MAYOR OF LONDON **LONDON**ASSEMBLY

Data on waiting times for driving tests in London

Key information

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Introduction

New data from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), sheds light on waiting times for practical driving tests and pass rates across the country. In this post, the Research Unit's **Richard Berry** and **Monolita Mahtab** examine the data for London and the capital's individual test centres.

Londoners are less likely than people in the rest of the country to hold a driving licence or to own a car. The reasons for this are likely to be related to the density and demographics of the city, as well as the accessibility of more sustainable transport modes – including public transport options and safe cycle routes.

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> Source: Department for Transport, [Region and Rural-Urban Classification](#), August 2024. Findings from the National Travel Survey 2023: tables NTS9901 (licence holders) and NTS9902 (car availability)

There are currently 25 open test centres across London offering practical driving tests – which all new drivers must pass to obtain a licence, after first having passed a theory test. The map below shows their locations, along with current waiting times and average pass rates.

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> Source: Pass rate data from DVSA, [Driving test and theory test data: cars](#), April 2025 (table DRT112A). Waiting time data from DVSA, [Response to FOI 202502-067863](#), March 2025 (FOI

request submitted by [AA Driving School](#))

Since 2014, London-based driving test centres have conducted an average of approximately 240,000 practical tests annually. While test volumes fluctuated over the decade, they remained relatively stable until a drastic 74% drop in 2020-21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Post-pandemic, test numbers rebounded to near pre-Covid levels (278,151 in 2023-24). Over the same period, the pass rate rose steadily from 40.8% in 2014-15 to 46.8% in 2023-24, indicating improved success rates even as annual test volumes remained broadly consistent.

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> Source: DVSA, [Driving test and theory test data: cars](#), April 2025 (table DRT112A)

The DVSA has a target to reduce the national average waiting time for a driving test to seven weeks by December 2025. All test centres in London currently have longer waiting times than this, based on February 2025 data. Most London test centres have the maximum possible waiting time of 24 weeks.

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> Source: DVSA, [Response to FOI 202502-067863](#), March 2025

The waiting time in London has increased significantly over time. Around a decade ago, the average waiting time in London was eight weeks. Currently, the London average is 22 weeks, which is slightly higher than the Great Britain average of 20 weeks.

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> Source: Data up to September 2024 from Department for Transport, [Driving tests - waiting times - tests centres](#), October 2024 (response to written question from Neil O'Brien MP); Data from October 2024 from DVSA, [Response to FOI 202502-067863](#), March 2025

The DVSA has set out an [action plan](#) for reducing waiting times for driving tests, to meet the seven-week target. Measures include recruiting additional examiners, restrictions on people booking new tests in certain conditions, and increasing the notice required to change or cancel test appointments. Future data releases in this area should indicate whether these measures have been successful.

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