


- All information in this guide is referenced to the National Standards for Driver and Rider Training.
[368508 PRN/ADI Information Guide and Responsibilities.](#)



THE GUIDE *to*

FEEDBACK, ENCOURAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

SELF STUDY MATERIAL / VIA RESOURCES HUB.

Last Reviewed:
26/04/2026

For *the* Driving Instructor – Knowledge is Power

Essential Guide for Trainee Instructors and Approved Driving Instructors.

Based in Waltham Abbey, UK

Written/Content and Design: Sonny Hussein, Advanced Driving Instructor, and
Main Principle of Option2Drive DITAC.

All Rights Reserved.

- Email: support@option2drive.co.uk

Guide Information

1. This guide is put together for a better understanding into the ADI instructional ability tests.
 2. It focuses on the importance behind questioning techniques, barriers and when to Adapt the Lesson Plan. This guide supplements information about the SBI model in greater detail, which recognises a specific **Situation, a Behaviours** and the **Impact** on others and self.
 3. We inclusively discuss areas of Risk Management, Lesson Planning and other useful information in this guide.
 4. Questionnaire to assess your understanding of the ADI process. But first, you need to read all the information within this guide before answering the questions. The questions are designed to assess your readiness prior to your ADI 3 test.
- *The reason this guide was created, is to ensure we understand what we are doing, and why we are doing it. Many trainees often know what they're teaching, but don't understand the theory behind it, so this guide should give a much clearer understanding to the world of coaching.*

This Guide has useful references from reliable sources:

- National Standards for Driver and Rider Training
- G.R.O.W model, by Author, Sir John Witmore
- SMART. George T. Doran, a consultant and former director of Washington Water Power Company.
- (SBI) Model was developed by the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL).
- Carl Rogers (1902-1987), an American psychologist and co-founder of humanistic psychology, is the author and pioneer of the client-centered approach, which was developed in the early 1940's and 50's.

Useful Information

- **Effective Questioning:**

Use of “effective questioning techniques” is useful in any industry, and as for driver training, is a great way to build relationships, remove any barriers in learning and understand a client’s need.

Different questioning techniques evaluate understanding, knowledge builds rapport with learners putting them at ease, thus a trainer can benefit by asking such questions to gain a starting point, in which the lesson should start.

Avoid overloading the learner with too many questions, and those that are far too out of reach for their level of experience, it is common for them to feel incapable, this will only be likely to distract and demotivate them from the learning process.

Encourage learners to think about their actions and behaviours, by using a range of different questioning techniques, and avoid the “telling method”, as this does not allow them to think or reflect on their performance and own actions, or accountability.

- **Barriers:**

Encourage learners to analyse and take a degree of accountability and responsibility for what they did well, or didn’t go so well, by bringing their observed behaviour into discussion in a constructive manner. This will often achieve better results, for you and your learners, and achieve better outcomes should they be given time to reflect and think about their actions. As a trainer or coach, you should be able to recognise different emotions, barriers to learning and general obstacles that they may find difficult to overcome, by observing body language, tone of voice or similar behaviours. Recognising any barriers is critical to support those overcome any fears or challenges they may encounter. This will enable a smooth learning process and to equip a safer learning environment, and drive in their own comfort zone.

When and why should I adapt the lesson?

You may need to adapt the lesson at any time to accommodate a specific need, Even watching your learners’ body language, from eyes, hands and feet, or sweaty hands gripping the steering wheel, and less assertive behaviours or gestures are good enough reasons to **adapt the lesson** plan if both, trainer and learner agree to this. This may include but not limited to; actively listening to any comments which are made which may show some uncertainty.

Failing to recognise a need for change, brings the lesson to a standstill with no progression. It is important to work with your learner to address any needs to accomplish a goal and give that lesson a greater value for money. This guide will help you understand that.

Understanding a need for change, is understood by a personal situation that your learner may be struggling with, or does not agree to, and often where emotions are elicited through discussions, behaviour patterns and other areas shown of concern to the learner, and said coach. Learning is an ongoing process, and as we learn we often find it gets easier, and barriers are often removed from our thoughts. This guide breaks it down below, by explaining SBI Situation-Behaviour-Impact. This is a coaching model that identifies a need for change.

The SBI Framework

- **SBI Situation - Behaviour - Impact**

More on the SBI model can be found on the [Resources Hub](#).

- **Situation:** Driver fault, emotions, stress or other factors, to easy or to hard/:
- **Behaviour:** (Observed behaviour - Feedback and reflection). Encourage the learner to consider What, Where and Why it went wrong, and how others observing may have been affected. This is the behaviour.
- **Impact:** (Encourage learner to re-think what they could have done differently, consider the greater impact it would have on others in a positive or negative way, understanding the consequences. This guide looks at the “Action Phase” on page 09.

You will be assessed on how you manage **potential** or **safety critical incidents** on the move, (**situation stage**). This is about potential or actual situations that bring the trainer to act responsibly and safely to avoid a specific situation from arising that could potentially cause harm. The trainer-coach should ensure the learner is always learning in a safe environment.

It is crucial that the trainer-coach steps in quickly and appropriately to manage safety of everyone and keep the car safe, if intervention is required. It should be discussed with the learner at a suitable time and place e.g. when parked conveniently to avoid or not compromise any further risk exposure to others, or the learner. It is important for the trainer-coach to initiate a discussion, on the “observed behaviour”, what they saw and others in the learning environment. This is the (**behaviour stage**) observed element by trainer. Feedback should be discussed as soon as possible, and when safe to support their learner with the “**Impact**” it could have had on others, and themselves in a negative or even positive light.

The SBI feedback model is a structured tool for delivering clear, actionable and objective feedback. It reduces defensiveness by focusing on specific, observed behaviours rather than personality, using three simple steps: anchoring the context (Situation), describing the action (Behaviour), and explaining the result (Impact). As a trainer-coach, you should recognise when your learner feels any discomfort, boredom, tiredness or stressed about something, as all these factors increase their and risk on the road. This is the Situation, which can have an impact on others negatively and look for behaviour-change interventions to reduce risk on the road by adapting the lesson plan to suit their circumstances and need.

It is also important the trainer-coach provides feedback so that the learner understands what they; the learner could have done differently to gain a better understanding to have a greater impact on their learning outcomes, as well as the impact on others in a less positive way. This is the **Impact** process.

Risk Management | Risk Management

- **Shared Responsibility:**

This is where you will agree and facilitate role and expectations of your responsibilities and the learners. This gives them accountability, value and confidence, and to accept and take responsibility within their capabilities and do things independently without prompts. The trainer is expected to support, provide help where the learner proves to struggle the most. This is known as **shared responsibility** for what they can do independently.

- **Intervention:**

The trainer should ensure that his/her intervention is timely and appropriate. Look for clues in your learners' actions, body language or verbal clues that may suggest they have a weakness, or lack of understanding to a certain situation.

As a trainer-coach, you're not just a teacher to guide one how to drive a car; but instead, a good active listener, strong in predicting the unexpected and reading the road ahead and behind, whilst observing your learners' behaviours.

Whilst implementing all the above, you will have the necessary skills to think out loud, and act well in advance to avoid any safety critical situations that may put other road users at risk, including all occupants in the car, and to always keep the car in control. You should recognise developing hazards and act well before it becomes critical. It is important to provide an explanation to your learner if you have had to stop, slow or command a verbal instruction to avoid a potential critical situation.

- Surroundings:

The trainer should be aware of their environment and the pupils actions. The trainer should possess good attention to detail of information within a moving environment that has the potential to cause harm, and bring this to the attention of the learner if evidently they are unaware of the situation.



Lesson Planning

- Lesson Planning - and Creating Opportunities for Learning

The lesson in turn should have plenty of opportunities for the learner to work towards their goals, addressing any learning points and exploring their thoughts and feelings towards the goal that is yet to be achieved.

- The Goal and The Starting Point

Setting the scene, objectives, and goals for that lesson:

- You should know what will you teach (subject matter)
Agreed development points from previous lesson findings (Goal)
- Explore what they know now, where they are now currently, in terms of confidence level and where they would like to be by the end of that lesson (measurable)
- You should know who you are teaching (learner rapport and know their capabilities)
- How will you teach it? Agree with their preferred learning method/style. (Avoid being instructor led).
- Do they understand, have they had any driving experience? What experience exactly? and who with? (Check throughout the lesson, feedback, review and progress?)

Differences Between a Goal and a Need?

- A goal is an objective in which someone or another wishes to accomplish in a certain time frame. I should point out, a goal is not a skill to any degree, it's considered an accomplishment.
- A need is a specific or defined area in which allows the learner to reach the goal. For example, a skill come with practice, and the more we practice the better we become. This is likely to allow us to achieve the goal.

Commonly, identifying driving faults are often missed, and assumed of another fault which was never the case, due to poor judgement of our pupils ability, or worse, simply not watching the learners actions due to other distractions or poor posture in a seating position which gives the trainer-coach the least advantageous view, or understanding our learners need. Giving an incorrect remedy to a driving fault, means the fault will keep re-occurring, and lead to a loss of confidence and demotivate, thus bringing no value to the lesson, and increase risk!

Working with your learner, and understanding their need, wants and driving faults can at times, prove to be a challenge for many. Even for those coming into the industry as newly ADI's.

I would say talking from experience that it can be imperative to understand what the learner is there to achieve, considering the need and skill required to achieve the said goal.

Goals should be based on S.M.A.R.T, specific, measurable, achievable and realistic with timely outcomes. This guide later, will look at SMART!

As suggested previously in this guide, many ADI's/PDI's are unsuccessful in making the ADI qualification for failing to recognise when to **Adapt the Lesson Plan**, which proves to be a weakness for many entering the industry, and is responsible for around **65%** of Part 3 and Standards Check fails in the UK each year.

It is understood that many trainee instructors, even the experienced ADI's undertaking a Standards Check, don't make the grade in the lower-level competencies due to a lack of understanding of the learners goals and needs.

I believe, having been in the driver training industry and having observed many experienced and inexperienced ADI's, that the pass rates for part 3 are low, due the trainer not addressing the learners need.

The GROW Model

Our live video recording of the GROW model is now available on the Learning Resources Hub of our website, where you can find useful information and a step-by-step guide in to how GROW is widely used in the world of coaching.

Website Address: <http://www.option2drive.co.uk>.

Focus on the bigger picture

Too often, lesson planning begins without focus on the learning. I have evidently sat in the back of lessons, where the trainer-coach hadn't prepped for the lesson, or without considering where learner is, within their journey. Failing to prepare is risky business and does not often examine the bigger picture.

The solution

Explore what may work, don't work, when and how. This part is about moving your learner - forwards and finding a solution that works for them for a smooth learning environment.

- **Don't try and do everything!**

You may be experienced in driver training, or have little or no experience if any, or you may have gained experience on a trainee license to further your confidence and boost your income.

There is a lot to learn even still, it's better to focus on one or two elements that your learner wishes to practice as their focus and refine in their lesson, than try to cram everything in one lesson. This does not mean ignore any other driving faults or behaviours outside the agreed plan. Remember, too many tasks can be a distraction or even overwhelming and often leads to failure and can lead to demotivation if the goals are not accomplished.

Be prepared to change the lesson plan at any time. Target the specific areas of development and work with your learner to achieve that goal and meeting their every needs. If there is a need to change or adapt the lesson plan, it should be agreed at a suitable time without any further distractions. Distractions are a major cause of crashes, and as a trainer-coach, you must be aware, when an opportunity arises to agree a change of lesson to work towards a goal at a suitable time for retention.

Where a driving fault is evident, it can be sometimes a useful to link the original agreed plan with the secondary fault, refining the small-step-method which is easier and accomplishable. For some learners, they will find it easier to master one or more skills at a time, without this being to overwhelm, however... for some this is not the case, particularly if you are working with the nervous, or neurodiverse clients. But remember the golden rule, always keep things simple, by breaking things down into small bite-size learning objectives.

So for example if your student has agreed at the start of the lesson, that you are to help them with making better, and effective use of mirrors, but struggle with approaching and leaving major roundabouts at the exits, you could have this discussion at the start, or during the lesson and agree that both elements are to be worked on to achieve one outcome by the end of that lesson, understanding the skills needed to do these two things safely. If it comes to light they are unsure of the speed limit on the road they currently driving on, This is often regarded as the "need".

Linking the goal and need is crucial to ensure learning effectively took place, and the lesson was of great value. This must be evident on the ADI part 3 exams, the needs should always be addressed and not ignored.

If your learner forgets to check their mirrors for example - what are the consequences of this? What could be the risk here, and when is it likely to happen, e.g. before signalling at junctions, changing lanes, or stopping on the left. Then the next part is to establish a route cause, why did it happen? Understanding a route cause is never easy, however the most important part if you're going to find a correct fix to a problem. We go deeper into the behaviour and minds of the client. For instance, it could be **lacking knowledge and practice, forgetfulness, other distractions or overwhelmed**.

It is important to understand, what is going on in the minds of our learners' to establish a base line of their behaviours, and find that fix. This is done using different questioning techniques, which we looked at, in the early stages of this guide.

Likewise, if it clear your learner is not making full use of their driving observations, and missing speed limit signs or road markings, due to ineffective observations what are the consequences? Whilst you will notice that Mirror Observations and Missing Speed Limits aren't necessary the same things, they both follow the same pattern. (Observational factors), can be linked quite easily merging the two subjects together for one achievable outcome as they follow the same risk patterns. Next in this guide, we'll look at the **"Action"** stage.

- **Actioning:**

It is useful to know specific actions which can be used to change a behaviours for the best positive outcome. For instance, many trainers I have sat in and observed, often accept words over actions. Let's give an example below.

Mark, is travelling along the A41 dual carriageway, and signal rather late to move into the right-hand lane to continue ahead. Whilst doing so, the trainer-coach in question had realised that Mark signalled his intentions to following traffic late. Whilst parked at a service station, the trainer coach explained of the late signal and discussed the consequences of Marks behaviour.

Following from the discussion, the trainer-coach had asked Mark, what could you have done differently to avoid the late signal? ...Marks response was, I will need to do this earlier next time to avoid any confusion.

Unfortunately, this will not a solution to a fix; because whilst he gave the correct response, it isn't a solution to a problem! The "Actioning Phase" of training is crucial, because it's an observed behaviour by others, a prompt, reminder or an action which requires a physical intervention over- phrases or words. For example, instead of Mark' stating he will need an early signal, he could "action" this by reminding himself to do it, e.g., using spoken faults, thinking out loud commonly known as commentary driving, or setting a reminder, this could be in agreement with trainer to use prompts to aid Mark when to signal, or even habitually using the MSPSL routine, so M- Mirrors, before the "S", Signalling/Moving across. [\(Continue to next page\)](#),

A good reminder could be, the trainer-coach could swap seats with the learner and use the “show-method” as a demonstration or a diagram. This is known as the “Actioning Phase”.

S.M.A.R.T

The “A” In the SMART model below, stands for “Achievable actions” and option available to the learner to establish a solution.

GROW/SMART:

The term SMART is highly valuable in any coaching industry, not just driving instruction. Its aim is to ensure learning is of value, achievable and meets a specific deadline. ***SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Timely and Relevant.***

Specific, Goals should be clear and focused, to the point and easy to understand. Answering **Who, Where, What** and **Why**.

Measurable, how measurable criteria is met, for example measuring progress by way of knowing when the goal has been met, and what obstacles or challenges might prevent your learners from meeting this deadline.

Achievable, is it achievable? Are there enough opportunities to reach the goal, is it realistic given the time, do they have the necessary skills, resources to achieve it, too easy or too hard to complete? Have you looked at the current situation. (This is the Actioning Phase) but not limited to.

Relevant, is the goal relevant to their situation, are they the right person to achieve it, and does it match with their core values and long-term goals.

Time-bound, assign a start and end to this goal. This is known as a timeframe, or deadline in which it should be achieved. Think about what you can do today, tomorrow, next week to achieve the goal, etc.

So, now we have taken a closer look at SMART objectives for your lesson planning above, let's look at the student.

- Choose a reliable student, who is punctual and supportive. It is worth taking some who you have taught from scratch! That way, you will know their likes and dislikes, and what works and doesn't work for them. I also understand, that when your being assessed by examiners, they assess how you respond and answer questions, and how you encourage feedback on the lesson. Therefore, it can be a good idea to bring someone who you have a good rapport with, who isn't so shy, and isn't afraid to ask questions.
- If you must rely on an alternate student in the event of your first choice of student's absence in the event of unforeseen circumstances, it can be a good idea to explore their goals and specific needs before sitting the ADI exam, rather than taking a student you know nothing about!
- As the examiner make themselves present half way through the lesson, only a recap should be given, so that the examiner has a baseline of where the learner is, and how things are going with your learner's progress. The lesson recap should take no longer than 3 to 4 minutes at the test centre. I would recommend introducing the learner to the examiner once the examiner has entered the vehicle, (No shaking of hands necessary) at this point. Ensure car is slightly ventilation, and your learner is familiar with the car.
- Ensure you mention, whilst not mandatory that there is extra weight in the car, so you could briefly talk about car handling on bends and pulling away. Particularly, if this vehicle is a manual transition and your learner has never had anyone sat in the back. The examiner will not trick a learner or make them stumble by awaiting an instruction for a seatbelt or to adjust the head-restraint. However, it does not hurt if your learner mentions this to the examiner as a safety precaution measure.

The test will last around 45 minutes from the test centre, and this includes a 3-minute recap, coaching drive and consolidation drive with end-lesson-feedback back at the test centre, implementing the 17 competencies.

In-car training

GROW

- Based on S.M.A.R.T objectives:

Ensure the lesson is structured with agreeing all points, having a structure will help, i.e. the G.R.O.W or SMART model. (Goal, Reality, Options and Way-Forward).

Keep to timings and agree practice area with your learner. Remember to know the route to the practice area, and any obstacles you may face on the way to the practice area. For example, you should be aware if any diversions, time it will take, getting to and from, and if there are anywhere to park prior to reaching the practice area, in the event the learner should cause danger to others, and it needs to be discussed before resuming.

keep the “Goal” simple, offer feedback and review through-out, look at the “Reality” of where the learner is within the learning process, look at the “Options/obstacles” and resources available to your learner and praise when it’s due, this inspires confidence in your learners motivation to succeed, as this motivates LEARNING and boosts moral.

We all liked to be praised at times for our hard work by our peers, people around us and colleagues. Vary your training style to suit, support, and show empathy if or when needed, Avoid being too rigid with the goal, have some flexibility to change the goal if required, gain this agreement first, keep the learning moving with progress, find a “Way-Forward” for your learners to develop in other ways, other than being in the car. This adds value to the lesson and to the learner, as you may need to change the plan at any time. Remember not everything goes according to plan!

Adopting a client focused approach

Adopting this approach is key, by starting off with a discussion on what points the learner wishes to address, and any weaknesses within their ability to complete something to a competent standard. Often by initiating a discussion through some basic questions like those below, you’re creating an effective environment of learning value to understand your clients specific need and goals.

Questions like those below, will often make your learner feel valued, and gives a chance to have an input in the lesson, and values their thoughts and feelings therefore, and allows the trainer-coach to have an active role in listening to their needs, or a feeling towards a situation. it puts the learner at the heart of the learning experience and therefore will often lead to a relaxed style of coaching and learner approach.

Questions you could use to start a coaching conversation, are some suggestions below:

- How would you like me to help you today?
- What have we agreed?
- How much help do you think you will need from me?
- At which level shall I introduce coaching or instruction?
- How much time is needed?
- How would you measure success?
- What does success look like to you?

It is understood that many trainers, experienced and the inexperienced believe that asking questions, or best known as Q&A is a client focused approach, do not be fooled...!

Client-centred learning (CCL) is a pedagogical approach—heavily endorsed by the DVSA for driving instruction—that adapts lessons to a learner's specific pace, preferences, and needs rather than using a one-size-fits-all method.

It shifts the instructor from a lecturer to a facilitator, using coaching, questioning, and active listening to empower learners to identify and solve their own problems. Key Aspects of Client-Centred Learning:

- **Active Participation:** The learner takes an active role in planning lessons, setting goals, and evaluating their own performance.
 - **Conversational Approach:** Lessons are a dialogue that considers the learner's previous experience, emotions, and thoughts, rather than just delivering instructions.
 - **Tailored Instruction:** Lessons are adapted to the learner's individual personality, confidence levels, and learning style.
 - **Goal Setting & Reflection:** Instructors and learners collaborate on goals and use tools like reflection (e.g., discussing what went well or wrong) to foster independent thinking.
 - **Identifying Gaps:** Rather than just correcting a fault, the instructor asks questions to help the learner understand why a mistake happened, leading to better retention and decision-making, and an easier way to understand.
- **Benefits of a Client-Centred Approach:**
 - **Increased Retention:** Learners tend to remember skills better when they find the solutions themselves.
 - **Improved Safety:** Fosters independent decision-making, creating safer, more responsible drivers.
 - **Reduced Frustration:** Lessons are paced according to the student, decreasing pressure and increasing motivation. This approach transforms the instructor-pupil relationship into a partnership where the goal is to develop safe driving skills for life, rather than just passing the driving test.

- Recognising Different Learning Styles:

Remember that we are all different in many ways, and different things work for different people. A good coach recognises this and can adapt around others specific needs. Some learners are passive, whilst some are reflective, and a few need a little time in short to think about what they will do differently, and how they will do it. Reflective learners may require even more time at home to sit and digest before coming up with any answers.

✓ Content and design, to Option2Drive DITAC.
All Rights Reserved.
ADI568508.