

Your Essential Guide to Choosing the Best ADI Training Provider

Introduction

Before parting with any money, it's advisable to have a look around at what other companies have to offer. The only problem is, with so many ADI training providers out there, it's often difficult to decide which one to choose.

The following is an essential guide of 12 things to look out for and the questions you should always ask each provider when finding out what they have to offer. If you have any doubts about the training being offered, or indeed the trainer delivering your training, then it may be best to trust your instincts and walk away.

Never choose an ADI Training provider based on price alone – more often than not, you'll end up paying far more in the long run by needing to find a second provider to help you get through the Part 3 examination.

After each of these questions and explanations, we have provided our responses – this should help you make an effective comparison when researching the best provider for you. If you have any questions, please contact us – our details are on the last page.

ORDIT Registration

“Are you a DSA ORDIT Approved Training Establishment?”

The Official Register of Driving Instructor Training (ORDIT) contains a list of ADI Training establishments and ADI trainers that have been fully inspected by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA), and have satisfied the minimum training standards. So make sure the company you choose, and all of their trainers are ORDIT Registered!



For more information on ORDIT and to access the full register, visit the following link on the DirectGov website: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/Drivingforaliving/DG_182842

Ged and Claire Wilmot are fully ORDIT registered to provide training for all three parts of the ADI qualification, along with ADI retraining courses. They are approved to provide full-time, part-time, distance learning, classroom and residential based courses.

Be Wary of Cheap Courses With Tie-In Clauses

“Once I qualify, do I have to work for you, or can I make my own choice?”

Some training providers advertise cheap training courses with all sorts of special offers to hook you in, but be very wary of any 'catches'. Also, if the training is so cheap, question the quality of training that's on offer.

Cheap training providers will ensure that they make their money from you somehow – after all, there's no such thing as a free lunch! So first, make sure that the training provider you choose will allow you to decide your career path following qualification.

Many will disguise the fact that they'll tie you in to a lengthy contract to work solely for them when you pass, so be careful! Remember, once you sign a legally binding contract, you must fulfil your end of the deal, and if later down the line you change your mind about working for the company you have trained with (or worse still they don't provide you with sufficient work to cover your franchise fees and earn a decent living), it'll be too late.



Be aware that cheap training may be offered by trainers who have little experience in the field of Driving Instructor Training. It's specialised training and a good driving instructor won't necessarily be a good driving instructor trainer. You will be investing a lot of money in your new career and you need to find a trainer who knows what they're doing, is confident they can get you through the tests and will train you to be a great instructor. It's highly unlikely you'll find a good trainer offering their services at knock down prices.

Ged and Claire offer completely independent training. You are free to work for whomever you choose once qualified, or even start up your own business. Total freedom of choice! In addition, we have managed to strike a balance between offering a professional service at an affordable price. Our course fees are typically 25% less than the national companies.

Flexible Payment Options

"What payment options are available?"

Be wary of companies who only accept full course payment up front. If you enter into a credit agreement to pay for the whole course, make sure you are aware of the interest charges before you sign the contract and also make sure you have the means to pay back the loan.

Look for a course which enables you to pay as you go along – this means you can progress through your course at a pace to suit your learning and your budget. Also, the advantage of paying in instalments or a pay-as-you-learn option is that you have your options clear should you need a break from training, or indeed if you want to change your provider if they aren't living up to their promises.

We offer trainees a range of flexible payment options. Although you can pay in full if you so desire, most choose to pay in instalments or take our 'pay-as-you-learn' option.

We are also registered training providers under the government's Professional & Career Development Loans (PCDL) scheme. With the first 12 months payment free, it could be one of the most cost effective ways for you to finance the course, without huge interest rates. For further information on Professional & Career Development Loans, visit www.direct.gov.uk.

Refunds

“What is your refund policy?”

If your personal circumstances change at any point and you decide to stop training through choice, or for reasons beyond your control, make sure you can claim a refund for the training you haven't received.

Always make sure you read the terms and conditions of the training agreement to ensure that if you are unsuccessful at any part of the qualifying process which prevents you from carrying on with your training, you are entitled to a refund for the remainder of the training you haven't received.

We will provide you with full terms and conditions to read and take away before you make any decisions. Active Driving Solutions operate a fair refund policy which ensures you won't be left out of pocket should you need (for whatever reason), to cease your training.

Practical Training

“How much of the training you provide is given in the car?”

Helping you to improve your driving, and training you to become a driving instructor, are practical skills that we believe should always take place in the car, not in a classroom.

Be very wary of courses providing a proportion of your training in the classroom, especially at the Part 2 or 3 stage. This is just a way for the company to make savings – it's significantly cheaper for them to have 20 students in a classroom with one trainer than it is for the 20 students to be out on road with 20 trainers.

Apart from your 1½ hours of Part 1 Hazard Perception Training (for which we use the office computer), all of your training will be conducted in the car.

One-to-One Training

“How many other trainees will be sharing my training time?”

Although many ADI training companies will sell the apparent benefits of receiving training on a two-trainees-to-one-trainer basis, this is usually operated as a cost-saving exercise, as in the case of offering classroom training. Such pairing can often be very detrimental, particularly if the two trainees learn at very different rates or are at different stages in the course.

So when a company claims to provide you with a set number of training hours, check that this number of hours is with you in the driving or instructor seat, and not sat in the back of the car!

When you train with Ged and Claire, all the training hours you pay for will be yours, no one else's. Because all of your training is on a one-to-one basis, you can be assured that each and every session is tailored to your needs, to ensure you get the most out of each and every training session. Ged and Claire will work with your individual strengths and areas for development at your own pace.

Frequency, Duration & Flexibility of Training

“When can I train and how regular will my sessions be?”

If you have current work or personal commitments, you may need to arrange around these. Make sure you choose a training provider who can offer you the flexibility you need, such as training at the weekend. Be aware that if you are training around current commitments, it may take you more time to qualify.

Individual training sessions need to be of at least 2-3 hours in order for you to gain the most benefit. If you are looking for an intensive-style course, consider your optimal concentration time – this can vary from person to person.

Also ask how frequent your training sessions will be. Long gaps in between sessions can be detrimental, especially with Part 3 training. At least 3 hours in car Part 3 training per week is recommended.

Ged & Claire’s training sessions are generally for 3 hours, although we can sometimes adjust this according to your circumstances and our availability. Full day / week bookings are also fine, and work best for those travelling from further afield.

We are available for training 6 days a week, from Monday through to Saturday. Ged & Claire always ensure that you receive regular training to keep you at your best.

The Trainer(s)

“Can I meet my Trainer?”

Ideally, for consistency of training, you should only have one or two ADI Trainers. Having a different one each session breaks the flow of your training, and you’ll often end up missing things or covering things you may have done already.

You will be spending a lot of time in the car with your trainer and it’s important you that you get on well with them. You will learn much better if you have a good rapport, enjoy your training and feel that your trainer listens to you, reassures you and builds your confidence in your own ability.

Meeting your trainer will also give you the opportunity to ask what Grade they are. All driving instructors are graded 1-6. 1-3 is unsatisfactory with 4 being satisfactory, 5 being good and 6 very good. Only 6% of driving instructors currently on the register are Grade 6 ADIs, so ideally this is the grade of trainer you would want.

Be wary if the only person you meet before signing a contract is a sales person, they can be quite convincing. Walk away and think about your options before deciding on which provider you feel matches your needs best.

With Active Driving Solutions, only Ged and Claire Wilmot will deliver your training. They have over 25 years’ experience in the industry between them, and are both top Grade 6 ADI Trainers. They are also the only people you will meet when discussing your options – we don’t employ any sales people. This initial meeting will give you an opportunity to decide if we are the right people for you.

Trainer Qualifications & Continual Professional Development (CPD)

“What additional qualifications does my trainer have?”

It is a little-known fact that anyone providing ADI Training is not required to have any other qualification other than being an Approved Driving Instructor. The ORDIT register is currently voluntary, so before signing onto any course you really should check out the credentials of your trainers.

Ask what extra qualifications they have. Any decent trainer will endeavour to keep up to date, and always expand on their knowledge and skills by seeking out further training and qualifications. This industry is constantly changing and your trainer needs to be one or several steps ahead and be above and beyond the minimum requirements.



Ged and Claire have over the years been on lots of training programmes and have obtained a stack of qualifications. Check out the list of qualifications and professional memberships on the 'About Us' page of our website to find out what they have achieved.

Both Ged and Claire are firm believers in Continual Professional Development (CPD) and are consistently committed to improving their skills. They are currently working towards Masters Degrees in 'Coaching' and 'Coaching and Psychology'.

Success Rate

“What is your success rate?”

Largely due to poor training standards, it has been estimated that less than 10% of those starting out on an ADI Training course ever go on to qualify. It's a startling statistic, therefore it is essential that you choose a provider who has an excellent success rate. Remember, you only get three opportunities to pass each of the Part 2 and 3 tests, so each attempt should not be taken lightly. You need to ensure that you are fully prepared and have the best chance of passing the tests on the first attempt. At the time of writing (November 2010), the national ADI pass rates for each part of the qualifying examination are: Part 1: 46%, Part 2: 51% and Part 3: 34%.

The success rate measures how many trainees have been successful at qualifying, so asking 'How many trainees that have taken and completed your course have qualified as Driving Instructors?' will give you a true reflection of their success.

Ged and Claire always ensure that all their trainees are ready for their test. They are proud to have pass rates well above the national average and every single one of their trainees that have taken and completed their full training course since 2005 have achieved success at Parts 1, 2 and 3 and become fully Approved Driving Instructors.* That's a 100% success rate.

**Ged & Claire's success rates for trainees who have had previous Part 1,2 and/or 3 training elsewhere and have come for remedial pay-as-you-learn training is an impressive 91%. Please make sure you allow plenty of time for the training you may need to reach test standard if you need remedial training. Ged and Claire will be honest and realistic when assessing your current standard before advising you on a suitable test date.*

Testimonials

“Do you have any testimonials I can read?”

Any large training company can attract business by spending thousands of pounds on TV & radio advertising and glossy adverts and brochures. But is all this a reliable guarantee of quality? Of course not! The best source of work is through recommendation. Successful ADI Training Companies should have many recommendations from people they have trained, so ask to read them. Even better, ask if you can speak to some of them personally.



Ged and Claire have many hundreds of happy and satisfied customers. The majority of their work comes through recommendation from other instructors and past trainees. They have many glowing testimonials from past students, and their most recent ones can be found on the testimonials page of our website. If you wish to talk to previous trainees to get a more personal view of Ged & Claire's training style and approach, this can be arranged, too.

Assistance Beyond Qualification

“What support do you offer once I have qualified?”

After you qualify and embark on your new career as an Approved Driving Instructor, you will continue to learn about how to run your business and how to best deal with your pupils. But without help, this can often be by trial and error, and some of the things you learn this way may not necessarily be correct.

Does the training provider offer ongoing support and advice to you following qualification, whether you need advice on a technical issue or advice on developing your business and taking further qualifications to improve your skills?



Your chosen training provider should be able to provide you with any additional training you feel you may need in the future. Do they offer structured Check Test assessment and development training which you may want during your first year as a driving instructor? The DSA will conduct regular Check Tests throughout your career to ensure that you still make the grade!

Ged and Claire offer full lifetime support to all of their trainees following qualification. Free advice is always available by phone, text or email, and they are happy to meet in person should you wish! Whether you need to know about the latest industry developments, find out an answer to a technical query, or get some advice on how to deal with anything related to your business, they are always there to help and offer assistance.

They also offer a range of further training courses for qualified instructors so that you can develop your skills helping you to become even better!

And finally...

It's strongly recommended that you speak to and visit a few different training providers so you can compare their services. Asking the questions in this guide will help you decide who you wish to train with, and could save you from making the wrong decision, saving you time and money!

We wrote this guide because of the many hundreds of people we have spoken to that have been let down by their initial training providers. Either they felt the offer on the table was too good to miss, or that the high price meant they were getting quality training. In both circumstances, they usually found the standard of training to be poor, and they would have been one of the thousands of people who fail to qualify as driving instructors had they not found us.

If after comparing us to other training providers, you do decide to train with someone else, please feel free to call with any questions you may have, at any stage of your training. And if you do find that your chosen provider isn't giving you what they promised, or you feel you need a second opinion or a different approach, we will gladly help out!

Our contact details are as follows:

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We look forward to hearing from you!