

DSA ezine for road safety professionals

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Do it online

Find your nearest driving instructors



You can use this service to find driving instructors who are approved and registered with the Driving Standards Agency (DSA).

'Find your nearest' publicly launched



DSA has formally launched the 'Find your nearest driving instructors' service on Directgov.

The online search facility allows people to search by postcode to find approved driving instructors (ADIs) in their area. Learner drivers can get the details for their nearest instructors with just a few clicks of the mouse, along with the assurance that those listed have passed the DSA qualifying tests, have been Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checked and are on the ADI register.

The service has been available on Directgov since last year, but has now been publicly launched and is being actively promoted to

the public through press releases, social media and other communications channels.

Road Safety Minister Mike Penning said:

"This new service will make life easier for learner drivers and parents looking for qualified instructors in their area. I hope that this will allow people to make more informed choices about who they want to teach them to drive."

The directory only lists fully qualified instructors, and allows learners to see if an

instructor has signed up to the voluntary code of practice and if they are committed to continuing their professional development (CPD).

If you're an ADI and you've signed up to the service, learners will be able to see:

- your name
- your contact number
- your email address
- if you are committed to CPD and abiding by the voluntary ADI code of practice
- how far you are from the learner's postcode.

Go to <http://direct.gov.uk/finddrivinginstructor>. For a video explaining how to use the service, see http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Video/DG_WP198544.

If you want your details to be listed on 'Find your nearest', you'll need to check your preferences on the 'Manage your Approved Driving Instructor registration' page on Business Link. You need to enter 'yes' in the section asking if you would like us to publish your main telephone number and email address on our website. For a step by step guide, see our online guide: 'How to use online instructor services'.

LGV and PCV testing from customer sites

The Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA) is reviewing how it delivers vehicle tests for lorries and buses. In some areas, VOSA is transferring testing from its own sites to customer premises, referred to as authorised testing facilities.

However, DSA currently uses 47 VOSA sites to conduct vocational tests. Where these are earmarked for closure by VOSA, DSA is looking at different ways of delivering tests, including conducting tests from customer sites.



Customer sites are approved by DSA to have vocational tests carried out on their premises. Once approved, DSA deploys an examiner to the site to conduct licence acquisition and Driver CPC module 4 tests.

“DSA has been successfully using customer sites since 2008,” commented Phil Coop, operations change manager. “The benefits for trainers of becoming a customer site could include reduced fuel costs and journey times as there’s no travelling to and from the test centre. There’s also the convenience - testing at a customer site frees up some of the trainer’s time.”

Kerry Palmer, vocational testing transformation manager, said “The specifications for becoming a customer site can be viewed at dft.gov.uk/dsa/customersites. If you’re interested in becoming a customer site get in touch. After talking through your application DSA will come out and visit your site to see if it’s suitable. We are now looking at how the customer sites can be opened up to host candidates presented by other trainers.”

To date, VOSA has announced that it will cease vehicle testing at the following testing stations which are shared with DSA:

- Bishopbriggs (Glasgow) December 2011
- Mitcham July 2011
- Simonswood (Liverpool) December 2011
- Gloucester December 2011
- Garretts Green (Birmingham) July 2011
- Swynnerton (Stoke) April 2012

Interested in becoming a customer site?

The **specifications for becoming a customer site** can be viewed here.

For more information on becoming a customer site please contact Kerry Palmer, vocational testing transformation manager, email: kerry.palmer@dsa.gsi.gov.uk

Check tests - don't miss yours!

If you're an approved driving instructor (ADI), then at some point during your period of registration you'll have to take a test of 'continued ability and fitness to give instruction', otherwise known as a check test.

ADIs are legally obliged to take check tests when requested - and if you don't attend when invited, you could be removed from the ADI Register.

Charles Morton, Registrar, says: "Check tests are an essential part of the ADI Register. They allow ADIs to demonstrate they've maintained the required standard of instruction, and where necessary, identify areas for improvement.

"Very few instructors fail to meet the required standard, but if there are any areas of concern, the examiner will explain these in the debrief. The ADI will then be able to work on these areas before their next check test."

If you're unable to attend a check test on the date you've been given, it's essential you inform the Registrar as soon as possible.

You'll need to provide a valid reason for not attending, such as proof that you will be out of the country at the time. However, not having a pupil, not working with learner drivers and not having a car are not acceptable reasons for failing to attend.

If the Registrar accepts your reasons for postponing a check test, you can propose other dates when you will be available. You should propose a period of two to three weeks rather than just a specific day, but the Registrar has the final decision.

If you avoid taking a check test, you could be removed from the ADI Register.

If you don't have a valid reason for postponing or if you fail to attend a check test without letting the Registrar know in advance, you may be removed from the ADI Register.



IRSO - driving up the standard of road safety delivery

This month Despatch talks to Darren Divall, chairman of the Institute of Road Safety Officers (IRSO).



Darren Divall



Q: What is IRSO?

A: IRSO is a professional body for public, private and voluntary sector road safety practitioners. We're set up as a company limited by guarantee, which means we don't have any share capital or shareholders, but we do have a board of directors to deal with the business of the company. These report to our president, HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO.

Q: What are your main objectives?

A: Our aim is to facilitate the continued professional development of road safety practitioners. We want to ensure that all casualty reduction interventions are based on examples of best practice and are of the highest possible quality.

Q: How do you work?

A: We provide and facilitate academic and competency based training and support opportunities for practitioners working in both the public and the private sector. IRSO chairs the National Staff Training Group (NSTG) which coordinates the development and delivery of relevant training opportunities. We take a collaborative approach, and aim to bridge the gap between individual practitioners, regional networks and the national voice.

Q: What's on your agenda at the moment?

A: At the last NSTG meeting, representatives from sixteen stakeholder organisations discussed issues such as the implementation of the recently developed National Transportation Qualifications (NTQs), modular based competency and academic training, as well as the future of the EdExcel Professional Development Diploma in Accident and Safety Management.

Q: What do members gain from joining IRSO?

A: IRSO can support you in your continuing professional development and as a means to keep you up to date with new initiatives aimed at saving lives and reducing road casualties. The Institute provides opportunities for members to express their views on road safety issues and facilitates direct access to experts and policy makers in all areas of road safety. IRSO holds an annual national course, comprising quality professional presentations and debates at various locations throughout the United Kingdom.

For more information about IRSO and how you can become a member go to www.irso.org.uk or contact Darren Divall at divall@itpworld.net.

Observer on test - your feedback

In the April issue of Despatch, we reported on DSA's efforts to encourage more instructors to sit in on tests with their candidates. With ADIs now present on around 20 per cent of tests, we asked you to send in your own views and experiences about being an observer on test.

The feedback has been extremely positive. And whilst there's still a concern among a minority of instructors that being present on test puts additional pressure on their pupil, most said they found it very valuable to see the test firsthand.

Here's a selection of your comments:



"I encourage all my pupils to take me with them on test. I stress the decision is theirs, accepting that some may feel overwhelmed by having an examiner and instructor in the car with them. But most of my pupils seem to feel having me there gives them some moral support."

Robert Ridley

"I certainly don't mind sitting in on tests with my pupils, provided they are comfortable with me being in the car with them. However, I would also like to be able to ask the odd question to the examiner which is something we as instructors are not allowed to do."

Derek Costello

"Sitting in on test has really opened my eyes to how differently students perform. And it has, without a shadow of a doubt, helped me to develop my training skills and adapt the way I go about educating my students."

Duncan Garwell

"I have always encouraged my students to ask for me to sit and observe their test. If the trainer observes the test they are in a much better position to identify the areas that the examiner has picked up on and can fully debrief the candidate when they are in a more appropriate frame of mind to understand and take in the feedback."

Dave Taylor

Almost 70 per cent of instructors accompany their pupils on test at least some of the time and 17 per cent regularly sit-in on test.

A round up of this month's news

Electric vehicle infrastructure

Transport Secretary Philip Hammond has set out the Government's vision for a recharging infrastructure to support the development of electric vehicles.

A report - **Making the Connection: the Plug-In Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy** - identifies how recharging infrastructure will develop in a way that is targeted, convenient and safe.

It sets out the steps that Government, as part of its £400m programme to support ultra-low emission vehicles, and industry will take to support an infrastructure that encourages the majority of recharging at home, at night, and after the peak in electricity demand, supported by workplace charging for commuters and fleets, and a targeted amount of public infrastructure.

The Transport Secretary also announced that the Renault Fluence has become the tenth vehicle now eligible for the **Plug-in Car Grant** - a consumer grant of up to £5,000.

'Show me, tell me' competition launched on Facebook

DSA has launched its first ever competition on Facebook.

A video of a DSA examiner and three students from Bilborough College, Nottingham, discussing the 'show me,tell me' questions is now on the **DSA Facebook page** 'I can't wait to pass my driving test!'. DSA is inviting people to make their own videos of vehicle safety checks and upload them to YouTube.

The videos will be judged and DSA's official publishers, TSO, have kindly donated three £50 Amazon vouchers for the three best entries.

The competition seeks to raise awareness of vehicle safety checks, and show how important they are - not just for the driving test, but for life.



Get in touch

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

Information for candidates is available on direct.gov.uk/motoring and driver and rider trainers can visit businesslink.gov.uk/transport

Book and manage your test appointments at direct.gov.uk/drivingtest or businesslink.gov.uk/transport

A list of useful contact details can be found at dft.gov.uk/dsa

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



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