

## NASP Questions to DVSA 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

**Q: Is there an update of Fleet training?**

**A: Fleet driver training and assessment is an important part of occupational road safety. This activity provides additional training or assessment to a qualified driver ensuring they are competent to drive a company vehicle. Such assessments are often a condition of commercial motor insurance, condition of employment and an important requirement of driver safety policy.**

**We are currently working with Department for Transport and will provide further information shortly.**

**Q: Do we know if there are to be any Key worker privileges regarding training or testing?**

**A: The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is working with its theory test contract provider, Pearson VUE, to respond to requests for theory tests from organisations such as Ambulance Authorities on behalf of frontline mobile emergency workers who require a driving licence to carry out duties in their employment role.**

**The DVSA will also respond to requests for practical driving tests from organisations on behalf of frontline mobile emergency workers, who require a driving licence to carry out duties in their employment role.**

**This is a limited service subject to examiner resource and is restricted to candidates working in health and social care, and other public bodies involved in work responding to ‘threats to life’ such as the Environment Agency’s flood rescue staff, or local authority gritter truck drivers.**

**The DVSA will contact NHS Trusts to explain how to nominate candidates; candidates cannot apply themselves. Applications from other organisations will be considered if the mobile emergency worker criteria is met.**

**Approved driving instructors and trainers can return to work only for the purpose of supporting a mobile emergency worker with a booked test.**

**Further communication will be issued as soon as possible on the operational arrangements to implement this.**

**Q: Is it possible that when booking a theory test that DVSA open up the calendar more than 3 months in advance? It is very frustrating for a pupil when trying to book they can't go beyond the 3-month schedule. DVSA must know that appointments would fill easily.**

**A: I can confirm since 21 November the booking window was changed from 3 months to 4 months to give candidates more choice of future appointments.**

**Q: Pupils cannot get appointments locally and are having to travel maybe 30, 50 or 100 miles or more to get an appointment, would this be allowed under current restrictions?**

**A: DVSA booking systems were not designed to deal with a global pandemic. They cover Great Britain as a whole, with limited ability to section off parts for Wales and Scotland. Candidates must continue following government guidance, across the three nations, regards local travel restrictions that may be imposed following lockdown.**

**Q: Are DVSA now looking for a new service provider for the theory test?**

**A: The current theory test contract expires on 3 September so we can confirm we have been tendering for new suppliers. Contracts were awarded last month and we will shortly provide you with further details. The content of the test will not change.**

**Q: As pupils are not allowed to do private practice (even with members of their household) except for essential journeys are the DVSA going to let ADI's have 3 weeks training time to get our pupils back to standard before they start driving tests?**

**A: We continue to work with Government and NASP on the development of restart and recovery plans. We will provide further information as soon as we are able.**

**Q: If Government intend to allow training before testing can they announce it early to allow pupils ample time to arrange practice?**

**A: We are aware of recent announcements by Secretary of State for Education regards two weeks notice of return for schools, though we would highlight that driving lessons and tests were suspended in Tier 4 areas, whilst schools remained open. We continue to work with Government and NASP on the development of restart and recovery plans. We will provide further information as soon as we are able.**

**Q: Have the DVSA now cancelled all tests in England, Scotland & Wales up to Monday 15th February and re-scheduled these?**

**A: No, tests are currently cancelled up to 31 January in England and Wales and the 2 February in Scotland.**

**Q: If they have not, when will they have completed this?**

**A: We are in discussions with the Scottish government over tests beyond the 2 February following the announcement from the first minister on the 19 January.**

**We will keep the situation in England and Wales under review. Tests will continue to be suspended until the relevant restrictions are lifted.**

**Q: Do DVSA know What the projected average waiting time for a test will be after lockdown?**

**A: Given lockdown has not yet ended, and there is no indicative date at this time, it is not possible for us to provide a definitive answer at this time. A range of scenarios are being considered as part of DVSA Recovery Planning.**

**Q: are DVSA trying to ensure all examining staff will be vaccinated before returning to work?**

**A: We are looking at potential options as part of our planning for the resumption of services.**

**Q: Since we are now going to have very long waiting lists for both theory and practical tests, is now not the time for DfT/DVSA to reconsider allowing qualified instructors to sign of manoeuvres for the practical test, this would allow initially for less time on the test and more tests a day?**

**A The Road Traffic Act 1988 only allows a full driving licence to be issued if the person has passed the test of competence to drive. The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) 1999 regulations also require driving test examiners to meet certain criteria and pass an initial qualification and examination before being authorised by the Secretary of State to conduct practical driving tests. The regulations also specifically prohibit an examiner from simultaneously being an active approved driving instructor (ADI).**

**Q: Has there been any rethink on extending ADI Certificates?**

**A: The maximum duration of two years between passing the Part 1 and a tests is in place to ensure that a PDI's knowledge is current. This validity period is set in legislation and the Government has no current plans to lay further legislation to extend it. However, through existing mechanisms, DVSA has made arrangements to provide additional support.**

Regulations require that a part 3 test is booked, not taken, before the expiry of the part 1. PDIs whose part 1 pass is due to expire soon can book a test online or if no tests are available they can book a test to hold. This meets the regulatory requirements.

DVSA are advising anyone whose trainee licence commenced at the start of January that they can ask for the licence to be re-issued when restrictions are lifted. Anyone in that position should contact the ADI team at [PADI@dvsa.gov.uk](mailto:PADI@dvsa.gov.uk) and we will advise them of their options.

Furthermore, we are encouraging trainees not to apply for a trainee licence they know they cannot use, however, we need to take into account the regulatory requirements so advice for one trainee may not be appropriate for another so each should seek their own advice from the ADI team. Once restrictions are lifted, trainees should give DVSA as much notice as they possible when they want their licences to start. DVSA will prioritise these and it is likely they will be issued the same or next working day. Once issued we will send the trainee an email that tells them that they can teach for reward.

These arrangements, which were already permitted in legislation, have been widely communicated through DVSA Direct messages, webinars and has now been published on gov.uk.

DVSA continue to prioritise P2 & 3 tests, and have temporarily suspended routine Standards Checks to free up additional capacity to do this.

**Q: Are there any thoughts about doing away with the fleet training certificate?**

**A: There are no current plans to do so.**