

Driving and Mobility Centre

West of England

Driving Assessments

The Driving and Mobility Centre based in Bristol offers both Fitness to Drive and Adaptation Assessments. Our aim is to keep people independently mobile and to help them achieve safe driving.

You will need to have a current valid driving licence, or a provisional licence if you are learning to drive. If you do not have a licence, please contact the centre to discuss your options as we may be able to see you off-road. Assessments are by appointment only, and take around 1½ to 2 hours in all, starting in the office, then off-road and progressing onto the public roads in the surrounding areas.

You will drive one of the centre's cars and if required a specially adapted vehicle will be used. The cars have dual controls and come with full comprehensive insurance cover whilst driving.

Not everyone attending the centre is able to achieve safe driving so we **strongly advise** that another driver attends the assessment with you, or you arrange alternative public transport, in case the outcome of the assessment is unfavourable.

Please note that ordinarily, family and friends cannot accompany you on the assessment drive itself.

It may be necessary to refer you on to a different centre if more specialised adaptations are required. In some cases, where retraining is needed to master new controls or if you have not driven for some time, lessons may be required with a private instructor; this will be discussed with you on the day. Sometimes a further follow-up appointment will be needed to establish the final outcome.

The Application Form

Please complete the form as fully as you can. This will help us and will help you get the most out of your visit. We ask for your name, address, and other information such as:

- Licence details
- Background medical details
- Current mobility
- Appointment preference

On the back page of the form we ask you to sign to show you understand and consent for us to:

- Contact your doctor
- Conduct an assessment of your driving ability
- Contact the DVLA
- Keep records

The Venue

For those accompanying people to an assessment in Bristol there is a waiting area and tea and coffee is available. The Vassall Centre operates a No Smoking policy so smoking is not permitted in the building or on the surrounding grounds.

What happens during the assessment?

You will meet the assessment team who will ask you what your aims are. They will check your driving licence details (please bring your licence with you if you have one) and discuss any medical information, the type of impairments, and how these may affect your driving ability. If appropriate the Occupational Therapist may use a collection of cognitive tests relevant to driving (the Rookwood Driving Battery). This part of the assessment takes place at the centre and could take between twenty-five and forty minutes.

Your vision will be checked to ensure it is adequate for driving, so please make sure your vision has been tested within the last two years: please remember your glasses.

The physical range of movements and strengths of the driver will be assessed, along with reaction times from accelerator to brake.

Having gathered this information, the team will discuss with you whether adaptations are required, and if so, the most suitable combination of adaptations that may be needed in order for you to achieve independent mobility.

During the assessment you will be able to drive either a manual car or a car fitted with an automatic gearbox, power-assisted steering and a range of adaptations if required.

The on-road assessment will take account of your previous driving experience (if any) and will take around forty-five minutes to an hour to complete.

Your ability to control the car and drive safely and independently will be assessed and a written report will be produced and sent to the referrer as required.

Please do call us if you have any questions or wish to discuss further any of the information we have sent to you.

Our telephone number is: 0117 965 9353