

Psychometric Testing Policy for Train Drivers

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VERSION CONTROL RECORD

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Main Contributors/co-authors:			
Executive Sponsor:		Chief People & Corporate Services Officer	
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1.0	HR Management Team	15.08.17	Section 6 amended to say records will be held in line with best practice and industry guidelines. Section 8 amended to provide an overview of assessments used Section 10 amended to remove one year validity for age 67+, and to refer to major life events. Paragraph inserted in Section 6 about controlled
1.1	Head of Standards & Compliance	10.10.17	Added Appendix B for overview of assessment process
1.2	HR Services Manager	31.03.23	Changes made throughout to reflect Train Driver Licences and Certificates Regulations (TDLCR) (NI) 2010 and RSSB Rail Industry Standard for Train Driver Selection RIS-3751-TOM
1.3	The OPC	13.04.23	Amend SCAAT to online mini-SCAAT test.
1.4	EDI Advisor	10.05.23	Amend EO Section in relation to safety critical tasks
1.5	Assistant to Traction manager	29.09.25	Changes made throughout to reflect requirements of 2007/59/EC and EO section.

This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version is maintained within the Corporate Records Centre within Sharepoint by the Policy Owner.

1. Introduction

Throughout this Policy, the words 'Translink' 'Company' and/or 'the Group' refer to all corporate entities under the ownership of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC). This includes the parent company and each subsidiary either individually or taken together as a group.

2. Scope and background

Translink uses psychometric tests where appropriate, to enhance the quality and quantity of information available for recruitment and selection, training, and people development, as an aid to organisational change and for post-incident analysis.

Translink is committed to the highest standards of practice in the use of all psychometric tests, in order to maximise the benefit of testing to the organisation and the individual, and to promote fairness and equality of opportunity for all.

The current Train Driver assessment process complies with the requirements set out in Schedule 3 of the Train Driver Licences and Certificates Regulations (TDLCR) (NI) 2010 and Annex II Medical Requirements 2.2 Occupational Psychological Examinations of Directive 2007/59/EC on the Certification of Train Drivers Operating Locomotives and Trains on the Railway System in the Community.

It also complies with RSSB Rail Industry Standard for Train Driver Selection RIS-3751-TOM which provides a voluntary standard on the selection process for Train Drivers who drive on Network Rail managed infrastructure and to which the GB rail operators apply. Translink has committed to adhering to this standard because a standardised psychometric process is applied which means potential drivers are assessed against the same standard, so drivers can easily transfer between companies without needing to be assessed again. The assessment process provides a reliable, valid, fair, and practicable assessment of the aptitudes required for train driving against a defined minimum standard.

This assessment process applies to any person or role that is required to hold a Train Driving Licence issued by the DfI RSA or CRR and includes On-Track Machine Operators (OTMO).

3. Use and Approval of Tests

The HR Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that tests used within Translink for Train Driving (including On-Track Machine Operators) are in accordance with this policy and TDLCR (NI) 2010, 2007/59/EC, and RIS-3751-TOM. Any new or revised psychometric testing must be approved by the HR Services Manager before implementation.

4. Choice of Selection Methods

All psychometric tests used must be relevant to the given purpose. The tests used for Train Drivers are designed to assess the abilities recognised to underpin good performance in modern train driving. The purpose of the process is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the key skills against a minimum standard which is set to exclude people who might not have the aptitude to become safe train drivers.

5. Test Administration

Examiners of Psychological fitness for Train Driving must comply with the regulations set out in Schedule 3 of the TDLCR (NI) 2010 and Annex II of 2007/59/EC. Additionally, they must also possess BPS Certification in Occupational Testing (Level A) and awareness of the occupational requirements of Train Drivers.

In accordance with Part 8 of TDLCR (NI) 2010 and Article 11 (3) of 2007/59/EC, Examiners of Psychological Fitness must be registered with and appear on the respective registers of both the DfI RSA and CRR.

6. Test Scores and Standards

The psychometric assessment process provides a reliable, valid, fair, and practicable assessment of the aptitudes required for train driving against a defined minimum standard.

Test scores are valid for a period of 5-years subject to the requirements of Appendix A.

7. Retention of Assessment Records

Tests are administered by an external supplier who apply appropriate retention and disposal processes. They are responsible for uploading test results to a UK database which allows controlled access by specified representatives from other railway operators for the purposes of ensuring compliance in relation to repeat assessments.

Translink retains test outcomes and certificates of examinations in line with the HR Retention & Disposal Schedule.

8. Communication to Candidates

Translink is committed to dealing fairly with all candidates and will explain the use of tests, provide suitable practice materials wherever possible and offer relevant feedback whenever tests are used.

9. The Selection Process

The train driver assessment selection process includes:

- Tests of attention.
- A reasoning/memory test.
- A test of vigilance and reaction time.
- A test of perception.
- A test of hand co-ordination.
- A situational judgement exercise.
- A structured interview.
- A formal company interview.

An outline of the full assessment process is included as Appendix B.

10. Repeat Assessments

In accordance with the professional use of psychometric tests and in compliance with **RSSB Rail Industry Standard for Train Driver Selection RIS-3751-TOM**, Translink must apply good practice and consistent testing regulations which will apply as follows:

- Candidates who do not reach the standard required at the first attempt cannot be re-tested again within 12 months.
- On the second attempt (if undertaken within 5 years of the initial attempt), candidates need only normally undertake assessment of any elements they did not pass or have not yet undertaken.
- Candidates are permitted to undertake a third (and final) attempt of the psychometric tests. But this can only take place 5 years after the first failed attempt.

	1 year after	2 years after	3 years after	4 years after	5 years after	Beyond
Failed attempt #1	Attempt #2 can take place a minimum of one year after the first failed attempt					
					Attempt #3 can only take place 5 years after attempt #1 + minimum of 1 year after the 2nd attempt	

- For any re-assessment attempt where the Candidate has experienced a “Major Life Event” as described in Appendix A since undertaking their previous assessment then they should normally undertake the full psychometric assessment process unless there is documented evidence from a medical professional / psychologist / other suitably qualified person that the major life event would not affect the Candidates safe performance.
- **NOTE:** The provisions contained within this section regarding repeat assessments apply from the introduction of version 1.5 of this policy dated 29th September 2025. Previous applicants who already have two unsuccessful attempts at Train Driver psychometric testing prior to 29 September 2025 will not be permitted a third attempt.

11. Validity of Test Scores

Candidates’ selection process scores will be considered valid for a period of five years from the date of the first successfully completed assessment test unless:

- The candidate has a major life event that may have caused a decrease in cognitive ability or a change in behavioural tendencies, or
- The Company adopts different selection process elements relating to Train Driving.

11. Equal Opportunities

The company is committed to selection on merit and use of psychometric tests for Train Driver selection that are relevant to job demands and Rail Industry Standards.

We recognise that some applicants may require a reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process due to a disability. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended), defines a disability as:

“a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Applicants who highlight a ‘neurodiverse condition’ will be considered as meeting the definition of disability as per the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended). We are committed to supporting applicants who require a reasonable adjustment, in support of this, the following inclusive recruitment practice is in place: -

We ask that if you require a reasonable adjustment that this is noted on the application form for the role.

In advance of the assessment to help you prepare and identify if you need a reasonable adjustment due to a disability, we provide:

- A description of the assessment methods that will be used.
- Practice materials with correct responses.
- Advice on personal preparation for the process.
- Explanation of the assessment process: what to expect in terms of layout, access, and setup, what will happen and in what order, how results will be used, and what decisions will be made.
- Instructions on how to get to the assessment, details about car parking and directions using public transport, including both a map and a series of steps.
- Contact details, including a telephone number and a named point of contact, where available, for difficulties on the day.
- How to request reasonable adjustments or accommodations.

11.1 Self-Certification of Fitness to Sit Assessments

The Translink recruitment team will ask candidates, before they sit the assessment, if there are any mitigating circumstances (for example, a bereavement or illness) regarding their ability to complete the assessment to the best of their ability. Candidates should inform Translink of any issues with sitting the assessment as soon as possible. If a candidate has concerns that there are circumstances that will impact their test performance, they will be advised to not attend that testing session and apply for a role in another cycle.

Translink requires all candidates to sign a declaration that they are fit to do so before sitting an assessment. If you sit the assessment, regardless of having informed us of any circumstances which may impact on your performance, you (the candidate) are certifying that you are fit and well to do so and therefore waive any right to contest this at a later date.

If circumstances arise during the course of the assessment session, the candidate may be advised to leave the session and attempt the remaining tests at a later date, if available.

If a candidate wishes to submit a claim for mitigating circumstances, they must contact the Translink Recruitment team within 2 weeks of the date of the relevant assessment. Claims will not be considered after this cut-off point.

11.2 Requesting a Reasonable Adjustment

Candidates who believe they require reasonable adjustments to participate fully and fairly in the psychometric assessments should notify us at the earliest opportunity, and prior to the testing date. Reasonable adjustments cannot be requested or agreed on the day of the assessment.

In line with the supplier's policy, and to ensure the national and RSSB standards are met, candidates will be asked to provide any relevant supporting documentation to assist in the timely and appropriate facilitation of reasonable adjustments.

We will liaise directly with the external supplier to ensure that all requested adjustments are reviewed and implemented in accordance with their policies and procedures. This may include, but is not limited to, modifications to test format, additional time allowances or alternative testing arrangements.

12. Related Policies

- [Equal Opportunity Policy](#)
- [Psychometric Testing Policy](#)

APPENDIX A - EXAMPLES OF MAJOR LIFE EVENTS

There are situations which could impair cognitive performance in the short term, such as the death of a loved one, divorce, or illness. While these events are likely to cause considerable emotional stress to the individual, any decrement in performance would be temporary, and the individual would recover without any long-term impact.

There are other conditions that could cause long term, or permanent decrement to the individuals' cognitive performance and impact on the likelihood that they would be suitable for a safety critical role.

The list below provides examples of significant events or conditions that could lead to cognitive impairment and affect a candidate's suitability. Consideration of the types of events shown below may be used to decide whether full re-assessment using the psychometric assessment process is required. The purpose of this list is not to eliminate or discriminate against candidates and will only be used to identify if re-assessment is necessary.

Examples of significant events or conditions that could affect cognitive performance:

- Serious illness (including Cancer, Bacterial Meningitis)
- Stroke
- Significant accident or injury
- Traumatic brain injury
- Brain Tumour
- Degenerative disorders (for example dementias)
- Progressive disorders (for example Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease)
- Toxic or metabolic disorders (for example alcohol related disorders, neurotoxins)
- Oxygen deprivation
- Alcohol or substance abuse/long term use of medication
- Epilepsy/seizures
- Psychological illness such as: - clinical/serious depression, clinically diagnosed anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Motor Neuron Disorder
- Sleep Disorder (for example sleep Apnoea)

This is not an exhaustive list.

APPENDIX B – ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The assessment process will encompass the following elements:

- Competency-based application form.
- If shortlisted, the applicant will be invited to complete a safe concentration and attention test:

Test	Type	Competency Assessed
Mini Safe Concentration & Attention Test (MiniSCAAT)	Online	Concentration and attention

- If the applicant meets the standard on the MiniSCAAT test they will be invited to a formal interview.
- If the applicant has met the requirements of the MiniSCAAT and formal competency-based interview they will be invited to attend an assessment centre where they will be required to complete some or all of the following tests: -

Test	Type	Competency Assessed
Group Bourdon	Paper & pencil	Attention
Test of Everyday Attention - Occupational	Paper & pencil	Attention
Trainability for Rules & Procedures Test Part 1	Paper & pencil	Memory
Trainability for Rules & Procedures Test Part 2	Paper & pencil	Reasoning
Vigilance Test	Computerised	Vigilance
		Reaction time
Adaptive Tachistoscopic Traffic Test	Computerised	Perception
		Reaction time
Two Hand Coordination Test	Computerised	Hand Coordination
Situational Judgement Exercise	Computerised	Behavioural aptitudes

There will be several breaks during the assessment centre and the applicant will be informed at these intervals if they meet the standard which will allow them to progress to the next set of tests.

If the applicant meets the standard at the assessment centre, they will be invited to attend for a multi-modal interview which will comprise of a form of competency-based questions to assess behavioural aptitudes and communication skills.

Applicants who successfully complete all of the above stages will be placed on a waiting list pending future vacancies. Applicants will be called forward for a Train Driver medical assessment from the waiting list in rank order to fill vacancies as they arise.