



Drive Ability North West - Frequently Asked Questions

We often get questions from people using our service, these are the ones most frequently asked.

If you have any other queries call us on 0300 300 1100 or email BCHFT.DriveAbility@nhs.net.

What is a driving assessment?

Different from a driving test, a driving assessment is designed to review your driving and give you an honest opinion of your skills and ability.

Who will undertake the driving assessment?

All our assessments are undertaken by our trained Occupational Therapists and Approved Driving Instructors. We understand that the idea of an assessment can seem daunting, but we're a friendly team and will put you at ease.

What is an Occupational Therapist?

Occupational Therapists help people overcome challenges completing everyday tasks or activities (occupations). They look at your hopes and aspirations and identify how you may be able to undertake specific activities despite any challenges you may face.

Our Occupational Therapists will support you by assessing you and then creating a plan of goals and adjustments to help you remain as mobile and independent as possible. This will be tailor made to your own individual needs.

Can I use my own car for a driving assessment?

To ensure the maximum safety of everyone involved, we carry out assessments in our own dual-controlled vehicles. We will always try to match the vehicle you use as closely as possible to your own, from our fleet, which includes manual transmission, automatic transmission and adapted vehicles with specialist controls.

Can I have a relative or friend present during a driving assessment?

It is possible for a relative or friend to be present during the initial interview, up to a maximum of two people. In fact, we recommend that you bring somebody with you who can drive you to and from our Driving Centre. This means you can focus on the assessment beforehand and not worry about being tired afterwards.

There are occasions when unfortunately we have to advise our clients that they are not safe to drive. In these circumstances it would not be appropriate for you to drive yourself home. A supporting person can be present during the initial interview, however they cannot be present during the on-road assessment – this is for safety

reasons. During the driving assessment your relative or friend can wait comfortably at our Driving Centre.

Can Drive Ability North West fit vehicle adaptations?

We don't fit adaptations, but we are able to signpost you to adaptation specialists in the area, where you can get all the help you need.

Will I be expected to complete a full driving assessment in one appointment?

Yes, normally the full assessment is completed in one appointment. However, sometimes this may not be appropriate. For example, you might be driving with new controls for the first time and lack the confidence to drive in busy traffic. In such cases, we might recommend further tuition usually with an Approved Driving Instructor in your area. You would then return for a follow-up assessment at a later date.

Do I have to complete every part of a driving assessment?

We do understand that completing an assessment can possibly be a tiring or anxious experience. Nevertheless, we always endeavour where appropriate to include all the elements as they are essential for comprehensive assessment. Please bear in mind though our Occupational Therapists will always use clinical discretion depending on the nature of your medical condition and how it might affect your driving.

If I've been referred for an assessment by the DVLA, can I drive whilst my application is with them?

It's important to ensure that you're driving legally. [You can find more information in this useful leaflet from the DVLA.](#)