

## NASP member questions update

We have received more member questions from you and have put them to the DVSA for a response. Below are some of your latest questions with answers from DVSA.

**Member question:** There are numerous reports coming in now of the lack of availability of tests in the LGV sector. Allocations are reduced to nil with one training company implying that their company is no longer viable as a result and serious consideration to close. We seriously need information to give this sector to help them hold on. The DVSA phone system is not coping with all the anomalies, and the email responses are too vague, throwing up more questions. Could the DVSA please send out a mail direct to this sector and clearly explain the situation?

**DVSA:** *Communication was issued on 7 August. We are working to increase the number of available tests.*

**Member question:** Would we still be able to recap a manoeuvre on our standards check in the new system ?

**DVSA:** *No. The changes being implemented are designed to keep wheels moving so that the vehicle is well ventilated*

**Member question:** Due to the close-down from March there are some candidates who are in the 'on-hold' situation who are now having to take employers/occupational examinations to fulfil new job roles and wish to book their tests later than the system will currently allow. We have heard of two cases today where the waiting time on the phone to try to do this is over 2 hours. We also had similar reports last week. Is there any resource in the system that will allow the DVSA to be informed that the time windows that are being offered will not be required, and hence, allow the DVSA to utilise those time windows elsewhere? The candidates of the ADIs that have reported this have been advised not to respond to the invitations and to wait for the general booking portal to re-open so that the candidate effectively goes to the back of the queue.

**DVSA:** *Our customer service centre continues to receive an unprecedented volume of calls. We are trying to implement self service facilities, which reduce the need to contact us, wherever possible. We are aiming to reopen the internet booking system to the public in the near future. The six-week forward booking window is kept under review but will remain in place as it allows us to amend test programmes whilst minimising the impact on customers.*

**Member question:** I had a call late yesterday afternoon from a member, he is a Motorcycle instructor and although his Learners that have had tests booked during lockdown have now been advised that they can rebook their tests there are no tests available at their local centres which are Ipswich and Basildon, however there are new tests available to book at these centres. He also has an issue in that the larger schools are taking up the majority of the allocations in his area and that they get the test slots released to them earlier in the week leaving little for anyone else, he has asked the DVSA to increase his allocation however he did this 3 weeks ago and has not yet heard anything back

**DVSA:** *If there are not enough tests to meet the overall demand at a given test centre the trainer booking allocation is reduced for all trainers and shared out. All currently available resource has been allocated to motorcycle testing. As soon as more resource becomes available we will open more tests on the booking system.*

**Member question:** Had a rebook for a test but the girl wants to change the date again as she wants to push it back a few weeks. Do you know if that's possible? I've emailed the DVSA but get the generic "we will reply within 10 days"

**DVSA:** *We are trying to implement self service facilities, which reduce the need to contact us, wherever possible. We are aiming to reopen the internet booking system shortly.*

**Member question:** I had a key worker fail a test in Blackpool on the 16th of August. Applied for another on the email address provided for them for essential tests. Was contacted 10 days later and told they couldn't help her as no dates available and no longer get priority. Can you provide any advice as this can't be right?

**DVSA:** *There are a significant number of other critical worker applications. We are also having to balance these with rescheduling tests that were suspended in March. Whilst appreciative of the delay, it would be unfair to give further priority to the almost 1 in 2 people who fail their test. The candidate will be able to book a further test through the internet booking system in due course.*

**Member question:** When ADIs stopped working in March, some pupils had their Practical Tests booked in July/August etc, which was a 12 week-16 week gap to have lessons and try and reach test standard. These test dates were put on hold. I'm having pupils now trying to rebook those July tests within a 6 week window from now, which isn't enough time to get to test standard. What do they do? I think DVSA could have many chancers coming up on test not ready and then they will have to rebook but at the same time create a long waiting time. If they don't book a test within that 6 week window, the only alternative is to get a refund and apply again when the booking system goes public, which will have a long waiting list. Has the DVSA realised this would happen?

**DVSA:** *We are having to balance a number of things with the priority to resume services in a safe and fair way. The 6 week forward booking window is kept under review but will remain in place as it allows us to amend test programmes whilst minimising the impact on customers.*

**Member question:** Trainers who booked on the TBS with test dates between March 26th and June 7th are not receiving any notifications for the tests that their clients are waiting for. Is there a different process that should be going through?

**DVSA:** *All trainer booked tests have been refunded. Customers can now book tests through the usual method.*

**Member question:** At Stafford Test Centre there have been critical tests going out but there is nothing available at all for Cat B tests. Can you let us know what is happening please and why?

**DVSA:** *We are still waiting for the landlord to confirm some of their statutory compliance checks. We are able to accommodate a low volume of tests for critical workers but are at present unable to increase capacity until we have received confirmation of these checks. We are working on a contingency plan that will allow us to resume testing from Stafford shortly in the event that we don't receive confirmation from the landlord soon.*

**Member question:** A private car taken for test - learner had a mask on but mum accompanying did not have a mask.

Examiner refused to take the car out on test because of this. This goes against what we've been told and there is nothing on gov.uk about accompanying driver needing

to wear a mask. Have the rules changed? Do we need to make people aware this is what they have to do?

**DVSA:** *The guidance has not changed. In these circumstances the examiners should ask for the vehicle to be ventilated before starting the sign up process, eyesight check and tell me question. The test should then continue as normal.*

**Member question:** Why are some examiners not allowing the use of the toilets as agreed?

**DVSA:** *Please let us know of any instances.*

**Member question:** No available tests in Cheltenham for next few months. Can we know why please?

**DVSA:** *Cheltenham is also waiting for confirmation from the landlord that their statutory compliance checks have been conducted. We are working on a contingency plan that will allow us to resume testing from Cheltenham shortly in the event that we don't receive confirmation from the landlord soon.*

**Member question:** Are the Welsh tests currently being given priority till they catch up with the English tests?

**DVSA:** *Critical worker tests have been given the same priority across England, Scotland and Wales. Car practical tests resume in Wales from 17 August.*

**Member question:** The test booking system is crumbling. ADIs that booked tests are not able to get through on the system to re-book the on-hold tests. The candidates that have been invited to re-book are not able to get slots in local test centres for the full 6 week window in the Bolton and Tunbridge Wells areas. Could you please extend the 6 week window.

**DVSA:** *The 6 week forward booking window is kept under review but will remain in place as it allows us to amend test programmes whilst minimising the impact on customers.*

**Member question:** At time of a standards check, what happens if the pupil decides that they do not want a third person in the car?

**DVSA:** *The ADI should explain the procedure prior to the assessment taking place. If the pupil then later decides that they have changed their mind the assessment will be rescheduled. As always, we will monitor how frequent this occurs.*

**Member question:** We know that there are no extensions to the theory test, so what happens when a candidate retakes the theory and passes before the practical has been cancelled? If a candidate retakes the theory and passes before the practical has been cancelled?

**DVSA:** *A learner can retake the theory test before their current certificate expires. The decision was taken to refund practical test fees upon expiry to avoid criticism that the Agency was unfairly holding on to fees. If a learner repasses the theory before their current certificate expires then the practical test can proceed.*