1 The human factor: hints and tips

Associate Logbook page 4

Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to handle the different situations presented during their driving world

Objectives for the Associate

1. Understand themselves
2. Conduct vehicle checks
3. Discuss factors related to the journey
4. Understand the effects of the external world on their driving

Explain

The IAM RoadSmart approach to human factors
An IAM RoadSmart driver shows how they need to consider all influences on a driver.

Why all the elements are important and how they blend to achieve an IAM RoadSmart driver
Driving on today's roads takes not just skill but a certain amount of understanding and cooperation to communicate and interact with other road users.

The importance of vehicle checks
A regular, logical, ordered check of the vehicle's roadworthiness assists in keeping moving. Use 'show me, tell me' questions to encourage understanding.

Understanding the impact of human factors

A driver skilled in vehicle control but lacking in the ordered mental approach to driving will not make an IAM RoadSmart driver. Starting to consider the human factors that affect their driving and beginning the process of self-evaluation puts the Associate well on the way to achieving their goal. An IAM RoadSmart driver will understand the impact of the four human-factor elements on their driving. They will use this knowledge to inform all their driving decisions and will always be striving to improve.

When Associates first learnt to drive, they would have started with vehicle control, and with practise they developed their skills and muscle memory. Once they had mastered the basic skills, they were able to concentrate on traffic situations and react accordingly.

One of the main things to encourage your Associate to think about is that when they get into a vehicle, they are not a blank canvas: they bring their beliefs, life experiences and personalities into the driving seat with them. All these different aspects influence how they drive a vehicle.

1a The driver

Human nature can impact the way people drive. Their behaviour, emotions, attitude, mood and how tired they are all affect driving.

Coaching scenario: the driver behind the wheel
Theme: Understanding how personal factors – such as emotions, attitude, mood and fatigue – affect driving behaviour and decision making.
Objective: To help the Associate recognise how their mental and emotional state can influence their driving style, hazard perception, reaction time, and interactions with others on the road.
Example coaching situation: You are conducting an Observed drive with an Associate who appears focused but possibly rushed or distracted. As the session progresses, their driving becomes slightly erratic – late braking, impatience with slower vehicles, or frustration at traffic.

Example coaching questions: driver

Reflection-based:

1. How were you feeling today before the drive started? Is anything on your mind?
2. How might your current mood or stress level be affecting your driving choices?
3. Have you noticed any difference in how you have approached traffic or hazards today compared to a more relaxed drive?

Awareness and impact:

1. When you are feeling tired, angry or distracted, what kind of habits or behaviours creep into your driving?
2. How do you think emotions like frustration or overconfidence could affect hazard perception?
3. Can you recall a time when your mindset led to a risky situation while driving?

Coping strategies:

1. What strategies can you use to stay calm or refocus during a drive if you are feeling under pressure?
2. If you noticed your attitude slipping mid-drive, how would you regain composure and control?
3. What would you do differently next time you are about to drive but are not feeling 100%?

1b The vehicle

Knowing limitations as a driver is one thing but how often is it 'assumed' that vehicles are capable of the journey? Checking the condition of the vehicle and knowing its limitations are just as important as a driver knowing their own limitations.

Coaching scenario: the vehicle
Theme: Understanding the importance of vehicle condition, limitations, and how it interacts with driver capability and journey demands.

Objective: To encourage the Associate to actively assess their vehicle's roadworthiness, performance limitations, and suitability for each journey – moving away from assumption towards proactive responsibility.

Example coaching situation: You are observing an Associate about to begin or already on a journey. Perhaps they are confident but haven't checked tyre condition, have ignored a warning light, or are driving a heavily loaded vehicle without adapting speed or braking distance. You pause or debrief to explore this further.

Example coaching questions: the vehicle

Awareness and maintenance:

1. When was the last time you checked the condition of your tyres, brakes or fluids?
2. Do you routinely check your vehicle before long journeys – or trust past reliability?
3. Is there anything about this car that would make it behave differently in an emergency stop?

Capability and suitability:

1. How well suited is this vehicle to the journey you are doing today?
2. Have you driven this particular vehicle in poor weather or on challenging roads before?
3. If you had to make a rapid stop or evasive move – how would the car respond?

Assumptions vs preparedness:

1. Do you feel confident this vehicle is as prepared for this journey as you are?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where your car's performance didn't match what you needed?
3. How do you account for vehicle limitations when planning routes, overtakes or speed?

1c The journey

Every journey has a reason behind it; whether a person is going to work or driving to the local shops, they are able to justify their journey. However, prompt your Associate to consider if they always think about the ideal amount of time to make the journey and allow additional time, or do they judge journey time by the minimum time to get somewhere?

Coaching scenario: the journey
Theme: Understanding how the purpose, timing and planning of a journey influences driving behaviour, stress levels, and risk management.

Objective: To help your Associate recognise the influence that journey purpose, time pressure, and planning have on their mindset and driving performance – and to encourage a more proactive, considered approach to journey management.

Example coaching situation: Your Associate appears time-focused – perhaps checking the clock, slightly hurrying through decisions, or vocalising frustration with traffic. The route is familiar, but they seem focused on the destination rather than the drive.

Example coaching questions: the journey

Purpose and planning:

1. What's the purpose behind your drive today – how important does it feel?
2. How much time did you allow yourself for this journey?
3. What would you do differently if this drive was part of a longer or unfamiliar journey?

Time pressure and judgement:

1. Do you plan for best-case or worst-case scenarios when judging journey time?
2. How do you feel and respond to unexpected delays?
3. If you are running late, what changes in your driving – speed, decisions, reactions?

Adaptability:

1. What contingency plans do you make if things don't go to schedule?
2. How do you adapt your approach if the road or traffic conditions change suddenly?
3. How would your drive feel different if you allowed an extra 10 minutes?

1e The wider world

The Associate needs to understand external influences and manage them effectively as a crucial part of safe driving. Communicating with others and anticipating their actions takes skill and concentration. Situational awareness is crucial in becoming a well-rounded driver.

Coaching scenario: the wider world
Theme: Recognising and managing the influence of external factors – other road users, environmental changes, and social pressures – on driving decisions.

Objective: To help your Associate develop heightened situational awareness; improve their ability to communicate, anticipate and adapt to other road users and external influences; and maintain calm control in unpredictable environments.

Example coaching situation: During an Observed drive, your Associate encounters a mix of challenging external factors – tailgaters, impatient drivers, a pedestrian crossing without looking, or sudden weather changes. You observe their responses and reactions, then initiate a reflective conversation at a safe stopping point.

Example coaching questions: the wider world

Awareness and anticipation:

1. What are you noticing about the road users around you right now?
2. How early do you tend to pick up on changes in traffic flow or body language of other drivers?
3. What behaviours from others have caught you off guard in the past?

Adaptability and control:

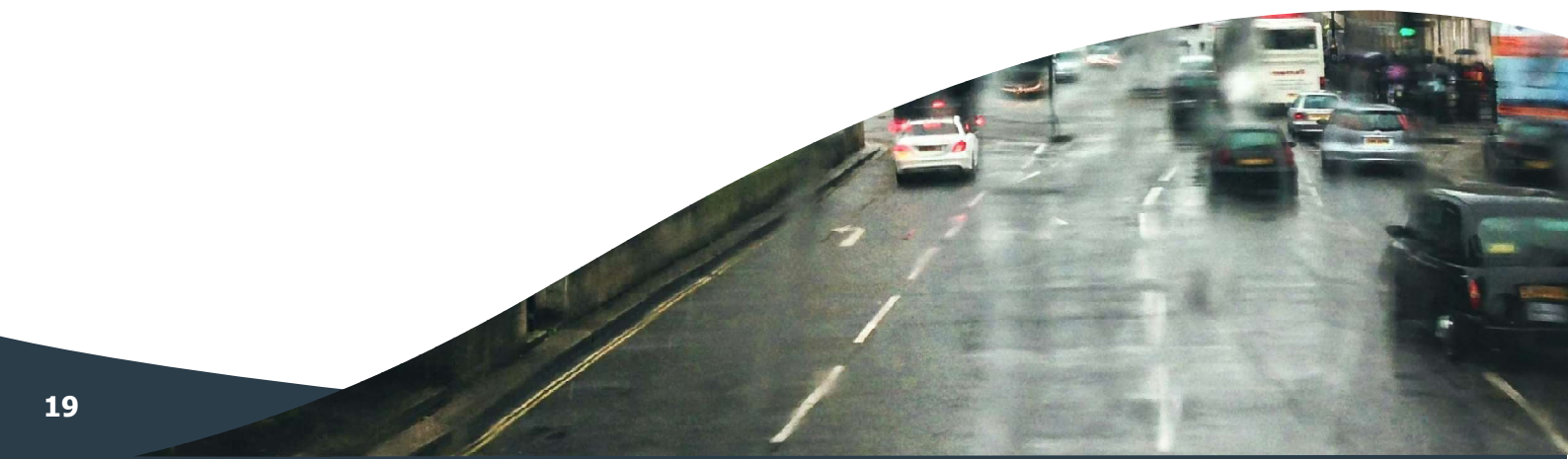
1. How do you typically respond to unpredictable drivers or pedestrians?
2. When someone puts pressure on you – say by tailgating – how do you keep your focus?
3. Do you ever find yourself reacting emotionally to others on the road?

Communication and interpretation:

1. What messages are you giving to other road users through your position, speed or indicators?
2. How do you judge if someone has seen or understood your intentions?
3. In what ways can you signal to others more clearly or confidently?

External pressures and environmental influence:

1. How do external pressures – like being late, traffic volume, or poor weather – affect your judgement?
2. What could you do to stay one step ahead in heavy or unpredictable conditions?
3. Have you ever made a decision based on what others were doing – not what was safest?



2 IPSGA: hints and tips

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Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to be able to consider each stage of IPSGA in sequence, revisiting the appropriate stage as new information becomes available

Objectives for the Associate

1. Demonstrate understanding and application of the system

Explain

Why we use IPSGA
The IPSGA system of car control is a trusted and effective method of creating time to negotiate a hazard safely.

How the information phase is broken down into TUG
Take – Use – Give information.
By developing Observation, Anticipation and Planning skills, the Associate will be able to identify hazards at the earliest opportunity and therefore have more time to plan.

2c Information

Understanding the system

Make sure your Associate understands the information phase of the system is not a standalone part of the system and is integral to all other phases.

- Is your Associate thinking of the information phase as just one standalone part of the system? This must be avoided, as information may change at any time and then the system needs to be considered again
- Does your Associate understand the system should be considered in sequence and the appropriate feature visited and adjusted if required, but is not yet managing to put everything together?
- Is your Associate able to demonstrate how the information phase of the system runs throughout and feeds into all the phases, and do they consider all phases on the approach to every hazard?

Taking information

The Associate needs to demonstrate their ability to take in information. All-round scanning is where most of the information will come from. However, encourage the Associate to use other senses i.e. country smells, the sound of sirens, and/or feeling any abnormalities with the steering.

Using information

The Associate will gather the information taken and decide what they are going to do.

They need to use the information to link possibilities i.e.:

- On hills, a cloud of exhaust smoke from an HGV suggests that it may be changing down a gear to cope with the hill
- A cluster of lamp posts may indicate a roundabout
- A single lamp post may indicate a junction opposite it

Giving information

Your Associate will need to understand how to communicate with other road users. Advanced drivers need to be able to demonstrate:

- **Positioning:** An Associate's position is the first method of communicating with other road users. Does your Associate adopt a position that avoids confusion?
- **Signals**: A signal needs to be timely and accurate. Does your Associate consider their signals at the appropriate time and apply where necessary?
- **Non-verbal communication**: Does the Associate make eye contact to confirm the intentions of the other road users? Remind them to look at the driver/rider, not just the vehicle.

Example coaching questions: information phase (Taking, Using, Giving)

1. What hazards can you see ahead? (taking information)
2. How will they affect your approach? (using information)
3. How can you prepare? (using information)
4. How can you make your intentions clear to other traffic? (giving information)

Coaching tips for Taking, Using and Giving information

- ✓ Encourage the Associate to scan for traffic, pedestrians and road signs. Emphasise taking in all available information (mirrors, blind spots, signals from other road users)
- ✓ Encourage early decision making based on available information
- ✓ Remind the Associate that other road users rely on their signals and positioning to anticipate movements
- ✓ Use commentary driving to reinforce thinking aloud: 'I see a car waiting at the junction, so I'll cover my brakes in case they pull out'
- ✓ Reinforce the importance of clear and decisive communication – hesitant or last-minute signalling can confuse others

2d Position

IAM RoadSmart drivers need to demonstrate how the position of their vehicle promotes safety, encourages stability, and where possible allows them to extend their view and assists with the communication between them and other road users. The Associate needs to show how they decide their road position based on what they can and can't see, the road layout and traffic conditions, and circumstances that may reasonably be expected to develop.

Example coaching questions: position phase

1. Where should you position your vehicle for safety and the best view here?
2. What will your position tell other road users?
3. Where should you position to see further into the bend?

Coaching tips for position

- ✓ Encourage early positioning – guide them to position well in advance rather than making last-minute adjustments
- ✓ Reinforce using road markings and surroundings – how road signs, camber, and kerb lines affect positioning
- ✓ Explain position for safety – how positioning also helps to see hazards earlier (e.g. moving right slightly for a left-hand bend)
- ✓ Encourage lane discipline – remind them to avoid unnecessary lane drifting or hugging the kerb
- ✓ Encourage position for safety when following – for example, leaving space behind large vehicles to improve visibility
- ✓ Encourage using a safety bubble for hazards – adjusting it for parked cars, cyclists or upcoming bends

2e Speed

The Associate needs to choose a speed that is appropriate to negotiate a hazard safely. The speed needs to be legal and allow them to stop safely in the distance they can see to be clear on their own side of the road. The stopping distance comprises of a thinking component and then the distance to brake to a stop. Discuss the 'two-second rule' as a way of assessing a good following distance; smooth operation of the accelerator and brakes gives a comfortable drive and reduces stress, therefore avoiding jerky or pulsing accelerator and movement, and harsh-braking events. Using acceleration sense when appropriate will avoid unnecessary brake applications (but where brake lights are required, they should be illuminated by gentle pressure on the pedal).

Example coaching questions: speed phase

1. How can you safely reduce speed while warning others?
2. How can you reduce speed smoothly while giving information to others?
3. How should your speed change as you approach this hazard?

Coaching tips for speed

- ✓ Focus on the 'Safe, appropriate, limit' approach – teach the Associate to consider the safety factors, what's appropriate for the conditions, and the speed limit
- ✓ Encourage early speed adjustments – emphasise slowing down before reaching a hazard to allow time for gears and the vehicle to settle; not leaving things to the last second
- ✓ Reinforce the need to match speed to vision – less vision = lower speed
- ✓ Highlight using speed variation for communication – slowing early gives following traffic time to react
- ✓ Encourage progressive braking – help them to avoid harsh braking by encouraging early mirror checks and planned three-stage braking
- ✓ Encourage smooth transitions – reinforce the importance of balanced braking for stability

2f Gear

To be able to ensure the car responds correctly, the Associate needs to be in the appropriate gear. It may be necessary to change the gear for flexibility even though the speed has not changed. They need to understand the working range for each gear and be able to correctly use an automatic gearbox. Drivers of EVs will generally not need to select a gear. However, they will need to allow the vehicle to settle after the speed phase; considering a gear at this point allows time for this transition.

Example coaching questions: gear phase

1. What gear do you think would give you the best control here?
2. How can you choose the right gear for a smooth exit?
3. Does this gear allow you to increase or reduce speed if required?

Coaching tips for gear

- ✓ Encourage early gear selection – teach the Associate to choose an appropriate gear before they need it (e.g. before entering a bend or junction)
- ✓ Reinforce using gears for control, not speed – lower gears give more control on bends, hills and slow manoeuvres, and are not just for increasing speed
- ✓ Discuss engine braking – explain how using a lower gear helps slow the vehicle without over-relying on the brakes, especially on downhill slopes
- ✓ Discourage unnecessary gear changes – it may be appropriate to block-change gears (e.g. 4th to 2nd) if appropriate, reducing wear, and improving efficiency. Automatic gearboxes may have switchable modes more appropriate for holding a gear
- ✓ Encourage matching gear to road conditions – for example, using lower gears for sharp bends. Ideally, they should use a gear that when negotiating a hazard will allow them to increase or reduce speed to safely progress through it
- ✓ Highlight avoiding coasting – ensure your Associate understands why driving in neutral or with the clutch down reduces control and increases stopping distances

2g Acceleration

The Associate should apply the correct degree of acceleration to negotiate and leave the hazard safely; positive throttle application will aid stability.

Example coaching questions: acceleration phase

1. How should you apply acceleration here for a smooth exit?
2. How should you accelerate to maintain control and match traffic speed?

Coaching tips for acceleration

- ✓ Encourage smooth acceleration – they should avoid sudden throttle inputs, especially in wet or icy conditions.
- ✓ Emphasise matching acceleration to road conditions – teach how road grip affects power delivery (e.g. less acceleration on wet roads)
- ✓ Highlight the need to use progressive acceleration – to apply power gradually as road and traffic conditions allow
- ✓ Explain weight transfer – show how hard acceleration shifts weight to the back wheels, affecting grip and steering
- ✓ Explain acceleration sense – encourage them to judge when to accelerate based on road layout and traffic flow
- ✓ Emphasise eco-driving – smooth acceleration saves fuel and reduces wear on the car

Tyre-grip trade-off

A vehicle's tyre only has a certain amount of grip which is divided between steering, acceleration or braking. Careful braking and accelerating leave plenty of grip available for steering; ideally, braking should be completed before steering is applied.

Common errors: IPSGA

1 Incomplete or inaccurate information gathering

- Does not scan far enough ahead to gather enough useful information
- Misses critical visual clues, such as road signs, hazards or traffic flows
- Focuses on only one element (e.g. road markings) and misses others (e.g. pedestrian movement, other road users)

Coach with: 'Did you gather information from all relevant sources – road signs, the road layout, surrounding traffic, and conditions?'

2 Not considering the whole picture in positioning

- Positions too early or too late relative to hazards, intersections or other vehicles
- Does not adjust position when conditions change (e.g. moving out for better visibility, or lane discipline)
- Fails to position for smoothness in overtaking, junctions or bends

Coach with: 'Did your position give you the best view and room for any adjustments needed ahead?'

3 Incorrect or delayed speed adjustment

- Does not adapt speed early enough to match the road layout, traffic or conditions
- Keeps a high speed when it is inappropriate (e.g. near a junction, bend or slow-moving traffic)
- Brakes too late or aggressively, instead of adjusting speed smoothly

Coach with: 'Was your speed set early enough to allow smooth progression through the next stage?'

4 Not selecting the correct gear

- Changes gear too late or too early, disrupting the flow or causing delays
- Uses a higher gear than necessary, which reduces control, especially in curves, junctions or while overtaking
- Does not adjust gear to allow smooth deceleration, acceleration or cornering

Coach with: 'Was your gear choice appropriate for the conditions and your desired control?'

5 Lack of anticipation or forward planning

- Moves through the IPSGA stages reactively rather than proactively
- Fails to anticipate what's ahead – such as upcoming hazards, changes in traffic speed, or road layout
- Does not adjust the system based on new information coming in (e.g. changing weather)

Coach with: 'How far ahead did you plan each stage of your approach? Were you thinking ahead enough to make adjustments?'

6 Not adapting IPSGA to changing road conditions

- Uses a rigid approach to the IPSGA stages rather than adjusts based on real-time conditions (e.g. poor weather, heavy traffic)
- Fails to account for roadworks, pedestrian crossings, or unfamiliar road layouts
- Does not adjust the positioning, speed or gear when conditions change suddenly (e.g. entering a built-up area)

Coach with: 'Did you adapt each stage of IPSGA to the conditions, or were you using a one-size-fits-all approach?'

7 Inconsistent use of the IPSGA system

- Skips stages of the IPSGA system, especially when under pressure or when not aware of the full context of a situation
- Does not follow through with all stages (e.g. fails to adjust acceleration when necessary after selecting the correct gear)
- Over-relies on one or two stages of the system, but neglects others (e.g. focuses on information but does not adjust speed)

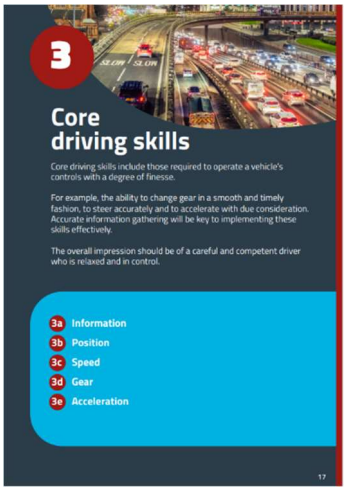
Coach with: 'Were you consistent in following all stages of IPSGA, or did you skip any steps because of external pressures?'

8 Lack of review or reflection after each manoeuvre

- Does not reflect on each IPSGA stage after completing a manoeuvre (e.g. overtaking)
- Does not recognise areas to improve in the use of the system for smoother or safer driving
- Fails to make adjustments to using the system based on experience or feedback

Coach with: 'After completing that manoeuvre, how would you review your use of the IPSGA system? Is there anything you'd tweak next time?'

3 Core driving skills: hints and tips



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Video: Core Driving Skills

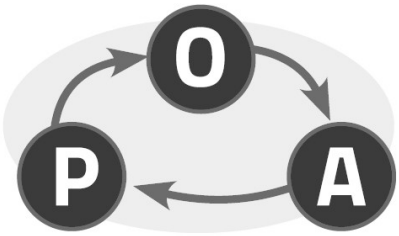
Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to drive safely using ISPGA

Objectives for the Associate

1. Demonstrate how they observe, anticipate and plan for hazards
2. Demonstrate how they use appropriate signals to communicate with other road users
3. Demonstrate smooth and accurate operation of controls

Explain



Core driving skills

These are the skills needed to operate a vehicle's controls with the high degree of finesse required to be an IAM RoadSmart driver.

OAP

Ask the Associate to demonstrate using Observation, Anticipation and Planning (OAP) as part of their driving

Example coaching questions: core driving skills

Observation and awareness

1. What did you notice early on in that situation?
2. How far ahead were you looking on that stretch?
3. What clues helped you anticipate what was about to happen?
4. Did anything catch you by surprise? Why do you think that was?
5. How did you manage your peripheral observations while staying focused on your plan?

Planning and anticipation

1. What was your plan before you entered that hazard?
2. What options did you consider before making your decision?
3. How did the behaviour of others influence your driving strategy?
4. How far ahead were you planning in that scenario?
5. How would you adjust your plan if conditions suddenly changed?

Vehicle positioning

1. Why did you choose that position on the road?
2. How did your road positioning help (or hinder) visibility and safety?
3. Where was your safety bubble and how did you maintain it?
4. What would have been a better position and why?
5. How does your positioning reflect an advanced level of awareness?

Speed and control

1. Was your speed appropriate for what you could see, reasonably expect, and the road conditions?
2. How smoothly did you apply the brakes or accelerate?
3. How did your speed support your decision making?
4. Would a different speed have given you more options?
5. How did your control inputs affect the balance of the vehicle?

Use of gears

1. What was your reason for selecting that gear at that point?
2. How did your gear choice support acceleration sense?
3. Could your gear selection have been more efficient or smoother?
4. Did you use the engine and gears to assist with control, or rely too heavily on the brakes?

Acceleration sense

1. How did you manage the accelerator pedal through that hazard or bend?
2. Was your acceleration smooth and appropriate for the environment?
3. How did your acceleration affect the vehicle's stability?
4. Were there any missed opportunities to improve flow through better throttle control?

Mirror use and awareness

1. When and why did you check your mirrors at that moment?
2. Did anything change behind you during that section?
3. How did your mirror checks support your overall situational awareness?
4. Is there anything you missed that you should have seen?

Communication

1. What signals did you use and were they well-timed and necessary?
2. How did you interpret the signals and body language of others?
3. What could you have done to be clearer in your intentions?
4. Did your position or speed help communicate your plan?

Eco-driving and smoothness

1. Were there moments where you could have driven more economically?
2. What changes would reduce fuel use or emissions without compromising safety?
3. How smooth was your drive overall? What could have made it more refined?
4. What impact does smooth driving have on passengers, economy and the vehicle?

Self-reflection

1. What part of the drive are you most proud of?
2. What would you do differently next time?
3. What skills do you feel need the most attention now?
4. How does this drive compare to your personal standard of excellence?

Common errors: core driving skills

1 Poor observation and awareness

- Fails to check mirrors frequently enough or uses them reactively rather than proactively
- Does not perform 360-degree checks (blind spots, rear-view mirror, side mirrors)
- Misses vulnerable road users (e.g. cyclists, pedestrians, motorcyclists) or other vehicles in blind spots

Coach with: 'Did you consistently check your mirrors and surroundings before making any decision or change?'

2 Incorrect or late steering inputs

- Over-corrects or under-corrects steering in bends or when avoiding obstacles
- Fails to anticipate steering adjustments based on the road layout ahead
- Steers too early or too late, which causes an unbalanced or uncomfortable drive

Coach with: 'Did your steering inputs feel smooth, controlled and timely, or did they cause any unsettling movements?'

3 Poor speed control and judgement

- Maintains an inappropriate speed for the road conditions (too fast or too slow)
- Does not adjust speed for bends, junctions or areas with potential hazards
- Relies on speedometers rather than adjusting speed based on feel and the environment

Coach with: 'Was your speed matched to the conditions, and did you adjust it proactively as situations changed?'

4 Inconsistent use of gears

- Does not use gears to their full potential (e.g. stays in a high gear when more control is needed)
- Changes gears too late or too early, causing unnecessary jerking or loss of power
- Fails to use engine braking when appropriate, especially in downhill situations

Coach with: 'Did you select the correct gear for the road conditions, and was your gear shift smooth and timely?'

5 Lack of smooth acceleration and deceleration

- Accelerates too quickly or too harshly when entering traffic or overtaking
- Fails to decelerate in a controlled manner before junctions, bends or obstacles
- Inconsistent throttle use, leading to jerky movements or delayed responses

Coach with: 'Did you accelerate and decelerate smoothly? Were there any points where you had to overcompensate?'

6 Inefficient or dangerous lane discipline

- Fails to position correctly for turns, bends or overtaking manoeuvres
- Drifts between lanes or cuts across lanes unnecessarily
- Uses the middle or overtaking lanes without reason or purpose

Coach with: 'Did your lane choice allow for clear, safe progression without causing obstruction or difficulty for other road users?'

7 Delayed or poor decision making

- Hesitates when a quick decision is needed (e.g. at a junction or in heavy traffic)
- Reacts too slowly to hazards or changes in the driving environment
- Fails to make adjustments in response to visible clues (e.g. adjusting speed for emerging hazards)

Coach with: 'Did you make decisions quickly enough to maintain smooth progress, or were there any delays in your actions?'

8 Not using the handbrake or clutch correctly

- Fails to use the handbrake on steep gradients or during stops
- Does not engage the clutch fully or lets it slip unnecessarily when starting or stopping
- Holds the clutch down unnecessarily while stationary, causing unnecessary wear or lack of control

Coach with: 'Did you manage the handbrake and clutch smoothly, and were they used effectively for the conditions?'

9 Poor hazard perception and anticipation

- Does not anticipate potential hazards early enough (e.g. pedestrians at crossings, cars pulling out)
- Does not adjust position, speed or awareness in anticipation of emerging hazards
- Relies too much on visible or immediate hazards without considering potential risks from the environment

Coach with: 'Were you anticipating potential hazards before they became a threat, or did you react only when you saw them?'

10 Inadequate positioning in tight spaces

- Struggles to position the vehicle correctly when manoeuvring in narrow spaces or when parking
- Cuts corners too early or too late, causing damage to the vehicle or nearby objects
- Does not judge distances accurately when reversing or parking

Coach with: 'Did you position the vehicle carefully and slowly to avoid obstacles, or was there a risk of contact with other vehicles or structures?'

11 Not accounting for other road users

- Fails to see or anticipate the actions of other road users (e.g. cyclists, pedestrians, other vehicles)
- Does not adjust driving to provide a safe space for others, especially vulnerable road users
- Ignores the behaviour of surrounding traffic, which could affect driving choices

Coach with: 'Did you consider and adjust for the needs and actions of other road users – especially those more vulnerable?'

12 Overcomplicating basic techniques

- Tries to make a simple manoeuvre too complex by focusing too much on unnecessary details
- Becomes distracted or loses focus on basic driving skills while overthinking
- Fails to break down driving into smaller, manageable stages when necessary

Coach with: 'Were you focusing on the essentials, or were you overcomplicating things with unnecessary adjustments?'

4 Bends: hints and tips

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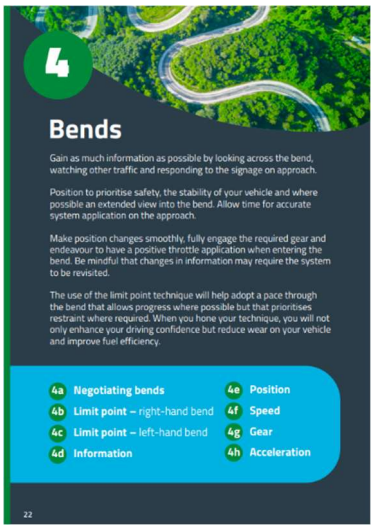


Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to corner safely

Objectives for the Associate

1. Demonstrate safe cornering through both left-hand and right-hand bends
2. Discuss the use of limit points when cornering
3. Discuss the five key principles of safe cornering

Explain

When a vehicle is most stable
A vehicle is most stable when travelling in a straight line on a level course and at a constant speed.

The characteristics that affect stability
Some characteristics include vehicle specifications, type of drive and any stability control.

The tyre-grip trade-off
The more grip that is used for accelerating or braking, the less there is for steering and vice-versa. This is called the tyre-grip trade-off.

The information that can be obtained through observations links
Road signs and markings.
Position, angle and speed of vehicles sharing the road, including the angle of headlights at night. The presence of danger poles (red – left side of road, white – right side of road), cat's eyes, trees, lamp posts, building lines, changes in road surface (varying condition and type), and weather conditions.

The effect of camber on the vehicle's handling in the bend

- **Crown camber:** the centre of the road is higher than kerbs (the effect on steering is positive on left-hand bends and negative on right-hand bends)
- **Positive or adverse:** positive favours the turn and adverse works against it
- **Super elevation:** the whole width of the road is banked up towards the outside edge of the bend, making it favourable for cornering in both directions

Positioning
Three elements to consider when deciding where to position the vehicle are **Safety**, **Stability** and **View**. Extending vision to the furthest point and scanning backwards allows a driver to build an overall picture and then to paint in the intermediate details.

4b/c Limit point

The limit point is the furthest point to which there is an uninterrupted view of the road surface as it disappears around a bend or over a brow. It is the point where the two edges of the road appear to meet. On a left-hand bend, a driver should treat this as where the left-hand verge meets the centre line of the road. If no wider views of the road are available, it is a reliable way of assessing speed of approach to a bend.

Limit point terms

Explain to the Associate that there are several key terms used when talking about limit points:

- **Static:** The limit point is not moving. It is getting closer to the car and the distance available to stop is reducing. Speed needs to be reduced to retain a safe stopping plan
- **Moving:** The limit point is moving away but not as quickly as the vehicle is approaching – again, the distance available to stop is reducing – the driver needs to slow down to retain their safe stopping plan
- **Matched:** The limit point is moving away at least at the rate of the approach; it is possible to stop safely in the distance seen to be clear on the driver's own side of the road. If all other conditions allow, the speed of approach can be maintained, and as the limit point improves further, a driver can increase speed if safe and legal

Five key principles of safe cornering

Explain to the Associate that there are five key principles of safe cornering.

1 Correct positioning on approach

Getting the correct position for the bend makes a big difference to the information a driver can Take and Use. It will allow the Associate to choose the best entry point and increase the radius of their path.

Left-hand bend – the best position is towards the centre line. However, the **IAM RoadSmart policy is not to teach off-siding to Associates**. They must be aware of the impact of positioning on other road users.
Right-hand bend – the best position is towards the nearside kerb. However, the Associate must be mindful of junctions, physical features, road surface, weather conditions and other road users.

2 Travel at the correct speed

A driver should use the limit point to judge the safe speed to drive around the bend and always be able to stop within the distance they can see to be clear on their own side of the road. The Associate should be aware that if there is good lateral vision, they should be able to see the road ahead for a greater distance – and use the tarmac limit point to decide the correct speed in these instances (a positive throttle will maintain the speed and assist keeping the car stable).

3 Have the correct gear for that speed

Allowing time for the system (IPSGA) will enable the Associate to make a smooth gear selection – one that has the flexibility to both accelerate or slow down if circumstances dictate.

4 Be able to stop in the distance you can see to be clear on your own side of the road

The Associate should always be able to stop safely on their side of the road. If others have to react, they should not be there!

5 Apply positive acceleration to maintain speed and balance through the bend

Positive throttle is used to overcome frictional forces introduced by turning. It will also keep the vehicle settled.

Example coaching questions: bends

1. How can you judge the severity of this bend before you reach it?
2. Where should you position your car for safety, the best view and control?
3. How should you adjust your speed to stay in control?
4. Which gear will give you the best control and flexibility through this bend?
5. When is it safe to begin accelerating after a bend?

Coaching tips for bends

- ✓ Encourage your Associate to identify the direction of the bend and the limit point of vision
- ✓ Ask what it means if the limit point is moving towards you as you approach
- ✓ Ask: 'If the limit point is staying still or moving closer, is the bend tightening?'
- ✓ Discuss benefits of adjusting position, speed and gear early before entering the bend so they can see further around the bend without compromising safety
- ✓ Examine the road surface and discuss the need to reduce speed even further to maintain grip in the wet
- ✓ Get your Associate to consider early (before entering the bend) the right gear to maintain control and accelerate out smoothly
- ✓ Encourage early observation – advise: 'Look as far ahead as possible and use the limit point of vision to judge the bend'
- ✓ Use commentary driving – ask the Associate to describe the bend and their planned adjustments
- ✓ Practise different bend types – open bends, tightening bends, downhill bends, wet conditions
- ✓ Encourage self-evaluation – ask: 'Did you feel in control throughout that bend? What would you do differently next time?'

Limit point exercises

These two exercises might be helpful as you develop the Associate's competence around bends

Limit point awareness exercise

Objective: To help the Associate to recognise and respond to the limit point of vision.
Suggested location: A quiet rural road with gentle and tight bends.

Instructions:

1. Ask the Associate to identify the limit point of vision as they approach a bend
2. Ask the Associate whether it moves away, stays the same, or moves closer as they approach
3. Confirm if the bend is opening up or tightening
4. Ask how they should adjust their speed and positioning
5. Provide feedback on their speed and position based on the bend's severity

Positioning for maximum safety and visibility exercise

Objective: To improve the Associate's ability to understand road positioning to enhance safety, visibility and control.
Suggested location: A road with left- and right-hand bends where visibility is limited.

Instructions:

1. Before entering a bend, ask the Associate where they should position for safety and the best view through the bend
2. Confirm their answer and discuss
3. Provide feedback on their speed and position based on the bend's severity

Common errors: bends

1 Inadequate use of limit point of vision
- Does not recognise that the limit point is closing
- Misjudges whether the bend is tightening, easing or constant
- Relies on road markings or assumptions, not vision-based judgement

Coach with: 'Is the limit point moving away, staying still, or coming closer?'

2 Incorrect positioning for safety and view
- Stays too central or too tight to the verge
- Does not adjust position to maximise vision and safety margins
- Fails to change position early enough, especially on approach

Coach with: 'Where should you be to maximise view while keeping safe space?'

3 Late or harsh speed adjustments
- Brakes in the bend instead of on approach
- Carries too much speed into a tightening bend
- Abruptly decelerates, upsetting balance or grip, especially in poor weather

Coach with: 'Did you set your speed early enough to steer smoothly through?'

4 Incorrect gear selection
- Selects gear too late, often while already steering
- Chooses a gear that's too high, losing control of acceleration
- Does not use gear to help control and balance through the bend

Coach with: 'Did your chosen gear give you the right control and response?'

5 Poor steering discipline
- Oversteers or saws at the wheel mid-bend
- Rushes into the bend and then corrects heavily
- Unstable grip on the wheel – fingertip steering or improper hand positioning

Coach with: 'Was your steering smooth and progressive, or reactive and sharp?'

6 Not planning for oncoming or hidden hazards
- Fails to anticipate vehicles cutting corners
- Does not spot side roads, cyclists, or surface changes mid-bend
- Ignores camber, overhanging vegetation, or mud from agricultural access

Coach with: 'What might be hidden just beyond your view?'

7 Underestimating road conditions
- Does not adjust for wet, icy or gravelled surfaces
- Ignores tyre and brake limitations when grip is reduced
- Trusts too much in traction control or ABS to compensate

Coach with: 'What's your safety margin in these conditions?'

8 Misreading the bend's shape and severity
- Confuses an open bend with a tightening one
- Takes local familiarity for granted ('I know this corner')
- Fails to scan hedge lines, trees, poles and other curve indicators

Coach with: 'How do you know what's coming next?'

9 Not using the full system (IPSGA) effectively
- Rushes from 'Information' straight to 'Go'
- Overlooks systematic speed, gear, and position setting
- Does not treat bends as a planned hazard needing full analysis

Coach with: 'What stage of the system are you in right now?'

10 No post-bend reflection or review
- Does not evaluate how well the bend was taken
- Misses learning opportunities from a poor line or misjudged speed
- Carries errors into the next bend due to lack of feedback

Coach with: 'What would you do differently on that bend if you could replay it?'

5 Junctions and roundabouts: hints and tips

Associate Logbook page 29

Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to negotiate junctions and roundabouts safely using the system of car control

Objectives for the Associate (Junctions)

1. Demonstrate early Observation, Anticipation and Planning when approaching junctions
2. Demonstrate safe negation of junctions
3. Discuss the considerations of different types of junctions

5a Junctions

Discussion points

Dealing with complex/hidden junctions

- For junctions partially hidden by buildings, parked cars, or foliage: treat them as closed until proven open.
- Get your associate used to the habit of being ready to stop without shock if something emerges unexpectedly.
- Ask your associate if they have ever heard of 'slow in, positive out' and explain how this can give then a more gentle approach and positive exit, exit positively when clear.

Communicate beyond signalling
Remind your Associate of how sometimes a hand signal or positive eye contact can reinforce intentions when visibility or expectations are uncertain.

Explain

How an Associate demonstrates early Observation, Anticipation and Planning (OAP)
Encourage scanning for junctions well ahead — look for signs like gaps in hedges, parked vehicles, or street lighting changes.
Coach the associate to read the road, ask them what type of junction are they approaching? Who has priority? Where might hazards develop?
Consider using the 'Plan early, act late' mantra and encourage your associate to build a plan early, but be ready to adjust late as new information develops.

Positioning for safety and view
Reinforce adopting the best position to improve view and be seen, slightly adjusting towards the crown or nearside when safe can reveal hidden hazards.
If visibility is restricted, coach 'creep and peep' move slowly and deliberately forward to increase the view without committing too soon.
Remind your associate why we always prioritise position for safety first, then view, then progress.

Priority: never assumed, always confirmed
Coach the associate to never assume priority — even when the Highway Code gives it.

Use the phrase 'priority must be given, not taken' always be ready to give way if in doubt.

Judgement of gaps and safe entry
When emerging, coach how to judge moving traffic speeds and pick safe gaps.
Emphasize "commit decisively" once the decision to go is made — avoid hesitation mid-manoeuvre, which creates risk.
When considering gaps, consider getting your associate to use 'dynamic gap assessment' where we acknowledge the gap but also consider if the gap will stay safe as they move

Exercise for gap assessment and priority challenge

Objective:
Sharpen judgment of safe gaps and reinforce defensive handling of priorities at complex junctions.
Suggested location:
Use a busier area with several T-junctions or crossroads where priority rules are obvious but practical application may vary (e.g., hesitation from others, aggressive drivers).

Instructions to Associate:

1. Every time they reach a junction to emerge:
   - Ask the associate to confirm if they have priority or do I need to give way
   - Predict aloud what the nearest oncoming vehicle(s) might do.
   - Tell you if they are going to Go, hold, or prepare to go
2. If emerging, commit smoothly without delay if it's safe; if holding, show poised readiness.
3. Consider discussing 'what if?' scenarios in the debrief:
   - 'What if that car had accelerated?'
   - 'What if that pedestrian had crossed?'
4. Encourage refining gap selection based on moving traffic, not just fixed distances.
5. Ask your associate to focus on dynamic risk assessment — it's not about who has the right of way on paper, but what's happening at the time.

Exercise for approach to junctions

Objective:
Develop fine control over approach speed, positioning, and gear choice to match different types of junctions (open, closed, staggered, major/minor).
Suggested location:
Pick a short urban or rural route with a variety of junctions (closed, open, blind, busy).

Instructions to Associate:

1. At every junction, approach as though it might change suddenly (a hidden hazard, vehicle emerging, etc.).
2. Talk me through your thought process
   - What can you see?
   - What can't you see?
   - What are you expecting to happen?
3. After the junction ask the Associate
   - How could you have made that approach even smoother or safer?
   - Was your gear appropriate for the information available?

Emphasize early mirror checks, appropriate positioning for view/safety, slowing early if vision is limited, and adjusting gear pre-entry.

Focus on smooth, progressive deceleration — no last-minute braking or rushed gear changes.

Remember to reward good forward planning and control; challenge poor anticipation without nitpicking minor execution errors.

5b Roundabouts

Objectives for the Associate (Roundabouts)

1. Demonstrate early Observation, Anticipation and Planning when approaching a roundabout
2. Demonstrate safe entry onto a roundabout
3. Discuss the considerations of straight lining (apexing)
4. Demonstrate safe exit

Explain

How the plan boards can help
Plan boards often show the layout of the roundabout, and can assist the Associate to plan their approach.

How an Associate demonstrates early Observation, Anticipation and Planning (OAP)
By looking at the sign or plan board on approach, the Associate can identify the required exit at an early stage. This will assist them with deciding their approach position. Lateral scanning will also give an early view of traffic approaching from other roads and assist with Anticipation and Planning. Explain how on the approach to a roundabout, they are able to plan for overtaking opportunities on the exit side – some other road users may not be looking for a progressive exit from the roundabout. Discuss how this may be dictated by the size and type of the vehicle being overtaken.

Gaining an advantage
On approach to a roundabout, the Associate should plan to stop but look for information that allows them to keep going. They should scan for new hazards such as diesel spills or differences in road surfaces that may affect the dynamics of the car. The exits of roundabouts are common places for a speed limit change, so Associates must look for any important information in these areas.

How to safely enter onto a roundabout
With the approach position and speed chosen, the Associate should merge safely with other traffic already on the roundabout matching speed where appropriate. They should select the correct gear for the chosen speed while their course is fixed. They should also scan for other road users entering from the left, stationary traffic ahead and vehicles cutting across their path. Progress can be made where vision, circumstances and speed limits permit.

Exiting a roundabout
Looking ahead and extending vision into the new road will help the Associate determine how they leave the roundabout. They should use mirrors before a change of speed or position and consider a blind-spot check. The Associate should indicate, if other road users would benefit from this type of signal. They must maintain lane discipline where there is a presence of other hazards.

Straight lining (apexing)

Discuss straight lining (apexing), so your Associate understands the rules of apexing a roundabout:

- A driver must never straight line a roundabout if it could cause confusion to any other road users including pedestrians
- A driver must be able to see both kerbs and have good lateral vision

If a driver reduces the tightness of the turn, which can help with stability, they must apply all-round awareness, reinforced with effective rear observations, before moving across lanes

Explain

The different characteristics of mini-roundabouts
Mini-roundabouts have a different road sign. They can be painted on the road and may be grouped together. The Associate must drive around the disc on the road even if this requires slowing down. They should approach in the same way as normal roundabouts. The Highway Code states that all vehicles must pass around the central markings, except large vehicles, which are physically incapable of doing so.
Multiple roundabouts
Some complex junctions have a series of mini-roundabouts. The Associate should treat each mini roundabout separately and follow the normal rules.

Example coaching questions: junctions and roundabouts

Approaching junctions

1. What early indicators tell you whether this junction is open or closed?
2. How can you adjust your approach based on the type of junction ahead?
3. What potential hazards might be hidden from view at this junction?
4. How can you use reflections, shadows, or road noise to detect approaching vehicles before you see them?
5. How far ahead should you start adjusting your speed and position for this junction?

Decision making at junctions

1. Who has priority at this junction, and how can you confirm their intentions?
2. What could cause another driver to misinterpret your intentions?
3. If another driver makes a mistake here, what is your escape plan?
4. How do you balance efficiency with safety when deciding whether to go?
5. If visibility is poor, how can you safely 'create' a gap to get a better view?

Planning and control at junctions

1. What position gives you the best advantage for seeing and being seen?
2. How does the road camber or surface condition affect your approach and exit?
3. How can you use engine braking to improve control as you approach?
4. If this junction is on a gradient, how do you manage control while waiting?
5. How would your approach change in wet, icy or low-traction conditions?

Emerging and exiting at junctions

1. What's the safest way to emerge into a fast-moving traffic flow?
2. How do you assess whether a gap in traffic is large enough?
3. What signs or signals might indicate a hidden pedestrian crossing as you exit?
4. How does your choice of gear affect your ability to accelerate safely?
5. If another vehicle unexpectedly blocks your path as you exit, how should you react?

Approaching roundabouts

1. How can you read traffic flow on the roundabout before you reach the give-way line?
2. What's the earliest point at which you can identify your exit and plan your lane choice?
3. If traffic is heavy, how do you prepare for a safe and efficient entry?
4. How do you decide whether to stop or maintain a rolling approach?
5. What's the best way to communicate your intentions to other road users?

Positioning on roundabouts

1. What factors determine your lane choice before entering this roundabout?
2. If you find yourself in the wrong lane, how can you correct safely?
3. How do you anticipate whether another driver might change lanes unexpectedly?
4. How does roundabout camber affect your control and stability?
5. What visual cues help you predict whether another driver is about to exit?

Identifying a gap and decision making on roundabouts

1. How can you judge vehicle speeds to determine whether there is a safe gap to enter?
2. If a driver signals incorrectly, how should you react before entering?
3. How does the size and type of vehicle affect its acceleration and the gap you need?
4. What's the best way to handle a roundabout entry with limited visibility?
5. How do you manage situations where drivers hesitate or act unpredictably?

Exiting and acceleration off roundabouts

1. What's the ideal timing for signalling your exit to ensure clarity?
2. How can you adjust your acceleration based on traffic merging from other exits?
3. What should you check before moving across lanes to exit?
4. If your planned exit is blocked, what's the safest way to react?
5. What's the best way to regain normal speed smoothly after exiting?

Roundabout planning and lane discipline exercise

Objective: To improve early hazard detection and lane positioning.
Suggested location: Large multi-lane roundabout with at least four exits.

Instructions:

1. Before reaching the roundabout, ask the Associate what signage they need to scan
2. Ask the Associate to identify to you the exit they are taking and explain which lane they need to be in
3. Ask the Associate to point out potential hazards they are aware of (pedestrians, cyclists, or vehicles in adjacent lanes)
4. Make sure your Associate uses their mirrors and signals correctly
5. Check:
    - Did they approach smoothly, avoid harsh braking and match their speed for the roundabout conditions?
    - Did they stay in the correctly chosen lane throughout and ensure their lane discipline remained precise?
    - Did they exit smoothly, with no disruption to following traffic and other road users?
    - Did your Associate use the system of vehicle control throughout the exercise?

Coaching tips for roundabouts and junctions

- ✓ Encourage your Associate to finish their planning before reaching the give-way line – reacting too late forces rushed decisions
- ✓ Stress the need to adapt to each roundabout – no two roundabouts require the exact same approach
- ✓ Encourage anticipation of the actions of other road users
- ✓ Promote a 'thinking aloud' commentary to try to reinforce habits that could lead to better decision making

Common errors: junctions and roundabouts

1 Inadequate early observation
- Late or rushed observation on approach
- Misses key clues like positioning of other vehicles, indicator use, or road markings
- Does not scan wide enough for vulnerable road users (cyclists, pedestrians, motorbikes)

Coach with: 'What did you know before you got to the give-way line?'

2 Poor timing of decision making
- Hesitates when a safe gap is available
- Rushes to go when there is not a safe gap (impatient or pressured)
- Misjudges the speed or intentions of others

Coach with: 'Did your decision match what was actually happening around you?'

3 Misjudging priority
- Assumes right of way instead of assessing and confirming
- Forgets that other drivers may not follow the rules
- Fails to anticipate unusual behaviour from large vehicles or vulnerable road users

Coach with: 'Did you act on assumption or confirmation?'

4 Incorrect lane use on roundabouts
- Enters or exits from the wrong lane
- Cuts across lanes, especially on multi-lane roundabouts
- Does not follow road markings or local signs carefully

Coach with: 'Did your lane choice match your exit plan and signage?'

5 Poor positioning on approach or exit
- Too wide or too tight on approach to the junction or roundabout
- Strays out of lane when entering or exiting
- Over-positions and closes down others' space

Coach with: 'Were you in the best place to stay safe and visible?'

7 Not adjusting speed smoothly
- Brakes too late and harshly
- Creeps forward indecisively, or rolls unintentionally
- Accelerates aggressively when exiting without checking mirrors

Coach with: 'Was your speed appropriate for your vision and intention?'

8 Poor use of gears
- Approaches too fast in a high gear
- Delays gear changes until too late (especially after turning)
- Selects a gear that doesn't match intended acceleration

Coach with: 'Was your gear selection smooth and matched to your planned action?'

9 Ineffective or misleading signalling
- Signals too late, too early, or not at all
- Forgets to cancel signal after exiting roundabout
- Gives misleading signals, especially at mini-roundabouts

Coach with: 'Did your signal match your plan – and could others understand it?'

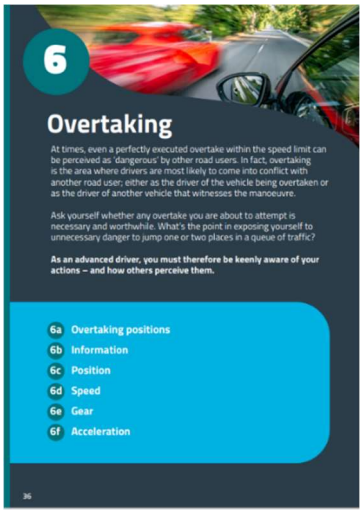
10 Not accounting for vulnerable road users
- Ignores pedestrians at crossings or near junction mouths
- Cuts across cyclists or misses them in blind spots
- Does not anticipate the path of motorcyclists filtering at junctions

Coach with: 'Did you scan for all types of road users – at ground level and mirror level?

11 Not reviewing the manoeuvre
- Fails to reflect on positioning, timing, or decision making
- Repeats the same approach despite near-misses or awkward timing
- Does not adjust planning based on traffic flow or road design

Coach roundabout again, what would you tweak?'

6 Overtaking: hints and tips



Associate Logbook page 36

Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to carry out an overtake safely without impacting on other road users

Objectives for the Associate

1. Discuss key safety points regarding overtaking
2. Discuss the legal restrictions on overtaking
3. Describe a three-stage overtake
4. Discuss a momentum overtake

Explain

Why overtaking is hazardous
Overtaking can be considered hazardous because it may bring a vehicle into the path of other vehicles and dangers from the offside, such as emerging traffic or pedestrians.

The meaning of 'an overtake'
An overtake is the process of moving past another vehicle or road user and often involves crossing the centre line onto the other side of the road.

Obeying the speed limit
A driver should never plan to exceed the speed limit in order to overtake.

Key safety points
The Associate must:

- Overtake only if far enough ahead can be seen to be sure it is safe
- Avoid causing any other vehicle to alter course or speed
- Be able to move back to the nearside in plenty of time
- Be ready to abandon the overtake if necessary
- Plan to avoid being the third vehicle beside two others (motorways)
- Check that there is no other vehicle looking to overtake (either behind or in front)

Possible conflict

Discuss where your Associate could come into conflict with other road users if they were to overtake at these points:

- At or near road junctions
- Where the road narrows
- Where a vehicle is indicating right
- School crossing areas
- Nearside to a tram stop
- During traffic queues
- At level crossings

Ask your Associate why they need to pay attention to:

- Road markings, signs, junctions
- Driveways, bends and lateral vision
- How much of the road is clear ahead
- The speed of the vehicle they want to overtake
- The position of the return gap after the overtake
- What they can't see

Choosing when to overtake

Outline to your Associate that:

- A driver must never overtake unless it is safe to do so and does not adversely impact on others
- Road markings, layouts and signs will help establish where to overtake
- Once the decision is made, the overtake should be brisk and within the speed limit, with safe entry to the return gap

Did you know?
Around 1 in 20 of all car occupants killed in a crash are killed when a vehicle is overtaking. The risk of death in a head-on collision at 60 mph is 90%. Two vehicles travelling towards each other at 60 mph are closing on each other at approximately 180 ft per second!

What mindset is needed?

Ask your Associate to look for reasons not to overtake. This approach will make them less likely to be affected by the things that make up our 'human factors' as drivers.
Does the purpose of the journey affect the decision to overtake?

What is a momentum overtake?

Explain this is when there are no other hazards – a driver is able to approach and overtake the vehicle or obstruction in one smooth manoeuvre with little or no change in speed.

What is a three-stage overtake?

Use the diagram in the Logbook to explain what a three-stage overtake is and how it differs from the momentum overtake. Give an example of where approaching vehicles or other hazards make it necessary to match and follow the vehicle in front while planning an overtake.

Discuss any additional dangers when overtaking a line of traffic

Overtaking a line of traffic will present additional safety issues for the Associate, such as:

- Longer time spent on the offside
- Potential danger of vehicles ahead pulling out into their path
- The return gap being closed down by traffic

Discuss why the Associate should avoid being overambitious and, instead, consider overtaking in bite-sized pieces by looking for stop-over gaps.

Overtaking near hazards or bends

As with all overtakes, this requires excellent Observation, Anticipation and Planning (OAP) skills. An Associate should look for OAP opportunities on the exit side of roundabouts, bends, etc. They should make sure the object vehicle is committed to its plan of action before they overtake.

NO VISION = NO PERMISSION

Example coaching questions: overtaking

1. What's your reason for overtaking – are you improving safety, flow, or just comfort?
2. Can you clearly see enough road ahead to complete the overtake safely?
3. What clues tell you whether oncoming traffic may appear sooner than expected?
4. Have you considered how the road layout might change just beyond the vehicle you are overtaking?
5. What's the worst-case scenario here, and are you prepared to respond?
6. Is there a safer opportunity coming up further along the road?
7. How will you position your vehicle to maximise vision before pulling out?
8. Which gear gives you the best acceleration without sacrificing control?
9. Are you certain no one is overtaking you at the same time?
10. Is your signal clear and well-timed, or could it be misinterpreted?
11. How does your vehicle's performance influence your overtaking strategy here?
12. Can you complete the overtake within the speed limit?

The overtake

1. Are you accelerating decisively and confidently, without being aggressive?
2. Is your steering input smooth and progressive, keeping the car stable?
3. Are you scanning the road ahead as well as the vehicle you are passing?
4. Are you giving sufficient clearance when passing a vulnerable road user or large vehicle?
5. How do you judge when to safely return to your lane – are you using all mirrors?
6. Are you using a gentle lateral position shift or a full mirror-signal-manoeuvre check to move out?
7. How does your position change what you can now see?
8. Is the road ahead truly clear and long enough for a safe overtake – or just momentarily empty?
9. Have you ruled out the presence of hidden dips, junctions, or upcoming bends?
10. Are you aware of traffic behind you that may be preparing to overtake as well?
11. Is your gear selection giving you the right power band for smooth, responsive acceleration?
12. Have you re-checked your mirrors and blind spots immediately before committing?
13. Are you overtaking with purpose and control, or just creeping by?
14. How will you judge when it is safe to move back in – what's your visual marker?
15. Are you allowing adequate clearance for both the vehicle you are passing and oncoming traffic?
16. What's your plan if the vehicle ahead speeds up or a new hazard appears during the manoeuvre?

The return

1. Have you ensured there is a safe gap behind before pulling back in?
2. Are you back to a safe and legal speed after the manoeuvre?
3. How did the overtake affect other drivers around you – positively or negatively?
4. What could you have done differently to make that overtake smoother or safer?
5. How has that manoeuvre affected your overall risk level in the current traffic flow?

Overtaking cyclists

1. How do weather and road surface influence your passing distance?
2. What could cause the cyclist to change position suddenly, and how would you react?
3. What is the minimum distance between the overtaking car and the cyclist?

Overtaking on rural roads

1. What signs suggest an upcoming hidden junction or field entrance?
2. How does road camber or tree shadows affect visibility and grip?
3. What is the minimum distance between the overtaking car and a horse?
4. When overtaking a horse, what is the maximum speed you should do?

Overtaking on dual carriageways

1. How do you manage blind spots and speed differences during multi-lane overtakes?
2. What strategy do you use to avoid becoming boxed in by other fast-moving traffic?

Overtaking exercises

These two exercises might be helpful as you develop the Associate's competence around overtaking.

Overtaking vulnerable road users exercise

Objective: To help the Associate to maintain a safe passing distance and anticipate unpredictable behaviour.
Suggested location: Semi-rural road with cyclists, horse riders, or joggers.

Instruction:

1. Ask your Associate to approach a vulnerable road user at a reduced speed, with a wide safety margin
2. Discuss whether to hold position or continue (depending on if there is oncoming traffic or no safe space)
3. Ask them to tell you what clearance should be given (at least 1.5 m; 2+ m for horses)
4. Ask them why horses should be overtaken slowly and given at least 2 m of room
5. While using the system, tell your Associate they can return to the correct lane gently, maintaining a low-noise footprint

This exercise focuses on:

- Spatial awareness
- Empathy for more vulnerable road users
- Smooth throttle and noise control

Overtaking a large commercial vehicle exercise

Objective: To improve your Associate's visibility planning and overtaking strategy.
Suggested location: A-roads or dual carriageways with lorries or buses.

Instruction:

1. Ask your Associate to follow a vehicle at a safe distance, and whether they can see the vehicle's mirrors and road ahead
2. Ask them how much space and time they need to pass the vehicle safely
3. Discuss what a suitable straight stretch would look like
4. Advise them to build up speed, and overtake decisively
5. Instruct that they do not return to their lane until they can see both headlights in their mirror

This exercise focuses on:

- The use of engine torque and correct gear
- Mirror discipline
- Forward vision over long overtakes

Coaching tips for overtaking

- ✓ Highlight the importance of planning overtakes strategically
- ✓ Discuss considering an escape plan
- ✓ Ask the Associate to share their understanding of vulnerable road users and their needs
- ✓ Encourage reflection on overtakes – will the Associate remember it as a smart move or a risky one?

Common errors: overtaking

1 Inadequate observation
- Fails to check far enough ahead for bends, dips, or hidden junctions
- Does not spot oncoming vehicles early enough, especially when moving out
- Over-relies on the vehicle in front's actions instead of independent observation

Coach with: 'What are you overtaking into?'

2 Poor use of mirrors and blind spots
- Does not check mirrors immediately before the manoeuvre
- Ignores the nearside mirror when returning to lane
- Fails to spot another vehicle already overtaking (especially motorcycles)

Coach with: 'Who might be planning the same thing as you?'

3 Misjudging speed and distance
- Underestimates the speed of oncoming traffic
- Starts the overtake too late, with insufficient acceleration space
- Returns to lane too close in front of the overtaken vehicle

Coach with: 'Did you leave enough room before, during and after?'

4 Hesitation after committing
- Moves out, then fails to commit when it is safe to go
- Slows down mid-overtake, leading to extended exposure in the danger zone

Coach with: 'Once you go, are you decisive and in control?'

5 Wrong gear selection
- Attempts to overtake in too high a gear, creating a sluggish response
- Over-revs or wheelspins due to selecting too low a gear
- Does not change down before the manoeuvre begins

Coach with: 'Is your car in the right gear to deliver the pull you need?'

6 Insufficient clearance
- Passes too close to the overtaken vehicle or especially vulnerable road users
- Cuts back in too early without confirming a safe gap
- Does not compensate for vehicle width or wobble (e.g. high winds)

Coach with: 'How much space would you want if you were being overtaken?'

7 Overtaking near hazards
- Ignores solid white lines, pedestrian crossings, or hidden junctions
- Overtakes near bends, brows or in poor weather
- Fails to spot road signs or markings that prohibit overtaking

Coach with: 'What does the road environment tell you about risk?'

8 Overconfidence from previous success
- Is tempted to repeat a previous overtake too quickly
- Does not re-check conditions on multi-vehicle overtakes (e.g. one is safe, but the next is not)
- Misjudges their vehicle's capabilities or road conditions

Coach with: 'What's changed since your last overtake?'

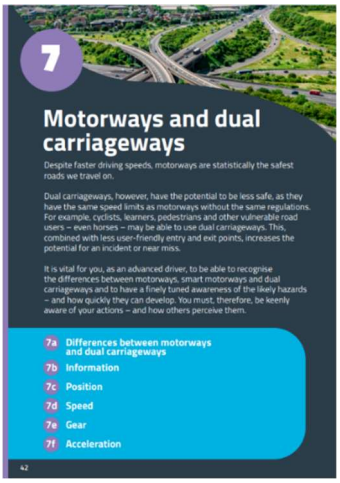
9 Emotional or impatient driving
- Lets frustration build behind slow vehicles
- Feels pressured by tailgaters or aggressive drivers
- Overtakes to 'make a point' rather than for genuine progress

Coach with: 'Are you overtaking because you should or because you feel like it?'

10 Lack of reflection after the manoeuvre
- Does not analyse whether the overtake actually improved progress or safety
- Fails to adjust following distance or position after the manoeuvre
- Does not learn from marginal or poorly timed overtakes

Coach with: 'What would you do differently next time?'

7 Motorways and dual carriageways: hints and tips



Associate Logbook pages 42

Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to enter, use and exit a motorway or dual carriageway safely

Objectives for the Associate

1. Compare the differences between motorways and dual carriageways
2. Discuss positioning for safety
3. Recognise the difference on a smart or managed motorway
4. Demonstrate or discuss safe entry and exit of a motorway

Explain

The differences in lane descriptions
The lanes on a motorway are normally 15 ft wide compared to dual carriageways which have lanes of 12 ft.

The differences in characteristics
Motorways are set out to improve safety and have restrictions on vehicles using them. There are no 90-degree junctions or cross-flow traffic.

The rules for using the hard shoulder in an emergency
It is best to try to stop near an SOS call box, park the vehicle, exit via the nearside, and move to the other side of Armco.

The main differences between a motorway and a dual carriageway
Motorways do not have roundabouts, T-junctions or exits with short or no slip roads. There are no sharp bends. Certain vulnerable road users are prohibited.

How to identify slip roads, parking and service areas
Slow vehicles in lanes 1 and 2, gradients, or clusters of traffic congestion may cause lane displacement.

Identifying others' non-verbal communication
Telltale signs of movement before a signal can be identified through a decrease in following distance, wheel-to-white-line distance altering, and where other drivers are looking.

Positioning for safety
The nearside lane (lane 1) is the default position in accordance with the Highway Code, unless making an overtake. Stopping distance and thinking distance are both important factors when driving at speed on motorways and dual carriageways. A three-second gap will allow traffic to move in and out of the space in front and avoid repeated speed alterations. This approach is also less stressful than constantly fighting for space.

Leaving a gap
A large gap before the vehicle in front on a motorway is essential for safe and stress-free driving. At high speeds, having more space gives crucial time to react to sudden braking or unexpected hazards without needing to brake harshly. It ensures enough stopping distance – especially important as speeds increase, and in poor weather, where stopping distances can double or more. A greater following distance also improves visibility, to see traffic patterns and potential risks further ahead.

Identify: motorway or dual carriageway?

- Ask the Associate to consider if their vehicle is allowed in all lanes
- Advise them to plan an exit early and slow down appropriately
- Highlight the need on smart motorways to follow the information gantry signs

Does your Associate know?
At 70 mph, leaving a two-second gap gives a gap of 200 ft (61 m)
Leaving a three-second gap gives a gap of 300 ft (91 m)
Overall stopping distance at 70 mph is 315 ft (96 m)

Entering a motorway or dual carriageway

When entering a motorway or dual carriageway, the Associate should obtain early information: 'On-slips' are often elevated. Looking to the sides during vision scans will assist the Associate with judgement and extending vision. Matching the vehicle speed to that of the vehicles on the carriageway makes for an easier transition, and where gaps are limited, it allows for safer merging.

Overtaking

Discuss how overtaking on a motorway is easier than on a single carriageway. When your Associate needs to overtake, they should move across the lanes gradually as safe opportunities become available (with a mirror/shoulder check before each lane change).
After an overtake is completed, they should move back to the nearside lane when safe. Proactive OAP will help them make early decisions about lane changes.

Exiting a motorway

The Associate must leave the carriageway without causing other road users to alter course or speed; therefore exits should be planned early and in plenty of time.

Motorway exits usually have markers at 1 mile; this is where the Associate should be extending vision out and scanning back, looking for spaces in the traffic.

At the ½ mile marker, they should be identifying and choosing a suitable gap, often referred to as a 'banker gap' (a space in the traffic in which they can gain access to the exit slip). In any event, they should aim to be in a position to safely exit by the 300 marker.

The Associate should reduce speed on the slip road and pay attention to any new information signs and speed limits. The vehicle may feel slower than it is going; therefore, draw this to your Associate's attention.

Smart motorways

All-lane-running (ALR) smart motorways remain a debated issue among UK drivers. Although they currently account for around 13% of England's motorway network, ongoing concerns about their design and safety have led the government to cancel all future smart motorway projects.

Despite this decision, many miles of smart motorway remain in operation across the country. It is therefore essential that drivers and riders understand how to use them safely and effectively.

Explain

- The difference between normal motorways and all-lane-running (smart) motorways
- The reason for Active Traffic Management Systems (ATMS) and/or variable speed limits
- The presence of electronic signs on gantries above a smart motorway, which display the maximum speed limit allowed and what lanes can be used

Common errors: motorways and dual carriageways

1 Inadequate observation and planning ahead

- Does not scan far enough ahead (500+ m)
- Fails to observe lane closures, signage, or variable speed limits in time
- Does not anticipate traffic patterns (merging traffic, bunching, HGVs)

Coach with: 'What's happening half a mile ahead that will affect your decisions now?'

2 Passive or indecisive lane discipline

- Remains in middle or overtaking lane without reason ('lane hogging')
- Changes lanes too late when exits or hazards are well signposted
- Drifts between lanes or shows poor lane centring

Coach with: 'Are you in the most appropriate lane for your speed, safety and journey?'

3 Poor use of mirrors and blind-spot checks

- Fails to check mirrors before lane changes
- Relies solely on mirrors without blind-spot checks
- Misses fast-approaching vehicles in overtaking lane

Coach with: 'Did you fully understand what was happening around you before that move?'

4 Ineffective or late lane changes

- Cuts across lanes abruptly
- Leaves it too late to move across for junctions or exits
- Signals without planning the move or fails to signal at all

Coach with: 'Did your positioning and signalling give others time to understand your plan?'

5 Poor following distance

- Tailgates, especially in heavy traffic or poor visibility
- Does not adapt following distance for weather, spray, or braking zones
- Uses fixed distances (e.g. 'two seconds') without adapting to conditions

Coach with: 'If the vehicle ahead suddenly braked – what would happen next?'

6 Inappropriate speed and gear selection

- Drives too slowly in high-speed lanes without cause
- Remains in a high gear which removes responsiveness
- Speeds through variable zones or fails to adapt for roadworks

Coach with: 'Is your speed and gear giving you the right control, safety and flexibility?'

7 Poor joining or leaving technique

- Hesitates or stops at the end of slip roads
- Joins too slowly, forcing others to brake
- Leaves too late and cuts across lanes

Coach with: 'Did you blend into traffic at a safe speed, with a clear plan?'

8 Not managing surrounding traffic well

- Matches speed with adjacent vehicles, reducing escape routes
- Allows large vehicles to box them in, or travels in blind spots
- Does not recognise developing risks (e.g. two HGVs overtaking)

Coach with: 'Where is your escape route right now?'

9 Underestimating effects of weather and visibility

- Does not increase following distance in rain, fog, spray or glare
- Drives at inappropriate speeds for reduced grip or sightlines
- Fails to use lights effectively when visibility drops

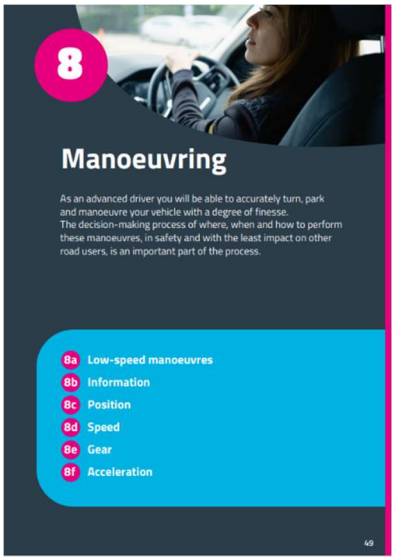
Coach with: 'Are you giving yourself and others enough time and space in these conditions?'

10 Failing to reflect and adapt driving style

- Drives the same way on all fast roads, regardless of layout or conditions
- Does not learn from lane-choice errors or timing mistakes
- Repeats behaviours (e.g. late moves, poor spacing) without review

Coach with: 'What did that section of driving teach you about your habits?'

8 Manoeuvring: hints and tips



Associate Logbook page 49

Observer aims

To provide the Associate with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skill and attitude to manoeuvre the vehicle safely

Objectives for the Associate

1. Discuss how to choose what type of manoeuvre to make
2. Demonstrate how to make effective observations
3. Maintain safety during the manoeuvre
4. Where fitted, make sensible use of in-car technology

Some additional pointers

When it comes to turning a vehicle around, competence in all areas is preferable to excellence in one.

When parking, Associates are not required to park their vehicles in ever-smaller gaps – or to keep their vehicle moving at all times.

Such requirements can contradict the overall aim of remaining safe and controlled at all times.

While a bay park is easy to achieve (as the size of the bay will already be set), it is worth remembering that it can appear to an Associate more difficult to park between lines than between cars.

Stay safe, make it enjoyable and be prepared to get out of the car to make assessments. This is an opportunity to help drivers solve problems they may have carried from their novice days.

Explain

The dynamics of a vehicle when turning
Clarify which direction the front of the car will go if reversing; and where the wheels will be if turning in the mouth of a junction.

What is needed to manoeuvre well
The Associate must make good observations that leads to accurate information and the ability to control a vehicle at slow speed.

Why manoeuvres should be slow
Completing manoeuvres slowly gives the Associate time to carry out good, effective observations and change the plan if necessary.

What type of manoeuvre is best
The Associate needs to be able to decide which type of manoeuvre is safest for the current road conditions. Available space may well dictate what manoeuvre is carried out.

- If turning round in a narrow street, the mouth of a junction or driveway could be used to help. As an advanced driver, the Associate needs to be competent in all manoeuvres

Demonstrating effective observations
The Associate needs to demonstrate their ability to carry out all-round observations before and during a manoeuvre, and be able to show what potential danger is being prioritised.

- If a danger is identified, the Associate will need to demonstrate how their response is proportionate to the danger and how they maintain safety

Demonstrating good observations and being able to make decisions that minimise the effect on other road users may mean completing the manoeuvre is the safest option.

Maintaining appropriate speed and control of the manoeuvre
The Associate needs to demonstrate they have the ability to control the vehicle accurately at slow speeds, driving the car slow enough to take in all information, and being able to react.

- If the car is slow and under full control, the Associate will be able to adjust the manoeuvre gently and stay in full control

Demonstrating full control of the accelerator, brakes and clutch is key to carrying out any manoeuvre in a positive way.

Being in total control

- Becoming too focused on the manoeuvre will distract the Associate from safe all-around observations
- The Associate should try not to inconvenience others when performing any manoeuvre
- The Associate must put first staying safe, and be prepared to delay or abandon the manoeuvre for safety

Sensible use of in-car technology

In-car technology is becoming commonplace and should be embraced, but used sensibly. Reversing cameras and sensors should not be relied upon, and if in doubt, the Associate should be prepared to get out and check around the car.

Parking in a car park

Discuss with your Associate which space is best and why. Reverse parking in a bay will usually be the best practice, as it is a safer manoeuvre. However, there will be circumstances where it is necessary to drive into and reverse out of spaces.

If the Associate is shopping and needs access to the boot, driving forward into a space might be the better option

Give your Associate coaching in both forward and reverse parking, and explain the dangers of reversing out and the caution required.

Getting the correct starting position

Having the Associate position the car in the correct starting position will make any manoeuvre easier to accomplish successfully, i.e. for a turn in the road, adopting a tight nearside position; and for a parallel park, positioning the vehicle at the correct distance from other parked vehicles.

Maintaining a safe position during the manoeuvre

While conducting the manoeuvre, the Associate will need to be mindful of their vehicle's position as well as the location of any street furniture, such as bollards and lamp posts. When parking, the Associate will also need to consider other vehicles and any accessories such as a tow hitch or step at the back of vans.

Maintaining an appropriate speed for the manoeuvre

Safety is the primary concern. Most manoeuvres are conducted at as slow a speed as possible. However, as quickly as necessary is a good guide to judging the correct speed. The Associate needs to control the car slowly enough to ensure information can be gathered and assessed accurately without inconveniencing other road users. All manoeuvring exercises are a really good way for the Associate to demonstrate the control of the clutch and accelerator in manual cars. Steering before the car moves, 'dry steering', needs to be avoided.

Making a smooth transition between forward and reverse gear changes

Moving between forward and reverse gears needs to be conducted smoothly. The Associate needs to ensure the car is stopped before changing gear and use excellent clutch control to assist with the manoeuvre.

Assuring a safe finishing position

If the Associate leaves their car unattended, they must consider its location: whether it is likely to inconvenience other road users, if it is a safe place to leave the car, if they have chosen their parking neighbours with care, and whether pedestrian access is respected, e.g. by avoiding blocking dropped kerbs.

Coaching tips for manoeuvring

- ✓ Reinforce that manoeuvring is about accuracy over speed
- ✓ Emphasize that constant, effective observation is key
- ✓ Coach balanced, progressive steering
- ✓ Develop a strong mental model of where the corners of the vehicle are relative to the wheels and body.
- ✓ Advanced drivers know when a manoeuvre is no longer safe or clean, remind associates they should have the discipline to stop, pull forward, and reset without embarrassment.

Common errors: manoeuvring

1 Inadequate all-round observation
- Fails to use 360-degree observations (especially blind spots and rear)
- Relies solely on mirrors or cameras, not combining with head checks
- Does not observe before and during the manoeuvre

Coach with: 'Where is the last place you looked before moving? What might you have missed?'

2 Poor planning before manoeuvre starts
- Starts without a clear mental map of space, reference points, or direction
- Attempts manoeuvres without understanding vehicle size and pivot point
- Parks without checking gradient, camber or proximity to hazards

Coach with: 'What's your plan before you move, and where is your safe space?'

3 Rushing the manoeuvre
- Prioritises speed over accuracy and control
- Fails to pause when unsure, leading to corrections under pressure
- Does not use clutch control or creeping speed effectively

Coach with: 'Are you driving like the car park is a racetrack – or a control zone?'

4 Over-reliance on technology
- Trusts parking sensors/cameras without confirming visually
- Assumes the vehicle's systems can fully replace skill or spatial awareness
- Becomes distracted by tech during manoeuvres

Coach with: 'Are you using tech to enhance your judgement – or replace it?'

5 Inaccurate positioning or approach angle
- Approaches too close or at the wrong angle for parallel or bay parking
- Misjudges gaps, overhanging kerbs, or adjacent vehicle width
- Starts a manoeuvre too soon or too late

Coach with: 'Did your initial approach set you up for success?'

6 Not managing risk to vulnerable road users
- Misses children, pedestrians or animals behind or near the vehicle
- Ignores footpaths, driveways or shared spaces
- Does not stop when someone enters the area of movement

Coach with: 'Would a pedestrian feel safe near you right now?'

7 Poor spatial awareness
- Misjudges the width or length of available space
- Turns too late or too early when reversing
- Cuts corners or clips kerbs unnecessarily

Coach with: 'How well do you understand your vehicle's footprint and pivot point?'

8 Lack of control or smoothness
- Jerky clutch, steering, or brake inputs
- Reverses too fast for the space or conditions
- Overcorrects and introduces confusion or hazard

Coach with: 'Are your inputs precise and progressive, or rushed and reactive?'

9 Finishing poorly positioned or inconsiderately
- Sticks out of bays, blocks access, or is too far from the kerb
- Takes up more than one space or causes obstruction
- Does not adjust or correct even when aware of poor final position

Coach with: 'If someone else parked like that next to you, how would you feel?'

10 Not reviewing or learning from manoeuvres
- Repeats bad habits (e.g. wrong turning points, misjudged angles)
- Does not reflect on what went wrong or why
- Avoids practising more challenging manoeuvres

Coach with: 'What did you learn from that manoeuvre – and how would you refine it?'

9 Spoken thoughts: example phrases

'Spoken thoughts' is the practice of describing aloud everything you see, think and do while driving, in order to hone advanced driving technique. Associates can use any language that is accurate, brief and natural for them. However, some examples of commonly used phrases are:

Observation – What can you see?
Mirror check – centre, right…
Pedestrian ahead near the crossing… no eye contact, may step out.
Vehicle approaching quickly from behind in the outside lane.
Brake lights ahead – traffic slowing.
Chevron signs indicating a sharp bend to the left.
Limited view due to hedge on the right – could be a concealed junction.
Parked cars narrowing my side of the road – may need to adjust position.

Anticipation – What might happen?
Approaching a junction – car on the left may not stop.
Cyclist wobbly – may veer out unexpectedly.
Van ahead – can't see past it, could be pedestrians stepping out.
Children on the pavement – expect sudden movement.
Car pulling out – watching for eye contact or movement of front wheels.
Green light, but I'm watching for late cross-traffic.

Planning – What am I going to do?
Easing off the gas – preparing to slow down for the hazard ahead.
Planning to change lanes early – mirror, signal, check blind spot.
Reducing speed gently to maintain safe following distance.
Selecting second gear for better control through the bend.
Holding back from overtaking – oncoming vehicle approaching.
Ready to move to offside position for better visibility.

Action – What am I doing now?
Mirror check – indicating right, moving out smoothly.
Brake pressure on – slowing to match traffic speed.
Gear change to third – keeping the engine in the power band.
Positioning slightly to the left for better view around the bend.
Applying gentle acceleration – exiting the roundabout safely.

Hazards – What am I managing?
Hazard ahead – stationary vehicle on my side, adjusting position.
Oncoming bus – road narrowing, easing off and holding back.
Surface change – wet patch ahead, reducing speed to maintain grip.
Double-checking mirrors – expecting merging traffic from slip road.
Watching crossing point – elderly pedestrian moving slowly.

Control – Smoothness and stability
Keeping acceleration gentle to avoid unsettling the car.
Balancing brake pressure – avoiding harsh braking.
Maintaining progressive steering through the curve.
Engine braking used – saves wear on the brakes.

Progress and efficiency
Safe to maintain current speed – clear view and good separation.
Planning overtake – good visibility, safe gap, accelerating progressively.
Reading road markings – left lane closes ahead, moving over early.

Common errors: spoken thought

1 Describing what's seen, not what it means
- Simply names objects (e.g. 'red car', 'stop sign') without interpreting their significance
- Misses opportunities to explain potential hazards or outcomes
- Does not show how observation leads to planning and decision making

Coach with: 'Are you explaining what you are going to do with what you see – or just listing it?'

2 Commentary too late (or too early)
- Comments after the hazard has passed, losing the coaching benefit
- Comments too far in advance, causing confusion or over-prediction
- Does not align commentary with key driving decisions (position, speed, gear, etc.)

Coach with: 'Was your commentary timed with your actions, or did it come too early or too late?'

3 No forward planning or risk prediction
- Fails to project what might happen with pedestrians, traffic, or road layout
- Does not identify areas of limited vision or risk (e.g. parked cars, junctions ahead)
- Omits phrases like 'I'm expecting…'

Coach with: 'Were you just reacting – or were you ahead of the drive?'

4 Missing the 'why' behind driving choices
- Says 'I'm slowing down' but does not explain why (e.g. narrowing road, pedestrian, or poor surface)
- Gives commands ('mirror, signal') without linking to a decision-making process
- Fails to connect observations to IPSGA use

Coach with: 'Does your commentary explain your thought process – or just your actions?'

5 Long pauses or gaps in commentary
- Drops the commentary during complex situations (when it is most useful)
- Does not speak during junctions or hazards
- Gets too focused on the drive and neglects verbalisation

Coach with: 'When the drive got busier – did your commentary keep up?'

6 Commentary not linked to driving plan
- Gives unrelated or disjointed observations (e.g. 'there is a blue bin')
- Misses cues that should influence speed, gear or position
- Does not show how the drive is being shaped by the environment

Coach with: 'Did your commentary show a clear driving plan evolving as you drove?'

7 Not including all core driving inputs
- Misses out mirrors, road signs, markings, signals, or gear changes
- Fails to comment on speed adjustment, clutch control, or steering input
- Ignores the physical process of IPSGA in the commentary

Coach with: 'Did your commentary include how you were managing the vehicle – not just what you could see?'

8 Overloading the commentary
- Talks too much or too fast without clarity or structure
- Includes excessive detail that confuses the listener (or the driver!)
- Loses track of the driving situation due to focusing on speech

Coach with: 'Was your commentary clear, calm and helpful – or was it too much?'

9 Not adapting to driving environment
- Uses the same structure or level of detail on all roads (e.g. quiet rural vs. busy urban)
- Does not adjust speed of speech or depth of explanation to suit traffic conditions
- Fails to pause or simplify commentary in demanding scenarios

Coach with: 'Did your commentary match the pace and complexity of the drive?'

10 Lacking self-reflection during or after commentary
- Does not review which parts of the commentary helped or hindered driving decisions
- Repeats commentary mistakes or misses learning opportunities
- Does not use commentary as a self-assessment tool

Coach with: 'What did your commentary reveal about your habits and thinking today?'