

APPI

Association of Paragliding Pilots and Instructors

Subject: Introduction to APPI and instructor certification pathway — Tandem & Instructor Course Italy, November 9-23

Dear fellow instructors and assistant instructors,

Thank you for your interest in APPI. Let me introduce myself: I am Manu Bonte, president of the APPI Pedagogical Committee, and I will be in charge of the pro workshop tandem & instructor that concerns you. Since you have not yet had any contact with our system, I would like to take this letter as an opportunity to introduce APPI, explain the certification pathway, and above all give you a precise idea of where to start right now.

APPI in a few figures

APPI is today the only truly international training and certification system in paragliding. A few reference points:

- Around 25,000 members worldwide, present in about a hundred countries.
- Official training and certification system in 13 countries, where APPI qualifications of foreign pilots are officially recognised.
- Qualifications also widely respected and informally recognised in many other countries.
- 240 tandem and instructor workshops held to date, as well as 10 maintenance workshops, all around the world.
- 35 master instructors, 380 instructors and assistant instructors, 790 tandem pilots and 70 maintenance technicians.
- APPI was the main contributor to the FAI's SafePro (IPPI) programme.

A powerful web platform to manage student progress

The APPI education system relies on a dedicated web platform, designed to offer a unique level of pedagogical continuity: an instructor can follow a student's progress throughout their journey, even if they change instructor, school or country. The platform is multilingual (around fifteen languages available) and gives access to online manuals, videos commented by experts, and virtual classes. It is a day-to-day working tool, not just an administrative support.

APPI is also at the forefront of innovation in safety matters. Notable examples include the mandatory formalisation of safety procedures for pilots, tandem pilots and instructors, as well as the flight logbook featuring the exposimeter, which aims to make pilots aware of their level of exposure on each flight.

We invite you to explore in detail: [help & FAQ](#) and [APPI news](#).

For more information: [what is APPI](#), [the APPI education system](#), [training calendar](#), [directory of APPI professionals](#) and [APPI worldwide map \(schools, maintenance shops, flyzones, events\)](#).

A system recognised for its results in safety

Between 2016 and 2021, a major insurance company became convinced that our system genuinely helps manage and limit the risk inherent to this activity. This allowed us to offer direct insurance to European, Swiss and Turkish citizens or residents.

Our insurance track record was excellent (80/20 balance), which is concrete proof of the quality of our educational system. Unfortunately, due to the consequences of Covid, this insurer stopped its activities in light

aeronautics. Today we are still able to insure European citizens and residents, as well as pilots from other countries where APPI ratings are recognised by local insurance companies.

The standard APPI instructor certification pathway

To give you your bearings, here is the usual pathway followed by an instructor who wishes to become an APPI instructor. In your case, being already very experienced instructors or assistant instructors with solid foundations, this pathway will be compacted — but it is important that you understand its full structure.

Full detail: [APPI Pro Training Program – Workshops & Courses](#).

Pro workshop tandem — 7 days minimum

Objectives:

- General theoretical refresher: equipment ageing, flight mechanics / piloting, weather and forecasting, airspace, emotional aspects, accident analysis and safety.
- Acquisition of APPI safety procedures.
- Exchanges on tandem practice.
- Theoretical and practical assessment.

Instructor workshop — in 4 stages

1. Assistant instructor course (10 days minimum) — objectives: take-off guidance, flight and landing with APPI procedures, ability to teach theory classes, ability to analyse a student's mistakes and propose a solution through pedagogical tandem flights. Certification awarded: assistant instructor in progress. Validation of the personal work following the course finalises the assistant instructor certification and gives access to course 2.
2. Instructor course (10 days minimum) — pedagogy, psycho-pedagogy, APPI course preparation and management tools, familiarisation with the APPI platform (student management, progress tracking, exam tools); in practice: preparing and running courses in the field. Certification awarded: instructor in progress. Validation of the personal work following the course gives access to course 3.
3. Personal coaching (4 days) — individual on-site coaching by a master, in a small group, with your own students. Preparation for the final exam, or direct instructor validation depending on the level demonstrated.
4. Final instructor exam (1 day) — to obtain the instructor certification.

These stages are interspersed with periods of personal practice in the field, ideally carried out in at least 2 different APPI schools, or otherwise carried out independently under the supervision of the workshop staff, with clear objectives and reports to provide. This represents approximately 150 hours minimum of practice, split between course 1 and course 2, then between course 2 and course 3. The corresponding reports, flight logs and videos can be uploaded directly to the APPI platform, which allows tracking by the referent masters.

Your programme: a compacted 15-day format

Given your experience and your existing level, we have designed a special programme combining tandem and instructor training into a single 15-day course. This compact format can only work under two conditions:

- serious personal preparation ahead of the course;
- assessment stages at the start of and during the course.

The certifications actually awarded at the end of the course will depend on the skills and knowledge demonstrated by each participant. If a participant does not meet the required objectives on a given point, this is not a final failure: a personalised roadmap will be offered to complete their training.

Our first shared objective is therefore simple: that you arrive in November with the level required to make the most of these 15 days. Here is how we will get there together, step by step.

Step 1 — Meeting the entry requirements (to start right now)

General conditions to take part in the APPI pro workshop:

- Be over 18 years old.
- Solo paragliding: minimum 4 years of experience.
- Tandem: more than 2 years of experience and a minimum of 150 tandem flights.

Three steps should be taken without delay:

1. Register with APPI and sign up for the workshop

- Register with APPI:

[flyappi.org/tutorials \(block 1\)](https://flyappi.org/tutorials/block-1)

- Sign up for the workshop:

[flyappi.org/tutorials \(block 2\)](https://flyappi.org/tutorials/block-2)

Workshop registration link: <https://flyappi.org/workshop/1558/>

2. First aid certificate

You must hold a first aid certificate less than 5 years old (Red Cross or any other recognised organisation). If yours is older than 5 years, contact the Red Cross or an equivalent organisation now to renew it.

3. APPI Advanced SIV certificate

You must obtain an APPI Advanced SIV certificate. The most suitable solution for your situation, given the technical resources available to you, is to send a video made in strict compliance with the instructions in the reference document below.

Reference document: [flyappi.org/tutorials \(block 13\)](https://flyappi.org/tutorials/block-13)

Example video: [flyappi.org/tutorials \(block 10\)](https://flyappi.org/tutorials/block-10)

The video must be filmed with two cameras: one from the ground, the other mounted on the knee or on a pole, facing the pilot as specified. The masters responsible for the workshop will review the video and may validate the SIV qualification if the footage shows correct piloting technique.

It is also possible, if you already have the required skills, to make an appointment with an APPI SIV instructor for a simple advanced SIV assessment. If your skills do not entirely match what is expected, a piloting refresher will be offered to you.

Step 2 — Preparing so the tandem part is reduced to a simple assessment

The goal of this step is for the tandem part of the course to be limited to an assessment at the start of the workshop, rather than a full learning process on site. This involves two aspects: theory and tandem flying.

Theory

Before building an effective preparation strategy, we need to know your current level. This happens in two stages:

1. Complete three online diagnostic theory tests, ungraded — they are used solely to calibrate the course. These consist of a general knowledge multiple-choice test, open-ended questions, and a multiple-choice test on the APPI system. These tests have no selection purpose: they allow the teaching team to assess the level of general knowledge of participants and of the group, in order to adjust the course content. They are mandatory at the time of registration.
2. On this basis, we will organise video-conference sessions, targeted at your individual and collective weak points, so that you arrive in November with the required level (some personal work will certainly be requested in addition).

We ask you to answer these tests as honestly as possible: the more precisely your actual level is identified, the more effective the preparation offered to you will be.

Tandem flying

The most important point here is the APPI safety procedures. We will explain them to you during a dedicated video call; it will then be up to you to practise them and repeat them in flight until they are perfectly mastered.

In addition, APPI tandem assessments include specific manoeuvres that should be practised beforehand: the U-approach and landing accuracy are notably assessed during exams, and therefore deserve specific training. In concrete terms, here is what will be requested:

- A tandem operation video, in line with the reference document below.

Reference document: [flyappi.org/tutorials \(block 24\)](https://flyappi.org/tutorials/block%2024)

Example video: [flyappi.org/tutorials \(block 3\)](https://flyappi.org/tutorials/block%203)

- Take-off, including the safety check procedure according to the APPI standard (see doc. 2, tandem routine_en).
- Timed exam manoeuvres: 720° and figure-eight (see doc. 1, important information_en).
- Landing: U-shaped approach, with a precision objective (target).

Step 3 — Guiding students

Two important points should be worked on before the workshop, as they will be central to this stage of the course:

- The student check procedure before take-off.
- Guiding U-approaches, with the associated precision requirement.

Here again, a video call will explain the APPI procedure in detail; it will then be up to you to train so you are ready on the day of the course.

The course itself

From the start of the course, a validation stage will assess your tandem practice, your theoretical knowledge and your guiding skills. We will then focus on:

- completing the remaining theory points;
- training in designing theory classes adapted to the audience and their progression;
- pedagogical tandem flying;

- pedagogy and psycho-pedagogy;
- APPI tools for preparing and planning field courses;
- practice: preparing and giving courses in the field, in real conditions;
- use of the APPI platform.

Next steps

To summarise, here is what we expect from you right away:

1. Register with APPI and sign up for the workshop.
2. Start renewing your first aid certificate if necessary.
3. Plan your assessment or your advanced SIV video.
4. Complete the three diagnostic theory tests.

We remain fully available to answer any questions you may have throughout this preparation. It is a pleasure to welcome you into the APPI pathway, and we will do everything we can to make these 15 days in November live up to your experience and commitment.

Best regards,

Manu Bonte

President of the APPI Pedagogical Committee