



# ESDS Drivers Guide

Emergency Services Driving Standard

## Acknowledgments

The RSA would like to acknowledge the contribution that the members of the ESDS Panel have made towards the development of this publication.



Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre  
Road Safety Authority



An Stiúrdhóireacht Náisiúnta um Dóiteáin agus Bainistíocht Éigeandála  
National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management



# Foreword

As an organisation the Road Safety Authority regards the education and training of Emergency Service Drivers as a vitally important part of road safety and considers the ESDS initiative as a significant and extremely worthwhile contribution to Road Safety in line with commitments to the Government Road Safety Strategy.

Having Emergency Service Drivers trained and assessed to the Emergency Services Driving Standard will ensure that you will drive during the course of your duties safely and for the benefit of yourself and other road users.

The Emergency Services Driving Standard reflects the need for higher standards of driving and aims to develop and sustain a spirit of cooperation, caution and courtesy in emergency service vehicle drivers. As an Emergency Service Driver, you will aim to achieve an exemplary standard of driving that acts as a positive example to other road users. The overarching aim of this driving standard is to significantly reduce the risks created by driving emergency service vehicles; to benefit drivers and other road users, and provide for the safety and comfort of patients/passengers as may arise.

The purpose of the ESDS Certification and Recertification process is to prove that you have the knowledge and skills to drive your vehicle to the required ESDS Standard on the road.

The ESDS Certification and Recertification process consists of a theoretical examination and a practical driving assessment. By being successful in both the Theory Test and the Practical Driving Assessment, you have proved that you have the knowledge and that you understand the principles of what you have learned and put them into practice. The assessment will be carried out by registered ESDS Assessors.

Remember, driving an Emergency Service Vehicle brings with it a huge responsibility. When driving, you are responsible for your life, the lives of your passengers, and the lives of other road users. In order to be a safe driver, you must maintain the ESDS standard required to pass the practical assessment every day. While you may have passed the practical assessment, you may have incurred a number of faults, so as a driver, you have to always strive to drive as a socially responsible and safe ESDS driver.

Driver Recertification will be a requirement in order to maintain ESDS Certification in that ESDS level and vehicle category. Driver Recertification will normally fall due towards the end of the Driver Certificate validity period of five years and the ESDS Unit will notify each organisation of same.

Where a Driver successfully completes the recertification practical assessment they will be recertified for a further 5 years. Theory test(s) are not required where the relevant practical assessment for recertification is successfully completed in the relevant level and category within 6 months of the expiry date of certification.

Where the Driver is referred at the recertification practical assessment they will be afforded one further opportunity to complete the recertification practical assessment. However, in the event of referral at this further opportunity the Driver will be required to re-sit all related ESDS theory tests and practical assessments for the relevant level and category to receive further recertification. This will also be the case where a Driver fails to present for recertification within the agreed ESDS Recertification Timeframes see page 29.

Any referral on Driver recertification may impact on other ESDS Certifications.

All ESDS certification will be RSA approved and be transferable between Emergency Services. This interoperability shall not preclude an organisation from determining if refresher or additional training is required in the case of a member who has been trained or assessed by another organisation.

The candidate's organisation will have due regard to the respective driving responsibilities and shall determine the type of vehicle to be used for the assessment. It will reflect the type of vehicle and type of work authorised drivers will typically be expected to operate during the course of their duties.

Finally please remember that driving is never predictable, however as a result of being a certified ESDS Driver you should be capable of applying the ESDS standard to assess and deal with any driving situation or circumstance that is presented to you.

We all need a BETTER, SAFER and MORE SKILLED driver which will yield dividends into the future.

**Frank McGill**  
**ESDS Manager**

# Introduction

## Why is an Emergency Service Driving Standard needed?

Creating a culture of safe and responsible driving is essential for reducing deaths and casualties on Irish roads. Emergency services drivers should understand that their presence on the roads has an impact on other road users so they need to act responsibly at all times.

The Emergency Services Driving Standard aims to develop and sustain a spirit of cooperation, caution and courtesy in emergency service drivers. Emergency service drivers should aim to achieve an excellent standard of driving that acts as an example to other road users.

The main aim of this driving standard is to benefit emergency services drivers and other road users by:

- reducing the particular risks associated with the driving of emergency service vehicles;
- making sure that patients and passengers are safe and comfortable; and
- cultivating the attitude that responding to an emergency should never involve actions which could lead to the death or injury of any person.

## Purpose

This ESDS Drivers Guide has a number of purposes:

- to answer any of the questions that you might have about ESDS;
- to give you some useful information about ESDS;
- to summarize what kind of information/requirements we need from you when you attend for your practical ESDS driving assessment.

The ESDS Drivers Guide is provided for informational purposes only. It is designed to provide drivers with a general summary description of the practical driving assessment procedures. The ESDS unit in the RSA has the right to change, modify, delete, deviate from, or update procedures. It is your responsibility as a candidate for ESDS Driver certification to read this guide.

## What will I find in the ESDS Drivers Guide?

- The information and parameters for drivers attending for ESDS practical driving assessment;
- Various checklists;
- Details of representative vehicles for the ESDS Practical Assessment;
- Different ESDS policies;
- Useful tips.

## What is ESDS?

ESDS stands for Emergency Services Driving Standard – a driving standard for emergency services drivers. Representatives of the principal emergency services and related organisations in Ireland met with the Road Safety Authority (RSA) to discuss the possibility of developing a common driving standard for emergency services personnel. It was agreed that all services could work together to develop a common standard. The standard is voluntary and has no statutory footing.

## Who is involved with ESDS?

A working panel (group) was set up with members drawn from:

- The RSA (Chair);
- Civil Defence;
- The Irish Coast Guard;
- The Defence Forces;
- An Garda Síochána;
- Health Service Executive National Ambulance Service;
- The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council;
- The Chief Fire Officer's Association;
- The Irish Prison Service;
- National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management.

The job of this group was to look at ways to develop a standard for emergency service vehicle drivers and work towards putting it into practice. The panel proposed a modular approach with three levels to suit the different needs of the individual organisations. The three levels are referred to as Emergency Services Driving Standard (ESDS) Levels 1, 2 and 3.

## What will ESDS achieve?

It will improve the driver's:

- awareness of the need to share the road in a safe way (while showing due care for themselves and other road users);
- attitude to risk;
- willingness to accept responsibility;
- ability to take precautions;
- ability to choose ways of driving that reduces the risk of collisions or incidents;
- awareness of the need for responsible emergency services driver behaviour;
- knowledge of legal requirements and regulations in relation to emergency service vehicles and how they impact on individual organisations; and
- awareness of the reasons for the regulations that affect them.

## Objectives

The RSA encourages road safety through significantly improving driving behaviour. The ESDS helps this process by:

- working with other services to develop best practice driving standards;
- ensuring that the register of ESDS trainers and assessors is kept updated and quality assured;
- awarding certification on successful completion of ESDS assessment;
- awarding recertification on successful completion of ESDS assessment;
- ensuring ESDS driving assessments and theory tests are conducted in a reliable, valid, transparent and fair manner.

## Is ESDS relevant outside of emergency organisations?

ESDS assessments will only be offered to drivers who are put forward by the Emergency Service Provider they work or volunteer for.

ESDS certification is only applicable to Emergency Service Organisations that have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the RSA and to ESDS certified Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs).

## Does having previous experience as an Emergency Services Driver help?

In order to successfully pass the theory and practical driving assessments required for ESDS certification, there may be a requirement to undergo training, and having prior emergency driving experience will be of benefit at the specific ESDS level and vehicle category. You must also be nominated by your Emergency Service organisation for certification. Your organisation will provide this training.

## What will ESDS focus on?

The Emergency Services Driving Standard focuses on the following areas of driver competence:

- Knowledge – driving laws, rules and vehicle operation;
- Control of the vehicle;
- Control in traffic situations;
- Recognising, managing and avoiding risks;
- Driving professionally; and
- Emergency Response Driving (Level 3 only).

## What is the structure of the ESDS?

The Emergency Services Driving Standard (ESDS) has three levels:

### ESDS Level 1

This is the entry level and sets out the training, learning and assessment that will produce competent and responsible emergency service drivers.

### ESDS Level 2

Describes the training, learning and assessment for emergency service drivers and includes the principles and skills set of 'Roadcraft'. 'Roadcraft' is a recognised system of vehicle control in the training for emergency service drivers that develops a methodical and systematic approach to driving. It increases safety by giving the driver more time to react in complex situations as they have a greater awareness and ability to anticipate hazards.



**ESDS Level 3**

This level refers only to services who by law can drive using blue lights and sirens in emergency response situations when this does not endanger the safety of other road users. An example of this is when an emergency services vehicle exceeds the statutory speed limit. This applies only to emergency services who are specified in Section 87 of the Road Traffic Act 2010 as follows:

- An Garda Síochána;
- Ambulance Service; and
- Fire Service.

This level sets out a series of principles and response tactics which are compatible with Roadcraft and focus on the driver’s attitude towards emergency response driving.

Creating correct behaviour and a responsible attitude to driving skills greatly reduces the risks associated with emergency response driving. The standards will ensure that drivers fully understand their responsibility to manage the risks associated with emergency response driving and, in doing so, they will help to keep themselves and the public safe.

ESDS Level 1	ESDS Level 2	ESDS Level 3
<p><b>Module 1:</b> Before driving emergency service vehicles</p> <p><b>Module 2:</b> Driving emergency service vehicles</p> <p><b>Module 3:</b> The fundamentals of road sharing</p>	<p><b>Module 4:</b> Recognise, manage and avoid risk</p> <p><b>Module 5:</b> Vehicle Control</p> <p><b>Module 6:</b> Control on traffic situations</p>	<p><b>Module 7:</b> Managing emergency response</p> <p><b>Module 8:</b> Driving standards and vehicle assessment</p> <p><b>Module 9:</b> Emergency response driving</p>
<p><b>Practical Assessment and Theory Test (Level and Vehicle specific)</b></p>		
<p><b>ESDS Level 1 Certificate</b></p>	<p><b>ESDS Level 2 Certificate</b></p>	<p><b>ESDS Level 3 Certificate</b></p>

## Where can I go for ESDS training?

Each participating organisation has a designated ESDS contact person who can advise of their policy and procedure in respect of training and assessment in ESDS.

The Road Safety Authority (RSA) will hold a register of ESDS trainers throughout the country. Some Approved Driving Instructors (ADI) provide normal learner driver training and also ESDS training. To make sure a trainer is ESDS registered, the RSA will provide a list on its website of Trainers who are registered under ESDS. Only drivers eligible to avail of legal exemptions under the Road Traffic Act can undertake ESDS Level 3 training and assessment.

## What's involved in the training?

The ESDS syllabus describes how ESDS Trainers may deliver effective and appropriate training at each level. It is underpinned by the ESDS Competence Framework and the ESDS Guidance Manual. Throughout the ESDS process, trainees will be encouraged to reflect on and assess all aspects of their own driving. This will make them more aware of how they drive. It will involve:

- examining what they have been doing;
- why they have been doing it (or not doing it); and
- determining what they need to do to become a safe and responsible emergency service driver.

Trainees will be encouraged to take the time to carry out self-assessment and self-reflection. This helps them to remember what they've learned which, in turn, helps the trainer to deliver the training programme.

Drivers that avail of training will be more likely to obtain ESDS certification than those who do not avail of training.

## How is ESDS assessed?

The assessment consists of a theoretical and practical examination.

## ESDS Theory test

Each Driver who is seeking ESDS certification must complete a theory test which is designed to check driving knowledge. The theory test you undergo is dependent on the ESDS Level you are seeking certification in and the vehicle type.

**ESDS Level 1 Core  
Theory Test**

**ESDS Level 2 Core  
Theory Test**

**ESDS Level 3 Core  
Theory Test**

**ESDS Category C  
Module Theory Test**

**ESDS Category D  
Module Theory Test**

The ESDS theory tests are multiple choice computer based questions and are user friendly. All theory test questions refer to areas within the Rules of the Road (for all ESDS levels), the Roadcraft manual (for ESDS Level 2 & 3) and the ESDS publications. Additional learning material is available in RSA publications available on the RSA website [www.rsa.ie/esds](http://www.rsa.ie/esds).

## ESDS Practical driving assessment

The practical driving assessment will be carried out by registered ESDS assessors. The assessment aims to ensure that the knowledge, skills and understanding at the level in question has been achieved.

Each assessment will be category and level specific. ESDS applies to vehicle categories B, BE, C1, C, CE, C1E, D1, D, DE, D1E, W.

Only drivers eligible to avail of legal exemptions under the Road Traffic Act can undertake ESDS Level 3 training and assessment.

## Learning materials

The following ESDS related publications will be available from the RSA website:

- ESDS Information booklet;
- ESDS Guidance Manual;
- ESDS Competence Framework;
- ESDS Syllabus;
- ESDS Tactical Response Guidelines;
- ESDS Standard Operating Procedures and Marking Guidelines;
- ESDS Theory Test Information.

## Support documents

- Rules of the Road – Current Edition
- Roadcraft – Current Edition
- Relevant Road Traffic Legislation
- RSA publications and website

## Preparing for your ESDS Practical Driving Assessment

The practical assessment is designed to find out whether you have the skill to drive competently in accordance with the standards set down in the ESDS Levels for the category of vehicle you are undertaking the assessment in.

### Preparing for your practical assessment you should:

- study carefully the ESDS suite of publications and the Roadcraft publication relevant to the ESDS level of your assessment;
- get tuition from an ESDS Trainer who is registered with the RSA;
- practise the required skillsets as set out in the ESDS as much as possible on all types of roads and in all types of traffic situations;
- build up your driving competence.

### Avoid:

- unnecessarily obstructing traffic or causing annoyance to other road users;
- practising on practical assessment routes for the most part; congestion on these routes causes inconvenience to residents and candidates for assessment alike.

## Special Circumstances

You should advise the ESDS section in advance if you have any disability which may need consideration in respect of your practical assessment.

## Your appointment

Appointments for practical assessments are arranged through the designated contact in your organisation to the RSA. Your assessment may be conducted by an Assessor in your organisation or one from the RSA. You must familiarise yourself with any practical requirements which must be met for the assessment itself as it may help avoid problems on the day of the assessment.

You should be present in the waiting area of the practical assessment centre before the appointed time of your practical assessment. If you are late, the practical assessment cannot be conducted. When you arrive at the practical assessment centre, take a seat in the waiting area and you will be called by the ESDS Assessor.

Any cancellation or amendment to appointments must be made through the designated ESDS contact in your organisation.

## Your vehicle

You must ensure that the vehicle you present to practical assessment with meets the requirements for the category of vehicle for that practical assessment (see ESDS Representative Vehicle Chart). You must also ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition.

The ESDS Assessor will check your driving licence to establish that it:

- I. relates to you;
- II. is current and is valid on the day of the practical assessment;
- III. is for the correct category of vehicle.

You may be asked to read and sign a statement confirming that the insurance cover in place is adequate, your vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and meets the criteria for the particular practical assessment.

## About the Practical Assessment

You will be given clear directions during your practical driving assessment regarding the route to be followed. This route has been designed to be challenging in order to assess your competence at the ESDS level you are seeking certification in.

The following chart sets out the minimum distance and the time allotted to each category of vehicle and to each level:

ESDS Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 2 & 3 combination
<b>Distance</b>	32km	30km	25km	50km
<b>Category B</b>	1.5 hours	2 hours	1 hour	2 hours
<b>All other categories</b>	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour	2 hours

Your driving and vehicle awareness will be assessed under a variety of road and traffic conditions and will include the following where applicable:

- Vehicle Technical Checks
- Pre-start routine
- Demonstration of 5 hand signals
- Turnabout in the road
- Hill start
- Moving off
- Driving in traffic
- Stopping
- Reversing round a corner
- Starting on a hill
- Parking
- Road positioning
- Overtaking and passing
- Anticipation and observation
- Use of mirrors and signals
- Progress

- Speed
- Compliance with traffic lights, road signs and markings
- Use of the vehicle controls (accelerator, clutch, gears, brakes and steering)
- Use of secondary controls such as wipers, demisters, etc.

## Useful information

You will be given clear directions throughout the practical assessment, should you not understand a particular direction, ask the ESDS Assessor to repeat or clarify it, if you make a mistake do not worry unduly. It may not be as serious as it appears and may not impact on the outcome of your assessment.

Passengers other than the ESDS Assessor and/or ESDS/RSA officials are not permitted to accompany you in the vehicle during the practical assessment. The ESDS Assessor may be accompanied on practical assessment for training and quality assurance purposes. While the accompanying officer may take notes, s/he has no input into the conduct or outcome of the practical assessment.

## Common Faults Contributing to Practical assessment Referral

The following are the most common faults which give rise to candidates being referred on their practical assessment:

- Inadequate observation moving off, at junctions, at roundabouts and when changing lanes;
- Failure to react/anticipate the actions of other drivers;
- Incorrect road position on the straight, on bends, turning left, turning right, at roundabouts, and when overtaking;
- Inadequate progress at junctions, roundabouts, on the straight, and when overtaking;
- Incorrect, inadequate or inappropriate use of mirrors and signals;
- Non-compliance with traffic controls, e.g. road signs and markings and traffic lights;
- Incorrect, inadequate or inappropriate use of vehicle controls, including gears, clutch, accelerator, steering, handbrake, footbrake, and secondary controls;

- Excessive speed for the road or traffic conditions;
- Failure to yield the right of way to others;
- Lack of competence in the reverse, turnabout and parking manoeuvres.

The list of faults highlighted above is by no means exhaustive.

## Once your ESDS Practical Driving Assessment is scheduled

Now that you are aware of where the practical assessment fits in your overall driving career, let's see what we can do to help you prepare for the practical assessment. The following tips should be useful to help you:

What do I need to do?

- Practise my driving;
- Receive instruction from an ESDS Trainer;
- Ensure that I have my documentation in order;
- Ensure my vehicle is in order;
- Utilise the relevant ESDS documentation including the following:
  - ✓ *The ESDS Information booklet*
  - ✓ *ESDS Guidance Manual*
  - ✓ *ESDS Tactical Response Guidelines*
  - ✓ *The Rules of the Road book*
  - ✓ *The 'Roadcraft Book'*
  - ✓ The RSA website [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie)
  - ✓ RSA publications.

To successfully pass the practical driving assessment, you need to ensure that you are fully prepared. The preparation necessary will vary dependant on the ESDS Level being assessed. If you have engaged the services of an ESDS Trainer you should understand and be able to demonstrate the required competencies appropriate to the ESDS Level.

You should also ensure that you have the correct documentation with you on the day of the assessment, as well as ensuring that your vehicle is in order.



## Myself

- Be present in the waiting area of the practical assessment centre before the appointed time of your practical assessment;
- You must be insured to drive the vehicle;
- You will be asked to read and sign a statement confirming that the vehicle insurance cover is in place and is adequate and is in a road worthy condition.

## My Documentation – what do I need to bring with me?

- Your current Driving Licence for your practical assessment category. This must:
  - Relate to you;
  - Be in date;
  - Be for the correct category of vehicle which you are undertaking your practical assessment in.

## My Vehicle

- Ensure that the vehicle you are presenting in meets the minimum requirements as set out in the Representative Vehicles for ESDS Practical Assessment. This chart is available at the ESDS section of the RSA website [www.rsa.ie/esds](http://www.rsa.ie/esds);
- If you pass the practical assessment in a vehicle with automatic transmission, your ESDS certification and/or ESDS Recertification will reflect this.  
Where applicable the vehicle must display a current valid original Insurance Disc (white background with a green band extending along left hand side). The disc must clearly show the Registration Number (or fleet name) of the vehicle (not Chassis Number) and the policy dates. If the details are faded, you should get the disc replaced prior to the practical assessment;  
For state owned vehicles, Drivers should ensure that the appropriate insurance documentation is contained in the vehicle.
- Where applicable the vehicle must display a valid motor tax disc  
*The disc must clearly show all details required by law, including the registration number of the vehicle;*
- Where applicable the vehicle must display a valid NCT/CVRT disc  
*The disc must clearly show all details required by law, including the registration number of the vehicle;*

- The vehicle must be in a roadworthy condition at the time of the practical assessment and you will be asked to sign a statement to this effect;
- Loads should be properly secured including any auxiliary equipment;
- All vehicles presented for a practical assessment must have a safety belt fitted to the front passenger's seat, head restraint, notwithstanding whether or not this is required by law;
- All lights including the brake and indicator lights should be checked to ensure they are working;
- Any warning lights indicating a malfunction or a defect, which shows before or during the practical assessment, may lead to the non-conducting/non-completion of your practical assessment if deemed to be safety critical;
- In the case of a practical assessment with a trailer, the trailer must have a registration plate displayed on the rear, and the registration number must correspond with that of the drawing vehicle;
- The vehicle, including the interior, must be presented in a clean condition and fully functional to avoid any instance that would lead an ESDS Practical Driver Assessor to conclude on health and safety grounds that vehicle was unsuitable for assessment. For example the passenger seat must be clean and fully adjustable with an appropriate head restraint.

For further requirements necessary for specific categories of vehicle, please keep updated by checking the RSA website.

## After the ESDS practical driving assessment

### **If you are successful at the Practical Assessment:**

Congratulations! You will be given a copy of your practical assessment report sheet and receive relevant verbal feedback from your assessor. The ESDS unit will be in contact with your organisation to arrange certification if you have also been successful at the corresponding ESDS Theory Test.

Remember, passing the practical assessment is not the end of the learning process; so continue to drive carefully and build on your skillsets in different traffic, weather, lighting and road conditions.

### **If you are not successful at the Practical Assessment:**

You will be given a copy of your practical assessment report sheet and receive feedback from your Assessor. The report will outline the faults which occurred during the practical assessment. Pay particular attention to these when preparing for your next practical assessment without, of course, neglecting other aspects of your driving. If considering a future assessment you should work on these areas, together with all other areas of your driving, with your ESDS Trainer. Together with your ESDS trainer, you can maximise your chances of passing next time.

### **What happens if we cannot conduct your practical assessment on the day?**

While we make every effort to ensure that your practical assessment goes ahead at the appointed date and time, in some instances it can become necessary to cancel a practical assessment at short notice due to logistical or weather conditions. In any such case, we will do our best to inform the relevant organisation/ assessment candidate as soon as possible.

In every case where we cancel a practical assessment, we will rearrange a further practical assessment as soon as possible.

### **Practical assessment Centre locations:**

- Athlone
- Carlow
- Carrick-on-Shannon
- Castlebar
- Cavan
- Clonmel
- Cork
- Dublin
- Dundalk
- Ennis
- Galway
- Kilkenny

- Letterkenny
- Limerick
- Longford
- Monaghan
- Mullingar
- Navan
- Newbridge
- Portlaoise
- Roscommon
- Sligo
- Templemore
- Tullamore
- Tralee
- Wexford
- Waterford

## Practical Assessment Cancellation Policy

Where an ESDS practical driving assessment is scheduled to take place with the RSA, the following cancellation policy will apply:

Organisations must inform the ESDS Unit RSA no later than five full working days' ahead of the appointment date and time of their need to cancel the appointment. The practical assessment appointment will be cancelled and a new date rescheduled.

Please note that should any fault or issue outlined under the 'my vehicle' heading occur during the practical assessment, leading to the practical assessment having to be stopped, irrespective of whether the issue was present at the start of the practical assessment, your organisation will have to re-apply for the practical assessment on your behalf. Likewise, if, during your practical assessment, you become unable to proceed for any reason and the practical assessment is stopped as a result, your organisation will have to re-apply on your behalf.

## How do I cancel my appointment?

The most important thing is that you let the designated ESDS liaison person within your organisation know as soon as possible. This will enable your organisation to cancel your appointment and perhaps someone else may well be able to take your time slot.

## What happens if the RSA cancel your ESDS Assessment?

In a small amount of exceptional cases the RSA may have to cancel assessments at short notice. This may arise due to:

- hazardous weather conditions;
- the Assessor being absent unexpectedly;
- other exceptional circumstances.

In these cases we will arrange another assessment for you at the earliest date possible.

We will make every effort to notify you or your organisation as soon as possible if we are forced to cancel your assessment.

## Non-Conducted ESDS Practical Driving Assessments

Where a Practical Assessment is not conducted and/or not completed due to circumstances within the control of the person attending for assessment, a result is not issued in these cases.

Where an applicant requests that an assessment should be curtailed, the assessment will be curtailed and a result will not be issued, regardless of how many faults have been accumulated.

# Complaints Procedure

## Types Of Complaints

We would like to hear from you if any of our services or actions:

- are not in line with our rules or policies;
- do not meet the general principles of fairness and good administration;
- have a negative effect on you;
- fail to respond to your query or request.

## How To Make A Complaint

If you wish to make a complaint in relation to any of the Services we provide, you may do so through the following mediums:

**Letter:** The ESDS Unit,  
Road Safety Authority,  
Moy Valley Business Park,  
Primrose Hill,  
Ballina,  
Co. Mayo

**Email:** [esds@rsa.ie](mailto:esds@rsa.ie)

**LoCall:** 1890 40 60 40 or 096 25000

**Website:** <http://www.rsa.ie/Utility/Contact-Us/Complaints-Form/>

Note:

If your complaint refers to a Driving Assessment Application please quote your ESDS Number where possible.

## Informal Approach

Sometimes it is best to speak or write to the person you have been dealing with and explain your problem or query. Most issues can be resolved this way.

## Formal Approach

Formal complaints should be made in writing or by email. Complaints will be investigated and a written response will issue to the customer within a timeframe of ten working days from receipt of complaint. While we are looking into your complaint, we will let you know about the status of your complaint and about any outcomes. We aim to address and solve 90% of all complaints within 10 working days.

## Third Party Complaints

Where a complaint is received from a third party, the person that the complaint relates to will be asked to provide further details in a signed written statement.

## If You Are Still Not Satisfied

If you do not receive a response within 21 working days or you are not satisfied with the response given, you may contact the Office of the Ombudsman. The details are as follows:

Office of the Ombudsman  
18 Lower Leeson Street  
Dublin 2

Tel: 01 639 5600  
Lo-Call: 1890 223 030  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie)

# ESDS Practical Driving Assessment Appeals

## Appeals procedure against the outcome of a practical driving assessment

A person aggrieved by a decision of a practical assessment may appeal to the ESDS Unit. Appeals against the outcome of a practical driving assessment will only be considered on the following grounds:

- That the assessment has not been conducted in accordance with the procedures as laid out in the standard procedures for conducting an ESDS practical driving assessment;
- Where it is alleged that there was improper conduct on the part of the Assessor.

Appeals must be lodged in written format with The ESDS Unit, Road Safety Authority, Primrose Hill, Ballina, Co. Mayo no later than 5 working days following the assessment date.

Once an appeal is received, it will be acknowledged and referred to the ESDS Manager in the RSA for investigation. The ESDS Manager may decide to take the following actions on receipt of the appeal:

- Contact the Assessor's organisation to establish the facts of what transpired during the assessment;
- Reply to the Appellant directly with a decision on their appeal;
- Refer the matter to the ESDS Panel for further deliberation and final decision.

Where the appellant is not happy with the appeal outcome, they can refer the matter via the ESDS Manager to the ESDS Panel who will review the case and can decide on an outcome.

Where it is proven that the assessment has not been conducted in accordance with the procedures as laid out in the standard procedures for conducting an ESDS practical driving assessment, or where it is proven that there is improper conduct on the part of the Assessor, the appeal will be deemed successful. A successful appeal





will not lead to an assessment outcome being altered. When an appeal is upheld, the Appellant will be offered the opportunity to re-sit the practical driving assessment.



The decision of the ESDS panel with respect to the appeal shall be the final decision and shall not be subject to further appeal.




The ESDS Panel will not examine individual faults incurred during the practical assessment.



## Representative Vehicles for ESDS Practical Assessment

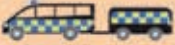

Level 3 assessment vehicles must be fitted with emergency warning equipment and organisational livery.

Vehicle Category	Representative vehicle
<b>B</b> 	<p>Four wheeled vehicles (e.g. cars/light vans), having a design gross vehicle weight not exceeding 3,500kg. with passenger accommodation for not more than 8 persons and capable of a speed of at least 100km/h. The vehicle should be minimum of 'C segment /Small Family Car 1'. The Vehicle must be fitted with an interior mirror and two exterior mirrors, one on the right and one on the left. In the case of van an interior mirror is only required if fitted at manufacture. Mirrors must be so fitted as to enable the driver to obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides. 1 e.g. Ford Focus, VW Golf (cars, station wagons, pickups).</p>
<b>BE</b> 	<p>A combination, made up of an ESDS Category B assessment vehicle which should be either (a) a length of at least 4.25 metres, or (b) a 4 wheel drive vehicle, and a trailer with a design gross vehicle weight of at least 1,400kg. but not exceeding 3,500kg., capable of a speed of at least 100km/h, which does not fall within Category B. The cargo compartment of the trailer must consist of a permanent, closed box body which is at least as wide and as high as the motor vehicle, except where the trailer is specific to emergency service operational requirements, and have a length of at least 2.4 metres. The trailer body may also be slightly less wide than the motor vehicle, provided that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear-view mirrors of the motor vehicle. The trailer must be presented with a real total mass (the actual weight of the trailer including any load if necessary.) of at least 800kg., having due regard for safety, stability, manufacturer's guidelines and legal limits of the combination. The drawing vehicle requires two external mirrors, one on the right and one on the left so fitted as to enable the driver to obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>

Vehicle Category	Representative vehicle
<p><b>C</b></p> 	<p>Vehicles (rigid trucks /large vans) with passenger accommodation for not more than 8 persons, a design gross vehicle weight of at least 12,000kg., a length of at least 7 metres, a width of at least 2.2 metres, capable of a speed of at least 80 km/h. The vehicle must be fitted with anti-lock brakes, be equipped with a gearbox having at least six (6) forward ratios and recording equipment (tachograph) where applicable. Cyclops mirror must be fitted where required. The cargo compartment/body shall consist of a permanently mounted cube shaped closed box body, which is at least as wide and as high as the cab, except where the vehicle is purpose built for emergency service operational requirements. The cargo compartment/body must be such that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear view mirrors of the motor vehicle. The vehicle must be presented with a real total mass (the actual weight of the vehicle including any load if the necessary) of at least 10,000kg., having due regard for safety, stability, manufacturer's guidelines and legal limits. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>
<p><b>C1</b></p> 	<p>Vehicles (larger vans/light trucks) with passenger accommodation for not more than 8 persons, a design gross vehicle weight of greater than 3500kg., but not more than 7,500kg., a length of at least 5 metres and capable of a speed of at least 80km/h. The vehicle must be fitted with anti-lock brakes and recording equipment (tachograph) where applicable. The cargo compartment/body shall consist of a permanently mounted cube shaped closed box body, which is at least as wide and as high as the cab, except where the vehicle is purpose built for emergency service operational requirements. The cargo compartment/body must be such that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear view mirrors of the motor vehicle. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>

Vehicle Category	Representative vehicle
<p><b>D</b></p> 	<p>Vehicles (buses) having passenger accommodation for more than 16 persons, a length of at least 10 metres, a width of at least 2.4 metres and capable of a speed of at least 80km/h. The vehicle must be fitted with anti-lock brakes and recording equipment (tachograph) where applicable. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>
<p><b>D1</b></p> 	<p>Vehicles (minibuses) having passenger accommodation for more than 8 persons, but not more than 16 persons, a design gross vehicle weight of greater than 3,500kg., a length of at least 5 metres and capable of a speed of at least 80km/h. The vehicle must be fitted with anti-lock brakes, and recording equipment (tachograph) where applicable. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>
<p><b>CE</b></p> 	<p>Either (a) an articulated vehicle, or (b) a combination of an ESDS Category C assessment vehicle and a trailer of at least 7.5 metres in length. Both the articulated vehicle and the combination must have passenger accommodation for not more than 8 persons, at least 4 axles, a design gross vehicle weight of at least 20,000kg., a length of at least 14 metres, a width of at least 2.2 metres and be capable of a speed of at least 80 km/h. The vehicle must be fitted with anti-lock brakes, be equipped with a gearbox having at least six (6) forward ratios, and recording equipment (tachograph) where applicable. A Cyclops mirror must be fitted where required. The cargo compartment/body shall consist of a permanently mounted cube shaped closed box body which is at least as wide and as high as the cab, except where the vehicle/trailer is purpose built for emergency service operational requirements. The cargo compartment/body must be such that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear view mirrors of the motor vehicle. The articulated vehicle or the combination must be presented with a real total mass (the actual weight of the vehicle including any load if necessary) of at least 15,000kg., having due regard for safety, stability, manufacturer's guidelines and legal limits of the combination. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>

Vehicle Category	Representative vehicle
<b>C1E</b> 	<p>A combination made up of an ESDS Category C1 assessment vehicle, and a trailer with a design gross vehicle weight of at least 2,000kg. The combination must be at least 8 metres in length, and must be capable of a speed of at least 80km/h. The combination must have a design gross vehicle weight of not more than 12,000kg., and the gross vehicle weight of the trailer must not exceed the unladen weight of the drawing vehicle. The cargo compartment/body of the trailer must consist of a permanent, closed box body which is at least as wide and as high as the cab, except where the trailer is purpose built for emergency service operational requirements, and have a length of at least 2.4 metres. The closed box body may also be slightly less wide than the cab, provided that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear-view mirrors of the motor vehicle. The trailer must be presented with a real total mass (the actual weight of the trailer including any load if necessary) of at least 800kg., having due regard for safety, stability, manufacturer's guidelines and legal limits of the combination. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>
<b>DE</b> 	<p>A combination made up of an ESDS Category D assessment vehicle, and a trailer with a design gross vehicle weight of at least 1,400kg., capable of a speed of at least 80km/h. The cargo compartment / body of the trailer must consist of a permanent, closed box body except where the trailer is purpose built for emergency service operational requirements, which is at least 2 metres wide, 2 metres high, and has a length of at least 2.4 metres. The trailer must be presented with a real total mass (the actual weight of the trailer including any load if necessary) of at least 800kg., having due regard for safety, stability, manufacturer's guidelines and legal limits of the combination. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>

Vehicle Category	Representative vehicle
<p><b>D1E</b></p> 	<p>A combination made up of an ESDS Category D1 an assessment vehicle, and a trailer with a design gross vehicle weight of at least 1,400kg., capable of a speed of at least 80km/h. The cargo compartment/body of the trailer must consist of a permanent, closed box body except where the trailer is purpose built for emergency service operational requirements, which is at least 2 metres wide, 2 metres high, and have a length of at least 2.4 metres. The combination must have a gross vehicle weight of not more than 12,000kg., and the gross vehicle weight of the trailer must not exceed the unladen weight of the drawing vehicle. The trailer must be presented with a real total mass (the actual weight of the trailer including any load if necessary) of at least 800kg., having due regard for safety, stability, manufacturer's guidelines and legal limits of the combination. The vehicle must be fitted with external mirrors, on the right and on the left, so as to ensure the driver can obtain an adequate view of traffic to the rear and on both sides.</p>
<p><b>W</b></p> 	<p>Works Vehicles and Land Tractors.</p>

## ESDS Recertification Timeframes/ESDS Certification Validity

### Recertification within the Timeframe

Recertification	Validity of Certificate	Timeframe allowed for recertification	Application received before timeframe expiry	Recertification information
Driver	5 Years	5 years 6 months	Certification issues	Recertification may be sought 6 months before the expiry of a Driver Certificate
Trainer	2 Years	2 Years 6 months	Certification issues	Recertification may be sought 6 months before the expiry of a Trainer Certificate
Assessor	3 Years	3 Years 6 months	Certification issues	Recertification may be sought 6 months before the expiry of an Assessor Certificate

### Recertification outside the Timeframe

Recertification	Validity of Certificate	Timeframe allowed for recertification	Application received after timeframe expiry
Driver	5 Years	5 years 6 months	Certification expires (new application required)
Trainer	2 Years	2 Years 6 months	Certification expires (new application required)
Assessor	3 Years	3 Years 6 months	Certification expires (new application required)













## Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre Road Safety Authority

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