

# Training and more testing to help people become HGV drivers

Free courses for adults to train to be HGV drivers are under way across the country – as part of a package of measures to ease driver shortages and support supply chains this Christmas and beyond.

Skills Bootcamps in HGV driving are free, flexible, intensive courses designed to train drivers to be road ready and gain their licence, offering people the chance to launch well-paid careers in the logistics sector. People that successfully complete the HGV courses are guaranteed a job interview with an employer, and the first drivers are expected to be on the road from March 2022.

The courses are available [now in locations across the country](#) and will also support existing drivers to refresh or upgrade their skills so they can get back on the road. The Department for Education has today (Friday, 10 December) announced it has boosted capacity for even more people to just over 11,000 places – backed by £34 million. Courses are in high demand with more than 2,000 people having already expressed an interest in signing up with the [National Career Service](#) and hundreds more through Jobcentre and the DfE helpline.

To ensure more people can take their test sooner, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is also making capacity available for 500 more HGV driving tests a week, equivalent to up to 26,000 more per year.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is helping Christmas deliveries run smoothly by extending flexible retail delivery hours – first put in place during the pandemic – to cover all goods. Flexible hours will stay in place until September next year to support supply chains over the busy festive period and beyond. Construction working hours will also be extended to make sure vital deliveries are not missed and smaller developers are not unfairly impacted by shortages.

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi said:

HGV drivers are vital to keeping this country moving. It's brilliant to see the first people with their hands on the steering wheel as they head towards new well-paid careers in the industry.

To help even more people get the training they need to be road ready, we're expanding our HGV Skills Bootcamps to support more than 11,000 people to gain the skills they need to progress in the industry, and to help those with previous experience refresh their skills so they can get back on the road.

The additional HGV testing capacity has been made possible following an

overhaul of the testing process. The DVSA has split the HGV and bus driving tests into two parts, so that approved assessors can test the off-road exercise part of HGV and bus tests at their own training sites, freeing up DVSA driving examiners to carry out extra on road tests.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The government has worked tirelessly to tackle the driver shortage caused by coronavirus and years of undervalued wages. We have now introduced 32 actions to help get more HGV drivers on the road. It is good to see that these measures are clearly working, with the haulage industry reporting a significant increase in tests carried out and licenses issued. Now these training camps will provide a further boost for the sector as we work together towards its recovery.

Minister for Housing Christopher Pincher MP said:

It's right that we do all we can to support supply chains and give the country the Christmas it deserves.

By asking councils across the country to work with us and extend retail delivery hours and construction working hours over this busy period, we are supporting businesses and ensuring everyone can get the goods they need.

Previously, retail deliveries were prevented through the night and construction hours were generally limited to 8am – 6pm on weekdays, and 9am -1pm on Saturdays. Councils are being encouraged to take a flexible and positive approach and not to unnecessarily impose restrictions that would prevent deliveries being made outside of these hours. Delivery hours and construction working hours are set locally and councils are still able to take action where they deem it necessary.

The measures announced today build on the action already under way to ease temporary supply chain pressures and HGV driver shortages, including a temporary visa scheme to make it easier for foreign lorry drivers to work in the UK and support from the Ministry of Defence to increase testing.

Skills Bootcamps form part of the government's drive to support more adults to get a better job and gain skills for life. They offer free courses of up to 16 weeks, giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills, including digital, construction and green skills and a fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

New figures published today show that [more than half \(54%\) of the 2,210 adults](#) who completed Skills Bootcamps between September 2020 and March 2021 went on to achieve a successful outcome, such as securing a new job, an apprenticeship, a new role or increased responsibilities with their current

employer or, for the self-employed, access to new opportunities.