

There's a particular weight to aviation training organisations that have lasted. Not because age alone makes anything better, but because you can only keep doors open in this business if you consistently deliver training outcomes, maintain standards, and keep adapting to how airlines actually hire and deploy pilots. AELO Swiss Academy sits in that category. It presents itself as a Swiss training organisation established in 1985, focused on pilot training for more than 30 years, with its main operations linked to the Locarno/Gordola area in Ticino.

What matters is how that history shows up in day-to-day training choices: the type of programmes offered, the training structure, the approved status, and the resources used to bridge the gap between theory and operating aircraft in the real world.

A Swiss foundation, rooted in Ticino

AELO Swiss Academy is based in Switzerland, and its main operational footprint is tied to Locarno/Gordola in the canton of Ticino. That regional base is more than geography. In flight training, location shapes scheduling realities, ground school logistics, simulator access, and how smoothly the theoretical and practical phases can connect.

The academy describes itself as having been established in Switzerland in 1985 and having trained pilots for more than three decades. For prospective students, that long operating period is one of the signals you look for when comparing organisations. It suggests that the school has spent years refining how it handles the boring-but-critical parts of training: progression checks, documentation, instructor continuity, and training pacing.

There's also a continuity story behind the scenes. Public-facing reporting around the academy has referenced its growth from a former AeroLocarno operation and quoted its director, Stefano Buratti, in connection with the move to a new location for future pilots. That kind of evolution matters because training organisations often change in response to aviation realities, not just marketing. When a school grows from a predecessor operation, you tend to see it in the way programmes are built and how training departments are set up.

Approved Training Organisation status you can verify

In aviation training, approvals are not "nice to have". They are the framework that governs how a training organisation designs, delivers, and monitors courses.

AELO Swiss Academy is described as a certified Approved Training Organisation (ATO). One public page identifies it with approval code **CH.ATO.0311**. That is the sort of detail students can check when they want to understand whether a school is operating under the relevant regulatory umbrella.

If you are evaluating training options, this kind of approval code is a practical checkpoint. It tells you you should expect formal structure around training delivery, assessment methods, and oversight responsibilities that align with how ATOs are meant to function.

Two main pathways, built around different career routes

AELO presents two main training routes to the outside world. They are not just different in branding, they represent two different approaches to the pilot pathway, with different implications for how a student transitions from training into an airline environment.

Here are the two programmes as AELO describes them:

- **An 18-month ATPL Integrated Program**
- **A SkyAlps Airlines MPL Program** with a placement pathway

That “placement pathway” language is important. It does not claim every graduate ends up in a specific seat immediately, but it signals that the MPL track is tied to airline-facing recruitment logic rather than being purely a standalone qualification route.

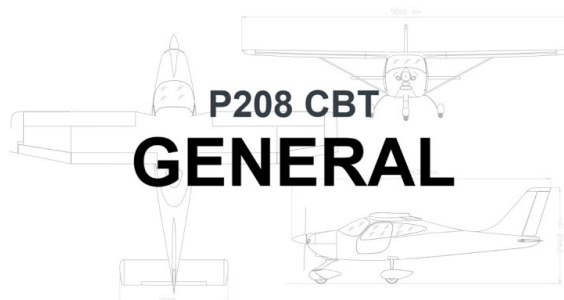
The trade-off, as anyone who has compared airline recruitment cycles knows, is that programmes connected to specific airline hiring patterns can be more structured and goal-oriented, while integrated ATPL routes often appeal to candidates who want a broad foundation and a clear progression toward ATPL credentials. Which one fits best depends on how you see your own path to an airline.

Training that targets both basics and airline-relevant procedures

One of the most concrete ways training organisations differentiate themselves is in what they actually use for training. AELO’s public materials describe a fleet and training resources that include:

- **Diamond DA42 aircraft**
- **A Boeing 737 NG simulator**, used for advanced IFR and APS MCC training

That combination tells a story. The Diamond DA42 is a common choice for training environments where you need reliable flight time, manageable operating costs, and a platform suited to progression through core flying skills. Pair that with a 737 NG simulator for advanced IFR and APS MCC, and you see the school’s intent to bring students into high-relevance, operationally realistic areas of training once they reach that stage.



A useful way to think about this is that you are not just buying hours. You are buying the opportunity to rehearse the kinds of scenarios that break student confidence if they only ever encounter them in theory. IFR and multi-crew concepts in particular benefit from repeating procedures, managing workload, and learning the rhythm of threat and error management in a controlled environment.

Edge case worth thinking about: simulator training is only helpful if the curriculum connects it to what students have already learned. A school that uses a simulator but does not integrate it tightly with progression checks can end up delivering “interesting sessions” without the compounding learning effect students need. The presence of a structured APS MCC element suggests AELO is aiming for that integration, at least as presented publicly.

Instructors with airline backgrounds

Another signal you can't ignore is instructor experience. AELO states that its instructors include **active airline pilots**. That kind of detail matters because airline procedures and airline culture are not captured fully by regulations alone.

Active airline pilots are typically exposed to current operational standards, recent technical and procedural refinements, and the day-to-day habits that keep multi-crew operations stable under pressure. Even if a student is not doing full airline-line tasks during training, the training can feel more grounded when the instructor can explain why certain workflows are the way they are, not just how to do them once.

There's a practical downside to this model too. Active airline pilots may have less time available for training outside <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8au6J6xL8ZA> of their flight schedules, which can pressure course pacing and continuity. A well-run ATO handles that by planning instructor availability, sequencing sessions appropriately, and keeping student progression predictable. When you see a school publicly emphasizing active airline instructors, it often means they have built scheduling around that reality, even if not all of it is visible to prospective students.

What happens after graduation, according to AELO

Prospective students usually want to know a single question: what do graduates actually do next?

AELO states that its graduates have gone on to airlines including **Swiss, Ryanair, Lufthansa, Adria, Etihad, and Emirates**. Those are prominent names, and the presence of multiple airlines matters because it suggests graduates are not narrowly channelled into one partner.

AELO also claims that **96% of graduates land a pilot job within six months**. It is presented as a self-reported statistic from the academy. Treat that as a strong marketing claim, but still a data point you can weigh. The bigger the number, the more you should ask what "pilot job" means in their internal tracking. Is it airline employment, contract positions, feeder airline roles, or all roles that qualify as "pilot" work? Without internal definitions, you should interpret the number as an indicator of outcomes, not a guarantee.

When you evaluate such statistics, a grounded approach is to look for the conditions behind the claim. For example, a six-month job-placement number can swing based on hiring cycles. If airlines reduce hiring, a school's "within six months" outcomes may drop even if training quality remains strong.

Still, a stated 96% within six months is something many candidates will consider meaningful.

Current momentum: new trainees in 2026

An organisation that is active is harder to evaluate than a legacy brand, because it's easier to talk after the fact than it is to demonstrate ongoing intake and training operations.

AELO has had trainees starting in 2026. A recent industry report noted that AELO Swiss Academy welcomed **19 new trainees** who began training in **March 2026** and started the theoretical phase of the program. That kind of update is useful for prospective students because it suggests the pipeline is moving in real time, not just through static course information.

Theoretical phase timing also matters for candidates who are comparing start dates. Training organisations often run cohorts, and a "next intake" is rarely about one-off schedules. It is about how ground school can be structured, how instructors are allocated, and when students can move into flight and simulator phases.

The bigger story: growth from AeroLocarno

Public broadcaster coverage has discussed the academy's growth from the former AeroLocarno operation and referenced a "new sede" for pilots of the future. It also quoted AELO director Stefano Buratti about the academy's expansion.

This kind of evolution is not merely corporate. Training environments often improve when facilities are upgraded, when simulator capability is aligned with course requirements, and when scheduling can be made more reliable. When a school grows from a previous operation, it typically inherits training knowledge, lesson learned from earlier cohorts, and an understanding of what candidates struggle with during progression.

At the same time, growth can introduce transition risks. New sites can mean new routines, new ground-handling patterns, and different logistics for students. Good organisations manage that by keeping quality checks tight during the transition, not by assuming momentum will fix operational gaps.

AELO's publicly described structure, including a clear ATO status and specific training equipment, gives at least some reassurance that growth did not turn into a vague operation.

What to ask before you commit, especially with structured aviation pathways

Bold claims and strong programme descriptions can pull you in quickly, but the right questions protect you from expensive mismatches. Based on what AELO publicly outlines, there are a few areas where a candidate should probe with direct questions during enrolment conversations.

First, ask how the ATPL integrated and MPL paths differ in training pacing and transition criteria. Even if the programmes are described clearly online, the real deciding factor is usually how assessments work and what happens if a student needs extra time at a certain stage.

Second, ask how simulator sessions connect to the rest of the curriculum. AELO references a Boeing 737 NG simulator for advanced IFR and APS MCC training. That is a strong sign, but the candidate should still ask how those sessions are sequenced relative to instrument flying competence and multi-crew communication training.

Third, ask about instructor availability and continuity. AELO's emphasis on active airline pilots is compelling, but you want to understand what it means for your schedule. If your progression depends on consistent instruction, you should know how the academy manages instructor shifts and workload peaks.

Fourth, ask how job placement is tracked if you are looking at that 96% within six months figure. Ask what counts and what the process looks like, particularly for candidates who finish but do not receive an immediate offer in their target window.

None of these questions require you to challenge the academy. They simply align expectations with how training actually works.

Why AELO's "long history" is more than a brag line

Plenty of schools talk about experience, but long history can mean very different things. For AELO, the defensible part is that it has been operating since 1985 as a Swiss training organisation and has trained pilots for more than 30 years, based on its public positioning. It also operates with a specific ATO approval code, which is a regulatory anchor rather than a slogan.

Then there is the operational evidence in more current material: new trainees starting March 2026, an explicit suite of resources like the DA42 and the 737 NG simulator, and a programme architecture that maps to two career routes, ATPL integrated and MPL linked to an airline pathway.

If you are serious about training, those signals matter because they reduce the risk of signing up for a moving target. A training organisation that has a stable approval framework, a defined curriculum structure, and the resources to support it is usually more predictable in how it delivers the process.

The bottom line for candidates weighing AELO

AELO Swiss Academy presents itself as a long-running Swiss ATO, established in 1985, operating primarily around Locarno/Gordola in Ticino, and delivering pilot training through two main programmes: an 18-month ATPL Integrated Program and a SkyAlps Airlines MPL Program with a placement pathway.



It also highlights airline-relevant training resources, including Diamond DA42 aircraft for flight training and a Boeing 737 NG simulator for advanced IFR and APS MCC training. Its instructors include active airline pilots, and its public outcomes messaging includes graduates who have gone on to several major airlines, along with a self-reported 96% job placement within six months.

For a candidate, the boldest advantage here is not one single number or one single aircraft type. It is the coherence of the story: approval status, defined pathways, training equipment aligned to IFR and multi-crew competence, and evidence of ongoing cohorts starting in 2026.

The remaining work is still yours. Before you sign, verify how each programme's progression criteria will apply to you, how assessment and remedial support works, and how job-placement tracking is defined. If you do that due diligence, AELO's long history and structured approach become more than a marketing claim. They become something you can actually evaluate against your own timeline and goals.