

1. PURPOSE

This summary outlines the ZLA Training Staff Policy in addition to the basic requirements to become a mentor. The policies described represent a basic framework of the training program, and are built upon through mentor and instructor training conducted by senior training staff.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office of Primary Responsibility for this Summary is the ZLA Training Department Staff. This Policy was originally drafted by Marc Sykes, ZLA Facility Chief, on December 12, 2003, and approved by Ian Elchitz, VATUSA Western Regional Director, and amended August 1st, 2022 by Matthew Kramer, Nick Christopher, Joshua Borges, Andrew Kim, Judson Clark, and the contemporary training staff. This Summary shall be maintained, revised, updated or canceled by the ZLA Training Staff or any organization that supersedes, replaces or assumes the Training Administrator's responsibilities. Any suggestions for modification/amendment to this Summary should be sent to the ZLA Senior Staff for review.

3. DISTRIBUTION

Individuals within, and seeking entry into the ZLA Mentor Program and current ZLA Instructors and Mentors

4. BACKGROUND.

This policy establishes clear guidelines for controllers wishing to become mentors in the Los Angeles ARTCC in addition to guidance for training staff on student priority.

5. VERSION

List of Changes

Version	Date	Explanation of Changes
6.00	1AUG22	New Formatting. Adjustment made to align with the new training paradigm. Section 5 changed to changelist. Sections 6, 7, 8 added.
6.10	1MAR23	Mentor eligibility adjusted to start with GC2
6.20	18JUL23	Added mentor probation period, changed minimum required sessions.
6.40	18APR24	Fixed typos, clarified OTS Requirements. OTS Definitions.

6. REQUIREMENTS

1. The Training Administrator is responsible for administration of the Mentor Program
2. The Assistant Training Administrator (ATA) administers the mentors and the mentor training program at the direction of the Training Administrator (TA)
3. These requirements may be waived as necessary by the ATM, DATM, TA, or ATA
4. There is no limit to the number of active or inactive mentors
5. The Mentor rating can be suspended or revoked at any time by the ATM, DATM, or TA
6. Individuals wishing to apply to the mentor program who meet the following requirements must email the ATA and TA, and request a mentor application. They must meet the following criteria.
 - a. No disciplinary record with ZLA, VATUSA, or VATSIM
 - b. Minimum rating of S3
 - c. Must have passed the GC2 (S3 & SAN_APP) certification
 - d. Be willing to instruct others in the implementation of SOPs
 - e. Be willing to be available for at least one mentor session every two months
 - f. Be a home controller of the ZLA ARTCC
7. New mentors must complete the following mentor probation requirements
 - a. Probation period
 - i. The probation period will last for a minimum of three (3) sessions conducted by the probationary mentor or Instructor, and can not be completed until the additional milestones listed in 6(7)(b) are also met.
 - ii. During the probation period mentors will have limited powers and must meet specific milestones to progress towards full mentor certification
 - iii. New mentors will be assigned a senior mentor or Instructor to guide them through the probation period and serve as a point of contact for any questions or issues that arise during the probation period
 - b. Milestones
 - i. Observe at minimum three (3) training sessions conducted by experienced mentors or instructors.
 1. This requirement may be increased or decreased at the discretion of the ATA or TA
 - ii. Conduct at minimum three (3) training sessions under the supervision of the new mentor's assigned senior mentor or Instructor. These sessions will be reviewed by the assigned senior mentor or Instructor for feedback and improvement purposes.
 1. It is the responsibility of the new mentor to coordinate these training sessions with the student and senior mentor or instructor
 2. This requirement may be increased at the discretion of the ATA or TA
 - iii. Feedback
 1. The TA and/or the ATA may solicit feedback from the new mentor's students based on the new mentor's ability to ensure satisfactory quality of instruction
 - c. Limitations on Certification Powers
 - i. During the probationary period, new mentors will not have the authority to certify students. They must consult with the assigned senior mentor or Instructor and the ATA or TA for final certification decisions
 - d. Evaluation and Full Certification

- i. Once the probationary period is complete and all milestones have been met, the new mentor's performance will be evaluated by the TA and/or ATA. If the evaluation is positive, the mentor will be granted full certification and be allowed to train students independently and have the authority to certify them, including recommending rating promotions.
 - 8. The following will apply to all ZLA mentors and Instructors
 - a. Mentors and Instructors who are removed from the ZLA roster shall lose their mentor or Instructor status
 - b. Must conduct at least one training session every two (2) months to be considered active. If this requirement is not met, mentors and Instructors may be placed on inactive status or removed from the training program at the TA's discretion
 - c. Each Mentor and Instructor shall log their sessions by submitting Session Evaluations using the website's training portal.
 - d. Mentors may conduct training sessions for any position that the mentor is fully certified to work, except that mentors may not conduct any approach training sessions until the SoCal Approach Combined certification is earned
 - e. Mentors are authorized to conduct recertification tests only for students whose certifications were removed due to inactivity
 - f. Mentors cannot control another position while monitoring the performance of a student. Instructors are exempt from this subparagraph, though this practice is discouraged.
 - 9. The following shall apply to all ZLA Training Staff
 - a. Training staff shall offer sessions to students in the order prescribed by the training calendar as described in section 7, *Training Calendar Workflow*
 - b. Training staff understand that, upon submitting a session offer, they are responsible for working directly with the student through certification of whichever position is being trained for
 - c. Unless waived by the ATM/DATM/TA/ATA, training staff may not train a student on consecutive certifications (e.g. a mentor conducting SAN_TWR training may not train the same student for LAX_TWR)
 - i. Instructors may conduct multiple OTS examinations with the same student on separate positions (e.x. LAX_CTR and SCT_APP), provided that they themselves have not recommended the student for the OTS in question.
 - d. Session Evaluations
 - i. Session evaluations must be submitted upon the session's completion in a timely manner
 - ii. If certification on position is not achieved, the training staff member shall schedule an additional training session with the student immediately
 - 1. If the staff member or student are unable to commit to a time, they may—in good faith—delay rescheduling
 - 2. No later than 48 hours from the completion of a session, the training staff member must have scheduled the next session
 - a. If they or the student are unable to schedule, the training staff member will notify the rest of the training team through the use of a profile note and either apply a “check file” flag to the student's profile or, through the admin note, request that one be added by a member of the ZLA Staff
- 3. The training staff member shall select “Do Not Bump” in the session evaluation form**

- iii. If certification is achieved, the training staff member has completed their obligation to the student, and may select a new student to begin the process anew.
 - 1. The student is now considered the lowest priority, having been the most recently certified
 - 2. **“Do Not Bump” shall be left unchecked in the evaluation form**
- e. In rare circumstances, training staff who know they are unable to work with a student to certification completion may instead conduct visiting controller checkouts outside of calendar priority
- f. Solos may be issued on the following positions:
 - i. LAX Tower
 - ii. SCT Area 5
 - iii. SOCAL Combined
 - iv. LA Center
- g. Solo waivers may only be granted by the ATM, DATM, TA, ATA, and Staff Instructors
 - i. Solo waivers are not solo certifications, but waivers that allow a student to bypass a mandatory solo position for certification, e.g. SCT_S_APP.
- h. OTS - Over the Shoulder Exams
 - i. The OTS may only be conducted by a ZLA Instructor except;
 - ii. The LAX Tower OTS may be conducted by any member of the training staff
 - iii. An OTS must be conducted by a training staff member other than the recommending mentor or instructor unless waived by senior staff
 - iv. An OTS must be 90 minutes in length
 - v. The student must work the entire airspace top-down
 - 1. For SCT and LA Center, after 45 minutes the instructor may allow a local controller to alleviate buildup provided the student has demonstrated proficiency in the areas the local controller will assume responsibility
 - vi. A student must be recommended for an OTS by their trainer
 - vii. An OTS recommendation completes the trainer’s assignment with that student. The trainer shall consider the training for that position complete
 - viii. Students shall mark OTS availability in the same way they indicate normal sessions availability. Instructors will reach out to OTS eligible students for scheduling
 - ix. The following certifications require an OTS
 - 1. Los Angeles Tower
 - 2. SOCAL Combined
 - 3. Los Angeles Center
- i. Visitor Checkouts and Endorsements
 - i. Visitor checkouts are conducted per the training tracks described in the [Training Summary](#). Visitors will check out on LAX_TWR or SAN_APP first then check out on the other before resuming the regular progression.
 - ii. Visitors do not take an LAX_TWR OTS.
 - iii. All training staff may conduct initial visitor checkouts and endorsement sessions
 - iv. Visitor sessions follow the structure of the Training Summary, modified to ensure competency to issue Tier 1 and Tier 2 endorsements
 - v. The ATM, DATM, TA, or ATA will work with incoming visitors to determine the order of checkout sessions

- vi. Mentors may conduct visitor checkouts for any position that the mentor is fully certified to work, except that mentors may not conduct approach visitor checkouts until the SoCal approach combined certification is received
10. Sweatbox and associated software is for training staff use only.
- a. Training staff may opt to use it for training sessions, though use of the live network is preferred.
 - b. If the first training sessions or checkout is on SAN_GND, that session will use Sweatbox

7. TRAINING CALENDAR WORKFLOW

Mentors and instructors shall use the provided ZLA training calendar to offer students sessions based on the priority displayed on the calendar. Students are sorted with those having gone the longest between training sessions at the top, with OBS → S1 students being the highest priority.

Mentors and Instructors shall use the calendar to offer a session, and must only offer sessions at times they can actually attend and provide training in good faith. Mentors and Instructors shall refer to the below workflow for guidance:

- 1) Offer session to first available student within your own availability
- 2) Conduct Session
 - a) Certification achieved
 - i) Write eval
 - ii) **Leave “Do Not Bump” unchecked**
 - iii) Submit eval
 - b) Certification not achieved
 - i) Schedule next session immediately or, failing that, schedule it within 48 hours of the conclusion of the previous session
 - ii) Write eval
 - iii) **Ensure “Do Not Bump” is selected**
 - iv) Submit eval
 - c) Certification not achieved, unable to schedule session
 - i) Write eval
 - ii) **Ensure “Do Not Bump” is selected**
 - iii) Submit eval
 - iv) Write profile note indicating need for new instructor or mentor
 - v) Append “Check File Before Training” Flag to profile
 - vi) Send a message in discord or other communications platform to notify training staff.

Mentors are unable to append profile flags, and shall skip step 2(c)(v), instead using the admin note to request the flag be added. A staff member or instructor should append the flag upon seeing the relevant profile note.