vacate a position if a member with a valid booking arrives to take over.
- 3.8 e A booking ceases to be valid if the member is more than 15 minutes late logging onto the position or voluntarily vacates the position unless specified otherwise below.
- 3.8 f If a student does not arrive in adequate time for their mentoring session, the mentor may choose to assume the booked time for their own controlling, or nullify the booking. Mentoring session bookings ceases to be valid if the student or mentor has not logged in to control within 30 minutes of the session start time.
- 3.8 g Active exam or validation bookings remain valid until completed. Such bookings override other controller bookings, including when the session continues beyond the booked time.
- 3.8 h ATC Mentors shall endeavour to avoid scheduling mentoring sessions over existing controller bookings as much as possible. In the unavoidable event that this does occur, Mentors must inform the controller as soon as possible. ATC Mentors may not, under any circumstances, overbook a controller booking less than 24 hours in advance.
- 3.8 i When approved by the member of staff designated overall responsibility for events, controllers may be allocated positions to control. Allocated controlling shall take priority over controller bookings.

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- 3.8 j For controlling during a designated event, allocation of controlling or booking by controllers may be subject to a priority order which may be based on factors including, but not limited to: rating, experience, training status, mentoring permissions, RTS or Division status.
- 3.8 k When a position split<sup>1</sup> is opened, the first controller to book (or log on if neither have booked or bookings were made after their log in time) may choose the split position they will control, regardless of the positions booked on the RTS system, with the exception of:
- (i) Controllers wishing to bandbox two or more primary area sectors should book a single sector and then log on to the bandboxed position. Other members may then log on to or book the other primary sectors without the need for obtaining the first controller's preference, and;
  - (ii) If a controller does choose to book a position bandboxing the primary area sectors, other controllers may choose to log on to or book a contained primary sector without obtaining the first controller's preference. This action must leave the bandbox controller with a minimum of one primary sector to control.
- 3.8 l Members who violate VATSIM UK booking rules or fail to honour their bookings (including allocated controlling during events) may be subject to sanctions. This may include losing the ability to make bookings and/or losing the privilege of being allocated to control during events.

### 3.9 Military

- 3.9 a Military positions and operations within VATSIM UK shall be defined on the VATSIM UK website or within approved resources. The ATC Training Department is responsible for administration of military controlling within the UK.
- 3.9 b VATSIM UK is designated responsibility for the following airfields outside the mainland UK:
- Gibraltar
  - Akrotiri
  - Mount Pleasant
  - Ascension Islands.
- 3.9 c Any member wishing to control RAF/MOD airfields within or outside of mainland UK (hereafter termed '*Military airfields*') shall require an endorsement by the ATC Training Department:
- (i) A "Military Tower" endorsement allows a member that holds a *permanent controller rating* of S2\* or higher to control aerodrome positions at *Military airfields*;
  - (ii) A "Military Approach" endorsement allows a member that holds a *permanent controller rating* of S3\* or higher to control Zone/Approach/PAR positions at Military Airfields, and;
  - (iii) A "Military Area" endorsement allows a member that holds a *permanent controller rating* C1\* or higher to control Military Area positions.

\*A member must be allowed to control the corresponding civil positions to this rating within the UK (i.e. be valid up to their present *permanent controller rating* as a home member or have received an endorsement as a visiting controller) to receive a military endorsement. This may be waived at the discretion of the ATC Training Department who may allow training and/or a validation to be carried out upon a military position to obtain the relevant military endorsement.

### 3.10 ATC Channel

- 3.10 a The ATC channel shall only be used for operational messages to multiple controllers. Controllers should consider other users with large visibility ranges before choosing to use this method of communication.

### 3.11 Emergencies

- 3.11 a During a mentoring session, validation or practical exam, the mentor/validator/examiner may decide to refuse an emergency on behalf of their student under the same conditions set by the Code of Conduct.
- 3.11 b Pilots shall not initiate an emergency during ATC exams or validations without the prior approval of the examiner/validator.

## Section 4. Training

### 4.1 General

- 4.1 a VATSIM UK provides ATC training, managed by the ATC Training Department.
- 4.1 b VATSIM UK may provide pilot training, managed by the Pilot Training Department.

### 4.2 Theory Examination

- 4.2 a A theory exam shall be sat by the student via the VATSIM UK website without assistance from others.
- 4.2 b Upon failure of a theory exam, a student will have to wait a time period specified by the relevant training department policy before they are able to retake the exam. After this time period a retake may be automatic or may require approval as specified by relevant training department policy.
- 4.2 c The relevant training department shall define whether a theory exam pass is valid.
- 4.2 d A pass mark shall be set for each theory examination by the relevant training department policy.

### 4.3 Practical Examination

- 4.3 a Examiners shall be appointed to conduct practical exams by the relevant training department as specified in the department policy.

### 4.4 Controller Training

#### 4.4.1 Examinable Ratings

- 4.4.1 a Training for an S1 rating does not require a formal practical exam with a VATSIM UK examiner. Upon completion of the required training, a member may be recommended for the upgrade by an approved mentor.

4.4.1 b The S2, S3 and C1 ratings require a formal practical exam with a VATSIM UK examiner. A member may be recommended for practical exam by an ATC Instructor.

4.4.1 c C3 ratings may be awarded as defined by ATC Training Department policy.

### 4.4.2 Central Training Scheme

4.4.2 a The ATC Training Department divides responsibility for groups of facilities into a Central Training Scheme. The Central Training Scheme ('CTS') must be joined by members wishing to receive training in the UK Division. Joining may be either as a 'home member', 'visiting member' or 'area member'.

4.4.2 b Training towards a new controller rating may only be conducted within a member's *Training Group*.

4.4.2 c Training towards a new *permanent controller rating* shall only be allowed on training facilities defined by the ATC Training Department.

### 4.4.3 Mentoring Sessions, Validations and Practical Exams

4.4.3 a Mentoring sessions, validations and practical exams must be accepted via the relevant portion of the VATSIM UK website unless in accordance with a published agreement, approved by the Division Director and ATC Training Department.

4.4.3 b Mentoring may only be conducted by a mentor approved for the specific position. Approval to mentor is granted by the ATC Training Department as specified by the department policy.

4.4.3 c A member cannot be approved by the ATC Training Department to provide an ATC Training Session for a student unless they hold at least the corresponding *permanent controller rating* to the *position level* and are allowed to control the position without supervision.

4.4.3 d ATC Training Sessions are only available on positions defined by the ATC Training Department. Positions available may differ depending upon the type of ATC Training session, rating or endorsement status of the student.

4.4.3 e A member cannot be endorsed as a transferring controller on Shanwick (Oceanic) or military positions. A member must also hold the corresponding *permanent controller rating* to receive training or an endorsement on these positions.

4.4.3 f Mentoring may not take place adjacent to exams unless the prior express permission of the examiner is obtained.

4.4.3 g ATC Training Sessions may not take place during official events (controlling the event traffic) without the approval of the staff member designated overall responsibility for events.

4.4.3 h During an *ATC training session*, a *session mentor* must log into the same position as their student and supervise their frequency. A *session mentor* may not simultaneously supervise or control on another frequency.

### 4.5 Pilot Training

- 4.5 a VATSIM UK may provide pilot training for the ratings specified in its ATO licence.
- 4.5 b Pilot training may also be provided for purposes other than achieving pilot ratings.
- 4.5 c Official mentoring sessions or practical exams must be accepted via the relevant portion of the VATSIM UK website.
- 4.5 d Official mentoring sessions may only be conducted by a mentor approved on a specific position. Approval to mentor shall be granted by the Pilot Training Department as specified by the department policy.
- 4.5 e A member cannot be approved to provide mentoring or perform examinations for a student unless they themselves hold the corresponding pilot rating for which they are mentoring/examining. The only exceptions to this rule are published in global ATO policy.

## Section 5. Visiting & Transferring

### 5.1 General

- 5.1 a Information about the application and training process for visiting/transferring controllers shall be made available on the VATSIM UK website.
- 5.1 b VATSIM UK may consult with an applicant's home division as part of the visiting/transferring process.
- 5.1 c Visiting/transferring controllers may control only those positions for which they have received an appropriate endorsement. A list of visiting/transferring controllers and the positions/*position levels* they are currently endorsed for shall be displayed on the relevant area of the VATSIM UK website.
- 5.1 d VATSIM UK may limit the capacity for visiting/transferring controllers in order to safeguard the training of its home members.

### 5.2 Non-Controlling Members

- 5.2 a Members transferring with no *permanent controller rating* (i.e. OBS) are not subject to assessment by VATSIM UK. Such a member is considered a *full division member* upon assignment to VATSIM UK.
- 5.2 b *International members* may receive pilot training from VATSIM UK at the discretion of the Pilot Training Department. Such members do not require *visiting controller* status for this purpose.

### 5.3 Visiting Controllers

- 5.3 a Members holding a *permanent controller rating* of S1 shall not be granted *visiting controller* status within VATSIM UK.
- 5.3 b Members of other divisions currently holding a *permanent controller rating* of S2 or higher may apply for *visiting controller* status.

- 5.3 c When controlling within the UK, *international members* shall not log in with an Instructor (I1/I3) rating as such a rating denotes a VATSIM UK ATC staff position.

### 5.4 Transferring Controllers

- 5.4 a A training plan for a *transferring controller* shall include training required to obtain an endorsement up to and including the member's *permanent controller rating*.
- 5.4 b During the transfer process, a *transferring controller* may be granted a temporary endorsement to control some ATC positions, in accordance with the training plan and ATC Training Department policy.
- 5.4 c When a *transferring controller* has completed all requirements of the training plan, they are thereafter considered a *full division member*.

### 5.5 Shanwick (Oceanic)

- 5.5 a International members may train for and hold a Shanwick endorsement without holding a *visiting controller* status.
- 5.5 b To obtain a Shanwick endorsement with VATSIM UK, members are subject to the application process and conditions outlined in Section 5.1 .
- 5.5 c A *transferring controller* may be allowed to obtain a Shanwick endorsement prior to becoming a *full division member*, subject to the permission of the ATC Training Department.

## Section 6. VATSIM UK Services

### 6.1 General

- 6.1a VATSIM UK provides various services that may be accessed throughout the use of a member's VATSIM credentials (network CID and password). These services include, but are not necessarily limited to, the VATSIM UK website systems, TeamSpeak and Slack. All such services are governed in their use by global VATSIM policies and by Terms and Conditions published by VATSIM UK.
- 6.1b The *Division Director*, or a nominated representative, shall appoint a Moderation Team for VATSIM UK services.
- 6.1c Access to any of the VATSIM UK systems may be temporarily removed or restricted by a member of the Moderation Team. Permanent removal of access must be approved by the *Division Director*, *Deputy Division Director* or a nominated representative.
- 6.1d No political material may be displayed on any of the VATSIM UK services.