



Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency

Chief Executive's
Office

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Julia Lopez MP
by email:

our ref: 2304-018100
your ref: JL23217

15 May 2023

Dear Ms Lopez

Thank you for your email of 27 April on behalf of your constituent, about the recruitment of driving examiners into Hornchurch driving test centre (DTC).

I can confirm that we currently have six examiners based at Hornchurch DTC providing category B (car) tests.

As you are aware, to help meet the continuing demand for driving tests we are recruiting more than 300 driving examiners across Great Britain. I should explain that Hornchurch is part of a cluster of DTCs, and we have continued to recruit into the cluster. This enables us to deploy more examiners across the cluster when needed, for example to cover illness and annual leave and when there is an increase in demand.

Our examiner recruitment campaigns continue to be successful, but due to the extremely competitive job market there are some areas of Great Britain that are challenging to recruit in. However, I am pleased to confirm that we have recently offered positions to five new entrant examiners within the Hornchurch cluster, this will enable us to increase the availability and flexibility of testing in the area.

We recognise that there is a high demand for learners who are wanting to take their practical driving test and we are aware of the impact this is having on learner drivers. I should like to assure that we are committed to reducing waiting times and will continue to do all we can, as quickly as we can, to increase availability at all test centres.

Since April 2021, we have created about 813,000 extra car test appointments by recruiting new driving examiners (DE), conducting out-of-hours testing, such as on public holidays and weekends, asking all those qualified to conduct tests but who do not do so as part of their current day job, to return to conducting tests, and asking recently retired driving examiners to return. On average, we create approximately 35,300 extra car test slots each month.

As well as the measures noted above, we also recently published the outcome of a consultation we ran between January and March 2022 about improving driving test availability and processes. We hope these changes will help to make more test appointments available and reduce the number of tests that are wasted. Further information about the consultation can be found at

[Government consultations - driving tests - improving availability and processes](#)

The driving test booking service is live, and the availability of test appointments continually changes. Test appointments are released on Monday morning, on a rolling 24-week basis, and additional appointments are added as soon as they become available. Candidates can check for test appointments by using the live [book a driving test](#) or [change your driving test](#) services. Other candidates cancelling or rescheduling their test also free up appointments for others to book, and tests might be available at other nearby test centres. I would advise your constituents to regularly check the booking service for new appointments.

The best way to search for dates is to use the postcode search facility. This will show the nearest four test centres, and the earliest dates to allow a candidate to widen their search if no dates are available or the ones offered are unsuitable.

I would like to thank you and for constituents for raising these concerns and hope the above clarifies matters.

Yours sincerely

Loveday Ryder
Chief Executive