



Your Driving Assessment Information Sheet

Help! I've been told I need my driving assessed!

Most people imagine they will be having an ordinary driving test, and become quite nervous – or feel a bit insulted, the service we provide is something quite different. Generally people apply for an assessment because some medical condition, accident or disability has raised a question. This might be whether you can operate standard car controls satisfactorily, and / or whether you are able to cope with everyday traffic management and drive safely. You might find it useful to know beforehand what to expect.

If you have a worsening condition we are here to help you maintain your driving ability for as long as safely possible. If you are in a recovering situation, the assessment is part of your rehabilitation and we will assess and advise on the possibility of returning to driving. If you are a novice driver, the assessment will aim to predict whether it is safely possible for you to learn to drive.

Why is it not a standard driving test or ordinary instructor's assessment?

Eight out of ten experienced drivers would fail the standard test if sent for test with no preparation. So, if you took that kind of test, failure might have nothing to do with your medical situation and it would be discriminatory for people with medical conditions. A normal driving instructor is trained to teach good safe driving and conducts a different kind of evaluation to that which is needed for medical situations. Medical assessment specifically looks at whether your medical symptoms are affecting your driving. The assessor is skilled at identifying relevant driving symptoms and where possible, helping you to overcome them. For example, if you have only physical limitations, we will mainly be looking to confirm that you can control a vehicle safely, and if really needed, you will have a chance to try recommended controls adaptations. For others, where there is no physical problem, on assessment, you only need to drive as you normally do so we can assess whether you are as safe as anyone else out there on the road.

What happens on an assessment?

Car Adaptation assessment - For those with purely physical problems - takes up to 3 hours.

- Physical check-up (fully clothed) to assess strength, range, coordination, sensation and position sense.
- Reaction time check.
- Number plate test (Must be read at the distance required by DVL.) *Please note: If you are unable to do this, an extra visit will need to be arranged later, at further cost, once you have had new spectacles. This is because even though you will not have had your drive, I will not have been able to instantly fill the allocated time with another booking to compensate.*
- Practical in-car drive at a level to suit your experience and situation, with adaptations if required. Initial familiarisation with the adaptations is included.

Driving Ability assessment - for those whose situation requires a full check-up e.g. for licence renewal:

As for car adaptation above plus an additional 1 hour to carry out:

- Cognitive (thinking skills) tests
- Driver vision tests

In-car drive

You will start in a quiet area such as is used by learner drivers. Our approach is positive and supportive, and if there are difficulties, we will work with you to try and overcome them. You will be driving a dual controlled assessment car, with automatic or manual transmission, whichever is best for you. If required, controls adaptations are available for trial.

The full drive in traffic (if done) will last about 55 minutes. For those learning new controls, the drive will comprise a driving lesson in quiet areas to begin familiarisation.

Frequently Asked Questions

I've been off the road for a while, how can I practise so I 'pass' the assessment?

Everyone worries about needing to practise but if you have been 'off the road' due to illness, we expect to be taking you out for your first drive. Our job is to help you rehabilitate if it is possible and if lessons seem appropriate, we will facilitate them after the assessment. On the day, you will have plenty of time to familiarise and the assessment drive will only proceed when you are happy and ready. If you are currently unlicensed please be aware it is illegal to practise, even in a private car park - because if the public have access, the ground is counted as public in law.

I want to drive my own car

It is natural to want to drive your own car but there are two insurance reasons why we cannot do this:

- 1) The assessor is at work doing the assessment, so is not a 'passenger' and is not covered on your car insurance.
- 2) For safety in case there are problems, dual controls must be available when assessing someone's medical driving ability.

My licence has expired / I don't have a licence

If you don't have a current licence, special cover just for assessment is possible at the discretion of DVL provided you have applied for your licence. Please discuss with DVL. If they provide a special licence for assessment, this is only valid for your time in our car, so preliminary practise is not possible.

What are the likely outcomes?

It is impossible to list every scenario, but here are the most common outcomes*:

- You may begin learning to drive.
- If a full licence holder, you may return to, or continue driving.
- You may return driving again but you will be using some adaptations to controls. A few lessons may be required for familiarisation. You will be advised how to obtain the adaptations.
- It looks hopeful that you can drive, but you may need a few lessons with adapted controls before I can see you again and take you into busy traffic and test your overall traffic management ability. If successful you will be advised how to obtain the adaptations.
- Symptoms noted during the drive suggest that it would be best to delay your return to driving until you have had more recovery. A time scale will be given.
- Symptoms noted during the drive suggest that it is advisable for you to consider your mobility without driving.

* Subject to licensing authority procedures as they apply to your situation. This will be explained at the end of the assessment.

Why is it so expensive?

- We offer a specialist service, conducted in line with EU protocols for this kind of work, carried out by a leading dual qualified UK-based Occupational Therapist / Driving Instructor who has 24 years' experience (as of 2015).
- Two appointments are required: 1) The pre-drive medical review 2) In-car assessment. See 'What will the assessment involve?' for the time involved.
- Preparation your formal report (1.5 hours)
- Assessor's travel costs.
- Vehicle running costs (insurance, adaptations, maintenance, servicing fuel etc.)

We invite you to compare the cost of 5.5 hour's private physiotherapy (a roughly equivalent skill) plus these listed costs, and judge our fees accordingly.

For further information:

The service: www.Guernseydriveability.org.gg

The assessor: www.wix.com/suevernon/surreydriveability
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