ZNY Training Staff Policy

Requirements for Training Staff Onboarding & Progression

Effective: 10/28/26 • Revision: 2.0

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the requirements for appointment to the ZNY training staff and pathways for staff progression. It supplements the ZNY-1000 General Policy (ZNY GP), the VATUSA General Division and Training policies, and the VATSIM GCAP. Where any provision of this policy conflicts with a higher-level policy, the higher-level policy governs.

2. Definitions

1. **Mentor-in-Training (MIT) —** A training staff member who has been newly onboarded for a probationary period of 60 days.
2. **Mentor (MTR) —** A training staff member who has been signed off to teach without supervision by the conclusion of the 60 day probationary period.
3. **Probationary Instructor —** A training staff member previously serving as a Mentor who has been appointed a Probationary Instructor as outlined in VATUSA DP002C.
4. **Instructor (INS) —** A training staff member authorized to conduct VATUSA S2, S3, and C1 rating examinations unsupervised in addition to being able to conduct all training session types.
5. **FC (Facility Coordinator) —** As defined in ZNY GP section 5.2.2.
6. **TA/ATA —** Training Administrator and Assistant Training Administrator. Any action this policy assigns to the TA may be delegated to and performed by the ATA as needed.

3. Eligibility

Mentor. A candidate must:

1. Be an active ZNY home controller in good standing.
2. Hold an S3 rating for at least 30 days prior to appointment.
3. Be certified up to departure at their home Tier 1 facility.
4. Have excellent written and verbal communication skills.
5. Have had no recent unprofessional activity or significant disciplinary record.
6. Have availability to conduct training sessions and a high degree of energy and commitment appropriate to the position.
7. Be recommended by the FC of their home Tier 1 facility or the TA/ATA.

Instructor. A candidate must:

1. Be a ZNY home controller at the time of nomination.
2. Hold a Controller 1 (C1) rating for at least 30 days before nomination.
3. Hold all controlling endorsements in the ZNY ARTCC.
4. Have previously served as a full Mentor at ZNY in good standing.
5. Have strong knowledge of the U.S. and VATSIM ATC systems, and FAA Order 7110.65.
6. Have no significant disciplinary record, no history of unprofessional behavior, no recent network suspensions, and be in good standing on the VATSIM network.
7. Be recommended by the TA and appointed by the VATUSA Deputy Director – Training Services.

Recency of unprofessional behavior is defined at the TA's discretion for Mentor candidates and at the VATUSA Deputy Director – Training Services' discretion for Instructor candidates in consultation with the TA.

4. Application and Appointment

Members interested in joining the ZNY training staff should complete the ZNY training staff questionnaire and inform the FC of their home Tier 1 facility of their interest. After the form is completed, the relevant FC and TA/ATA will discuss the member's candidacy. If the FC and TA/ATA agree that the member is a good candidate, the TA/ATA formally onboards the member as a Mentor-in-Training and releases them to the FC of their home Tier 1 facility to begin onboarding under section 6. Candidates not selected will be notified by their FC or the TA/ATA.

The TA recommends Instructor candidates to VATUSA and are subject to formal appointment by the VATUSA Deputy Director – Training Services.

5. Authority and Oversight

1. **FCs** define facility-specific onboarding requirements and oversee MIT progression at their facility. FCs are expected to advance the teaching capabilities of staff, to teach additional session types assuming they are interested in doing so, at a reasonable pace.
2. **TA/ATA** are responsible for session types not tied to a Tier 1 facility, such as ITL and ITT, excluding ZNY/ZWY. The TA/ATA may authorize exceptions to any portion of this policy at their discretion as needed if doing so positively impacts the ARTCC's training program.

6. Onboarding and Progression

A new training staff member is appointed as a Mentor-in-Training (MIT) for their home Tier 1 facility. A new member may not be appointed as an MIT for any facility other than their home facility except when authorized by the TA/ATA. The appointment of MITs is proposed by the candidate's home facility FC or TA/ATA, and ultimately approved by the TA.

For each session type, the training staff member progresses through three phases:

1. **Observation —** The training staff member shadows at least one training session conducted by an authorized member of the training staff.
2. **Supervised Teaching —** The training staff member conducts at least one under direct observation by the FC, their designee, or the TA/ATA.
3. **Solo Teaching Endorsement —** On sign-off, the training staff member is authorized to teach that session type without supervision, and the corresponding mentor certification is awarded via the website. Experienced members of training staff may be permitted to teach additional positions on an expedited basis in consultation with the relevant FC or TA/ATA.

Authority for each phase depends on the session type: for Tier 1 facility session types, the relevant FC conducts or delegates supervision and signs off; for session types not tied to a Tier 1 facility, the TA/ATA conducts or delegates supervision and signs off. The progression through session types for new MITs is as follows:

1. **Exam Reviews —** Immediately on appointment, an MIT may conduct S1 and Facility-Specific Exam Reviews for their home Tier 1 facility. MITs may also grade exams for any position they are certified to control. The three-phase process in this section does not apply to exam reviews.
2. **DEL/GND, Probation, and Full Mentor Promotion —** The MIT completes the three onboarding phases described above for DEL/GND at their home facility. Once signed off, the MIT may conduct DEL/GND sessions unsupervised. MITs are promoted to full mentor status at the conclusion of their 60 day probationary period if they can teach without supervision.

3. **TWR —** Mentors (MTR) complete the three phases for TWR at their home Tier 1 facility. On TWR sign-off, the Mentor can conduct home Tier 1 facility TWR sessions.
4. **DEP and APP —** Full Mentors may add DEP and APP authorizations at facilities with those positions. Tier 1 facility DEP and APP are separate session types and are added separately, each through the three-phase process.
5. **Additional Facilities —** Mentors are encouraged to complete authorization through APP at their home Tier 1 facility before requesting to teach at another facility; earlier requests may be approved by the TA/ATA on a case-by-case basis. The three-phase process applies for each session type at the new facility. Requests to teach at Tier 2 facilities, namely PHL TRACON Familiarization, should be directed to the TA/ATA.
6. **ITL and ITT —** Full Mentors may request authorization to teach ITL at any time. Requests to teach ITL and ITT require authorization to teach TWR and APP at a Mentor's home Tier 1 facility. Mentors may conduct S2 and S3 exam reviews when they are certified to solo teach ITL and ITT respectively.
7. **Center —** Full C1-rated Mentors may request authorization to teach Center via the ZNY/ZWY FC. Center is a single session type broken into five distinct areas.
8. **Probationary Instructor —** A full Mentor recommended by the TA and appointed to be an Instructor by VATUSA is first issued the I1 rating as a Probationary Instructor for a 45-day period. During this period, the Probationary Instructor must submit at least three training records as the primary teacher, solicit at least three Probationary Instructor Review Forms from their students, and conduct a supervised S2, S3, or C1 rating examination. S1 rating examinations may be conducted unsupervised; all other rating examinations must be supervised by a non-probationary Instructor.
9. **Instructor —** At the end of the probationary period, VATUSA reviews the submitted documentation and, with concurrence of the TA, grants full Instructor status. On release, the member transitions from Mentor to Instructor and may conduct S2, S3, and C1 rating examinations without supervision.

7. Continuing Requirements

1. **Currency —** Training staff members must conduct at least two (2) training sessions per month. Controlling time and time spent receiving training does not count toward this teaching currency requirement. Certain training activities, such as completing a significant amount of training sessions in a single month or supervising MITs may fulfill training staff activity requirements in consultation with the TA/ATA.
2. **Policy Familiarity —** Remain current on ZNY, VATUSA, and VATSIM policies and on SOPs for every position members are authorized to teach.
3. **Independence —** Do not control an adjacent or underlying position while monitoring a student on the live network. This requirement explicitly does not apply when an eligible C1 student, namely an S3 that has completed the VATUSA and ZNY C1 exams, acts as a D-Side for a C1-rated controller.
4. **Training Notes —** Submit session evaluations through the ZNY website no later than three (3) days after completion with sufficient detail to provide students with constructive feedback on observed deficiencies. Training notes must end with defined next steps, such as "*Continuation of Training*. *Re-run EWR CD/GND 4s*".

8. Suspension and Removal

Mentors may be suspended or removed at the discretion of the TA only for cause, such as a documented history of unprofessionalism, lack of adherence to training staff standards, or

extended inactivity (e.g., 6 months of inactivity). Instructors serve at the discretion of the TA and VATUSA. Individual session-type authorizations may be suspended by the TA, or by the FC with TA concurrence, for demonstrated failure to meet currency or performance concerns.

Appendix A — Authorization Summary

Facility session-type authorizations (DEL/GND, TWR, DEP, APP) are granted on a per-facility basis. All milestones follow the three stage onboarding process described in section 6.

Milestone	Authorized Session Types (Cumulative)
Appointed as MIT	Conduct S1 and facility-specific exam reviews and grade exams.
MIT DEL/GND, Probation, and Full MTR Sign-Off	Teach DEL/GND at MIT's home Tier 1 facility. Promoted to MTR at the conclusion of the 60 day probationary period assuming MIT has successfully taught at least one student with minimal input or oversight from senior members of training staff.
TWR Sign-Off	Teach TWR at MTR's home Tier 1 facility.
ITL Sign-Off	May request to teach ITL if TWR is taught at MTR's home Tier 1 facility.
DEP Sign-Off	May request to teach DEP at MTR's home Tier 1 facility.
APP Sign-Off	May request to teach APP at MTR's home Tier 1 facility.
ITT Sign-Off	May request to teach ITT if APP is taught at MTR's home Tier 1 facility.
Center Sign-Off	May request to teach Center; requires C1 certification.
Appointed Probationary Instructor	May teach facility-specific session types previously authorized and conduct S2, S3, and C1 rating exams under full I1 supervision.
Appointed Full Instructor	May teach facility-specific session types previously authorized and conduct S2, S3, and C1 rating exams unsupervised.

Appendix B — Policy Changelog

Date	Policy Changes
5/13/26	Policy revision 1.0 established.
10/25/26	Changes made to sections 2, 5, 6, and 7 introducing: new MIT probationary time period, expectations for FCs on mentor development, streamlined mentor onboarding and expected progression flow, updates to ongoing currency requirements, and additional requirements for mentor removal.