



Department for Transport

Driver and rider testing and instructor statistics: Quarter 4 2015/16 (January to March 2016)

About this release

This publication presents information on the numbers and pass rates for driving and riding theory and practical tests conducted in Great Britain to 31 March 2016 and statistics from the Approved Driver Instructor (ADI) register and Integrated Register of Driver Trainers.

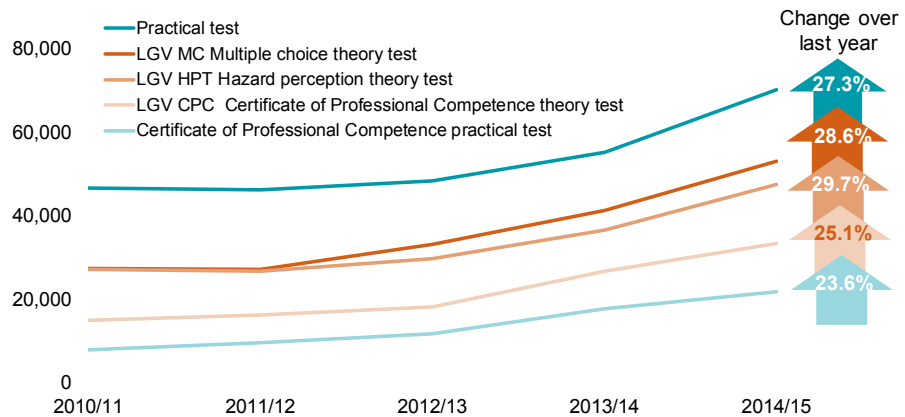
These statistics are derived from data held by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), which administers the driving test and training schemes in GB.

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The number of large goods vehicle (LGV) driving tests conducted increased by between 24% to 30% in the financial year 2015/16 compared to 2014/15.

Total number of LGV tests conducted: GB, annually



The large increase in LGV testing over the last three years reflects the high demand of professional lorry drivers with the economic recovery and ageing workforce of current drivers.

During the latest quarter, January to March 2016:

441,599 practical tests were conducted

↓ **- 1.6%** fewer than the same quarter last year

89% of practical tests were car driving tests

LGV & motorcycle tests continue to see large increases in the number of practical tests

511,900 theory tests were conducted

↑ **+ 1.3%** more than the same quarter last year

90% of theory tests were car tests

LGV tests continue to see large increases. Car & motorcycle tests increased by more than 10%

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Annual test statistics, by gender and age

This page summarises some of the characteristics of driving test candidates, based on data for the whole financial year 2015-16.



Car theory and practical tests

Figure 1. Car pass rates, by gender: GB, 2015/16

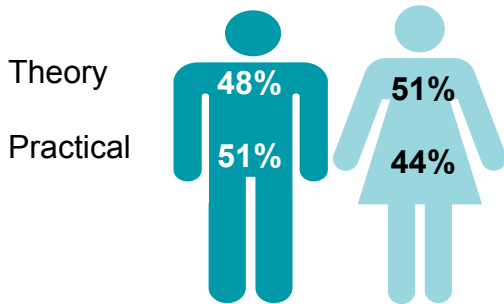
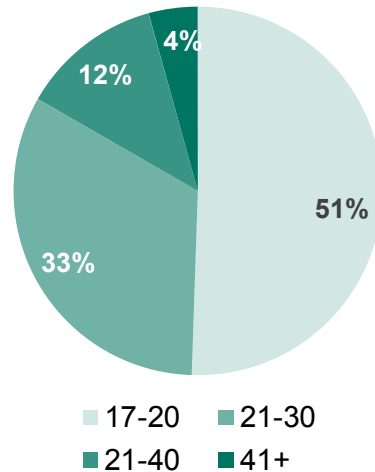


Figure 2. Practical car test candidates, by age group: GB, 2015/16



Young people are far more likely to take car driving tests than any other age group.

Car pass rates vary between men and women and type of test. Overall, women have a higher pass rate in the theory test, whilst men have higher rate of success in the practical test.

All practical tests

Shown in **figure 3 & 4**, below, in 2015/16 the number of men taking practical tests far exceeded the number of women in all tests apart from cars. However as car tests made up most of the market (87%), in total, women accounted for nearly half (47%) of all people taking practical tests.

Figure 3. Candidates for car and other practical driving tests, by gender: GB, 2015/16

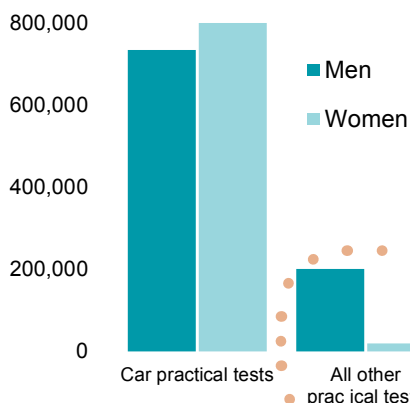
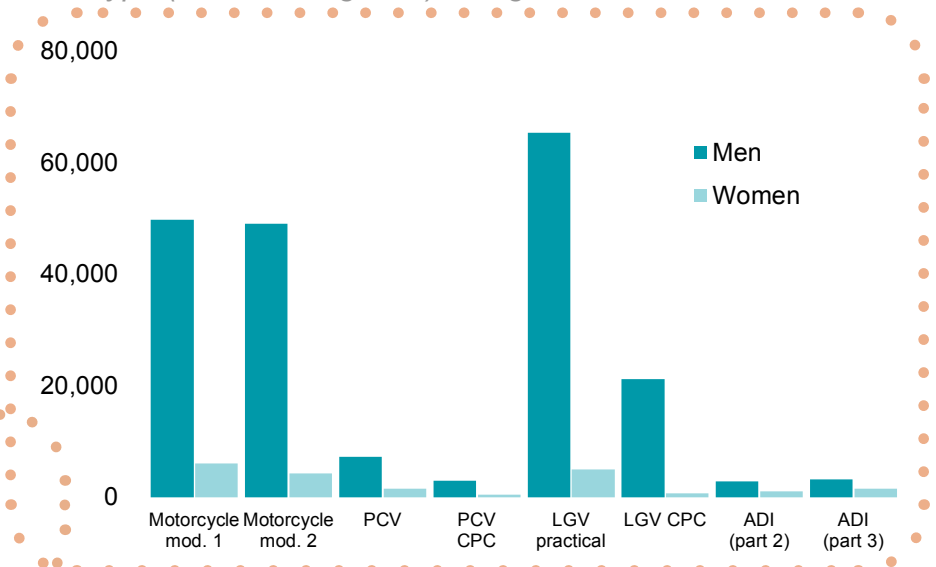
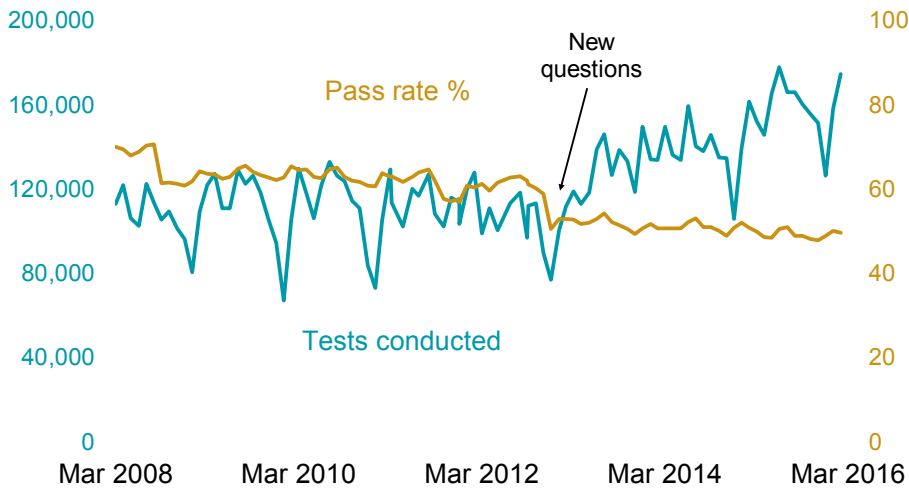


Figure 4. Candidates for practical driving tests, by test type (not including cars) and gender: GB, 2015/16



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Figure 5. Theory car tests: GB, monthly, Mar 2008-Mar 2016

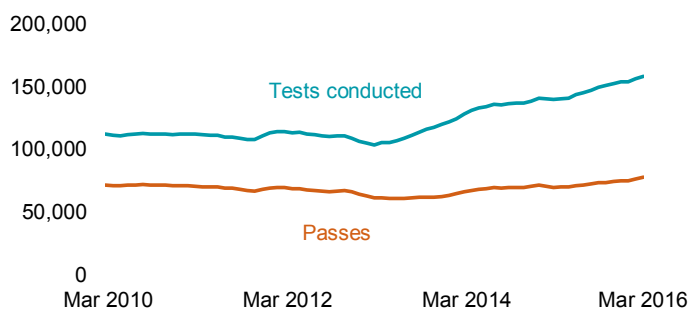


What does figure 5 show?

The number of car theory tests taken was fairly level from 2008 until the beginning of 2013, where it began to increase. This increase will initially have been influenced by the changes to the questions described in the panel to the right.

These changes resulted in a drop in pass rates, and therefore more candidates taking retests - this is reflected in the relatively level trend for test passes. shown. Retakes are associated with the drop in pass rate, as illustrated by the fact that the number of passes year-on-year has continued relatively unchanged (**figure 6**).

Figure 6. Theory cars tests: GB, 12-month rolling averages, Mar 2008- Mar 2016



encouraged candidates to delay tests until after this date, to take advantage of the lower fees.

In addition, there was a slight decrease in test fees from 1st October 2014, which may have

Tests needed to drive a car

Candidates must pass both a theory and a practical test to obtain a full car driving licence.

Changes

In January 2012, the car theory question bank was withdrawn from publication, and in January 2013, the first sets of questions that had never been published were introduced into the test.

From April 2014, the use of voiceovers and translators for foreign language tests was withdrawn.

Data tables

Theory car tests

drt5201

Practical car tests

drt0201

Driving licence holding

nts0202



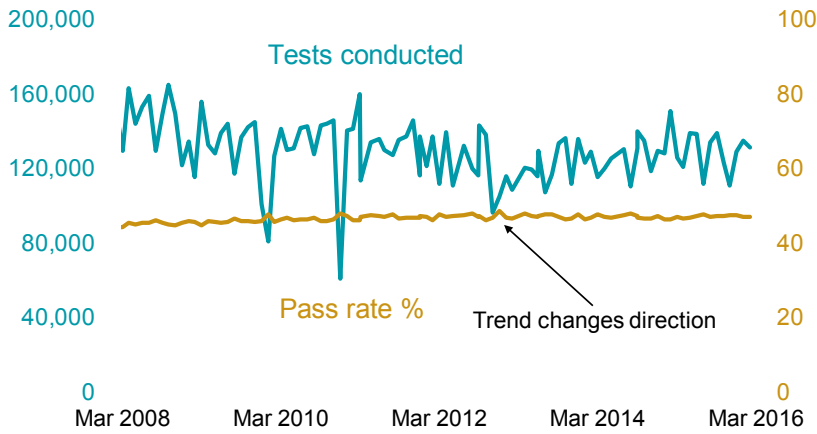
Theory tests: Jan-Mar 16

459,376 conducted
+ 12.9 % compared to same qtr 2015

227,908 passed
+ 9.4 % compared to same qtr 2015

49.6% pass rate
- 1.6 percentage points compared to same qtr 15

Figure 7. Car practical tests: GB, monthly, Mar 2008-2016



Car practical tests: Jan-Mar 16

395,080 conducted

- 3.1 % compared to same qtr 2015

185,988 passed

- 2.0 % compared to same qtr 2015

47.1% pass rate

+ 1.0 percentage points compared to same qtr 15

What does figure 7 show?

There was a long-term downward trend in practical tests conducted of 18.5 per cent between 2007/08 and 2012/13.

The trend changed direction at the start of 2013, which was probably influenced by the upturn in the economy, but pre-recession figures have not been reached. The number of tests conducted in January to March 2016 was still 12.4% lower than the corresponding quarter in 2008. Young drivers play a huge role in the trends over time (see below) as the peak ages for taking driving tests are 17 to 20 (see **figure 2**).

The car practical test pass rate has changed very little over recent years, so the trend in test passes closely mirrors that for tests conducted.

Young people

Demographics changes

A demographic trend of declining birth rates during the 1990s means that there are now fewer young people in this peak age group (see **figure 8**). Population data suggests this trend is likely to continue until late in the current decade, before reversing.

Young drivers

Data from the National Travel Survey show a downward trend in the proportion of young adults (aged 17-20) holding full licences since around 2007.

The economic recession from 2008 may have discouraged some people from taking a test, but it has been suggested that this is also part of a wider, international social trend towards lower licence holding amongst the young.

Figure 8. Proportion of the population aged 17-20: GB, various years (%)¹

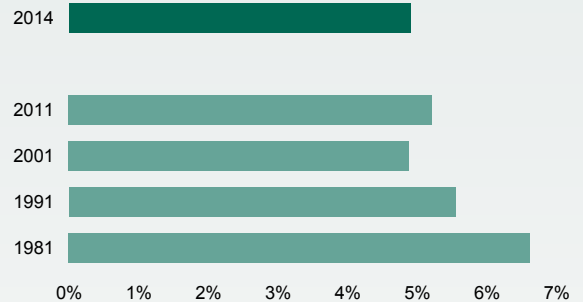
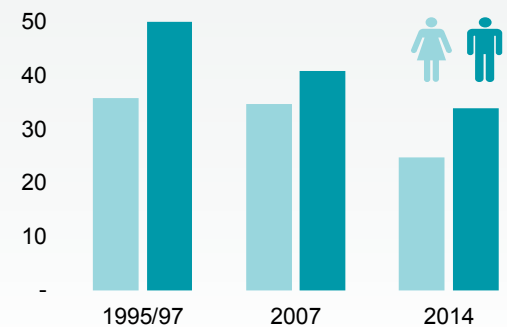


Figure 9. Driving license holding in age group 17-20 by gender, England (%)²

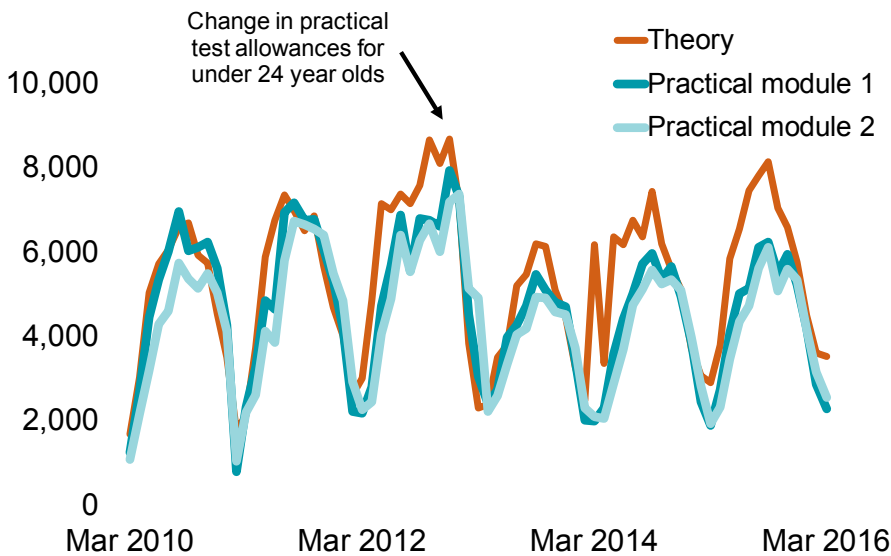


¹ Office for National Statistics

² Figures for 1995 onwards are based on weighted data, the National Travel Survey (table NTS0202)

Motorcycle tests

Figure 10. Motorcycle tests conducted, Great Britain, monthly, 2010-2016

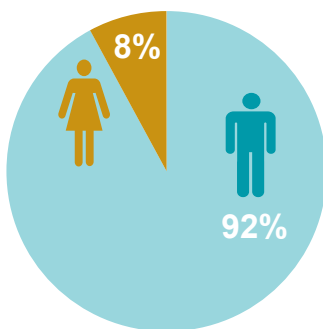


What does figure 10 show?

There are big peaks and troughs in motorcycle tests conducted across the year. Motorcycle tests numbers are far more seasonal than any other vehicles types, with relatively few practical tests booked during the winter months.

There was a surge in all motorcycle tests before 19 January 2013 as candidates attempted to pass before the rule changes described to the top right, and a corresponding trough after this.

Figure 11. Candidates for motorcycle tests, by gender



Between 2013 and 2016 the number of tests conducted has been rising annually. Pass rates across the three tests have stayed at approximately 70% over the last few years.

Men are more than 11 times more likely to take a motorcycle test than women (figure 11).

What tests are there?

Candidates must pass a theory test and both practical tests to obtain a motorcycle licence. Since April 2009 the practical test has consisted of two separate modules.

Changes

From 19 January 2013, a new EU Directive limited the engine size available to riders under the age of 24 at the date of attempting the practical test.

Motorcycle theory tests: Jan-Mar 16

13,786 conducted
+ 10.2 % compared to same qtr 2015

9,954 passed
+ 10.0 % compared to same qtr 2015

72.1% pass rate
- 0.2 percentage points compared to same qtr 15

Data tables

Theory motorcycle tests

drt5401 drt0403

Practical motorcycle tests

drt0401 drt0421



Motorcycle practical

Key statistics Jan-Mar 16



Module 1 9,620 conducted
7,005 passed
72.8% pass rate

Module 2 9,112 conducted
6,496 passed
71.3% pass rate

Change on Jan-Mar 15

+ 10.8 %

+ 14.3 %

+ 1.0 percentage points

+ 18.8 %

+ 17.5 %

- 1.0 percentage points

Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) tests

LGV theory tests: Jan-Mar 16

Change on Jan-Mar 15

Multiple choice



Tests conducted	13,008	+ 12.8 %
Tests passed	8,553	+ 9.9 %
Pass rate	65.7 %	- 1.8 percentage points

Hazard perception



Tests conducted	11,450	+ 9.1 %
Tests passed	8,969	+ 11.0 %
Pass rate	78.3 %	+ 1.4 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence



Tests conducted	8,407	+ 24.5 %
Tests passed	5,678	+ 26.9 %
Pass rate	67.5 %	+ 1.3 percentage

What tests are there?

To obtain a licence to drive a Large Goods Vehicle on the road (a 'vocational' licence), a candidate must pass two theory tests and a practical test.

Driver CPC

Since 10 September 2009, in order to drive an LGV professionally (i.e. as the main purpose of one's job) it has also been necessary to hold a Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC), which requires an additional theory (case study) and practical (safety demonstration) test. Professional drivers already holding a vocational LGV licence before this date qualified for Driver CPC automatically under 'acquired rights'.

All professional drivers must also do 35 hours periodic training every 5 years to retain their CPC.

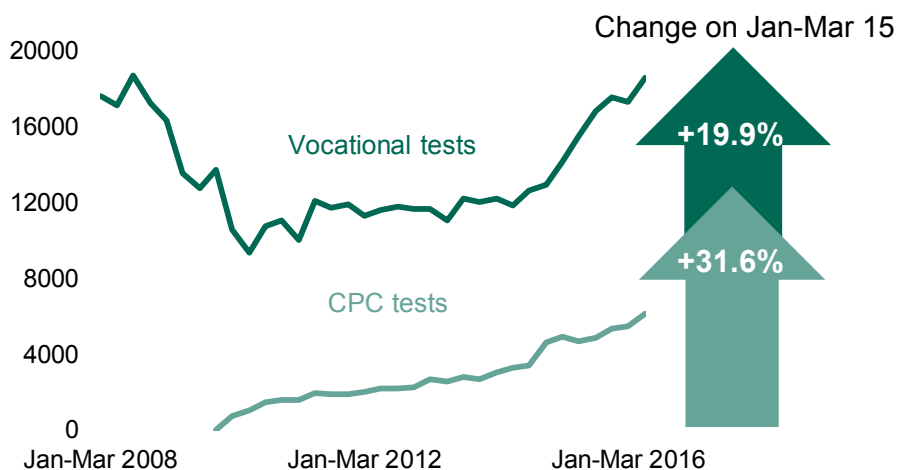
Other changes

In May 2013, the Multiple Choice theory test started using questions that had not previously been published, leading to a drop in the pass rate.

Data tables

Theory LGV tests
drt5501 drt5502
Practical LGV tests
drt0501 drt0502

Figure 12. Number of LGV practical tests conducted: GB, quarterly



What does figure 12 show?

The number of LGV practical tests conducted fell by 43 per cent between April to June 2008 and the same period in 2010, no doubt largely as a result of the recession. In comparison, in the last three years, demand for all LGV testing has increased rapidly. This reflects increasing demand for professional lorry drivers with the economic recovery, and recruitment drives to replace the aging workforce of drivers.

LGV practical tests: Key statistics Jan-Mar 16

Change on Jan-Mar 15

LGV practical



Tests conducted	18,565	+ 19.9 %
Tests passed	10,410	+ 20.8 %
Pass rate	56.1 %	+ 1.0 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)



Tests conducted	6,156	+ 31.6 %
Tests passed	5,438	+ 33.6 %
Pass rate	88.3 %	+ 1.0 percentage points

Passenger Carrying Vehicle tests

PCV practical tests: Jan-Mar 16

Change on Jan-Mar 15

PCV practical



Tests conducted	2,239	+ 11.0 %
Tests passed	1,299	+ 14.4 %
Pass rate	58.0 %	+ 1.0 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)



Tests conducted	827	+ 11.8 %
Tests passed	714	+ 10.4 %
Pass rate	86.0 %	- 1.0 percentage points

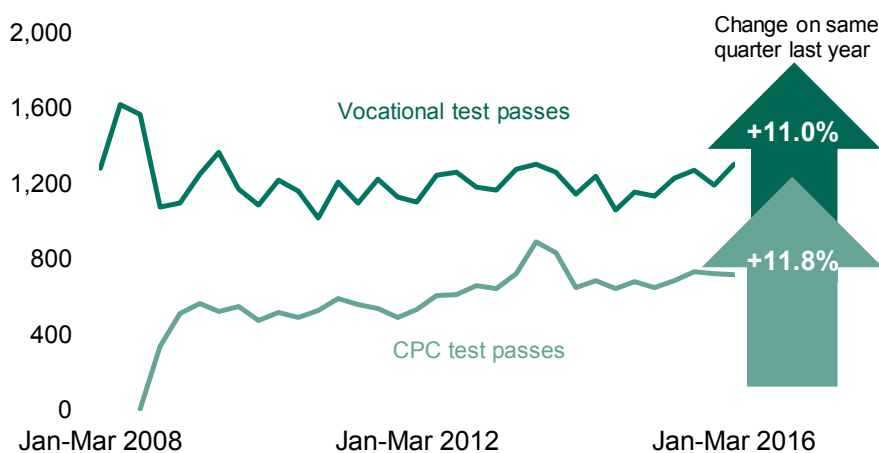
What tests are there?

The types of test required for PCVs, including the CPC requirements, are similar to those described for LGVs above, except that the PCV CPC requirement was introduced a year earlier, on 10 September 2008.

Other changes

In May 2013, the Multiple Choice theory test started using questions that had not previously been published, leading to a drop in the pass rate.

Figure 13. PCV practical test passes: Great Britain, quarterly



What does figure 13 show?

The number of PCV practical test passes has remained fairly stable over recent years, but the numbers of passes were higher in the last quarter than they were in the same quarter of the previous year.

Data tables

Theory PCV tests

drt5601 drt5602

Practical PCV tests

drt0601 drt0602

PCV theory tests: Key statistics Jan-Mar 16

Change on Jan-Mar 15

Multiple choice



Tests conducted	2,209	+ 3.4 %
Tests passed	1,506	+ 4.0 %
Pass rate	68.2 %	+ 0.4 percentage points

Hazard perception



Tests conducted	1,998	+ 3.2 %
Tests passed	1,599	+ 6.7 %
Pass rate	80.0 %	+ 2.6 percentage points

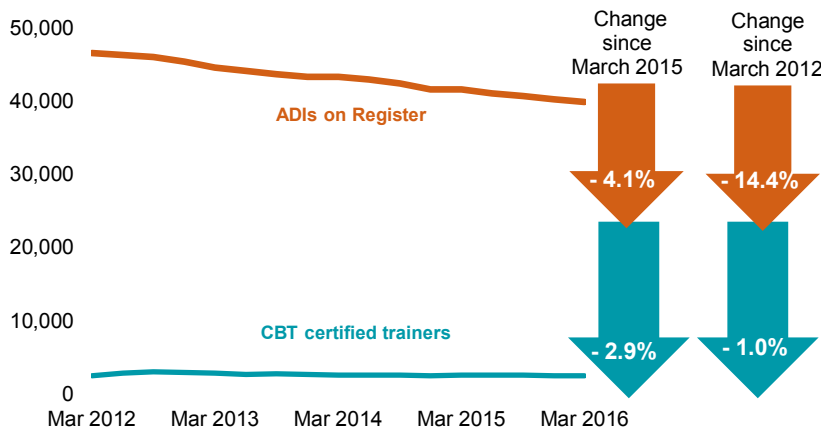
Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)



Tests conducted	1,666	+ 6.3 %
Tests passed	857	+ 9.0 %
Pass rate	51.4 %	+ 1.3 percentage points

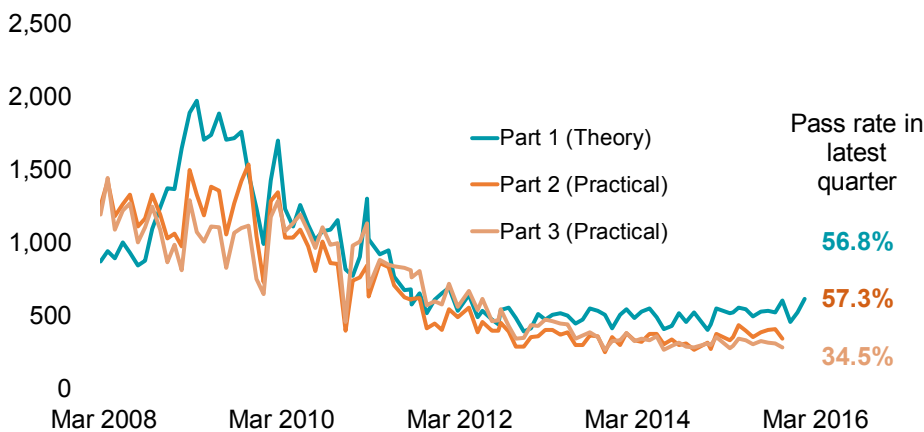
Driver and riding instructors

Figure 14. ADIs on register and current CBT certified trainers: GB, monthly



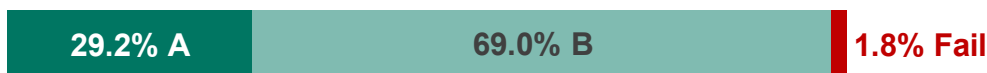
As at 31st March 2016, there were **39,878 Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs)** on the register and **2,471 Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) certified trainers**. These numbers follow the downward trend of recent years.

Figure 15. ADI tests conducted: GB, monthly, March 2008 - March 2016



There was a large peak in ADI theory tests around 2009, which may have been due to individuals considering a career change during the recession. The number of people applying to be an ADI followed a downward pattern until 2013, where a slight upturn for theory tests began and has continued.

Figure 16. ADI standard check results: New standards. Jan 2016-Mar 2016



During January to March 2016, 1,791 standards checks were conducted on ADIs, taking the total with a grade under the new standards to 17,985. Of 107 CBT instructor check tests conducted during January to March 2015, 75 per cent had a satisfactory result.

What are ADIs and CBT?

To become an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI), candidates must complete one theory and two practical tests, after which they can apply to be added to the ADI statutory Register. Registration lasts for four years before renewal is required.

Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) must be undertaken by all learner motorcycle and moped riders before driving on the road, and can only be delivered by trainers holding a certificate issued by DVSA.

Standards checks

ADIs must undergo a standards check during each 4-year registration period. A new standards check was introduced on 7 April 2014, with a new grading structure, Grade A - an overall high standard of instruction, Grade B - a sufficient level of instruction, Fail - an unsatisfactory performance. Grades at last check test are still relevant for those ADIs who have yet to take the new standards check. The old grades ran from 1 (extremely poor overall performance) to 6 (very high overall performance).

CBT instructors also undergo check tests.

Data tables

Instructors

drt0701-drt0721
drt5701
ins0101-ins0103
ins0501-ins0504

Background Notes

1. This statistical release is published by the Department for Transport based on statistics produced by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.
2. The Driver and Rider Tests and Instructors web page provides detailed data tables for this series - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/driving-tests-and-instructors-statistics>.
3. Practical test categories included are B (car), B1 (tricycles and quadricycles), A, A1 and A2 (motorcycles), C, C1 (medium and large goods vehicles), C+E, C1+E (medium/large goods vehicles with trailers), D, D1 (minibuses and buses), D+E and D1+E (minibuses / buses with trailers).
4. The next release of statistics will be published in September 2016 and will provide information for the first quarter of the 2016 financial year (April to June 2016).
6. These official statistics are not designated National Statistics. They are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
7. Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the Pre-release access list.
8. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency also publishes operational data by test centre - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/driving-test-operational-statistics>.
9. Additional data on ethnicity of candidates are released via www.data.gov.uk. This information is not published as part of the statistical release as only circa 15 per cent of candidates declare their ethnicity. It is, therefore, highly likely that the information is subject to self-selection and reporting biases and neither the DVSA nor DfT would recommend that users rely on these data being a true reflection of the ethnicity of all candidates. The data are being provided simply for information and as they are frequently requested under the Freedom of Information Act.
10. For further information on the impact of the EU 3rd Directive to rider licensing please visit - <https://www.gov.uk/ride-motorcycle-moped/bike-categories-ages-and-licence-requirements>.