



Department for Transport

Driver and rider testing and instructor statistics: Quarter 2 2015/16 (July to September 2015)

About this release

This publication presents information on the numbers and pass rates for driving and riding theory and practical tests conducted in Great Britain to 30 Sep 2015 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.

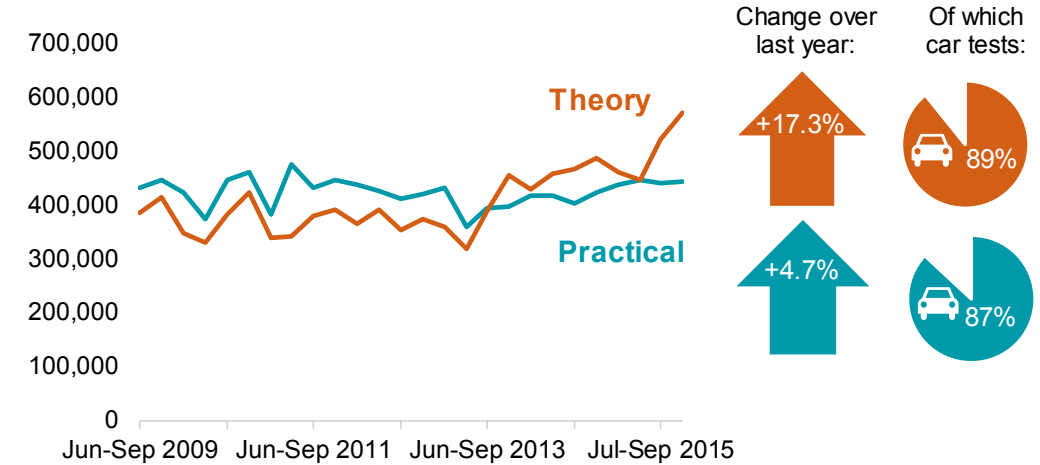
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The numbers of all types of driving tests have increased over the last year. Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) tests continue to see the most rapid increases.

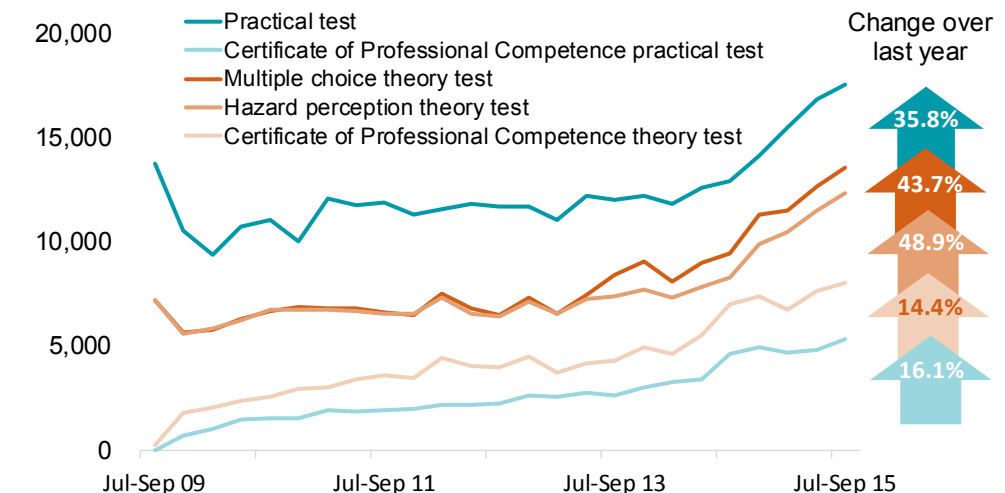
During the three months July to September 2015, in Great Britain, 444,232 practical driving tests and 571,688 theory driving tests were conducted. Almost 90 per cent of these were car driving tests.

All driving tests



The number of Large Goods Vehicle practical and theory tests of all types conducted during July to September 2015 was 34 per cent higher than in the same quarter of 2014, reflecting increased demand for drivers in the economy.

Large Goods Vehicle tests



RESPONSIBLE STATISTICIAN: Rachel Moyce 020 7944 4139

FURTHER INFORMATION: Media: 020 7944 3066 Public: 020 7944 3077 vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Car theory and practical tests

Car theory tests Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

Tests conducted	510,013	+ 16.5%
Tests passed	255,908	+ 12.2%
Pass rate	50.2 %	- 1.9 percentage points

What tests are there?

Candidates must pass both a theory and a practical test to obtain a full car driving licence.

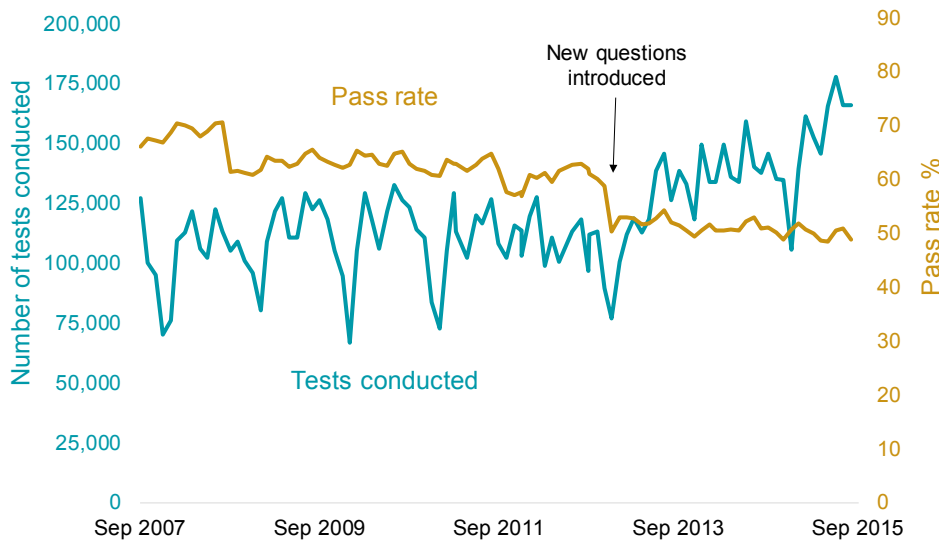
Changes

In January 2012, the car theory question bank was withdrawn from publication, and in January 2013, the first sets of questions that had never been published were introduced into the test.

From April 2014, the use of voiceovers and translators for foreign language tests was withdrawn.

The number of car theory tests taken was fairly level from 2008 until the beginning of 2013, since when it has increased.

Car theory tests



Data tables

Theory car tests

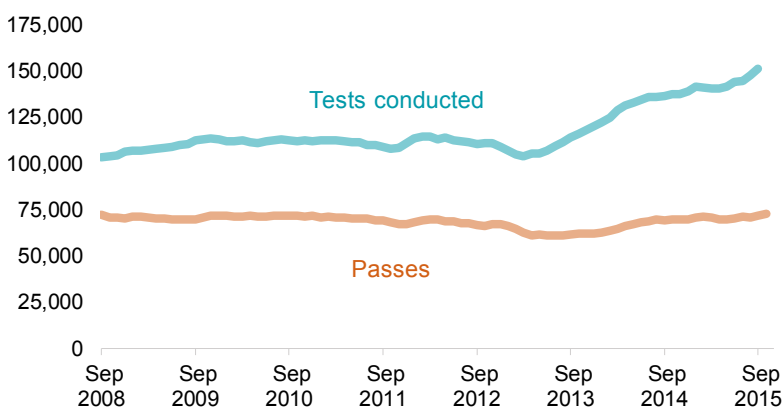
drt5201

Practical car tests

drt0201

This increase will initially have been influenced by the changes to the questions described in the panel to the right. These resulted in a drop in pass rates, and therefore more candidates taking retests - this is reflected in the relatively level trend for test passes shown in the chart below.

Theory car tests: 12-month rolling averages



The number of theory tests conducted began to level off again in 2014, but showed an increase of 16.5 percent during July - September 2015 compared with one year before.

A factor in this relatively large year-on-year increase may be a slight decrease in test fees from 1st October 2014. This may have encouraged candidates last year to delay tests they might otherwise have taken during July to September 2014 until after 1 October, to take advantage of the lower fees.

Car practical tests Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

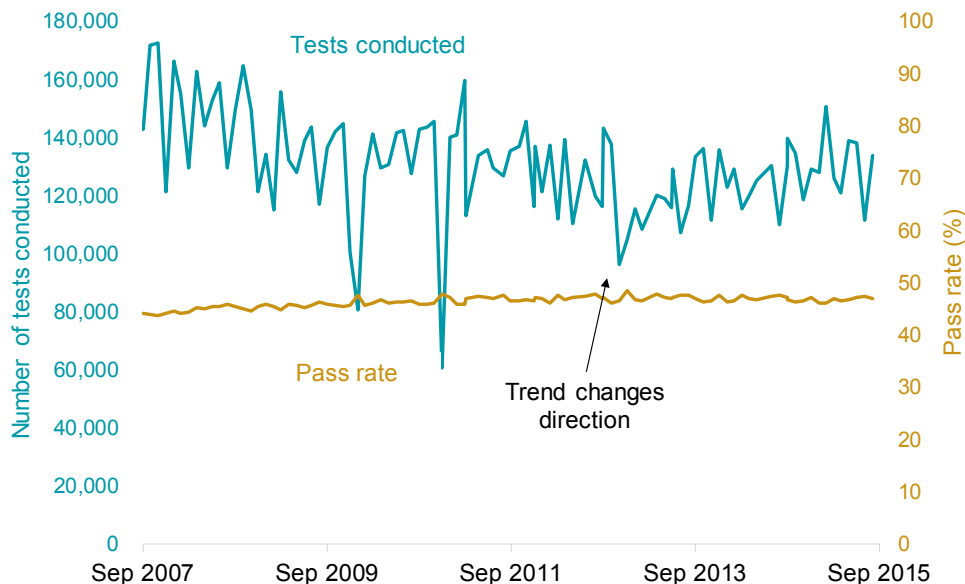
Tests conducted	383,810	+ 3.5 %
Tests passed	181,110	+ 2.9 %
Pass rate	47.2 %	No change

Factors influencing the car test trend

A demographic trend of declining birth rates during the 1990s means that there are now fewer young people in the peak age group for driving tests (17-20). Population data suggests 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. The economic recession from 2008 may have discouraged some people from taking a test, but it has been suggested that this is also part of a wider, international social trend towards lower licence holding amongst the young.

Car practical tests



There was a long-term downward trend in practical tests conducted of 18.5 per cent between 2007/08 and 2012/13. Several factors are likely to have influenced this, as discussed in the panel to the right.

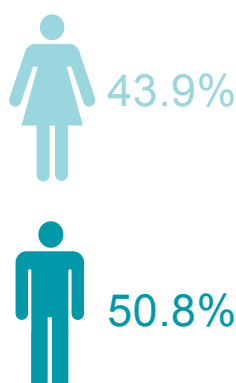
By contrast, in recent quarters there have been increases in the numbers of tests conducted, which were probably influenced by the upturn in the economy. The number of tests conducted in July to September 2015 was 3.5 per cent higher than in the same quarter of 2014, but still 11.2 per cent lower than in the corresponding quarter in 2007.

The practical test pass rate has changed very little over recent years, so the trend in test passes closely mirrors that for tests conducted.

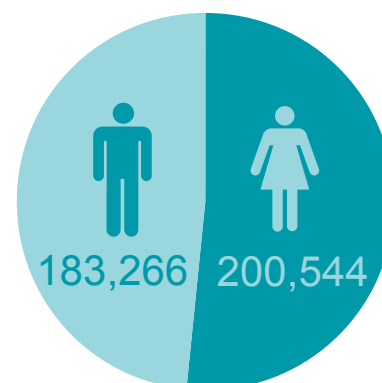
The practical car test pass rate in the last quarter was 43.9 per cent for women and 50.8 per cent for men.

Women made up 48.6 per cent of successful candidates during July to September, although they took 52.3 per cent of the tests conducted.

Car practical pass rate



Car practical tests



Motorcycle tests

Motorcycle theory tests Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 15

Tests conducted	21,750	+ 13.4 %
Tests passed	15,598	+ 8.5 %
Pass rate	71.7 %	- 3.2 percentage points

What tests are there?

Candidates must pass a theory test and both practical tests to obtain a motorcycle licence. Since April 2009 the practical test has consisted of two separate modules.

Changes

From 19 January 2013, a new EU Directive limited the engine size available to riders under the age of 24 at the date of attempting the practical test.

Motorcycle practical tests Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

Module 1

Tests conducted	17,633	+ 4.1 %
Tests passed	12,513	+ 5.7 %
Pass rate	71.0 %	- 0.01 percentage points

Module 2

Tests conducted	16,760	+ 4.0 %
Tests passed	11,986	+ 6.7 %
Pass rate	71.5 %	-0.02 percentage points

There was a surge in both theory and practical motorcycle tests before 19 January 2013 as candidates attempted to pass before the rule changes described to the right, and a corresponding trough after this.

The increase in test numbers between 2013 and 2014 reflected a return to more normal patterns after this trough, but the continuing increase over the last year to July 2015 is likely to be influenced by more general factors such as the improvement in the economic situation.

Data tables

Theory motorcycle tests

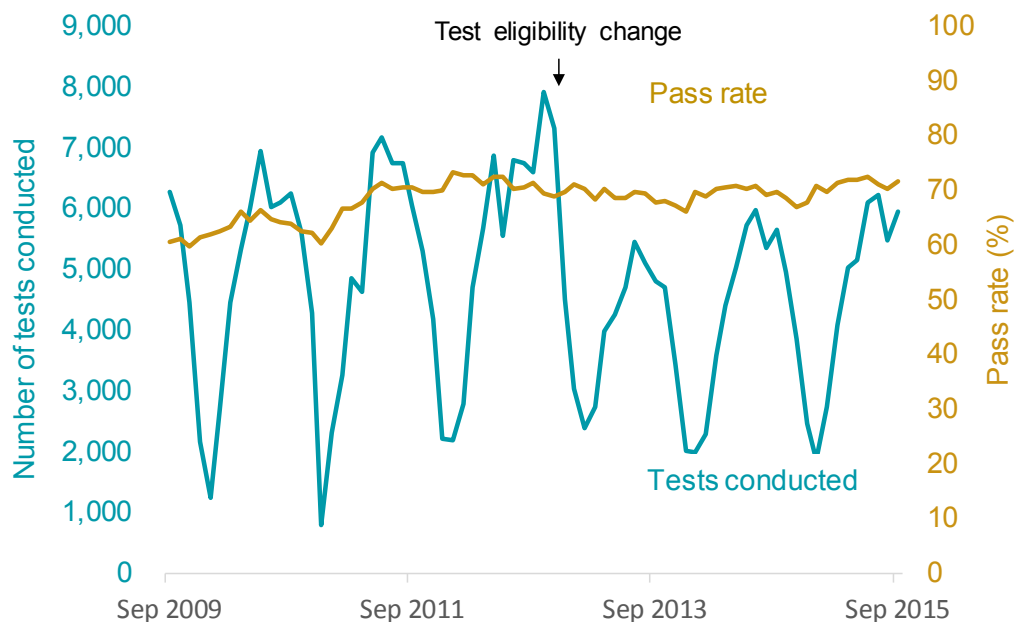
drt5401 drt0403

Partical motorcycle tests

drt0401 drt0421

All driving tests tend to be affected by the weather - with fewer tests during bad winter weather for example, but motorcycle tests numbers are far more seasonal than any others, with relatively few practical tests booked during the winter months.

Motorcycle Module 1 practical tests



Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) tests

LGV theory tests

Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

Multiple choice

Tests conducted	13,591	+ 43.7 %
Tests passed	8,893	+ 42.1 %
Pass rate	65.4 %	- 0.7 percentage points

Hazard perception

Tests conducted	12,334	+ 48.9 %
Tests passed	9,425	+ 42.0 %
Pass rate	76.4 %	- 3.7 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	8,052	+ 14.4 %
Tests passed	5,377	+ 18.1 %
Pass rate	66.8 %	+ 2.1 percentage points

LGV practical tests

Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

LGV practical

Tests conducted	17,563	+ 35.8 %
Tests passed	9,771	+ 36.1 %
Pass rate	55.6 %	+ 0.1 percentage points

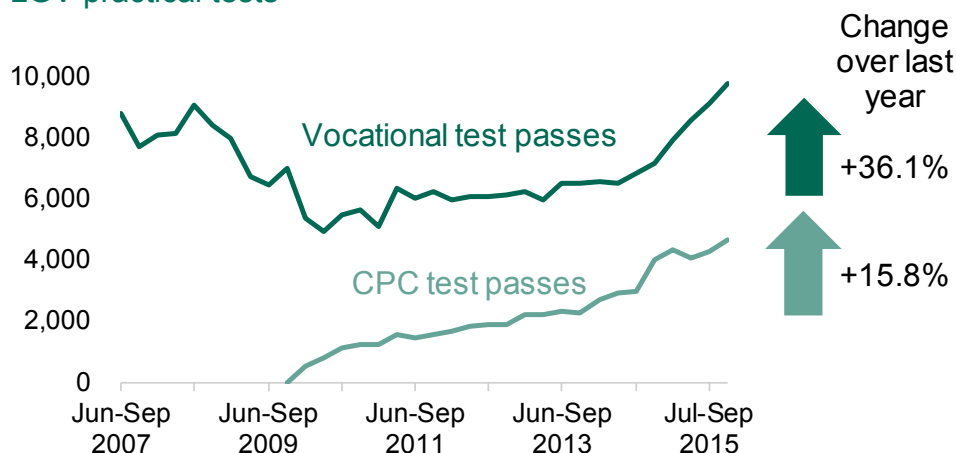
Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	5,349	+ 16.1 %
Tests passed	4,699	+ 15.8 %
Pass rate	87.9 %	- 0.2 percentage points

The number of LGV practical tests conducted fell sharply by 43 per cent between April to June 2008 and the same period in 2010, no doubt largely as a result of the recession.

In the last year, demand for all LGV testing has increased rapidly and is now 16 per cent higher than the number of practical tests conducted in the same quarter in 2008. This reflects increasing demand for professional lorry drivers with the economic recovery, and recruitment drives to replace the aging workforce of LGV drivers.

LGV practical tests



What tests are there?

To obtain a licence to drive a Large Goods Vehicle on the road (a 'vocational' licence), a candidate must pass two theory tests and a practical test.

Driver CPC

Since 10 September 2009, in order to drive an LGV professionally (i.e. as the main purpose of one's job) it has also been necessary to hold a Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC), which requires an additional theory (case study) and practical (safety demonstration) test. Professional drivers already holding a vocational LGV licence before this date qualified for Driver CPC automatically under 'acquired rights'.

All professional drivers must also do 35 hours periodic training every 5 years to retain their CPC.

Other changes

In May 2013, the Multiple Choice theory test started using questions that had not previously been published, leading to a drop in the pass rate.

Data tables

Theory LGV tests
drt5501 drt5502
Practical LGV tests
drt0501 drt0502

Passenger Carrying Vehicle tests

PCV theory tests

Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

Multiple choice

Tests conducted	2,178	+ 9.1 %
Tests passed	1,436	+ 9.1 %
Pass rate	65.9 %	No change

Hazard perception

Tests conducted	2,103	+15.2 %
Tests passed	1,588	+11.3 %
Pass rate	75.5 %	- 1.9 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	1,667	+ 3.3 %
Tests passed	798	+ 6.5 %
Pass rate	47.9 %	+ 1.4 percentage points

What tests are there?

The types of test required for PCVs, including the CPC requirements, are similar to those described for LGVs above, except that the PCV CPC requirement was introduced a year earlier, on 10 September 2008.

Other changes

In May 2013, the Multiple Choice theory test started using questions that had not previously been published, leading to a drop in the pass rate.

PCV practical tests

Key statistics Jul-Sep 15



Change on
Jul-Sep 14

PCV practical

Tests conducted	2,273	+ 18.0 %
Tests passed	1,272	+ 20.2 %
Pass rate	56.0 %	+ 1.1 percentage points

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)

Tests conducted	844	+ 15.9 %
Tests passed	730	+ 13.2 %
Pass rate	86.5 %	- 2.1 percentage points

Data tables

Theory PCV tests

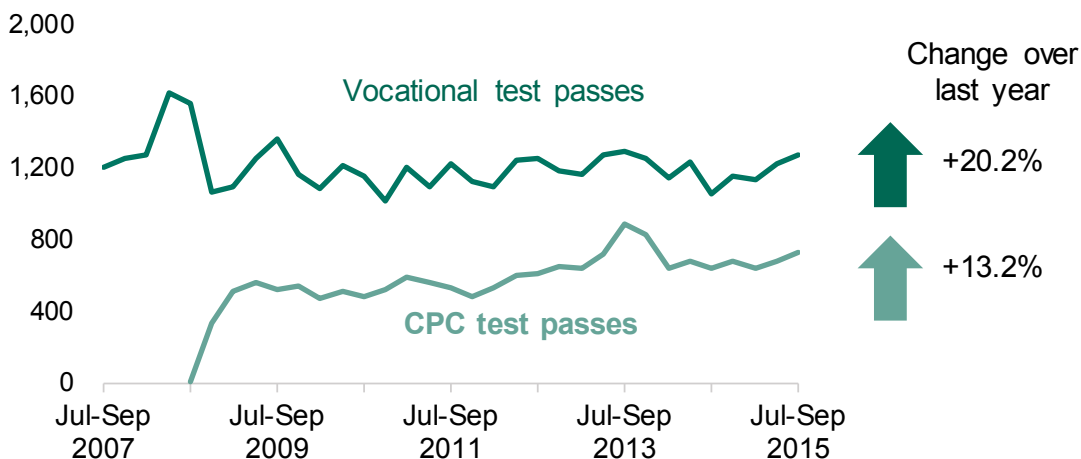
drt5601 drt5602

Practical PCV tests

drt0601 drt0602

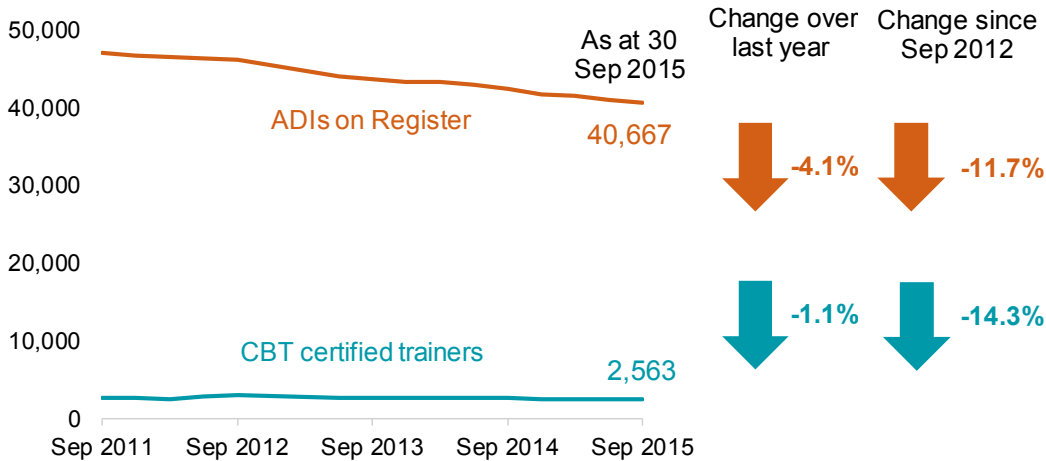
The number of PCV practical test passes has remained fairly stable over recent years, but the numbers of passes were higher in the last quarter than they were in the same quarter of the previous year.

PCV practical tests



Driver and riding instructors

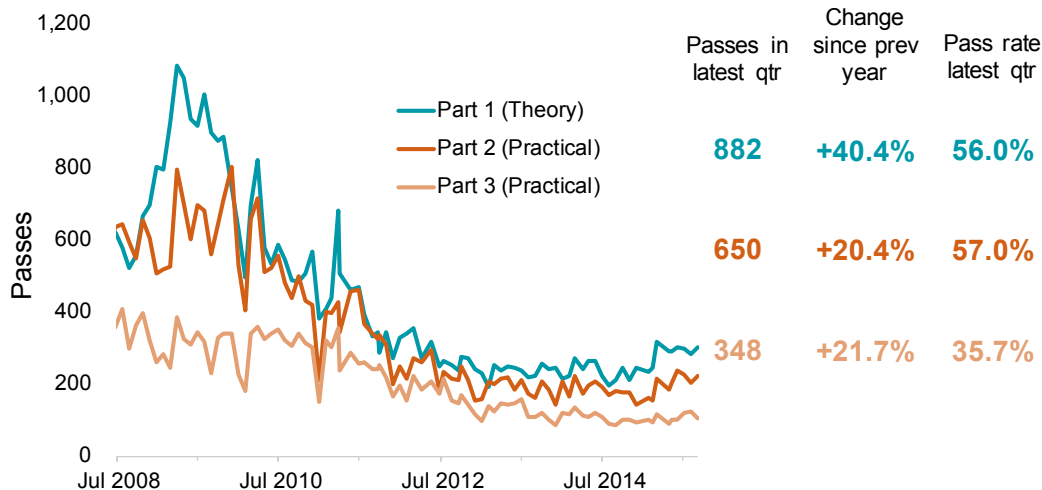
ADIs on Register and current CBT certified trainers



There has been a downward trend in the number of Approved Driving Instructors on the Register in recent years. This may be linked to a reduced demand for instructors, related to what was until recently a reducing number of car practical tests.

The number of people applying to be an ADI also followed a downward pattern until recent months, where there is now an upturn for both Theory and Part 2 tests. There was a large peak in ADI theory test passes around 2009, which was only slightly reflected in increased practical test passes. This may have been due to individuals considering a career change during the recession but completing the full process - completing the whole process is costly and requires a great investment of time and effort.

ADI test passes



During July to September 2015, 2,364 standards checks were conducted on ADIs, taking the total with a grade under the new standards to 13,750. Of these, 26.1 per cent scored an A, 65.3 per cent a B and 8.6 per cent had failed.

Of 141 CBT instructor check tests conducted during July to September, 130 had a satisfactory result.

What are ADIs and CBT?

To become an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI), candidates must complete one theory and two practical tests, after which they can apply to be added to the ADI statutory Register. Registration lasts for four years before renewal is required.

Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) must be undertaken by all learner motorcycle and moped riders before driving on the road, and can only be delivered by trainers holding a certificate issued by DVSA.

Standards checks

ADIs must undergo a standards check during each 4-year registration period. A new standards check was introduced on 7 April 2014, with a new grading structure, Grade A - an overall high standard of instruction, Grade B - a sufficient level of instruction, Fail - an unsatisfactory performance. Grades at last check test are still relevant for those ADIs who have yet to take the new standards check. The old grades ran from 1 (extremely poor overall performance) to 6 (very high overall performance). CBT instructors also undergo check tests.

Data tables

Instructors

drt0701-drt0721
drt5701
ins0101-ins0103
ins0501-ins0504

Background Notes

1. This statistical release is published by the Department for Transport based on statistics produced by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.
2. 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.
3. 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).
4. The next release of statistics will be published in March 2016 and will provide information for the third quarter of the 2015 financial year (October to December 2015).
5. 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.
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 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/driving-test-operational-statistics>.
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 15 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>.