

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

DGDT - QUALITY ASSURANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2018 TO 2019

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Period covered: 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE DGDT SCHEME

The purpose of the Dangerous Goods Driver Training (DGDT) Annual Report is to provide the Department for Transport (DfT), Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and Training Providers with an overall view of the quality assurance position within the DGDT Scheme.

There are currently 179 approved Centres, and there have been 25 newly approved instructors during the year 2018/19.

The majority of Training Providers who received a visit during the period 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 were found to have a good appreciation of the DGDT Scheme and fully met the requirements of the SQA Manual of Practice.

There have been a total of seven Grade 4s issued during this period. After full investigations were carried out by the SQA recommendations were made to the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), where serious incidents of malpractice had been identified. This resulted in the withdrawal of the approval status of two Training Providers.

Overall, there was an increase in the number of visits undertaken by the team of External Verifiers (EVs) in the period, and this is reflected in the following Key Performance Indicators which have been met.

- Verification visits achieved Total of 197
- Invigilation visits achieved Total of 144
- Administration visits achieved Total of 60

The year 2018/2019 has been a very proactive year for all members of the SQA team, which included:-

- The appointment of four new EVs.
- Introduction of procedures to ensure compliance with the new GDPR requirements which included:-
 - updated ADR2 Candidate Registration forms with a relevant statement for candidates.
- The development of the new database system with subsequent introductory training provided to the EV team in September 2018.
- The introduction of a new variation programme template in July 2018 to ensure standardisation of all approved training programmes.
- An overall review of the ADR initial course syllabus.
- ADR Syllabus review in line with ADR 2019. (awaiting DfT sign off)
- A review of refresher programmes in line with Chapter 8.2.2.5. (awaiting DfT sign off).
- Achievement of EV qualification for DGDT EVs.
- The implementation of internal QA checks by office team.

1. Updating of the Manual of Practice:

To include:-

- Changes to the requirements for Class 1 and Class 7 Instructor approval which was introduced in line with ONR requirements.
- GDPR requirement updates.

2. Multi-choice examination question papers:

Since the review of the 2016 ADR question bank took place, those new questions introduced within the bank have been continuously monitored and analysed by members of the SQA Team. As a result of this exercise, and also feedback received from Training Providers, a total of 22 questions were amended or replaced and released to the questions bank in April 2018.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE ON VERIFICATION VISITS

The team of EVs carried out a series of unannounced visits to Training Providers for the purpose of observing compliance with the SQA Manual of Practice. This included training activity, training materials and compliance with the ADR course syllabus.

The practical elements of the training were found to be generally well delivered and in the majority of cases fully meeting the requirements of the SQA Manual of Practice. However, some Training Providers were found to be unclear as to whether all candidates should participate in all three of the practical elements. (ie: Fire, First Aid and the Emergency desktop exercise). This has now been clarified within the revised course syllabus for both Initial and Refresher courses within the SQA MoP, and will be released imminently upon DfT approval.

It is imperative that instructors have the ability to make a judgement on candidates' ability against the award specification criteria.

During the first half of the year, there were a large number of late notifications received. Training Providers are reminded any notification of intention to run a course must be uploaded not less than seven days before the commencement of the course. Any requests made for a late notification without a justifiable reason will be declined.

2.1 TRAINING COURSE MATERIALS & FACILITIES

During the year EVs carried out a review of training course material being used. The purpose being to ensure the ADR training course syllabus is fully met by all Training Providers, and that the same standards were being applied throughout.

At present approximately 80% of Training Providers have been involved. The review will be ongoing throughout 2019.

A version control system was introduced for the purpose of assisting EVs to monitor the changes.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE ON INVIGILATION VISITS

EVs have conducted unannounced visits on the Invigilation of examinations.

Generally, there were no major areas of concern regarding the conducting of examinations by Invigilators. However, EVs have reported a few instances where Training Providers have not adhered to the examination starting times uploaded on to the SQA database. Consequently, this was reflected in the Grade issued at the time.

Training Providers are reminded that the examination start times must correspond with those uploaded on to the SQA database.

3.1 ONLINE EXAMINATIONS

This period has shown a large increase in the number of Training Providers offering online examinations. Overall, there is an average of 95% pass rate for online examinations and 97% for paper based, with a slight fluctuation across the different modules.

All invigilators were fully appraised on the requirements of the contingency plans in place in the event of loss of internet connection. (MoP: 12)

During some quality assurance activity, SQA have identified that some Training Providers have not been adhering to the five minute breaks between examinations. It is imperative that these breaks are taken in line with the MoP: 8.5. Training Providers not adhering to these breaks will be graded accordingly during quality assurance monitoring.

If examinations are taken in multiple groups due to I.T availability, Training Providers must ensure this is detailed in the notes box for each relevant course. This will enable EVs to monitor accordingly.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE ON ADMINISTRATION VISITS

The key function of the Administration visit is to provide advice and guidance to the Primary Contact and Examination Secretary to ensure compliance with the SQA Manual of Practice.

During this period, the team of EVs have continued to closely monitor internal quality control procedures with Training Providers which included:-

- Training records for Appointees
- Mobile site compliance
- Security of examination material

General administration and database compliance are also monitored during an administration visit.

From a selection of the reports submitted by the team of EVs, some common contraventions of the SQA Manual of Practice have been identified as follows:-

- Current insurance documents not uploaded to the SQA database.
- Instructors' current ADR Driver Training Certificate not uploaded to the database.
- Inventory of examination papers including spoilt papers have not been kept.

The most common deficiency being the uploading of the current Public Liability Insurance Certificate. This is generally an oversight by the Training Provider.

Training Providers have been reminded that they are responsible for maintaining current documentation onto the SQA database.

Any non-compliances have been reflected in the grade issued upon completion of the visit.

Variation Programmes

EVs reviewed the variation programmes uploaded on to the Training Providers database. Variation programmes no longer used were withdrawn.

In July 2018 a new "variation template" was introduced to ensure a national standardisation. All future variation programmes submitted for approval must be completed using this template.

During the database migration, only pre-approved programmes will be migrated over to the new database. Training Providers will be invited to submit programmes requiring variation through the new template.

4.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE & COMPLIANCE

Since 1st April 2018, it has been noted that the current standard of training facilities, training material and presentation is of a very good standard.

The following are some of the main contraventions which were identified in the EVs reports and were reflected in the grades issued at the time.

Grade 3 or Grade 4s

- Course programmes not adhered to.
- Examinations not conducted as notified.
- Courses not cancelled.
- Candidates not uploaded onto the SQA database as required.
- ADR2 Candidate registration form not completed.
- Security breach of examination papers.
- Examination papers marked with answers.
- Reference material not available.
- No instructor notes.
- Candidates not participating in the mandatory practical exercises.
- No insurance.
- Insufficient teaching units delivered.

In all cases, advice and guidance has been provided by the team of EVs, resulting in the appropriate corrective action being taken to ensure compliance.

Training Providers are reminded that, if you are awarded consecutive Grade 3 reports for the same contravention of the Manual of Practice, the grading will be increased from a Grade 3 to a Grade 4. The cost would be recovered from the Training Provider.

4.2 DATABASE ADMINISTRATION AND TRAINING

Part of the EVs role is to check the SQA database for each Training Provider prior to any visit. This enables any appropriate corrective measures to be taken and provide training where necessary to ensure compliance.

5. SUMMARY

In summary, it is evident that, in the majority of cases the Dangerous Goods Driver Training Scheme is being delivered effectively throughout the UK.

The majority of Training Providers operate to a good standard and continue to meet the requirements of the SQA Manual of Practice.

During this current year a great deal of effort has been put into improving the efficiency and standard of administration of the Dangerous Goods Driver Training Scheme by the SQA ADR administration team.

Positive feedback has been received from Training Providers regarding the improved performance and response time of the SQA ADR administration team.

Although some weaknesses have been identified, none of these are insurmountable and it is felt that during 2019 / 2020, with the continued commitment and co-operation of the SQA ADR team and the team of EVs, further improvements to the Dangerous Goods Driver Training Scheme can be achieved.