



Department for Transport

Driver and rider testing and instructor statistics: Quarter 4 2014/15 (January to March 2015)

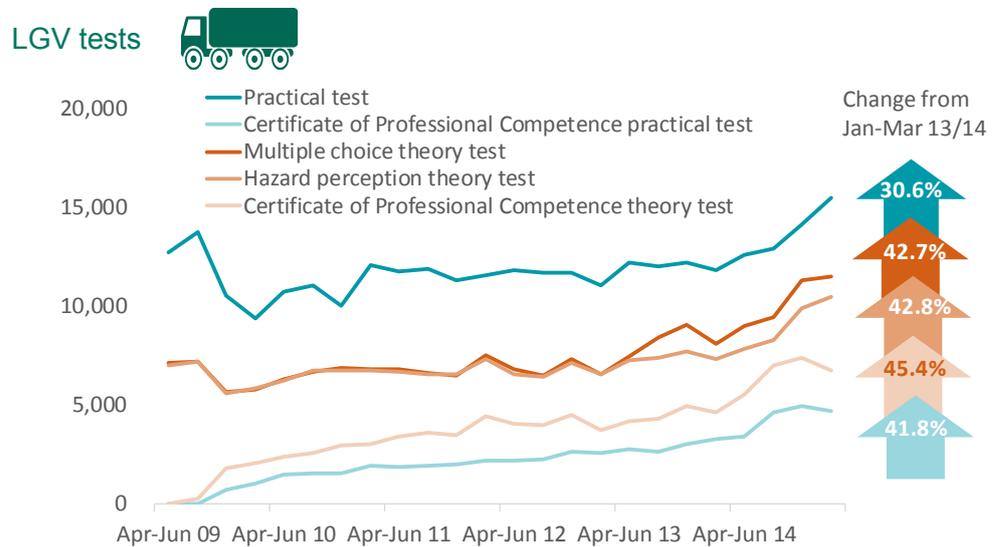
About this release

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 2015 and statistics from the ADI register and the Integrated Register of Driver Trainers.

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

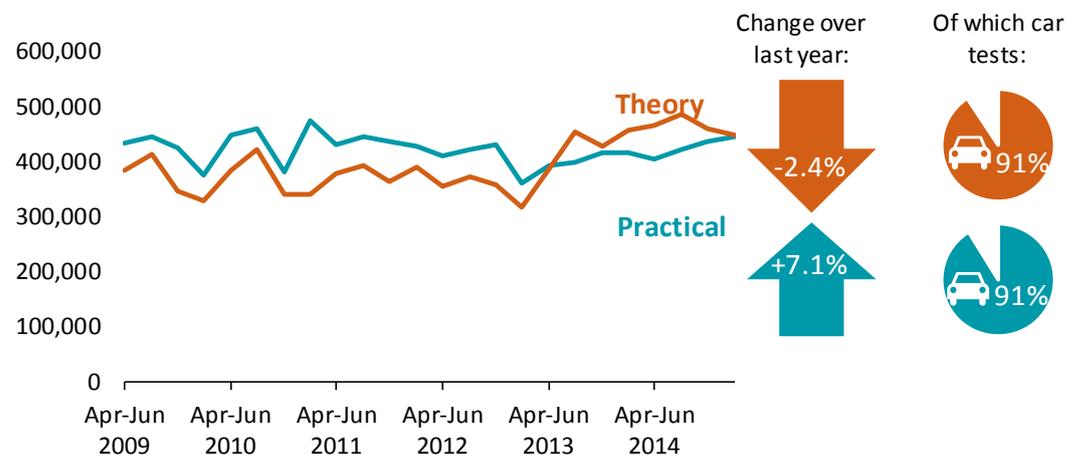
There have been large year-on-year increases in all of the Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) tests conducted over the last few quarters, reflecting the improving economy and current high demand for new drivers.

During January to March 2015, 49 thousand LGV practical and theory tests of all types were conducted; 39% more than in the same quarter of 2014.



More generally, during the three months January to March 2015, 447 thousand practical driving tests were conducted in Great Britain, and 448 thousand driving theory tests. The great majority of these were car driving tests.

All driving tests



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Car theory and practical tests

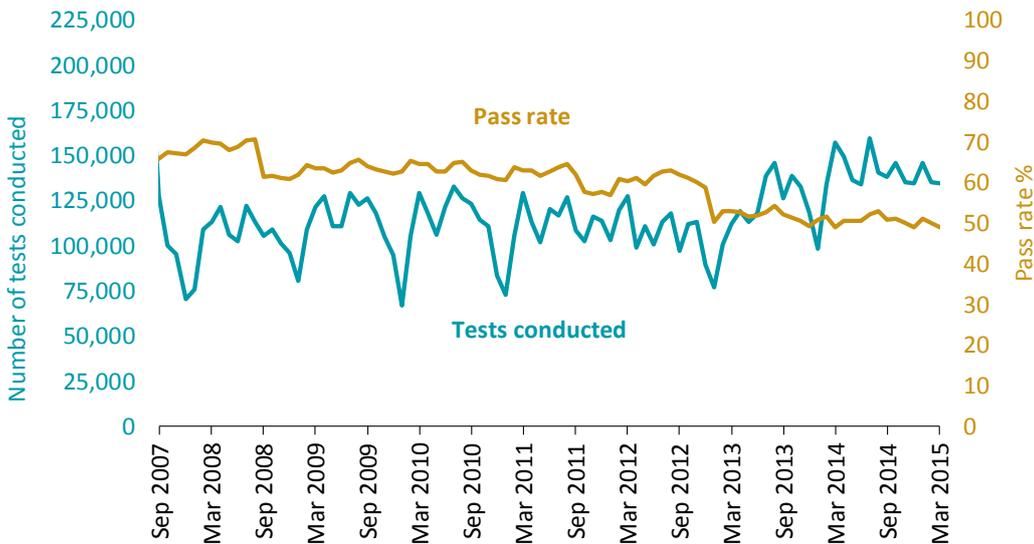
Car theory tests Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

Tests conducted	406,744	- 2.6%
Tests passed	208,292	- 2.3%
Pass rate	51.2 %	+ 0.2 percentage points

Car theory tests

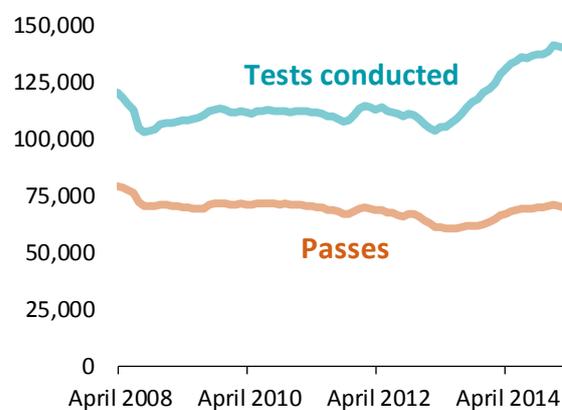


The pass rate for car theory tests dropped substantially at the beginning of 2013 with the question changes described to the right. From 1st October 2014, test fees decreased slightly, although this doesn't seem to have affected test volumes.

The long term trend in theory tests conducted was fairly level from 2008 until the beginning of 2013, then began to increase, continuing over the following year. This increase was largely due to the increasing number of retakes associated with the drop in the pass rate, as illustrated by the fact that the number of passes has continued relatively unchanged.

The number of theory tests conducted has begun to level off again in recent quarters.

Theory car tests: 12-month rolling averages



What tests are there?

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 theory test.

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

Data tables

Car tests

drt0201, drt0203
drt5201, drt5203

Car practical tests Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

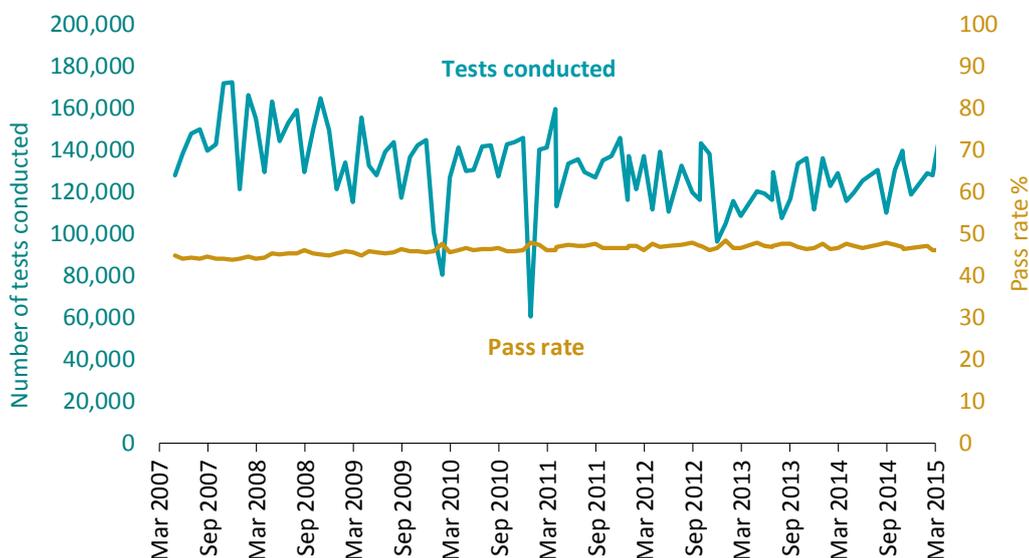
Tests conducted	407,904	+ 5.2 %
Tests passed	189,758	+ 4.4 %
Pass rate	46.5 %	- 0.3 % percentage points

Factors influencing the car test trend

A demographic trend of declining birth rates during the 1990s means that there are now fewer young people in the peak age group for driving tests (17-20). Population data suggests this trend is likely to continue until late in the current decade, before reversing.

Data from the National Travel Survey show a clear 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.

Car practical tests



There has been a long-term downward trend in practical tests conducted – of 18.5 per cent between 2007/08 and 2012/13. Several factors are likely to have influenced this, as discussed in the panel to the right.

By contrast, in recent quarters there have been increases in the numbers of tests conducted, which were probably influenced by the upturn in the economy. The number of tests conducted in 2014/15 remained 13.0% lower than in 2007/08, despite the recent increases.

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

The practical car test pass rate in the last quarter was 43.0 per cent for women and 50.2 per cent for men.

Women made up 47.7 per cent of successful candidates during October to December, although they took 51.5 per cent of the tests conducted.

Car practical pass rate



Car practical test passes



Motorcycle tests

Motorcycle theory tests Key statistics Jan-Mar 15

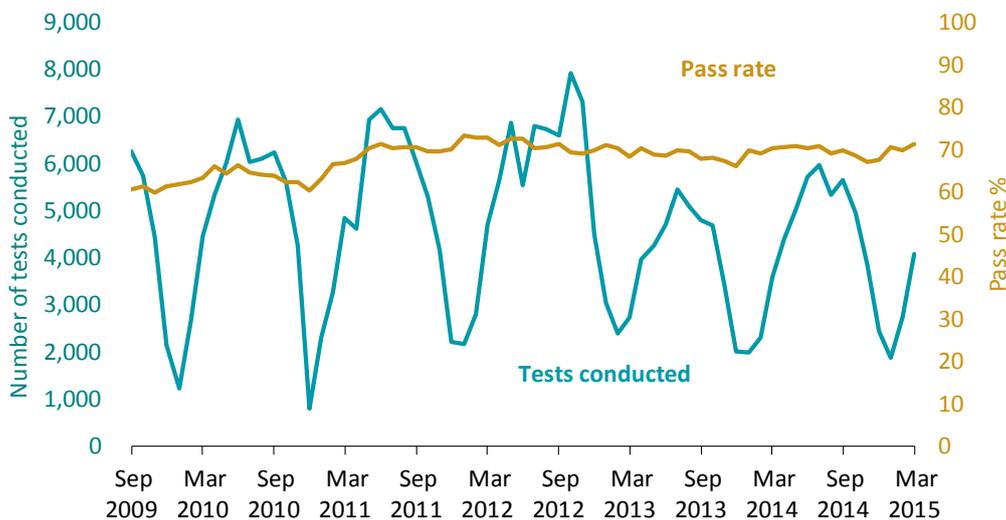


Change on
Jan-Mar 14

Tests conducted	12,506	- 21.1 %
Tests passed	9,046	- 24.2 %
Pass rate	72.3 %	- 3.0 percentage points

There was a surge in both theory and practical motorcycle tests before 19 January 2013 as candidates attempted to pass before the rule changes described to the right, and a corresponding trough after this. The substantial increases in test numbers in the latest quarter since the same period in the previous year reflect a return to more normal patterns after this trough, but may also be influenced by the improvement in the economic situation.

Motorcycle Module 1 practical tests



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.

Data tables

Motorcycle tests
drt0401-drt0423
drt5401, drt5403

All driving tests tend to be affected by the weather - there tend to be far fewer tests during bad winter weather for example, but motorcycle tests numbers are far more seasonal than any others, with relatively few practical tests booked during the winter months.

Motorcycle practical tests Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

Module 1

Tests conducted	8,681	+ 10.3 %
Tests passed	6,130	+ 11.8 %
Pass rate	70.6 %	+ 0.9 percentage points

Module 2

Tests conducted	7,668	+ 9.2 %
Tests passed	5,528	+ 9.9 %
Pass rate	72.1 %	+ 0.5 percentage points

Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) tests

LGV theory tests

Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

Multiple choice

Tests conducted	11,534	+ 42.7 %
Tests passed	7,781	+ 39.9 %
Pass rate	67.5 %	- 1.4 percentage points

Hazard perception

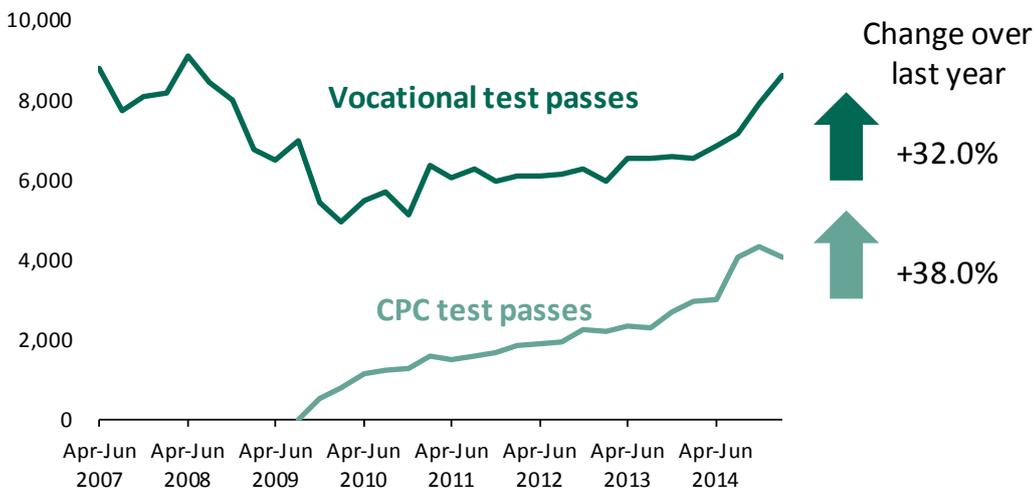
Tests conducted	10,497	+ 42.8 %
Tests passed	8,079	+ 38.1 %
Pass rate	77.0 %	- 2.6 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	6,753	+ 45.5 %
Tests passed	4,475	+ 44.4 %
Pass rate	66.3 %	- 0.5 percentage points

The number of LGV practical test passes fell quite markedly up to the beginning of 2009, no doubt largely as a result of the recession. Since then there has been a slow but fairly steady increase, while the number of CPC passes has also increased steadily, and somewhat faster. This is likely to reflect increasing demand for professional lorry drivers with the economic recovery. In the most recent quarters, passes for both tests have shown a more marked rise, indicating more growth in this sector.

LGV practical tests



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

LGV tests
drt0501-drt0503
drt5501-drt5503

LGV practical tests

Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

LGV practical

Tests conducted	15,481	+ 30.6 %
Tests passed	8,615	+ 32.0 %
Pass rate	55.6 %	+ 0.6 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	4,679	+ 41.8 %
Tests passed	4,070	+ 38.0 %
Pass rate	87.0 %	- 2.4 percentage points

Passenger Carrying Vehicle tests

PCV theory tests

Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

Multiple choice

Tests conducted	2,136	+ 11.7 %
Tests passed	1,448	+ 11.3 %
Pass rate	67.8 %	- 0.2 percentage points

Hazard perception

Tests conducted	1,936	+ 6.4 %
Tests passed	1,499	+ 6.6 %
Pass rate	77.4 %	+ 0.1 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

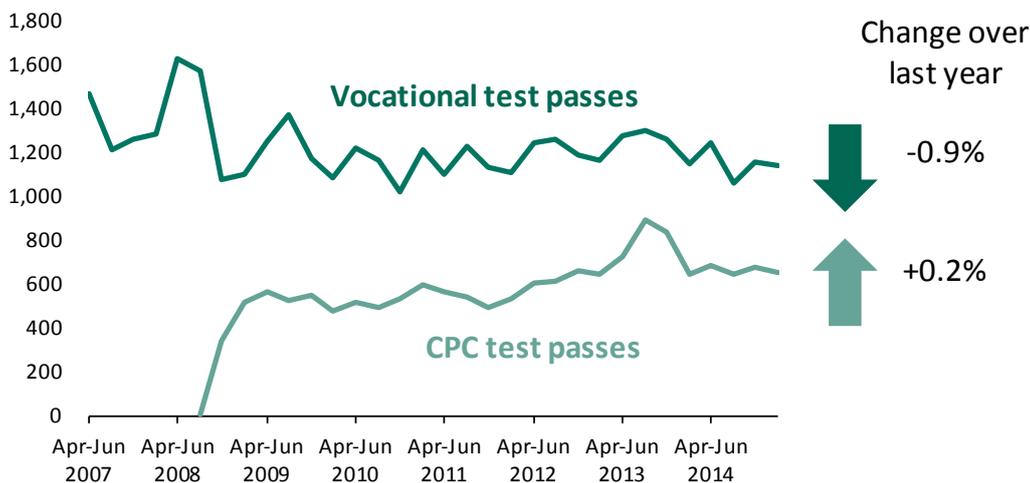
Tests conducted	1,567	+1.5 %
Tests passed	786	+12.0 %
Pass rate	50.2 %	+ 4.7 percentage points

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.

The number of PCV practical test passes has remained fairly stable over recent years.

PCV practical tests



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

PCV tests

drt0601-drt0603
drt5601-drt5603

PCV practical tests

Key statistics Jan-Mar 15



Change on
Jan-Mar 14

LGV practical

Tests conducted	2,018	- 4.3 %
Tests passed	1,135	- 0.9 %
Pass rate	56.2 %	+ 2.0 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	740	- 0.3 %
Tests passed	647	+ 0.2 %
Pass rate	87.4 %	+ 0.4 percentage points

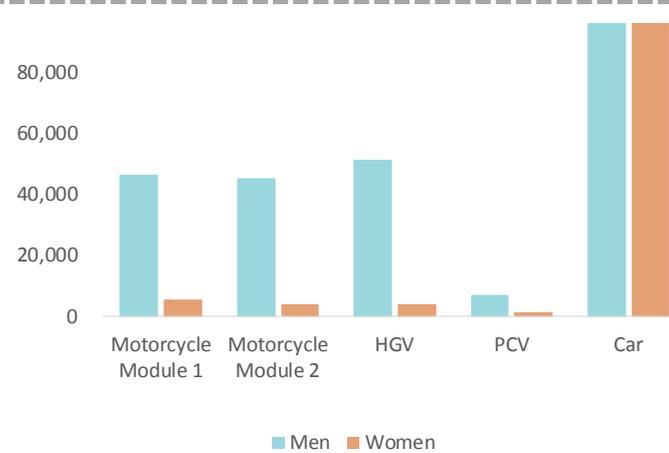
Age and gender of candidates

Candidates for practical driving tests

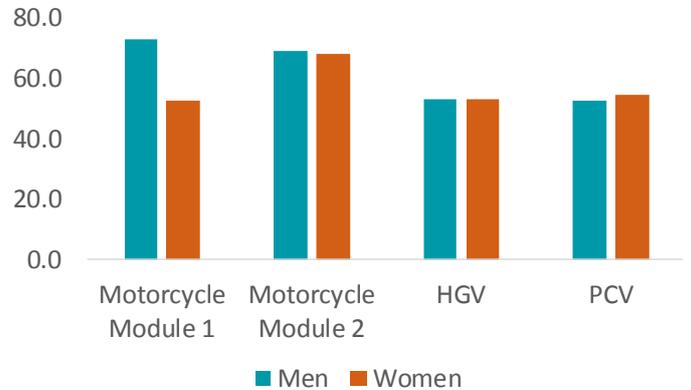


Although more women than men took the car practical test in 2014/15, for other vehicle practical tests, there were far fewer female candidates than male.

The pass rates for men and women for these other vehicle types were very similar except in the case of the module 1 motorcycle test, where the pass rate was 72% for men and 51% for women.



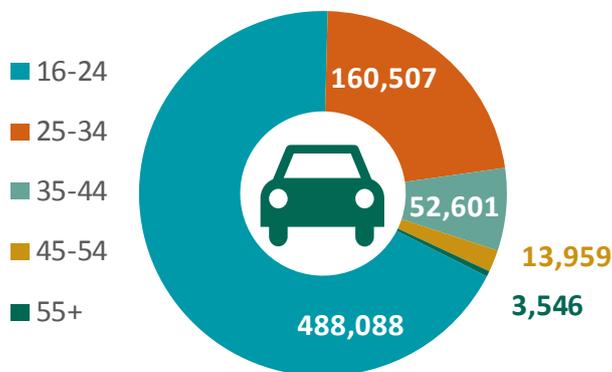
Pass rates for practical driving tests



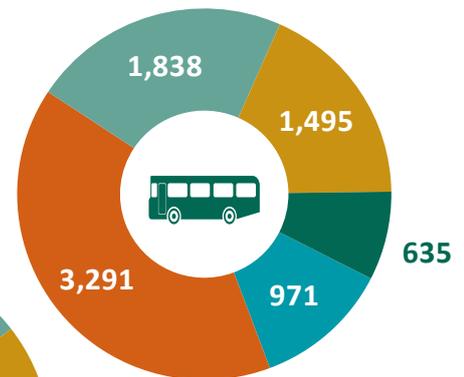
16-24 year olds made up 63% of car practical test candidates in 2014/15, and 68% of those passing.

Candidates for the practical vocational tests were somewhat older, with 40% of both LGV and PCV candidates between 25 and 34.

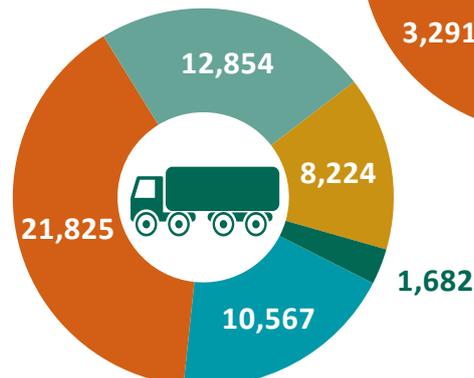
Car practical tests



Practical PCV tests

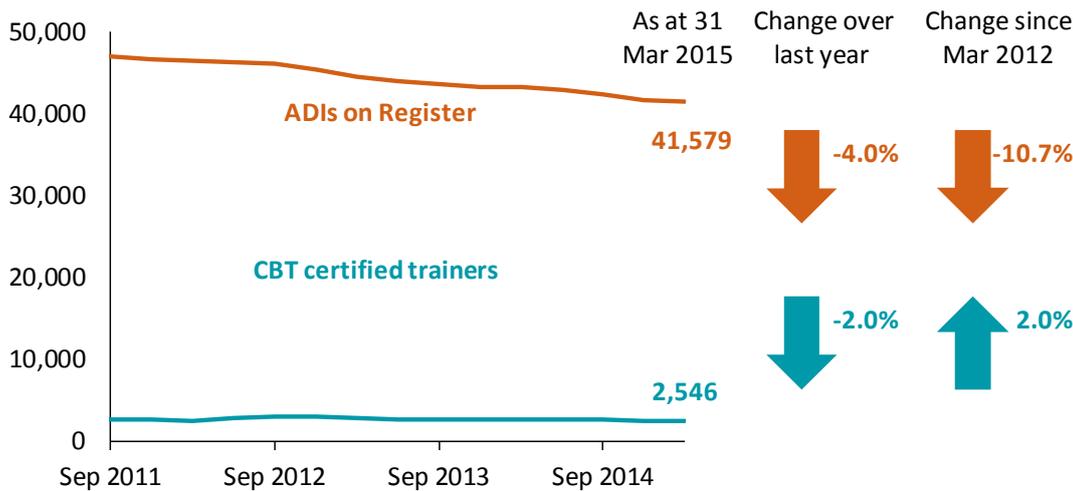


Practical LGV tests



Driver and riding instructors

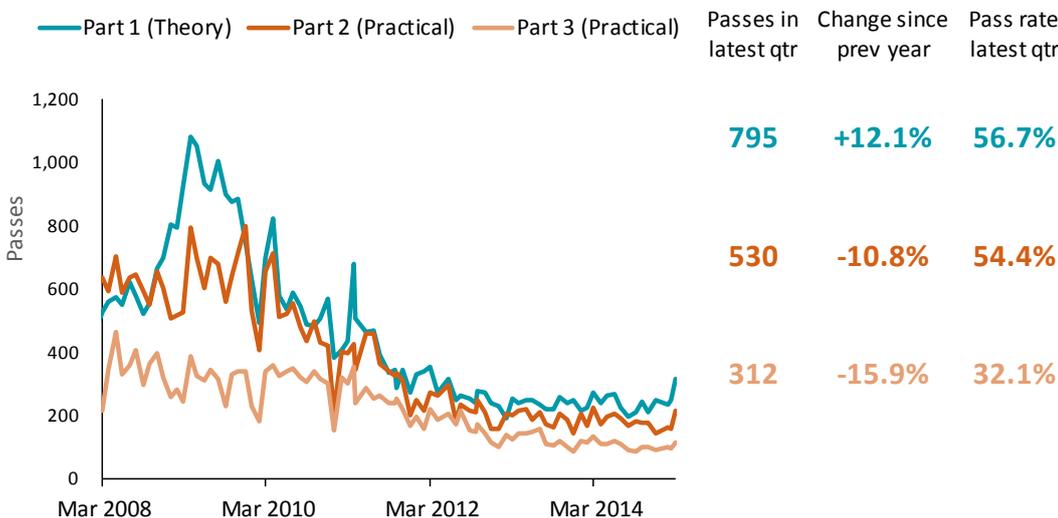
ADIs on Register and current CBT certified trainers



There has been an underlying downward trend in the number of Approved Driving Instructors on the Register in recent years, and also generally in the numbers applying. This may be linked to a reduced demand for instructors, related to the reducing numbers of car practical tests.

There was a large peak in ADI theory test passes around 2009, which was only slightly reflected in increased practical test passes. This may have been due to individuals considering a career change during the recession but not continuing through the full process - it would have been relatively easy to pursue this as far as theory test, but to complete the process is costly and requires a great investment of time and effort.

ADI test passes



During January to March 2015, 2,425 standards checks were conducted on ADIs, taking the total with a grade under the new standards to 9,544. Of these, 27.6 per cent scored an A, 68.8 per cent a B and 3.6 per cent had failed.

Of 99 CBT instructor check tests conducted during October to December, 94 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 further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release, including detailed data tables.
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).
5. The next release of statistics will be published in September 2015 and will provide information for the first quarter of the 2015 financial year (April to June 2015).
4. 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.
6. 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.
7. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency also publishes operational data by test centre - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/driving-test-operational-statistics>.
8. 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.
9. 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>.