

Guidance for Medical Flight Tests (MFT)

What is an MFT?

Following consideration of medical reports and examination, an MFT may be required by an aeromedical examiner (AME) or Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) medical assessor to confirm functional ability in the aviation environment (flight simulator or aircraft) as a final stage of assessment and to facilitate the issuance of a medical certificate.

Common reasons for initiating an MFT are to check musculoskeletal capacity or mobility, and to follow up a hearing test. An MFT is also a requirement for diabetic pilots treated with potentially hypoglycaemic medication to confirm that they can safely manage their health condition whilst exercising licence privileges. The candidate will have been informed of the reason for the MFT and its purpose.

How is an MFT conducted?

An MFT will usually be conducted by an examiner to run concurrently with a routine operator proficiency check (OPC), licence proficiency check (LPC) or licence skill test (LST). The MFT can also be conducted by an instructor during a suitable training event as part of a type rating course. In some circumstances the MFT can be a standalone event, independent of checks or training. There shall be no conflict of interest for the candidate and the individual conducting the MFT.

The form for the MFT will state areas to which attention should be directed, depending on the reason for the test. The range of tasks should be sufficient to enable a judgement to be made on the candidate's proficiency. In all cases, the examiner or instructor conducting the MFT must ensure that the required standard is demonstrated in full.

The [MFT forms](#) for different conditions can be downloaded from the CAA website. The forms include the following sections:

- The candidate's personal particulars
- The purpose of the test
- The candidate's consent and declaration
- The medical flight test report

The MFT candidate must advise the examiner or instructor of the requirement for an MFT prior to commencing the exercise and provide the form, with their sections completed.

What is the role of the examiner or instructor?

Examiners and instructors are not required to make any kind of medical assessment or medical fitness decision. However, they are expected to use their skill, knowledge and judgement to determine whether the candidate has **fully demonstrated the required standard** for assured safe operation of the aircraft, including the areas identified for particular attention. As always, the safe outcome of the manoeuvre must never be in doubt. For this reason, the examiner or instructor should take care when selecting suitable MFT exercises and manoeuvres to support a sound assessment.

The following are examples:

Example 1: If a pilot has recovered from a musculoskeletal condition affecting the use of a foot, it would not be acceptable to allow the pilot to conduct the rejected take-off (RTO) manoeuvre using autobrakes alone. In fact, a maximum crosswind RTO may be necessary to ensure that maximum manual brake pressure can be correctly and symmetrically applied with the rudder pedals displaced. In the case of an engine failure after take-off (EFATO), it is essential that the pilot demonstrates the ability to apply and titrate rudder inputs using the affected leg / foot without limitation.

Example 2: Where physical strength may be in question, an examiner or instructor using a full flight simulator (FFS) might consider that a suitable MFT exercise would include hand flying the aircraft following a stabiliser jam occurring while the aircraft was in trimmed flight at, say, 320 knots of indicated airspeed (KIAS) / 5000 feet. The pilot would then be required to demonstrate the ability to manually fly the aircraft to a safe landing, whilst accurately flying the aircraft under higher than normal control loadings.

Example 3: It may be necessary to ensure that the pilot can reach and operate controls and switches without the help of the other pilot. This might include the operation of the No.4 engine fire switch for a captain or the No.1 engine fire switch for a first officer on the overhead panel.

What happens in complex cases?

For assessment of certain cases, it may be necessary to conduct a specialised MFT, the content of which will be developed by the CAA Medical Department in conjunction the CAA Flight Operations Department. Specific competency checks will be included to ensure that areas of particular concern are assessed thoroughly. A CAA training inspector may be required to conduct or assist with the evaluation, and a CAA medical assessor and / or a specialist medical consultant might observe the MFT.