
MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR DRIVING INSTRUCTORS¹

1. GENERAL COMPETENCIES REQUIRED BY A DRIVING INSTRUCTOR

The driving instructor must be able to plan, implement and evaluate driver training effectively and meaningfully using the knowledge, skills and understanding related to the topics listed in 1 a) to e).

- a) Comprehensive knowledge of the Goals for Driver Education, in the form of the GDE matrix
- b) Familiarity with a wide range of communication, teaching and motivational skills, with a particular emphasis on targeting self-evaluation skills amongst learner drivers (right column of GDE matrix)
- c) Ability to assess the skills of the learner driver and to identify and address shortcomings
- d) Ability to drive in a consistently high social, defensive and environmentally-friendly manner
- e) Knowledge of the official training curriculum and/or driving test requirements for applicants for a driving licence

Detailed content requirements for training and testing are listed in article 5.

2. CONDITIONS FOR ENTRY TO THE PROFESSION

Applicant driving instructors are required to:

- a) have sufficient schooling to meet the demands of training and working in the profession
- b) possess the driving licence of the category he/she intends to teach in
- c) have a minimum of 3 years driving experience with the relevant category of vehicle
- d) complete a screening process, in order to gain access to training and the test to become an instructor
- e) **undergo a medical test - including an eyesight test - commensurate to the safe execution of the profession**
- f) undergo a background check with regard to prior criminal offences and/or traffic offences, to ensure that the applicant is a fit and proper person.

¹ MERIT is focusing on driving instructor requirements for category B. Special training and testing for other licence categories should be considered.

3. INITIAL QUALIFICATION

a) Training

Applicants shall be required to undergo obligatory initial professional training prior to the test. Such training shall be carried out in accredited driving instructor training centres which are subject to oversight by a recognised and appointed body. The programme shall at least include training on the teaching methods and skills required to teach all levels of the Goals for Driver Education matrix.

Experience with teaching real learner drivers is required prior to the trainee instructor gaining full qualification. **This experience must be subject to supervision by a qualified supervisor, during both practical and theoretical driving lessons.**

Detailed content requirements for training and testing are listed in article 5.

Persons responsible for training applicant instructors must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to train in the specific area in question.

b) Testing

Applicants shall undergo testing, according to the competencies laid down in article 1 and the specific goals specified in article 5, to assess his/her basic knowledge and skills with regard to:

- Theoretical knowledge
- Teaching ability
- Driving ability

The order of the above tests shall be determined by each Member State.

Testing of driving ability and/or teaching ability can be integrated into the training process.

Persons responsible for testing applicant instructors must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to test in the specific area in question.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ONGOING TRAINING

a) Ongoing training

Driving instructors are required to attend a minimum of 5 days of ongoing training every 5 years.

Persons who have ceased pursuit of the profession **for a period of 5 or more years**, and have missed ongoing training requirements during the period of absence, shall undergo a course of sufficient periodic training before resuming the profession.

b) Observation / Quality Checks (with feedback)

Driving instructors shall undergo a minimum of 1 observation, by an appropriately qualified and accredited observer, every 5 years. This observation shall, in particular, assess the instructor's interaction with the learner driver(s) and provide feedback to the instructor on positive performance and areas in need of improvement. The observation shall take place during a practical on-road driving lesson and/or in a theory lesson, if relevant to the member state in question.

Instructors found to be seriously under-performing during such observations shall be required to obtain specific training to correct the observed shortcomings.

c) Periodic medical testing

Ongoing medical testing for instructors, including an eyesight test, shall be required at least every 5 years.

5. CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING AND TESTING

a) Comprehensive knowledge of the Goals for Driver Education, in the form of the GDE matrix

The driving instructor candidate shall be fully familiar with the hierarchical approach to safe behaviour, according to the GDE matrix (Goals for Driver Education), and shall be able to provide understanding to the learner driver about how abilities and preconditions on a higher level influence the demands, decisions and behaviour on a lower level. In order to emphasise the comparative importance of the higher levels of the matrix, training for instructors should begin with level 4 and work downwards to level 1.

- Level 4 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Individual aspects related to safe driving

- age and gender
- personality
- general values and attitudes
- intelligence, education and learning style
- disabilities, special needs, vehicle adjustment
- diseases and impairments (including alcohol and drug use)
- Feeling of invulnerability (zero-risk theory)

Social aspects related to safe driving

- group norms and peer pressure
- cross-cultural issues
- youth socialisation process
- lifestyle
- socio-economic position

Road Safety-related Statistics

- road safety/accident statistics, national and international for different sub groups of population and road users-related to GDE level 4-aspects

- Level 3 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Transport and road safety system

- costs of traffic accidents, estimates of human costs, society cost, health cost etc.
- effects of traffic on health, mobility, economy, environment

Decision making and behaviour in trip-related choices

- health status and driving choices
- alcohol and drugs, tiredness and emotional state
- distractions (e.g. mobile phones) and inattentiveness
- single vehicle accidents amongst novice drivers
- peer pressure in the car, passengers, reason and motives for driving, influence on accidents and driving style
- available travel modes, public transport
- journey planning;
 - traffic density, rush hours,
 - time of day, darkness, dusk and dawn
 - seasonal and weather differences, snow and ice, fog, rain
 - time management

- Level 2 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Traffic rules

- existing traffic rules and their applications
- increased internationalisation and travelling between countries
- road users who are not obeying traffic rules, and driver's ability to cope with them
- legal aspects of breaking the rules, police surveillance, methods and principles, penalties

Traffic psychology

- mental workload, visual attention
- routine in traffic and automatization of driving behaviour
- overconfidence and calibration of subjective driving abilities in traffic
- risk compensation theory

Driver behaviour

- behaviour in different traffic situations (junctions, motorways, overtaking etc.)
- speed adjustment, general and in different road environments and situations
- cooperation with other road users and clearness about own intentions
- hazard perception
- dangerous situations, (animals, vulnerable road users, icy spots etc.)

Road Safety-related Statistics

- road safety/accident statistics, national and international for different accident types in different traffic situations-related to GDE level 2

- Level 1 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Vehicle functioning

- functioning of the vehicle and its different subsystems related to safety (airbag, seat belts, brakes, anti skid systems, tyres, chairs, child restraints, neck support etc, and benefits of using safety systems) and environment (e.g. fuel consumption)
- legislation concerning vehicles and their subsystems
- basic maintenance of vehicle and vehicle subsystems, particularly in relation to road safety and the environment
- principles of EuroNCAP (including pedestrian-friendly ratings), principles for crashworthiness of vehicles
- crash types, crash violence and injuries

Traffic psychology

- mental workload, visual attention
- routine and automatization of basic vehicle control skills
- overconfidence and calibration of subjective car control skills

Vehicle control and-related behaviour

- skills in vehicle control (starting, braking, steering, shifting gear)
- vehicle control on low friction
- vehicle control in high speed
- influence of the laws of nature on vehicle dynamics and movement
- sitting posture
- safety check of the vehicle
- environmentally-friendly driving style

b) Communication, teaching and motivational skills

The instructor shall have knowledge and skills relating to the following educational skills:

- Lesson planning, goal-setting and lesson evaluation
- Professional communication (establishing the appropriate relationship for learning)
- Basic teaching methods (demonstration, informing, setting tasks, checking)
- Advanced teaching methods (active learning methods such as coaching, moderating group activities, questioning & developing and giving feedback, etc)
- Selection of specific teaching method according to specific educational goal and driver's needs
- **The need to adapt to different learning styles**
- Motivational techniques

c) Assessment skills (driving skills, personal characteristics)

The instructor shall be able to:

- assess driving skills of learner driver, identify shortcomings and address them
- assess the effects of the personal characteristics of the learner driver on safe driving
- encourage self-assessment on the part of the learner driver with regard to his/her driving motives and ability

d) Driving ability

The instructor shall possess a high and consistent driving standard, with particular emphasis on:

- a social and defensive driving style
- environmentally-friendly driving techniques
- **ability to intervene safely while a learner driver is at the wheel**

e) **Knowledge of curriculum and/or test requirements**

The instructor shall have a full understanding and familiarity with:

- the goals of the national training curriculum for learner drivers (if appropriate)
- the requirements of the driving test for driving licence candidates