

DTLR Consultation Document
Introducing a More Structured Approach
to Learning to Drive



Response from
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Motor Schools Association of Great Britain (MSA) makes the following response to the DTLR Consultation Paper: Introducing a More Structured Approach to Learning to Drive
- 1.2 The MSA is the national trade association for driving instructors and schools founded in 1935. Members of the association are in the main Driving Standards Agency Approved Driving Instructors (ADI). We also have a partnership with the Institute of Large Goods Vehicle Driving Instructors (ILGVDI) and represent their interests together with those of prospective driving instructors (PDIs) and a number of bus/coach instructors and motorcycle instructors.

2 GENERAL COMMENTS

- 2.1 In order to canvass as wide a range of opinions as possible before submitting the association's views to the DSA, we invited all MSA members to comment through our monthly publication MSA Newslink. Full details of the consultation paper were published in the April 2002 issue.
- 2.2 Members of the association's Board of Management have also consulted members through regional meetings and the association's network of branches and associated local ADI groups.
- 2.3 The responses below are laid out as the questions are asked in the consultation document. The MSA replies are in ***bold italics***.
- 2.4 We are content for our response to be included in the summary of responses, which the agency may divulge on request.

INTRODUCTION OF MANDATORY LOG BOOKS

Question 1 Do you agree with the intention to introduce mandatory logbooks? **Yes**

If so, who should sign the logbook to confirm that the necessary training has been completed (the test candidate/accompanying driver/ADI)? **The ADI**

Please give your reasons. **ADIs are best placed to sign, as they will see that all the training is properly carried out. This is not compulsory tuition 98% of learners already go to an ADI. We do not consider it much of a burden for the other 2% to have an assessment. It will save wasting testing resources and make ADIs become more accountable.**

EXTENDING THE LEARNING PERIOD

Question 2 Do you consider that there should be an extended learning period? **Yes**

If so, how long should the minimum period last and what, if any, exemptions should be permitted? **The minimum learning period should last for six months and there should be no exceptions.**

Should there be any changes to the licensing age requirements? **Yes learners should be allowed to start learning at 16½ with an ADI and only be allowed to practice with a full licence holder after they reach 17 years old.**

Please give your reasons. **As stated in the consultation document this will allow time for tuition and practice.**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW PRE-TEST REQUIREMENTS

Question 3 Do you consider that new pre-test requirements should be introduced? **No.**

If so, what should they be and how would they be enforced? Please give your reasons. **See answer to question 2.**

ADDITIONAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Question 4 Do you consider that compulsory off-road basic training for learner car drivers should be introduced? **No.**

Please give your reasons. **Impractical, unnecessary and too costly.**

Question 5 Do you consider that compulsory theory training should be introduced? **Yes including hazard perception training with an ADI.**

Do you have any suggestions for improving theory learning on a voluntary basis? **Yes offer a cash discount on the practical test to those candidates who achieve full marks on their theory test. Stop the publication of the question bank.**

Please give your reasons. **Learning the theory questions by rote and watching some video clips may produce candidates who can pass a test but is unlikely to produce new drivers properly equipped for a lifetime of safe driving.**

Question 6 Do you consider that accompanying drivers should be required to take a compulsory training course? **No unless they are going to countersign log books in which case they should be required to take 25 hours of training with an ADI.**

Do you have any suggestions for voluntary initiatives to assist accompanying drivers? **Accompanying drivers should be encouraged to sit in the back when the person they are accompanying has driving lessons.**

Please give your reasons. **It would give them a better understanding of the learning process.**

Question 7 Do you consider that learner drivers should be compelled to take professional tuition? **No**

If so, how many hours should be the minimum requirement?

Please give your reasons. **For the reasons stated in the document.**

Question 8 Do you consider that learner drivers should be permitted on motorways? **Yes.**

If so, do you think they should be subject to any special accompanying driver rules or restrictions on the type of car they may drive? **Only with an ADI in a dual controlled car as part of a structured tuition programme.**

Please give your reasons. **For the reasons stated in the document.**

Question 9 Do you consider that skid training should be compulsory? **No**

Please give your reasons. **For the reasons stated in the document.**

INTRODUCTION OF A DELAY BEFORE RETAKING THE PRACTICAL TEST

Question 10 Do you consider that a longer delay period should be introduced before an unsuccessful candidate could retake the practical driving test? **Yes.**

If so, how long should the period be? **Four weeks.**

Please give your reasons. **For the reasons stated in the document.**

INTRODUCTION OF A PROBATIONARY LICENCE CODE

Question 11 Do you consider that a new probationary licence code should be introduced for the first two years after passing the practical driving test? **No.**

COMPULSORY USE OF P-PLATES

Question 12 Do you think that displaying P-plates would improve road safety? **No.**

REQUIREMENT TO TAKE A SECOND PRACTICAL TEST

Question 13 Do you consider that there should be a requirement to take a second practical driving test? **No. However, we do believe that it would be useful for all drivers to have their driving assessed by an ADI on a regular basis. Perhaps each time they renew their photo card licence.**

RESTRICTIONS ON NEWLY QUALIFIED DRIVERS

Question 14 Do you consider that a lower blood alcohol level should be introduced for new drivers? **No.**

Please give your reasons. ***For the reasons stated in the document.***

Question 15 Do you consider that new drivers should be restricted to low powered vehicles? **No.**

Please give your reasons. ***For the reasons stated in the document.***

Question 16 Do you consider that a lower speed limit should be introduced for new drivers? **No.**

Please give your reasons. ***For the reasons stated in the document.***

Question 17 Do you consider that new drivers should be prohibited from driving at night? **No.**

If so, when should such a restriction apply?

Please give your reasons. ***For the reasons stated in the document.***

Question 18 Do you consider that new drivers should be prohibited from carrying passengers? **Yes.**

If so, what restrictions should apply? ***They should not be allowed to carry more passengers than there are seats and seatbelts for.***