

DSA ezine for road safety professionals

New powers to protect learner drivers

Dangerous instructors face immediate suspension

Driving instructors who pose a significant threat to public safety will face immediate suspension under new legislation that came into effect in July.

Under the new rules, the ADI registrar can immediately suspend ADIs while the formal process to remove them from the register is under way.

Previously, ADIs were able to continue teaching while the process to remove them from the register was completed - this takes a minimum of 45 days.

The registrar is likely to exercise the suspension power in cases where instructors have been convicted of a violent or sexual offence, or are delivering tuition of a dangerously low standard.

Road Safety Minister Mike Penning said:

“Driving instructors play a vital role in helping to ensure Britain’s roads remain among the safest in the world.

“The vast majority of instructors meet the extremely high standards we require of them, but in the very rare cases where an instructor presents a significant danger to the public, it is right that we take prompt and effective action to protect learners and other road users.”

Instructors retain the right of appeal against a decision to remove them from the register or to revoke their trainee licence. The instructor



will be able to apply for compensation in respect of the period of suspension if they are not subsequently removed from the register

To find out more, read the information on Business Link at <http://bit.ly/KToUgA>.

Partnership deal brings tests closer to candidates

The DSA announces partnership with Halfords to provide local tests in areas that don't have a test centre

Driving tests could soon be available from branches of Halfords under plans announced recently by Road Safety Minister Mike Penning.

As well as using traditional driving test centres, the DSA is looking at working with public and private sector partners to provide driving test premises in selected areas that don't already have a local test centre.

The DSA began exploring a new approach to test delivery last year, offering tests from premises such as local authority buildings and leisure centres. In March this year the agency announced plans to extend the scheme to 21 more locations, and invited proposals from businesses and other organisations.

The DSA has now selected Halfords as a potential partner, and is also exploring partnerships with the Fire and Rescue Service and several universities. In one location, the agency also expects to sign an agreement with training company Mantra Learning Ltd.

Partners will allow the use of their premises at no cost to the DSA, and tests will continue to be conducted by DSA examiners.

The scheme focuses on 21 locations, centred around five different areas across the country. Testing from partner premises in these locations is expected to start from the autumn.

This only applies to practical car tests - other types of test and theory test centres are not affected.



Tests could be conducted from partner premises in:

- **Kettering area:** Corby, Market Harborough, Wellingborough
- **Glasgow area:** Johnstone, Renfrew, East Kilbride, Cathcart, Bearsden
- **Manchester area:** Cheadle, Altrincham, Salford, Middleton, Ashton-under-Lyne, Oldham
- **Worcestershire:** Kidderminster, Droitwich, Bromsgrove
- **Watford area:** Hemel Hempstead, Harpenden, Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City

Latest driving test stats published

Pass rate for car tests rises to 47% with fewer tests conducted across all categories



The Department for Transport has published new driver and rider tests and instructor statistics for the 2011/12 financial year. The practical car test pass rate has increased to almost

47%, up from 44% in 2007/8. At year end there were over 46,500 ADIs on the register. Of those, over 99% scored a grade four or better at their last check test.

Car tests

- roughly 47% of practical car tests in 2011/12 were taken by people aged 20 or under
- an increasing pass rate led to fewer repeat tests, in turn leading to a lower number of tests being carried out overall

Motorcycle tests

- 59,954 Module 1 tests were conducted, with a pass rate of around 70.5% - a gradual increase from around 60% in early 2009/10
- 57,911 Module 2 tests were carried out - up almost 17%

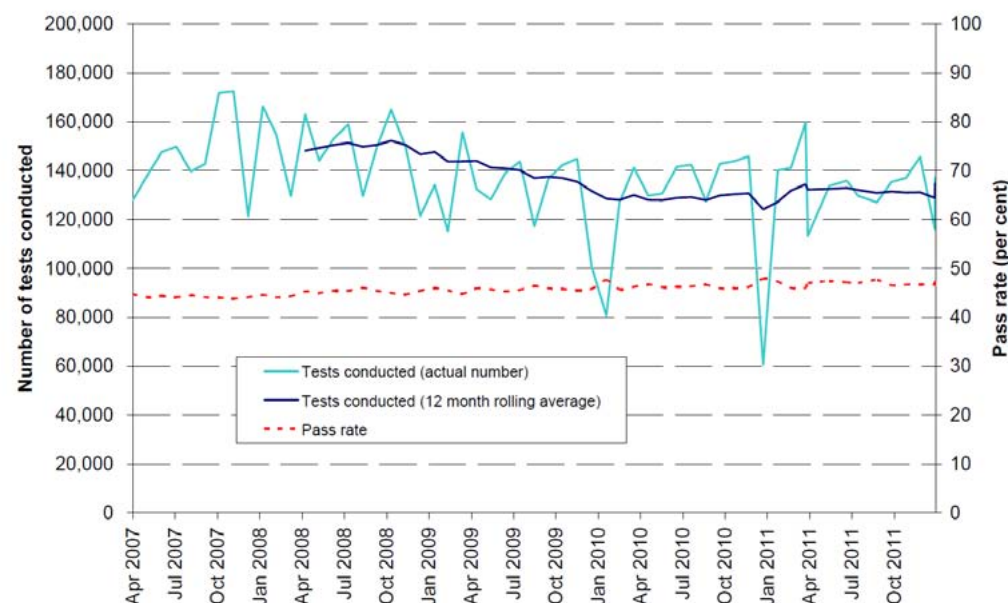
Vocational tests

- 46,549 large goods vehicle (LGV) tests were carried out - with the pass rate for women 2.1% higher than that for men, although they accounted for only one in every 13 test passes
- 8,456 practical passenger carrying vehicle (PCV) tests were carried out, 1.1% down on 2010/11

Instructor tests

- the number of potential driving instructors (PDIs) who take their ADI qualifying tests has decreased since 2007/08, especially over the last two years. From 2010/11 to 2011/12 the numbers of Part 2 and Part 3 tests conducted have fallen by 33% and 26% respectively
- 8,972 Part 3 tests were carried out, with the pass rate remaining around 30%

Practical car tests: Great Britain, April 2007 to March 2012 (Driving and Riding Tests web table DRT0201)



See the full information on the DfT website at <http://bit.ly/zMeqfy>.

The DSA invites special needs groups to discuss theory test

The DSA held a fact finding meeting in June to help ensure the theory test is accessible to people with special needs

Members of the driver training industry and representatives from special needs groups, including the British Dyslexia Association, the British Deaf Association and Mencap, attended the meeting.



Representatives from DVLA also attended the meeting to discuss the process of gaining a provisional licence.

Craig Riggs, the DSA's head of equality and engagement, said:

"We have a duty to serve all members of society, irrespective of background or protected characteristic. So it's important that we understand the issues that are faced by specific groups.

"The meeting was very informative and both sides learnt a lot. We talked through the current processes and identified positive aspects, as well as those where there may be scope for improvement."

"Thank you for inviting The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust to attend the meeting. We were very pleased to be involved and welcome the opportunity for continued involvement."

Lia Border
Dyslexia-SpLD Trust

It's hoped that the meeting will help share and improve understanding about the issues that certain candidate groups face, and improve the accessibility of the learning to drive process, whilst maintaining the integrity and consistency of the test.

"Thanks for a very professionally-run meeting. It was excellent in nearly all aspects, and I regard it as an honour to be able to take these issues forward."

Julia Malkin MBE
Director,
Training and Development Excel Academy
of Leicester



Jelly gets the job!

The DSA awards contract to refresh hazard perception clips using CGI

The contract to refresh the hazard perception part of the driving theory test by introducing computer generated image (CGI) technology has been awarded to London-based company Jelly.

DSA's Chief Executive Rosemary Thew said:

"The hazards presented in the current clips are still relevant but the image quality is not as clear or defined as the quality available today. We are looking forward to presenting clips that are fresh and up-to-date.

"The use of computer-generated images means that we can include situations with vulnerable road users such as children, cyclists and motorcyclists without risk to them or a camera crew."

The first stage of the contract will involve refreshing the current video images and putting them into CGI format, which will be introduced in August 2013. There won't be any change to the format of the test or the way it's scored.

The second stage of the work will enable the DSA to create a brand new batch of clips featuring hazards not previously included in the test. The agency hopes to introduce these into the test during 2015.

Peter Weddell-Hall, head of e-assessment, said:

"Using the CGI format gives us much more flexibility in terms of what hazards we can reproduce.

"We don't have to depend on fine weather and good light for filming. We can use scenarios that are too dangerous to film, and they can be created in all kinds of conditions, such as snow, fog and rain, making the clips more real."



A round up of this month's news

Start getting local news

Update your DSA Direct account to start getting local news for where you live and work - including updates about your local test centres. All you need is your email address. Go to <http://bit.ly/dsa-direct> - it takes about a minute to do.

You can register and sign-up for DSA Direct there if you haven't already.

New ID checking service for CRB checks

A new identification document checking service for ADIs applying for their criminal record checks has been launched by the DSA, in conjunction with its contractor TMG CRB and the Post Office. More information can be found on Business Link at <http://bit.ly/MG9sUt>.

There's no need for ADIs to send original or photocopied documents through the post if they use this method. The agency has also found that 80% of online applications are completed within 10 days of submission to the Criminal Records Bureau.

Independent driving diagrams

In response to feedback from instructors and candidates, examiners no longer automatically show a diagram to the candidate during the independent driving section of the driving test. They do still, however, ask if the candidate would like to see one and show it to them if they ask for it.

New title added to the e-book library

The publication 'Driving - the essential skills' is now available as an ebook. It was already downloadable as a PDF, but this is the first of the DSA's manuals to join The Official Highway Code on light and convenient ereaders like the Kindle. The ebook is currently enjoying a customer rating of 4.6 out of 5 on Amazon and is available through TSO at <http://bit.ly/OymT9L>.

Get in touch

For the latest DSA news and information visit dft.gov.uk/dsa

Information and services for candidates: direct.gov.uk/drivingtest

Information and services for driver and rider trainers: businesslink.gov.uk/adi

Contact details for DSA: dft.gov.uk/dsa/about/contact

What do you think of this issue of Despatch ezine? Email your comments to pressoffice@dsa.gsi.gov.uk



Follow us on twitter:
twitter.com/DSAgovuk



Follow us on Facebook
facebook.com/dsagovuk



View DSA videos on YouTube:
youtube.com/dsagov