

Advice for novice drivers, fact sheet 5a

Oral Language Modification

When taking the Theory Test, in some exceptional cases if there is evidence of severe difficulties in understanding anything but the simplest language, DVSA may offer Oral Language Modification (OLM).

In an OLM test a specially qualified person will re-word the Theory Test questions to make them easier to understand. They won't be permitted to change the "technical language" that you should be expected to know (e.g. Catalytic Converter or Antilock Braking System) but the OLM can change sentence structure and other non-technical words and phrases.

The candidate will still be expected to understand what's being asked of them and to answer each question without being given an unfair advantage.

DVSA will require written evidence of "severe difficulties in language comprehension" for this service to be provided.

To apply for an OLM test send the written evidence to:

Post: DVSA Theory Test Enquiries, PO Box 381, M50 3UW

Email: customer care@pearson.com

Telephone: 0300 200 1188

Information required:

- Candidates full name (as on the driving licence).
- Address and postcode (as on the driving licence).
- Date of Birth
- Provisional licence number.

Evidence of “severe difficulties in language comprehension”:

This evidence would normally state that OLM has been required when taking exams at school or college and would take the form of a statement of educational needs from an educational professional or a report showing comprehension scores (normally needing to equate to below 8 years of age) to warrant the service. If a statement of educational needs is not available (e.g. for those out of formal education) a report from any educational establishment attended or from a medical professional explaining the severe difficulties in language comprehension will be considered.

Content of the application letter should cover the following:

State specifically that an OLM test is required.

State that the candidate will require a person to read out the questions and answers in the multiple choice part of the Theory Test, this person will also be required to mark the answer that the candidate chooses.

Because of a diagnosis of (or evidence of) learning difficulties and a severe difficulty in language comprehension, the candidate may require the person reading the questions to change sentence structure and other non-technical words and phrases according to OLM guidelines.

Extra time will also be required for the multiple choice part of the Theory Test.

A standard reader/recorder is not considered suitable because they are only permitted to read the exact text of the questions and answers whereas OLM allows the reader to re-phrase the English language used to explain the meaning of the words and phrases.

If a third party is likely to need to discuss any details of the booking with DVSA or Pearson it would be recommended that a DVSA Data Protection Form (attached) is completed and sent with the application letter.

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