

Virtual FJC Recommendations & Minimum Standards

November 2025

The CWC recognizes with the advancing e-learning technology that some dropzones are moving some modules to a digital based learning system and CWC wants to provide some guidance on the delivery of these modules.

All individual and in person skill evaluations must be completed by an instructor who is trained and endorsed to perform those evaluations in order for a program to meet CSPA minimum standards.

Disclaimer: The following is a brief list of topics to be covered in the First Jump Course.

The sections are not intended to be lesson plans, nor do they constitute all the information required in a complete FJC. They do outline major content areas and suggest some strategies to help you in teaching specific information and skills.

For more details on what should be included refer to section 5 of the SSI reference manual, the CSPA skills progression chart and PIM 1, and for more details on writing lesson plans refer to section 4.2.6. of the SSI reference manual.

The FJC is meant to teach and formatively evaluate first jump students:

- Skills: through practical evaluation
- Technical Knowledge: by oral questioning or a written test
- Attitudes: by structured discussion or observation

It is up to the SSI leading the course to determine the appropriate Main Teaching points, methods of delivery, structure of a practice, lesson planning, training aids, teaching environment and rehearsals that will be required of the students for their FJC.

Virtual FJC's are restricted in what techniques can be used for the presentation, application, and feedback components of the PPAF process. Because of this it is extremely important that any possible shortcomings of the delivery methods used are considered and taken into account when teaching and evaluating the student when they arrive to the dropzone to work in person with their SSI prior to jumping.

For all courses the following are to be met:

Record Keeping (4.5.1 of SSI Reference Manual - Section 4)

- The following should be transferred to the Dropzone's master log for risk management reasons
 - Written records of all students in the course
 - Notes on all students' performance

Administration (5.1 of SSI Reference Manual)

Documentation – Pre-Course (5.1.1 of SSI Reference Manual)

- The following should be completed correctly and before the student is permitted to participate in parachute training.
 - Liability Waiver
 - Medical Declaration
- In each course:
 - It must be clearly stated by the SSI, or a member of the school's staff, that skydiving is a dangerous activity. *There should be no doubt in the student's mind that skydiving can and does lead to serious injury and death.*
 - Each student should acknowledge, in writing, that they fully understand the personal risks involved and that they are willing to participate voluntarily even with this risk. *Once this is recognized, there is no reason to over emphasize this aspect throughout the training, nor should it be used as a motivator to make students pay attention to course material.*

Expectations and Obligations (5.1.2 of SSI Reference Manual)

It is reasonable for the student to expect that the SSI/First jump course:

- Is qualified to fulfil the role.
- Will present a First Jump Course that fully prepares them for a successful first jump.
- Will clearly identify the tasks that they must perform during the jump.
- Will use equipment that is reliable, well maintained, and supported by all recommended safety devices.
- Will evaluate their capabilities to perform relevant skills prior to the actual jump.
- Will not allow them to make a jump if the instructor feels they are not fully prepared and capable of completing the jump safely and successfully.

Objectives, Content and Lesson Plans (5.3 of SSI Reference Manual)

- In general, the FJC should be given in the order that reflects the overall sequence of the actual jump.
- *It is important that all documentation and instructors working at a school use the same terminology, and that courses are taught consistently.*
- Please refer to section 5.3 of the SSI reference manual to determine appropriate learning outcomes, possible presentation points to cover, possible training aids or memory enhancement effects to use, sample questions to ask, and general suggestions for the following sections:
 - Introduction
 - Overview of the FJC
 - Equipment
 - Aircraft Procedures and Exits
 - Freefall - a. Body Position and Count (IAD/SL) b. Freefall tasks (PFF)
 - Canopy Control
 - Landings
 - Unusual Situations
- *The learning outcomes for these sections as described in section 5 of the SSI Reference manual which includes physical demonstration must be evaluated by an SSI prior to jumping.*

Retraining Or Refund? (5.5 of SSI Reference Manual)

The training should be able to identify those students who are not physically nor mentally prepared for the experience.

The list of reasons for you to make this decision includes but is not limited to the inability to:

- Deal with malfunction scenarios
- Perform such physical activities as climb out, arch, and count
- Take the course seriously and listen to what you had to say
- Modify their behavior to conform to your expectations
- Demonstrate awareness of canopy control and landing technique
- Show any level of stress management control
- Too heavy or large for the gear
- Too small for the gear, to the point where the person might fall out of the harness
- Really out of physical shape
- Totally uncoordinated
- Dizziness due to lack of nutrition intake or dehydration
- Medication which may make them vulnerable to passing out
- Conditions noted in the dropzone's medical waiver

Stress Identification And Management (5.7.2 of SSI Reference Manual)

During the First Jump Course you could have a discussion on how to cope with the stress.

Key ideas are to:

- Focus on the actions that have to be performed.
- Students should be encouraged to have a clear picture of what will be done so this can be mentally reviewed.
- They should see the jump as a series of units
- To help remember what to do, they should be taught key points or cue words

Emergency Procedures Review (EPR) 6.3.3 of SSI Reference Manual)

For canopy unusual situations:

- Review the React procedure first – analyzing the reaction procedure carefully,
- Review the Assessment portion second – using sensations (seeing, feeling and hearing) for assessments only and avoid technical names.
- Give scenarios, one from each category (high, low and correctable).
- Analyze the assessment decision and time components carefully.
- Cover all areas of the skills grid but try to keep it short and simple with emphasis on the gear that they are using, and
- Make sure you research your topics and deliver technical knowledge that is appropriate to the level of student or novice with whom you are dealing. As always, you can find further information on the CSPA website.
- Their physical skills performance for emergency procedures must be excellent.

Evaluating Physical Skills (3.4 of SSI Reference Manual)

To evaluate a performance objectively, you must compare it with a pre-set standard (the minimum level or score acceptable in the performance of a particular task). These standards come from tasks with well-defined and thought-out outcomes.

In the FJC, you will have to rate the student's performance to decide whether it is good enough for them to jump.

Generally, in skydiving, we tend to score knowledge and rate performance. More often than not, we rate through a letter grade such as:
Performance Rating System

- (E) Excellent: meets all aspects of the objective criteria.
- (G) Good: generally, well done, some adjustments required.
- (S) Satisfactory: one or two mistakes, room for improvement, but acceptable.
- (NI) Needs Improvement – several mistakes, retraining required.

Their performance for emergency procedures must be excellent, while you may accept a satisfactory performance for an oral review of equipment knowledge. You must not accept any performances that are rated Needs Improvement, as re-training and individual assistance should be applied to bring them up to an acceptable level.

If a student cannot perform a task up to standards, they should not be allowed to proceed with a jump of that type. (It may be that a tandem jump would be a better option).

Post Course Administration (5.4 of SSI Reference Manual)

Before Jumping (5.4.1 of SSI Reference Manual)

- Before the jump, students should be asked to show their understanding through a written exam or signed checklist.
- *An exam should be marked and any wrong answers discussed by the instructor and corrected by the student before they are allowed to jump.*
- *This is excellent risk management as it helps to show that you have covered all the key points.*
- *The student acknowledges that they have been taught these aspects and they understand what they have to do in all aspects of the first jump.*