



Driver and Rider Test and Instructor Statistics, Great Britain: Quarter 1 2014/15 (April to June 2014)

This publication presents information on the numbers and pass rates for driving and riding theory and practical tests conducted in Great Britain to 30 June 2014 and statistics from the ADI register and the Integrated Register of Driver Trainers.

The test and instructor statistics are derived from data held by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), which administers the driving test and training schemes in Great Britain.

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Key findings

- There were 419,839 **car theory tests** conducted between April and June 2014, 19.8 per cent more than in the same quarter of the previous year. In part this will be due to an increased number of retakes, following a drop in the pass rate as a result of changes to the test questions. The **pass rate** for these tests was 50.7 per cent, 2.9 percentage points lower than in the same period of 2013.
- There were 360,581 **car practical tests** conducted between April and June 2014, 1.5 per cent more than in the same quarter of the previous year. Set against a longer downward trend in practical tests, this increase may be related to the upturn in the economy. The **pass rate** for these tests was 47.1 per cent, 0.3 percentage points lower than the same period in 2013.
- The number of **motorcycle theory tests** was 33.4 per cent up in April to June 2014 compared with the same period of the previous year. The number of **motorcycle practical tests** was 17 per cent up for module 1 and 17.4 per cent up for module 2 in April to June 2014 compared with same period of the previous year. These changes have been influenced by changes to the testing regime.
- Increasing numbers of **theory** and **practical LGV tests** conducted in April to June 2014 suggest growth in this sector at a time of GDP growth.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Media Enquiries:

020 7944 3066

Public Enquiries:

Rachel Moyce

020 7944 4139

vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

1. General context

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) administers the driving test and training schemes in Great Britain. A driver or rider must pass both theory and practical tests in order to obtain full entitlement to drive a particular vehicle type on the road.

The total number of practical tests (which is dominated by car driving tests) had been on a downward medium-term trend, decreasing by 16 per cent between 2007/8 and 2012/13. There are a number of factors potentially influencing this, including:

- Generally increasing practical **test pass rates**, meaning fewer candidates taking retests.
- A **demographic trend** of declining birth rates during the 1990s, meaning that there are now fewer young people in the peak age-group for driving tests (17-20). Population data suggests that this trend is likely to continue until late in the current decade, before reversing.
- Data from the National Travel Survey show a clear downward trend in the *proportion* of young adults (aged 17-20) holding full licences since around 2007, suggesting that the **economic** situation or possibly other **social** trends are also having an effect.
- The economic recession from 2008 may have discouraged some people from taking a test.

During April to June 2014, and also in the previous quarter, there were increases in test volumes predominantly for car, bike and the LGV element of vocational tests compared to the same quarter a year earlier. This comes at a time when economic indicators are improving. Short-term variation in test numbers can be driven by seasonal and weather factors (there are generally fewer practical tests in the winter, particularly in months with severe weather). Regulatory and administrative changes can also have an effect, such as the changes to theory test question banks and new rules for motorcycles, which are discussed in this release.

Summary table: Driver and rider tests taken, and pass rates: Great Britain

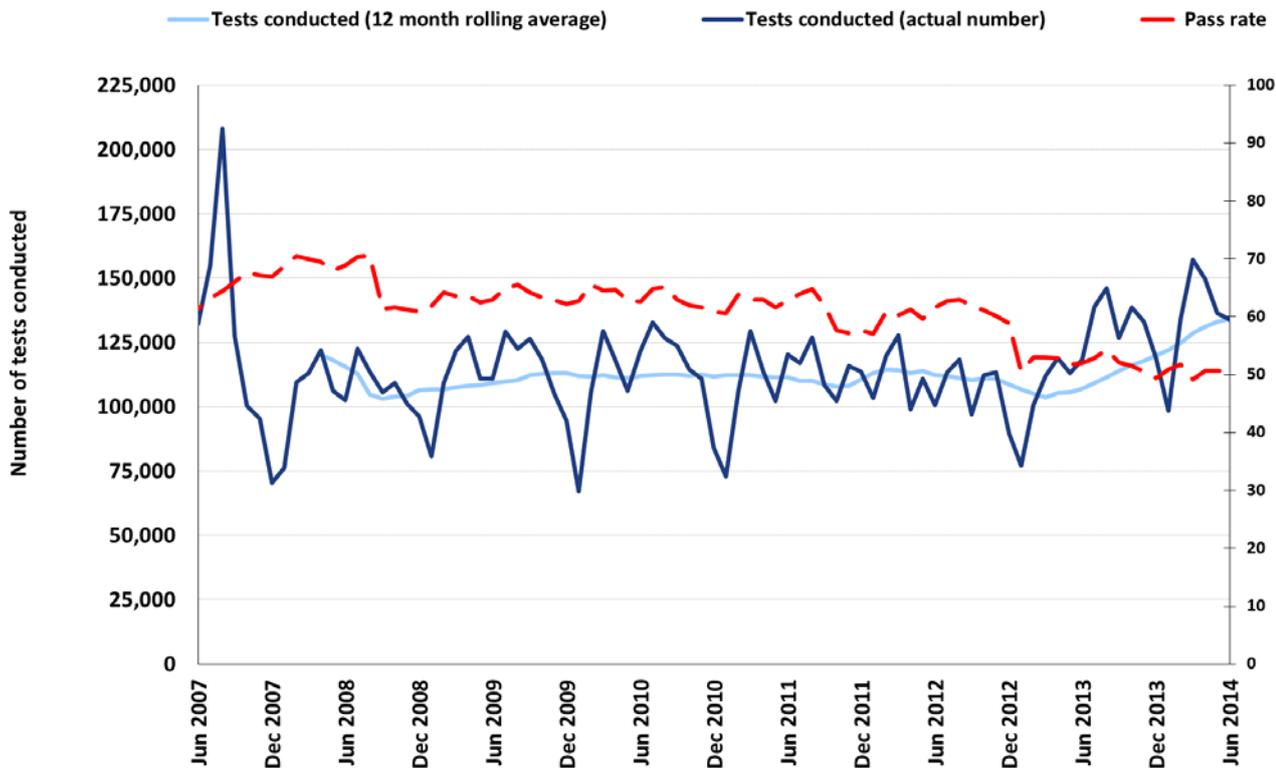
Test Type	Latest Quarter (January – March 2014)			
	Number of tests taken (thousands)	Compared to same qtr previous year	Pass rate (percentage)	Compared to same qtr previous year (percentage points)
Car theory	420	⬆️ +19.8%	50.7	⬇️ -1.5
Car practical	361	⬆️ +1.5%	47.1	⬇️ -0.3
Motorcycle theory	19.2	⬆️ +33.4%	75.4	⬇️ -1.1
Motorcycle practical module 1	15.1	⬆️ +17.0%	70.5	⬆️ +1.3
Motorcycle practical module 2	13.5	⬆️ +17.4%	69.5	⬇️ -0.4
LGV theory multiple choice	9.0	⬆️ +20.3%	65.8	⬇️ -4.6
LGV theory hazard perception	7.9	⬆️ +8.0%	80.3	⬆️ +1.0
Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) practical	12.6	⬆️ +3.2%	54.3	⬆️ +0.7
LGV theory CPC *	5.5	⬆️ +32.9%	64.4	⬆️ +1.4
PCV theory multiple choice	2.1	⬆️ +6.5%	67.4	⬇️ -4.0
PCV theory hazard perception	2.0	⬇️ -0.9%	77.8	⬇️ -1.5
Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) practical	2.2	⬇️ -5.6%	55.7	⬆️ +1.5
PCV theory CPC *	1.8	⬇️ -2.4%	47.0	⬆️ +0.3

* - CPC = Certificate of Professional Competence

2. Car tests

Theory car tests: Great Britain, April 2007 to June 2014

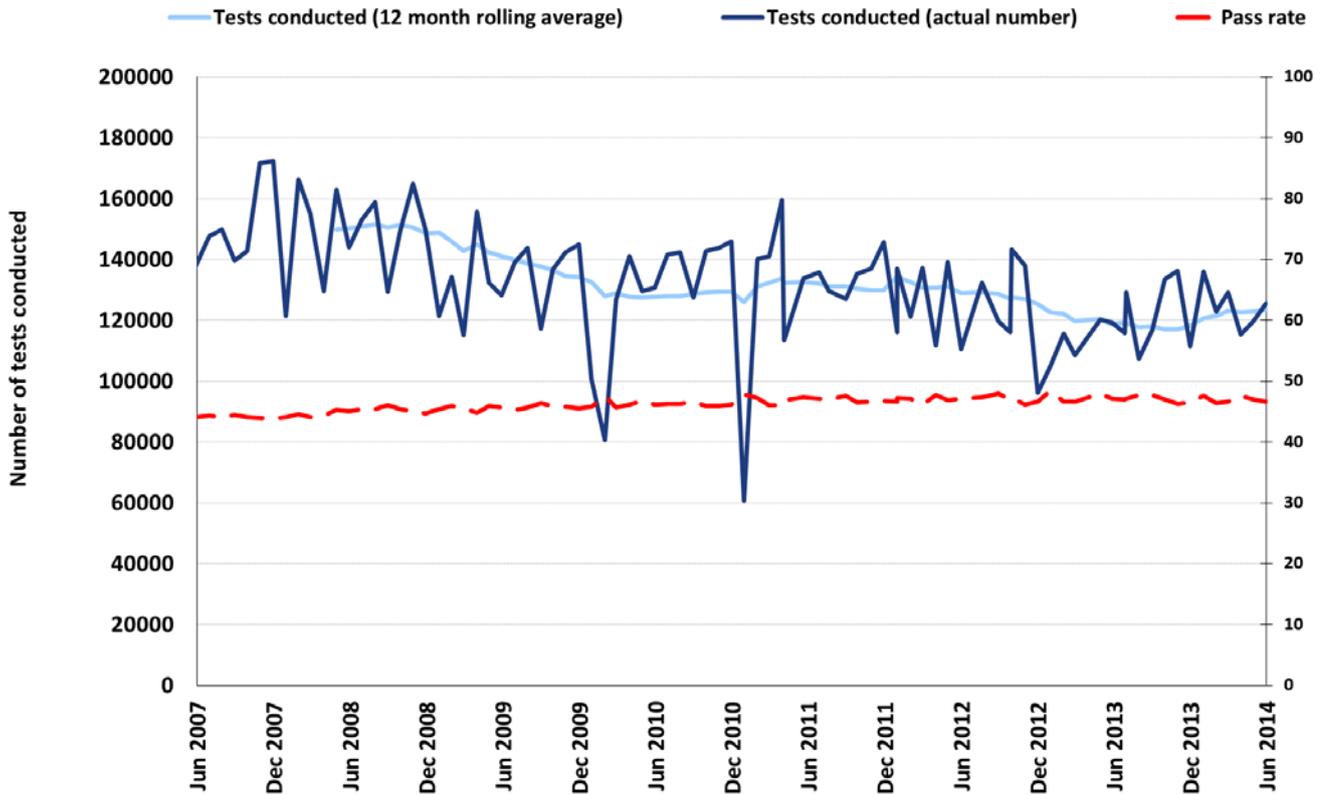
(Driving and Riding Tests web table DRT5201)



- In April to June 2014, there were 419,839 car theory tests. In comparison to the same period in 2013 this is 7.7 per cent up, and 19.8 per cent higher than in 2012. In part this will be due to an increased number of retakes as pass rates remain low.
- During April to June 2014, every month saw an increase in the number of tests conducted of at least 13 per cent higher and up to 26 per cent higher than the same month a year earlier.
- The pass rate for April to June 2014 was 50.7 per cent. This is 1.5 percentage points lower than the same period last year. This fall in pass rate is a continuation of a reduced pass rate following the changes to questions in January 2013 and may also be associated with the withdrawal of voiceovers and translators for foreign language tests from April 2014.

Practical car tests: Great Britain, April 2007 to June 2014

(Driving and Riding Tests web table DRT0201)



- There were 360,581 car practical tests conducted in April to June 2014. When compared to the same quarter in the previous year this is 1.5 per cent up.
- The pass rate for April to June 2014 was 47.1 per cent, 0.3 percentage points lower than the same quarter a year earlier.
- The pass rate for men in April to June 2014 was 50.7 per cent while the pass rate for women was 43.7 per cent. These are typical of the pass rates since early 2009, and a small increase on the pass rate in April to June 2007.

3. Motorcycle tests

On 19th January 2013, the EU 3rd Directive came into force in GB. This directive limits the engine size available to riders under the age of 24 at the date of attempting the practical test. This led to a trough in tests for this age group for both theory and practical tests following its introduction. The substantial increase in tests conducted in April to June 2014 reflects the ongoing recovery in test numbers following this trough and as mentioned, economic indicators are also improving which could also influence the number of tests conducted.

Theory Test

- There were 19,238 motorcycle theory tests conducted in April to June 2014. In comparison, there were 14,420 conducted in the same quarter a year earlier representing a 33.4 per cent increase.
- The pass rate has fallen 1.1 percentage points to 75.4 per cent in April to June 2014 compared to the same quarter last year.
- The pass rate in each month of April to June 2014 has been at least 1 percentage point lower than the same month a year earlier.

Practical (module 1 and 2) Tests

- During April to June 2014 there were 15,127 module 1 tests conducted. This is 17.0 per cent higher than the same quarter in the previous year.
- The module 1 pass rate was 70.5 per cent. This is 1.4 percentage points higher than the same quarter a year earlier.
- The number of module 2 tests conducted in April to June 2014 was 13,531. This is a 17.4 per cent increase on the same period in the previous year.
- The pass rate for April to June 2014 was 69.5 per cent on the module 2 test. This is 0.3 percentage points lower than the same period in 2013.

4. Large goods vehicle (LGV) tests

Theory Test

- During April to June 2014 there were 9,009 multiple choice theory tests conducted. This is an increase of 20.3 per cent when compared to the same quarter a year earlier.
- The increase in the number of tests conducted is due, in part, to a fall in the pass rate as a result of changes to the questions in May 2013 and also to underlying growth in the industry. In April to June 2014, the pass rate for the multiple choice theory test fell by 4.6 percentage points to 65.8 per cent when compared to the same period in 2013.
- In April to June 2014, 7,876 hazard perception tests were conducted. This is 8 per cent higher than the same period a year before. This gives a better indication of the growth in the industry as there have been no changes to the test.
- The pass rate for the hazard perception test rose by 1 percentage point to 80.3 per cent in April to June 2014 when compared to the same period in 2013, again underlining that there appears to be growth in this sector at a time when GDP growth is also improving.

Practical Test

- There were 12,623 LGV practical tests conducted in April to June 2014. This is a 3.2 per cent increase on the same quarter a year ago.
- The pass rate in April to June 2014 for LGV tests was 54.3 per cent which is 0.7 percentage points higher than the same period a year ago.

5. Passenger carrying vehicle (PCV) tests

Theory Test

- There were 2,140 multiple choice theory tests conducted in April to June 2014. This is a 6.5 per cent increase compared to the same quarter a year earlier.
- The pass rate in April to June 2014 fell by 4.0 percentage points to 67.4 per cent when compared to the same period a year earlier. As with LGVs, the increase in the number of tests conducted is due to the fall in pass rate as a result of changes to the questions in May 2013.
- During April to June 2014, there were 1,969 hazard perception tests conducted. This is 17 fewer tests (0.9 per cent) than the previous year.

Practical Test

- The number of PCV tests conducted in April to June 2014 was 2,224. This is 5.6 per cent (131 tests) lower than the same quarter a year ago.
- The pass rate has improved by 1.5 percentage points to 55.7 per cent in April to June 2014 in comparison to the same period in 2013.

6 Driving and riding instructors

Numbers of instructors currently registered

- At the end of June 2014, there were 42,934 approved driving instructors on the Register. This is 2.6 per cent lower than the number registered at the end of June 2014, continuing a longer downward trend.
- Alongside the ADIs, there were 2,568 riding instructors on the Statutory Register at the end of June 2014.

Checks on existing instructors

A new standards test for ADIs was introduced on 7 April and replaces the old check test. The new test is graded as A, B or fail, with A being the best possible grade. Grades at last check test are still relevant for those ADIs who have yet to take the new version of the test.

- During April to June 2014, 2,609 standards tests were conducted on ADIs. At the end of

June 2014, 22.3 per cent of these ADIs had scored an A, 53.5 per cent had scored a B and 13.0 per cent had failed.

- At the end of June 2014, of those ADIs who had not yet taken the new standards test, on their last check test, 46.3 per cent scored a grade four, 36.1 per cent a grade five and 6.5 per cent a grade six, the highest possible grade. No ADI scored a grade one, 5 ADIs scored a grade two and 7 ADIs a grade three.¹⁰
- Compulsory basic test (CBT) instructors also undergo check tests. Of the 184 tests conducted in April to June 2014, 167 had a satisfactory result.

New applicants, and theory and practical ADI tests

- In contrast to the downward trend in ADI numbers, the number of first applications to become a potential driving instructor has shown slight increases each quarter since Oct to Dec 2012 on the same periods a year before. In April to June 2014 the number of first applications was 1,953, 2.3 per cent higher than the same period in 2013.
- There were 1,568 theory tests conducted in April to June 2014. This represents an increase of 4.4 per cent in comparison to the same quarter a year ago. The pass rate for April to June 2014 was 49 per cent, about the same as in the previous year.
- During April to June 2014 there were 1,039 ADI part 2 tests conducted, 12.3 per cent fewer than the same period in 2013.
- In January to March 4 2014 there were 1,013 ADI part 3 tests conducted. This represents a fall of 27.0 per cent compared to the same period a year ago.

There have been continued year on year falls in the number of ADI theory, part 2 and part 3 tests being conducted. This may be linked to the drop in demand due to falling numbers of car practical tests being conducted, as well as the still relatively high numbers of instructors on the ADI register.

Although increases are now being seen in the numbers applying to become potential driving instructors, progressing to the later stages of the ADI testing requires more time and expense, and so recent trends in part 2 and 3 tests reflect an earlier generation of applicants.

8 Background notes

1. These statistics are published by the driver side of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.
2. Practical test categories included are B (car), B1 (tricycles and quadricycles), A, A1 and A2 (motorcycles), C, C1 (medium and large goods vehicles), C+E, C1+E (medium/large goods vehicles with trailers), D, D1 (minibuses and buses), D+E and D1+E (minibuses / buses with trailers).
3. The [Driver and Rider Tests and Instructors](#) web page provides further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release, including detailed data tables.
4. These official statistics are not designated National Statistics. They are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
5. The next release of statistics will be published in December 2014 and will provide information for the second quarter of the 2014 financial year (July to September 2014).
6. Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the [Pre-release access list](#).
7. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency also publishes [operational data](#) by test centre.
8. Additional data on ethnicity of candidates are released via www.data.gov.uk. This information is not published as part of the statistical release as only circa 30 per cent of candidates declare their ethnicity. It is, therefore, highly likely that the information is subject to self-selection and reporting biases and neither the DVSA nor DfT would recommend that users rely on these data being a true reflection of the ethnicity of all candidates. The data are being provided simply for information and as they are frequently requested under the Freedom of Information Act.
9. For further information on the impact of the EU 3rd Directive to rider licensing please visit - <https://www.gov.uk/ride-motorcycle-moped/bike-categories-ages-and-licence-requirements>.
10. Grades run from 1 – extremely poor overall performance, to 6 – very high overall performance