

Part 2 and Part 3 Testing and Licensing FAQs

In light of the current challenges faced by PDIs and their trainers in relation to Part 2 and 3 testing and the knock-on impact on the overall licensing process test supply issues have had, the National Associations Strategic Partnership have compiled a set of frequently asked questions which may help answer some of your queries and concerns.

1. Why is there such a problem with waiting times and cancellations for Part 2 and 3 tests?

As DVSA continues to battle a backlog of Category B tests post-pandemic, there's also been an impact in terms of supplying other test categories - and Part 2 and 3 tests have been among those tests impacted. Added to those existing test supply issues, is an exponential rise in applications for first licences (a 100% increase on pre-COVID figures and 4000 new trainees entering the industry) and as a result the agency is struggling to supply tests to meet demand. DVSA are still receiving around 700 applications per month for trainee licences - previously 250 per month.

2. What is DVSA doing to tackle the issues?

The agency shared with NASP recently some of the things they're doing to tackle the issue of waiting times for Part 2 and 3 tests

- They have increased the delivery of Part 2 and 3 tests - delivering almost three times the number of tests they did in this period last year.
- From September 2023 to February 2024 5,727 Part 2 were conducted and 4,637 Part 3s - a record number (previously only 500 tests a month were conducted on average).
- In April they commenced the training of new ADI Examiners who will be deployed to specifically deliver Part 2 and 3 tests. There will be 9 new specialist Examiners being deployed in the next 3 months, adding capacity for an extra 150 tests per week
- Resources will be focussed on Part 2 and 3 tests and then Standards Checks, focusing on areas with highest needs

3. What has NASP been doing to help tackle the issues?

NASP has been making sure this issue is top of the agenda, alongside Cat B test waiting times, in every meeting and call we have had with DVSA since the start of the issues. We have written to DVSA nearly every week in the past few months to



National Associations Strategic Partnership



seek updates on their efforts to tackle the issues, and to suggest ways in which the issues could be mitigated. Here are some of the suggestions we have made:

1. Not issuing dates any new applicants for Parts 2 and 3 until all the existing booked candidates have had their three attempts.
2. The priority system for bookings needs urgent review so no candidate has to miss their third attempt at a Part 3 due to time running out. Anyone knowing they may be in that situation need to be able to make DVSA aware so an earlier test can be given, therefore allowing a third attempt. Currently missing a third attempt is often not the fault of the PDI but due to previous cancellations, or lengthy waits for tests.
3. Issue real-time waiting times for tests and make candidates aware of them. Just going on hold doesn't show candidates how long they are likely to wait for a slot. If they knew how long the wait, candidates could plan their training more easily.
4. Ideally, no PDI should have more than one cancelled test in the duration of their training, otherwise too many months are wasted, and candidates will struggle to obtain a Part 3 final attempt. Is it possible to move candidates around so no one has more than 1 cancellation?
5. Is there an alternative booking system that a third test could be booked on hold if a PDI is running out of time for their 2 years?
6. Create more awareness for new PDIs entering the process to understand the current issue so they are aware that this is not a quick process. If some realise the challenges earlier on, they may defer application or make other decisions.
7. A blog perhaps offering guidance to PDIs on managing some of the issues and risks in the current process? Or even better a new official guide to the PDI process - we'd be happy to help write as NASP?
8. Consider closing the application process for new licences temporarily until the core issues have been resolved and place any new applicants on a wait list.

4. How do I best secure a test slot given the current issues with availability?

- The general advice is to book to hold a slot so that when slots do become available you will be notified and may secure a slot sooner.
- It is important when using book to hold, candidates make the payment on application, otherwise you will not be in the waiting system.
- Email customer.services@dvsa.gov.uk if you have been waiting for what you consider to be a long time, and you are concerned that the two years from passing Part One may be running out (allowing you the possibility of taking three tests).



National Associations Strategic Partnership



5. If I do not qualify under my first trainee licence, will I be given a 2nd trainee licence?

Your initial trainee licence lasts for 6 months. When it runs out you must stop being paid for giving driving lessons. You can [apply for another trainee licence](#), but you'll need to pay the fee again. Remember **you cannot receive any kind of payment for giving driving lessons when you do not have a valid trainee licence.**

At a recent DVSA/NASP meeting it was stated that the agency was issuing more second licences, but this is a discretionary decision, and each is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

You are more likely to get another licence if you inform DVSA you had stopped using the first, for example, because of a period of illness, or can give another reasonable explanation (such as your trainer had taken ill and was not able to complete your training, or if DVSA were unable to supply a test for you within the period, presuming you applied in good time).

It's unlikely that you'll get another licence if you:

- just want more time to pass the approved driving instructor (ADI) part 3 test
- did not follow the [rules for using your previous trainee licence](#)

6. What if I run out of time on my second licence, waiting for a test?

- DVSA do have some discretion to extend the period on a case-by-case basis. They have used this discretion in a number of cases recently, given the acknowledged issues with securing a test slot in a timely manner.
- All PDI training must be completed within two years from the date the Part One was passed. Due to extended waiting times some PDIs are running out of time and haven't been able to take a third test. However, as long as the third test is applied for, or put on hold before the two years runs out, DVSA will find them a Part 3 test date - even if it is after the date their Part One was successfully completed.
- Generally, the Registrar will only grant more time to those who can demonstrably prove they have fulfilled all other requirements of the licensing process properly (i.e. have fully completed their ADI 21S or instructor training declaration paperwork), and those who have made reasonable efforts to attend a Part 2 or 3 test when a slot was available.
- Again, bear in mind that DVSA always look at test records so will know if trainees have cancelled more than once. If a trainee has cancelled a test slot more than once DVSA will not consider a lack of test availability as reasonable grounds to extend the period of the second licence.



National Associations Strategic Partnership



7. Can I get a third trainee licence?

In some, albeit rare, cases the Registrar may grant a third licence, but this is highly unlikely and is purely at the Registrar's discretion.

8. How do I challenge being refused a second licence?

You can [appeal to the General Regulatory Chamber](#) if you're not given another licence. If you are a member of an association, you can seek advice from them on making an appeal and recognised ADI associations are also allowed to represent you at tribunal.

9. How do I challenge the results of my Part 2 or 3 test?

- In the first instance you can raise a complaint directly with DVSA. Most issues dealt with and rectified internally by the Disputes team.
- However, candidates also have the right to go to the Magistrates Court (or Sheriffs Court in Scotland) if unhappy with the conduct of the test.

10. Can I complain about my trainer/training school?

Yes, you should initially complain to the school itself. However, if you feel that has not been satisfactory you can complain to DVSA via instructorconduct@dvsa.gov.uk

11. Can I change the training or supervision option I choose for training once I've made it?

No, you have to use the system you agreed to when applying for the trainee licence.

12. What happens if I change training school?

- You must apply for a new trainee licence if you leave a driving school and join a new one. There's no fee for doing this.
- DVSA will send you a new licence showing the details of your new school. You should send your old licence to DVSA as soon as you get the new one.
- You can still give driving lessons while you wait for your new licence.



National Associations Strategic Partnership



13. Is there a specific place to display my trainee licence? Is there a penalty if I don't display it properly?

You must display your trainee licence on the nearside edge of the front windscreen of your car while you give driving lessons. And yes it is an offence to charge for lessons without your licence/certificate on display in the vehicle you are using for training. Licences can be revoked if you break the rules of using them, see next question.

14. Can my licence be taken away by the DVSA?

The ADI registrar can take your trainee licence away before it runs out if:

- you break any of the rules for having a trainee licence (<https://www.gov.uk/trainee-driving-instructor-licence-the-rules/rules-for-using-your-trainee-licence>)
- the licence was issued by mistake or gained by fraud
- you fail 3 attempts at the ADI part 3 test

15. When DVSA talk about Fit and Proper they say “being bound over” what does that mean?

There is an Approved driving instructor (ADI) 'Fit and Proper' person criteria' telling you how DVSA decide if you meet the minimum criteria to be an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI). The regulator designed it to help you; setting out some situations where it's likely that you'll be refused entry to or removed from the register.

It also tells you about the standards DVSA expects you to show, and explains the factors that the Registrar has to consider when making their decision about 'fit and proper'. You'll find the guidance and a useful blog on this subject below.

Being “bound over” refers to a legal process in which a judge or magistrate determines whether there is enough evidence to proceed with a criminal trial.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-involved-in-being-a-driving-instructor/approved-driving-instructor-adi-register-guide>

<https://despatch.blog.gov.uk/2015/08/25/protecting-the-reputation-of-the-driver-training-industry/>



National Associations Strategic Partnership



16. Where do I go to if my contact details change during my trainee licence?

With any changes to your licensing details go to <https://driver-services.dvsa.gov.uk/DSASWeb/authentication/begin.do> or contact padi@dvsa.gov.uk

17. What should I do with my licence if I have to stop giving instruction due to maybe illness?

You should return your trainee licence to DVSA if you are not using it, for example because of a long period of illness.

You will not get a refund, but DVSA will know that you have not had full use of the licence. This will be a factor in deciding whether to give you another licence in future.

18. On the forms I'm filling in (for example the ADI 21S Supervision form) it says to post to an address in Nottingham, is this correct?

Do not send any forms back by post, everything is now processed by email so scan the forms and send to padi@dvsa.gov.uk. If you have any issues with this you can phone customer services on 0300 200 1122 (Extension 25)

19. Where can I get help with the application if I need it?

Email padi@dvsa.gov.uk. Or you can phone customer services on 0300 200 1122 (Extension 25)

20. Do I need extra training once I have my trainee licence?

Yes. You have 2 options to choose from when you apply for a trainee licence. You must either:

- be supervised for 20% of all lessons you give while you have your trainee licence
- do at least 20 hours of extra training while you have your trainee licence

You can only choose one option and you cannot change to the other after you've made your decision.

Talk to your sponsoring approved driving instructor (ADI) or training organisation about which option is best for you.



National Associations Strategic Partnership



21. What is the cost of a trainee licence?

A trainee licence is £140 currently

22. Can I pass Part 3 without a trainee licence and if so can I charge pupils for petrol money?

You can train with an ADI trainer and then take a pupil to your Part 3 test. You must not charge your pupil for the lesson on test, or any lesson you give them, until you have qualified. It is an offence in law to charge for driving lessons unless you are an ADI or PDI on a trainee licence. You cannot charge anything at all - even for petrol money.

For further advice and guidance contact your national association.