

Large Passenger-Carrying Vehicle Testing – Notes for Guidance

TESTING

When is the test due?

For large passenger-carrying vehicles 1 year old or more, not being used for hire or reward, and built to carry more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver, the test is due on the first anniversary of registration and then every year afterwards.

GETTING A TEST

How do I apply for the test?

By telephone

We are sorry that this is not currently available but we have plans to introduce a telephone booking service for LPCV's in the future.

By post

You may book a test by post. You will need to complete an application form and send it with the appropriate fee to the vehicle test centre (see list overleaf) at which you would like the test to be carried out.

At the counter

You may book a test in person at any vehicle test centre (see list overleaf). When making a booking in person you do not need an application form but it is advisable to have your registration documents and current test certificate details when making the booking.

The Belfast centre is open for booking from 9.00 to 4.00, Monday to Friday.

All other centres are open from 8.45 to 12.30 and 1.15 to 4.00, Monday to Friday.

On line

We are sorry that this is not currently available but we have plans to introduce an online booking service in the future.

Do I need to apply in advance?

Yes. You should preferably apply about 6 weeks, but not more than three months, beforehand. We can issue a new test certificate up to 28 days before the current certificate expires. It will be dated from the current certificate's expiry date, as long as you inform the examiner and produce the previous certificate at the time of test.

How much does the test cost?

You can get information on fees on a 24-hour phone line, (08457) 581416.

Can I cancel my test appointment?

Yes, provided you give 1 clear day's notice. Clear days exclude Saturday, Sunday and public and bank holidays. Easter Tuesday counts as a public holiday but Good Friday does not. These days also exclude the date on which you tell us you wish to cancel and the date of the test. Example: if you wish to cancel a Tuesday appointment you must tell us by the previous Friday. We will only refund the fee if you give enough notice of the cancellation.

THE TEST ITSELF

What should I do before the test?

Make sure the vehicle is roadworthy with all its equipment working. It must be in a reasonably clean condition externally and internally, otherwise we may refuse the test and you would lose your fee.

What should I do when I arrive at the test centre?

Your appointment letter tells you which inspection lane number to go to. You will see equivalent numbers at the test centre. Drive the trailer to that lane number and wait. We will then ask you to drive your vehicle into the centre for inspection.

PASSING AND FAILING

What happens if the vehicle passes?

We give a Test Certificate, valid for 12 months, to the driver at the test centre. Keep it safe.

What happens if the vehicle fails the test?

You will get an inspection record sheet/notification of refusal listing the faults, and a retest application form. We charge reduced fees for retest applications if we receive them within 21 days of the full test.

Loss of certificate

If you lose your certificate, apply for a duplicate. Use this form but only complete sections 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10. Send your application and fee to our HQ. Alternatively, you can apply via our telephone booking on 0845 247 2471.

Change of ownership

If the vehicle is re-registered because of a change in registration or ownership, your certificate remains valid.

If I do not have a vehicle test certificate, can I use the vehicle?

No – unless it is being driven to or from the test centre.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Can I appeal against the examiners decision?

Yes. You can appeal within 14 days of the decision. You can get appeal forms from test centres. You must pay another fee.

What happens if I appeal?

The vehicle will be re-examined and you will be asked about repairs etc, since the test. You must produce the inspection record sheet/notification of refusal and registration documents. If the examiner allows the appeal, we will issue a test certificate. If there are good reasons for the appeal, we may refund all or part of the fee.

How do I complain?

If you are not satisfied with the service you receive, you can use our complaints procedure. Please ask at the test centre for details. If you are unhappy about any aspect of our service, please try to resolve it before you leave the test centre.

Speed limiter (buses and coaches only)

A public service vehicle with a maximum gross weight exceeding 10 tonnes first used on or after 1 January 1988 may require a speed-limiting device unless it is exempt.

A vehicle is exempt from needing a speed limiter if:

1. the vehicle's construction means it cannot exceed 100km/h. If this is the case, you must complete the Declaration at section 6 and be prepared to provide documentary evidence if asked for;
2. the vehicle's maximum speed has been reduced by:
 - (a) changes to drive-line gearing, or
 - (b) permanent changes to body size/shape which increases drag, or
 - (c) any other constructional change, or
 - (d) adjustments that reduce engine maximum rpm and/or engine power.

If alterations have taken place, you must provide details of the changes to the test centre at the time of the test with evidence of the vehicle's maximum speed. In addition, if 2(d) applies, you must provide documentary evidence of the engine's maximum power at the same time. If acceptable evidence is not produced (where required), your vehicle may fail its test for non-fitment of a speed limiter. It is an offence to make a declaration knowing it to be untrue.

Seatbelt test - (buses and coaches only)

A test will take place of seatbelts, how they are secured and the area to which they are secured (installation test).

Eligible vehicles

A *once-only* seatbelt installation test (test 'A') will be carried out on vehicles with more than 8 passenger seats and with seatbelts fitted to one or more non-mandatory, forward-facing seats. See section 5 on the form.

Vehicles that do not need the once-only test

Minibuses, buses and coaches do not need the once-only test if:

- the vehicle is first registered on or after 1 September 2002; or
- all seatbelts are mandatory, ie seatbelts are fitted on or after 1 September 2002 (excludes seatbelts fitted to buses designed for urban use with standing passengers), or seatbelts are fitted to the driver's seat and front passenger seat on minibuses (specified passenger seat), or seatbelts are fitted to the exposed forward-facing seats on a coach first registered on or after 1 October 1990;
- all seatbelts were fitted by the vehicle's original manufacturer and had been formally type-approved when installed (which in practice covers most seatbelts fitted at the time of manufacture);
- all seatbelts are disabled person's belts;
- the vehicle has passed an installation 'A' test in Northern Ireland after 19 June 2000 or GB after 1 August 1998. If this is the case, formal documentary evidence (eg, original PSV licence or MOT certificate) must be produced as confirmation. **If you cannot provide proof needed on the day of the test, a further full installation test will be required.** (Photocopies will not do.)

Testable Items

- Manufacturer/no. plates
- Lights
- Direction indicators
- Reflectors
- Windscreen
- Wipers/washers
- Horn
- Brake fluid level
- Electric wiring
- Suspension mountings
- Fuel system
- Tachograph/speedometer
- Mirrors
- Steering wheel/column
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Service brake pedal/operation
- Handbrake lever
- Seats and Seatbelts
- Cab/body work and flooring
- EME/ENT/doors and locks
- Wheels and spokes
- Speed limiters
- Dimensions
- Steering linkage/gear
- Suspension units (condition and attachment)
- Shock absorbers
- Oil leaks
- Engine/transmission mtgs.
- Transmission
- Exhaust
- Mech. brake components
- Brake wheel units
- Fuel system and components
- Brake system components
- Underbody/chassis condition
- Tyres
- Hubs/bearings
- Headlight alignment
- Service brake test
- Secondary/handbrake test
- Smoke/exhaust emission
- Road test (if necessary)