

IAM RoadSmart

The Car Examiner's Guide

May 2025 Version 1



iAM
RoadSmart

The assessment

- At the start of the on-road test phase, allow a little settling down time – the Associate may be nervous
- The on-road test should last no more than 60 minutes, however, if your Associate has asked for reasonable adjustments to be made, you may extend the time for a break. [Ex 3.1.3](#)
- Remember that aside from directions, you must not give any instructions, advice, or feedback during the test [Ex 3.2.6](#)
- Keep conversation to a minimum during the test to allow the Associate to focus on their drive.
- Give route directions clearly and in plenty of time for the Associate to take in the information and respond accordingly [Ex 3.3.3](#)
- Explain to the Associate how you will give directions approaching a roundabout [Ex 3.2.4](#)
- Assess the Associate's ability to drive in accordance with the System of car control
- Stop the Test immediately if there are any safety concerns, for example, you believe the driver to be dangerous or unfit to drive [Ex 2.1.5](#) and [Ex 3.2.10](#)
- Decide how best to note the main features of the drive so you don't forget what you have seen. You may wish to take notes or use a laminated test report. You will need to evidence your comments in the Test Report. [Ex 3.2.5](#)
- The Associate can provide spoken thoughts for all or part of the drive. However, if they do not attempt spoken thoughts, they will not be eligible for a F1RST.
- Avoid asking Highway Code questions at the start of the test, but if you would like to check understanding then ask for clarification at the end [Ex 3.2.9](#)
- Remember that Associates are tested on the Logbook and not Roadcraft [Ex 3.2.1](#)
- Check knowledge using Q&A at the end of the on-road phase, if required [Ex 3.2.9](#)



How to complete the test report

Use a laminated test report during the test and then complete the full test report in DARTS after the test.

Associate information

- Complete the first section of the box with information about the Associate and the test.
- Tick the type of test you are conducting
- Tick the box to confirm the Associate passed the eyesight check
- Tick the box to confirm the Associate signed the document declaration form

Candidate information					
Surname			First Name		
Date		Time		Associate No	
Advanced test	☐	Members re-assessment	☐	Declaration	☐
Eyesight test	☐				

Vehicle information

- Tick the type of vehicle that is being used for the test
- This Test Report is for use for Tests with all vehicles. The terms 'Drive' and 'Ride', 'Vehicle' and 'Machine' should all be deemed interchangeable in relation to this form.
- Refer to the Examiner Competency Based Coaching Document on more information on unusual and suitable vehicles.

Vehicle information (tick and delete as required)					
Car	☐	Motorcycle	☐	Commercial (Heavy/Medium/Light)	☐
Bus/Coach/Minibus (with trailer)	☐				
Reg no		Make		Manual	☐
				Automatic	☐

Competence levels

While conducting the test, use the guidance below to help you.

Competence Levels: 1 = Commended 2 = Satisfactory 3 = Requires Development					
Safety and legality		Gear changing		Cornering	
System		Use of gearbox		Overtaking	
Observation		Acceleration/sense		Restraint/progress	
Planning & hazard management		Mirrors/rear observation		Human factors & concentration	
Anticipation		Steering		Courtesy	
Vehicle sympathy & eco-driving		Braking		Slow manoeuvring	
Positioning		Signals		Smoothness	
Spoken thought		Knowledge		OVERALL RESULT	

Safety and legality

As the examiner, you decide whether the Associate's driving is legal. There may be a trade-off between legality in the interest of safety. Consider if a police officer would prosecute for any breach of road traffic legislation or whether what was done was reasonable in the circumstances. An Associate cannot PLAN to exceed the speed limit.

System

Does the Associate grasp the phases of the system, and can they apply the system correctly to each hazard?

Observation

Is the Associate identifying hazards and making scans in all directions around the vehicle/machine?

Planning and hazard management

Does the Associate plan to deal with the hazards identified? Do they appropriately manage the risk associated with each hazard? (by change of speed, positioning, use of horn, etc.)

Anticipation

Does the Associate make appropriate assumptions for what might occur, based on their observations?

Vehicle sympathy and eco-driving

Does the Associate take opportunities to rest the engine in higher gears when appropriate for both vehicle sympathy and fuel efficiency?

Positioning

Does the Associate position the vehicle safely and appropriately?

Spoken thought

Can the Associate verbalise their thoughts in relation to their drive? Does it explain the drive or is it historical? Speaking should not slow the drive or adversely affect the concentration.

Encourage the Associate to attempt spoken thought, if they do not attempt it, strike through the box. This will not result in a test failure, but you cannot award a FIRST without the Associate attempting spoken thought to at least a satisfactory standard.

Gear changing

Does the Associate select the correct gear at all times, without any difficulty? Is the clutch control matched with the gear selection on a manual gearbox? On automatic gearboxes, does the Associate understand the various drive modes available? Do they understand when and how to select a manual hold gear?

Use of gearbox

Does the Associate select the correct gear at the correct time, within the phases of IPSGA?

Acceleration sense

Can the Associate accurately match the speed of the vehicle to changing road conditions by using the accelerator? Constant 'comfort braking' or pulsing of the accelerator pedal are clear signs that acceleration sense is not being used. In an EV, is the regenerative braking used appropriately and smoothly?

Grading for EVs and automatic transmission

Leaving an automatic vehicle in 'Drive' for the entire test does not constitute a score of 3. If the vehicle is in 'Park' when you enter it and 'Drive' is selected throughout the journey and 'Reverse' is selected for a slow speed manoeuvre, then this should attract a score of 2 – Satisfactory.

If candidate can explain why leaving it alone (and is correct in their explanation) then consider a '1' e.g. "positronic gear box doesn't necessarily engage to a higher gear on steep descent, and therefore a lower gear doesn't need to be engaged to control descent speed.

"Flappy Paddle" use can be explained by the candidate if not used. There is no need for them to use it, if not required.

Mirrors/rear observation

Does the Associate use mirrors in an appropriate and timely fashion? Are shoulder/blind spot checks employed when necessary?

Steering

Are all steering inputs made smoothly and accurately? Is the Associate able to reach all ancillary controls when necessary, whilst steering? (regardless of which technique is employed).

Braking

Can the Associate use three stage (progressive) braking smoothly? Does the Associate avoid comfort braking, braking in a decisive and planned way. Do they understand how to perform and the benefits of a running brake check? In an EV, does the candidate use the regenerative braking together with friction braking appropriately?

Signals

Does the Associate give signals when appropriate and do they interpret correctly those given by other road users?

Knowledge

Does the Associate understand the concept and application of IPSGA? Do they have sound understanding of the Highway Code and our advanced course materials? Do they have sound knowledge of the technology fitted to their vehicle? This section should be used when a cockpit drill is performed.

Cornering

Does the Associate display safe positioning during cornering? Do they understand the Key principles of safe cornering, and use of the limit point? Do they ensure the vehicle is balanced and under control during cornering in bends, junctions and roundabouts?

Overtaking

Does the Associate understand the principles of overtaking including the following position, overtaking position and then demonstrating a safe overtake? If there are no safe overtaking opportunities during the drive then consider their overtaking deliberation planning and assessment in this section. It is also worth taking into consideration how the driver moves out to pass parked vehicles or when passing vulnerable road users. If this is unachievable, a discussion should take place to check understanding.

Restraint/progress

Has the Associate demonstrated a clear understanding of the balance between when to use restraint and when to make progress?

Human factors and concentration

Has the Associate demonstrated control of their emotions, in order to provide a safe and controlled drive? Are they able to describe the various factors affecting themselves, their drive and other road users? Do they maintain concentration throughout the test?

Courtesy

Does the Associate use courtesy in the way they approach hazards (thanking other road users, giving way when appropriate, etc.)? Do they consider their effects on others (such as when overtaking or approaching puddles near the kerbside)?

Slow manoeuvring

Can the Associate reverse a car or drive through narrow gaps with confidence? You may choose to ask for a slow speed manoeuvre to be performed if you have not seen sufficient skill demonstrated during the drive.

Smoothness

Can the Associate operate all controls in a smooth and accomplished manner without undue effort and without the vehicle being adversely unbalanced?



Scoring

For each of the competencies, select 1, 2 or 3. The table below gives the definition.

Score	Definition
1 = Commended	Consistently demonstrates competency to a high standard with confidence; shows sound understanding of interaction between this and other competencies.
2 = Satisfactory	Consistently demonstrates competency
3 = Requires Development	Fails to consistently demonstrate competency. Any grade 3 will result in the Associate being unsuccessful.

Overall result

An Associate will have been deemed to be successful, if you have graded every competency either 1 or 2. If you grade any competencies 3, the Associate has not been successful on this occasion. Encourage them to continue developing and to retake their test with some guidance from their group. The national pass rate for the Advanced Course is around 87%.

Awarding a F1RST

In order to award an Associate a F1RST, the Associate must have:

- Predominantly grade 1 scores (At least 20/23 competencies graded 1 which must include Safety and Legality and Slow Manoeuvring)
- Absolutely no grade 3s in any section.
- Attempted spoken thought to at least a satisfactory standard.

Exceptions:

As the Examiner, you have the discretion to recommend an Associate for a F1RST if they score a 2 in no more than three categories.

Those categories can be:

- Spoken Thoughts
- Vehicle Sympathy and Eco-Driving
- One additional category except for Safety and Legality, and Slow Manoeuvring which must score a "1"



Debrief at the end of the Test Drive

- At the end of the on-road phase, ensure you are parked somewhere safe and start the debrief
- Be mindful that you have about 10-15 minutes for the debrief and closing of the Test
- The Associate will be eager to know their results so let them know the result immediately [Ex 3.3.1](#)
- Explain the procedure for awarding a 'FIRST' pass if applicable [Ex 3.3.2](#)
- Give feedback to the Associate on their strengths and development points based on the Test drive [Ex 3.3.3](#)
- Provide meaningful detailed feedback and use evidence of what you have seen in the Test drive to evidence scores especially if the Associate is not successful
- Explain to the Associate that they will receive their test report by email and if they have been successful, their certificate shortly afterwards
- If an Associate has not been successful on this attempt, encourage them to review the development points, take some time to practise and then book a retest when ready
- Thank the Associate for their time
- Encourage them to continue to develop a proactive driving style.

Examiner comments in the test report

The last part of the Test Report is a box for your comments

- Please complete your comments on DARTS
- Provide meaningful detailed feedback covering positives and provide some areas to develop going forwards in the short development plan
- Please be specific and use evidence of what you have seen
- Remember that your verbal and written feedback should be consistent
- Proofread the report and check for any typos, spelling or grammatical errors.

Completing the test

Please ensure that you complete the Test report in the DARTS portal. This will ensure that the Associate receives the report and their results (and if successful this triggers the awarding of the certificate and full membership). [Ex 3.3.5](#)

Please remember to submit your expenses.





Vehicle information (tick and delete as required)			
Car ☐	Motorcycle ☐	Commercial (Heavy/Medium/Light) ☐	Bus/Coach/Minibus (with trailer) ☐
Reg no		Make	Manual ☐ Automatic ☐

- As the driver you are deemed to be in control of your vehicle at all times including responsibility for safety

Competence Levels: 1 = Commended 2 = Satisfactory 3 = Requires Development			
Safety and legality		Gear changing	Cornering
System		Use of gearbox	Overtaking
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Comments

Examiner name		Number			
Signature					