

## 5. SOP Section 7

## CHAPTER 5

### PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

In common with other applicants for driving licences, those who are physically disabled have to take a test of competence to drive. The test requirements are generally the same as for able-bodied candidates, and the same test documents are used. In addition the examiner must complete a report on form D255.

#### 5.1 RESTRICTIONS

The only cases where a restriction, other than the appropriate category letter, may be indicated on a pass certificate are those of candidates with a physical disability, which affects their ability to drive. **Restrictions must not be related to a specific make of vehicle or machine, or to horse-power, cubic capacity, or unladen weight.**

#### 5.2 SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

If the examiner is satisfied that the candidate is competent to drive all unadapted vehicles in the category on which they were tested, and in any additional categories covered, a normal pass certificate for the category should be issued.

If the examiner considers that the candidate can drive unadapted vehicles only of the category on which they were tested, but not the additional categories covered, then the pass certificate should be issued for that category (e.g. category B) and the D255 should indicate that the candidate should be restricted to category B vehicles.

If the examiner considers the candidate can drive only a vehicle with suitable adaptations, this should be indicated on the pass certificate. The appropriate EU code (listed below) should be entered on the D10.

#### 5.3 EU CODES

	Code
Modified transmission (gearbox)	10
Modified clutch	15
Modified braking system	20
Modified accelerator systems	25
Combined braking and accelerator systems	30
Modified control layouts	35
Modified steering	40
Modified rear view mirrors	42
Modified driver seat	43
Automatic transmission	78

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Where the candidate is to be restricted to driving automatic vehicles of the category on which they were tested the D10 should, depending on the circumstances, be completed as follows:

If the examiner considers that the automatic transmission, regarded as an adaptation, wholly overcomes the effects of the disability, appropriate category letter should be entered in box 4 and 'Y' in box 5; or

If the examiner considers that the automatic transmission, regarded as an adaptation, does not wholly overcome the effects of the disability, the appropriate category letter should be entered in box 4, 'Y' entered in box 5, and the appropriate EU code inserted in the space provided.

#### **5.4 FORM D255**

##### **REPORT ON DRIVING TEST OF A CANDIDATE WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY OR WHO FAILS THE EYESIGHT TEST**

A report on form D255 must be completed in duplicate in all cases, pass or fail, where a candidate has a disability, declared or undeclared, or fails the eyesight test.

In completing the form D255 the use of the boxes is self-evident. In addition it will be necessary for examiners to observe the instructions below:

**Box 5** – This is split into 4 sections as follows:

- Do you consider that the candidate should drive vehicles with adaptations and/or automatic transmission to overcome the effects of the disability? The examiner should briefly describe the adaptations fitted if the answer is yes. Where appropriate, describe the type of adaptation(s) considered necessary, e.g. "ball fixed to steering wheel, hand operated clutch", etc
- Did the adaptations and/or automatic transmission overcome the effects of the disability? The examiner should briefly give reasons if the answer is no
- Did the test show that the candidate would be unsafe as a driver of any kind of vehicle? Drivers Medical Branch (DMB) is seeking information here about whether the examiner considers the candidate would be unsafe to drive/ride vehicles of any kind. It is unlikely that someone who failed because adaptations to their vehicle were unsuitable or non-existent would warrant a 'YES' under this heading
- Do you have any other comments including likely effect of the disability on driving vehicles in other categories? Particular attention should be given to the candidate's ability to drive/ride vehicles in other categories. Comments should be made here to indicate whether the candidate's disability would affect their ability to drive/ride other vehicles safely

The examiner should briefly describe the adaptations fitted.

**NOTE: Examiners should be aware that if box 8 is marked 'YES', DVLA will revoke (or refuse) a licence.**

The original copy D255 should be forwarded on the day of the test to DVLA and the copy should be retained in a file in the DTC. Staple the D255 to the D10 when sending the forms to Swansea.

In the case of an eyesight failure, form DL77, if completed, should be attached to the copy D255. In the event of the candidate declining to sign the DL77, a note to this effect should be attached to the D255.

### **5.5 GUIDANCE TO UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES**

Generally the candidate should be given the result of the test, and be given an oral explanation of faults in the usual way. The examiner should not make any remarks, or enter into any discussion, about the candidate's licensing entitlement. However, if the examiner thinks some, or further, adaptation of the vehicle might enable the candidate to pass the test, they may give a general indication to that effect.

If a candidate asks for advice as to the precise manner in which they should adapt the vehicle they should be referred to the DETR's Mobility Unit. The telephone number and address is contained in the DSA's publication 'The Driving Test'.

### **5.6 THE MOTOR CYCLE TEST**

If direction indicators are fitted to a machine ridden by a candidate who cannot give arm signals, they must be regarded as a necessary adaptation to the machine.

It is very unlikely, but not impossible, that a one-armed motorcyclist could take the test. The examiner would have to be quite satisfied that all the requirements of the test were met and that the candidate was safe, and might find it necessary to repeat some manoeuvres, particularly the emergency stop, before reaching a decision. Each case must be treated on its merits.

A disabled motorcyclist who cannot take direct rear observation, but otherwise meets the test requirements may be granted a pass certificate to ride a category A or P machine; "with suitably positioned mirrors" (EU code 42).

A motorcyclist can be restricted to riding a combination machine if the examiner is not satisfied that they are capable of riding a solo machine safely. The appropriate category letter and disability code should be entered on the D10, and the D255 should indicate that the candidate should be restricted to riding machines with sidecars.

## **5.7 RESTRICTED/ABNORMAL STATURE**

Extra large or extra small stature is not of itself a disability and examiners should not normally restrict a pass certificate on those grounds, nor complete a D255. However there may be cases where restricted or abnormal growth could be said to amount to a disability, in that it could have an effect on the candidate's driving ability. If the controls of the candidate's vehicle have been adapted in any way to overcome this disability then the appropriate EU code should be entered on the D10.

In such cases a description of the candidate's build, giving some indication of size, approximate height, and whether build appears to be in proportion, should be given on the DL25 and a D255 should be completed.

## **5.8 DRIVING TESTS REQUESTED BY DVLA**

Occasionally Drivers Medical Branch (DMB) may require a disabled driver to take a driving test even though they already hold, or have held, a full licence. This may be done when a driver has become disabled since the full licence was issued, or when a previously disclosed disability has become more acute. The test is to help medical advisers in assessing the driver's licensing entitlement.

DMB send two copies of the special report form (D255) and a copy of the notification sent to the driver (D375), with a covering letter to the Area Office. The booking section holds these documents to link with the candidate's test application. An appointment is then made and the documents sent to the test centre with the normal programmes of work. After conducting the test, the examiner should issue a pass certificate or statement of failure, as appropriate, in the usual way. If the candidate does not take the test the documents should be returned direct to booking section.

The D255 should be completed in duplicate. The two un-numbered boxes will have been completed by DMB. Most of the other boxes are self-explanatory.

If the candidate fails the test, a copy of both sides of the DL25B should be made. The original should be attached to the D255 and the copy placed with the week's work.

The completed D255, together with the copy D10 or D10V in the case of a pass, and the original DL25 in the case of a failure, should be sent on the day of the test to DVLA. The duplicate copy D255 should be forwarded to the Supervising Examiner for retention on file.

## **5.9 DISABLED, DEAF, and DEAF WITHOUT SPEECH CANDIDATES**

### **5.10 TIME ALLOCATED FOR TEST**

More than one test period is normally allocated for an L test for a disabled person because of the extra documentation involved. Extra time is also allowed for candidates who are deaf without speech or who have declared a severe degree of deafness.

If a candidate in one of these categories fails to declare their disability when applying for the test, only one period will have been allowed. The test should however be conducted, the documentation being left for completion later in the day if necessary.

### **5.11 DIRECTIONS ON ROUTE**

Try to ensure that as far as possible the instructions are given when the vehicle is stationary and the candidate can see your face clearly. Speak clearly and not too fast. Do not shout. Keep your head still. Try to move your lips a little more than you normally do. Please be patient.

The examiner should agree with the candidate beforehand how instructions about the route and manoeuvres are to be given. This should be done in writing or, if the candidate is accompanied by a signer, through them.

There are now small electronic communication devices available to facilitate conversation with people who are hard of hearing. If asked to use one of these devices, the examiner should comply, after first ascertaining that it can be worn other than around the neck.

### **5.12 DEAF CANDIDATES (*motorcycles*)**

In the case of deaf candidates or those with a hearing defect that would make radio communication impractical, the examiner should give directions on route with the aid of a diagram or map, taking into account the candidate's local knowledge of the area. Care should be taken to ensure that the distance between briefing points is not too long, nor the directions too complicated.

If the booking section knows that the candidate is profoundly deaf in both ears, 2 periods will be allocated for the test. If a candidate reports for test with a hearing problem, which was not declared, on their application, the examiner should ascertain the extent of the deafness and check whether it can be overcome by the radio equipment. If not, the test should be postponed so that it can be re-booked with more time. The procedure of rebooking should be explained to the pupil.

### **5.13 WITHOUT SPEECH**

Directions can be given without difficulty, although examiners should bear in mind the possibility that the candidate may not have understood them.

### **5.14 COMBINATION OF DEAFNESS AND WITHOUT SPEECH**

The examiner should conduct the test as far as they reasonably can, resorting to less conventional methods of communication if necessary. The test must not however be distorted to an unacceptable degree to meet the candidate's handicaps. If the test cannot be conducted to a standard, which enables the examiner to reach a decision, they should terminate the test and make a special report to the SE for onward transmission to the area ACDE.