



ABOUT YOUR FIRST "EDUCATIONAL VISIT" AND CHECK TESTS THEREAFTER

A while ago, I was asked by a client who had just qualified as an ADI for some initial advice on Check Testing. The following is more or less the email that I wrote in reply.

These views are purely my own, and don't purport to be the wisdom of Solomon, the 'credo' of the DSA, ORDIT, the opinions of any Training Establishment, or the final word on anything!
[It's still pretty good, though!]

The MSA [Motor Schools' Association] publish a booklet on the "Check Test".
All ADIs should belong to one of the main Associations - even if only for the insurance cover it brings.
The DSA also used to publish an Official Guide - presumably, lack of interest from ADIs caused its demise!
It's up to you whether you feel you need any extra guidance after you have read this.

Your first CT will be an "Educational Visit", and you may - or may not - get a "full" grading.
The grade awarded should either be 4 / 5 / 6 (or an "E" [E]ducational visit done]).
It should take place within the first year of your registering. You can't 'lose'
If you get a grade, you'll be asked if you want to accept it.
Perhaps you'd consider not accepting a Grade 4.
Why not take an "E" and hope to pick up a 5 or a 6 a few months later?

There's nothing to fear or 'dread'.

You turn up with a trainee and give a lesson lasting about an hour, beginning and ending at the local Test Centre you've chosen to adopt.
The trainee can be for *Pass Plus*, a "refresher" lesson, Beginner, Partly-Trained etc etc.
The only stipulation is that you don't give a Mock Test.
This would involve too long a silence in the car during your "assessment" period.
Never take your "best" driver..... [and you can't use another ADI as your pupil].
The Check Test is looking at **you** the Teacher, not **them** the Driver!
Perhaps a trainee who'd had about 10 sessions would be good.

On one December Check Test, I took my Trainee into the Waiting Room to introduce her to my Examiner, and then she went to the car [to get it started (nb we were off road!) *so as to warm it up "for the old men's arrival", as I said!*]. Some so-called "Guidance-Notes" which you may get hold of might recommend that you leave the trainee in the car and "book in" with your Examiner, alone; perhaps - like me - you might consider this the height of bad manners.

Take charge of the situation : introduce your Trainee and then ask him/her to return to the car whilst you have a word with your Examiner.
Tell your trainee, perhaps, to get the air-con going ready for when you arrive : you'll need either heat or cool, as you won't want the car misting up or too hot for when you arrive.

Your Examiner will want a word about the Trainee you've brought along, what they've covered so far, their weakness and strengths, and what your objectives are for the lesson.
It's perhaps best to have this all printed out in note form :
relay the information verbally, and then hand your Examiner the sheet.

Off you go to the car. [Don't forget that the whole thing starts from the greeting of your Examiner, not the turning of the ignition switch!] The smile, hand-shake, dress-code, eye-contact etc. etc. - all is assessed, but not in any underhand, sinister way.
You'll no doubt represent exactly what the DSA rightly wants to see : smart, articulate adults coaching your Trainees responsibly and correctly.

It's NOT "ADI Part 3" - your Examiner just wants to see proof of learning through structured teaching, and to see you dealing with feedback/praise and faults.

Consider perhaps doing the "Emergency Stop" exercise for the first time, and I mean the Emergency Stop : [the L-Test involves a "controlled stop" but you teach what to do in an **Emergency!**]
This is a nice set piece for about 15-20 mins.

The trainee can't do it at the start, but they can by the end, so there's the proof of learning.

Then, do some nice on-road teaching for variety - perhaps some remedial work on Crossroads, and T-junctions etc. : trying to get the trainee to 'roll-out' at open junctions and assess more closed ones 'on the creep' in 1st gear.

Don't choose another "new" subject needing a briefing etc.

Get up and running with some on-the-move teaching, to counter the Em.Stop "set piece".

Anything and everything covered on route is assessed. [see Column A of the Mark Sheet - click link below]

If you negotiate a roundabout and talk the candidate through it, then the section on Roundabouts is assessed as "*satis*" or "*unsatis*". It doesn't all have to be "*satis*" to get a good grade.

It's the **Faults Analysis, the Core Competencies** which have to be 'spot on' for that.

It's not a Part 3, so if you spot a fault which is a one-off [you know your driver] you might want to "tuck it up your sleeve", then try to force an example of the same fault. If it re-occurs, deal with as you were trained : if the following time, all goes well, ask about the difference between the driving on that occasion compared to the previous. The fault was identified, but deliberately late in order to test the Trainee – this is what teaching is all about.

Real life is not a Part 3, and Part 3 doesn't even pretend to be real life.

You don't have to keep pulling them up immediately, over every niggling detail.

You don't have to keep pulling them up, full-stop!!

This will all have become second nature to you quite quickly after passing Part 3, I expect.

Finish up at the Driving Test Centre after about 50 mins [your Examiner will have requested this] : give a good re-cap of the lesson by **asking your Trainee's opinion** of how **they** rate various aspects of their lesson. Make sure that you set the objectives for the next lesson .

The Examiner will no doubt have asked you to get the Trainee to go to the Waiting Room at the end, and you'll then get the grading and the de-brief in the car, out of ear-shot of your Trainee.

Expect to be asked firstly how you feel the lesson went.

That's all there is to it!

ADIs fear the CT and they absolutely shouldn't, if their daily teaching is up to scratch.

The same Examiner that might *appear* an ogre for Part 3 is there to help and offer guidance to improve - and to validate your excellence when you get a 6!

If you can engineer it so as to meet your Examiner at some time well prior to being called for your Check Test, so much the better.

Always sit in on driving tests, too; your candidates shouldn't mind if you've prepared them well!

The *Manager* at your chosen Test Centre will soon get to know you, and his/her opinion of your candidates will probably be sought at some time prior to the CT, if not just the day of it.

I can't imagine your Examiner not saying : "*I've got this [Frederick Bloggs] for a CT today : what's your opinion of his trainees in general ... well-prepared for Test?*".

We all carry our reputations with us, don't we?!

nb : If you haven't got a trainee, your Examiner will rôle-play.

You'll then have a wait at the end whilst your Examiner goes into the office to do his paperwork, before announcing the result. You'll then get the de-brief in the car - again, 'out of earshot' of anyone.

For a first Check Test, you would probably prefer to take someone whose driving you KNOW, and with whom you have common "terminology" in place.

Don't fear rôle-play, though, if you are confident of your teaching/coaching skills.

Good luck, and try to 'enjoy' the experience.

If you're doing your job, you'll very quickly forget that your Examiner is actually in the car!

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