



the occupational
psychology centre

Train Driver Assessment: A guide for candidate's who undertake their assessment with The OPC

04/12/2024

Prepared by:

The Occupational Psychology Centre Limited

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Who are The OPC?

- The OPC (Occupational Psychology Centre) are one of 11 registered assessment centres around the UK.
- A registered assessment centre is an organisation who has met the required rail industry standards to undertake train driver assessment within the UK. Each centre has to meet standards set down by:
 - RACF (Rail Assessment Centre Forum).
 - RSSB (Rail Safety & Standards Board).
 - ORR (Office of Rail & Road).
 - BPS (British Psychological Society).
- Our Talent Assessors have been trained to a very high standard to meet the industry requirements to run train driver assessments which includes:
 - Administration of a range of psychometric tests from a range of test publishers (Schuhfried, Pearsons, OPC Assessment, Southeastern, RSSB).
 - Undertake the structured interview (MMI) to the required RSSB standard.

What The OPC are not

- Please refrain from calling the train driver recruitment process 'OPC testing'. This is not the case as the OPC are not in charge of the process, nor do we 'own' any part of it. Instead, the train driver recruitment process is used and managed by each train organisation that recruits train drivers. Therefore, you should be referring to this as train driver recruitment.
- The standards for the train driver recruitment process, i.e., the number of attempts, re-test policy, the tests to use etc has been issued by RSSB and is called RIS-3751-TOM. Therefore, if you have any queries around the standard then please contact either the RSSB or the train company you have applied to.

What is an Assessment Centre and what exercises will you sit on the day?

An assessment centre is a place where candidates sit a number of exercises that have been specially designed to select people who will do well in the job of Train Driver. On the day you will probably sit some or all of the below:

- Group Bourdon.
- Tea-Occ.
- TRP1B.
- TRP2.
- WAFV.
- ATAVT.
- 2-Hand.
- SJE.
- Structured interview.

The exercises you will sit on the day will be a mixture of paper and pencil tests and computer-based tests. Some train operating companies may also ask you to sit some additional assessment exercises.

What are the tests?

The tests are used to assess a candidate's ability or aptitude to perform a particular task or tasks that they will be asked to do on the job itself. They are also used to assess candidates on a number of key qualities that a safe Train Driver needs to have.

What will they look at?

The tests on the day will look at a number of things including your ability to have good concentration/attention, recall and retain job related information, learn new information, be vigilant etc. They may also cover a number of other abilities depending on which train operating company you are applying to.

Hints & Tips for the Tests:

- Try to avoid wild guessing.
- Try to answer as many questions as you can in the time allowed.
- You might not reach the end of all of the tests, not many people do, but if you work as accurately and quickly as you can, you give yourself the best chance of being successful.
- If you get stuck on a question: first circle that question on the answer sheet to remind yourself you have left it out so you don't put the answer for the next question in the wrong place, then move on to the next question, and finally, if you have time at the end, go back to the question you missed out and try again.
- If appropriate, make sure you have your glasses on or contact lenses in, so that you can clearly see the information on the test paper/computer screen.
- Listen carefully to the instructions given by the OPC's Talent Assessor before each exercise. These instructions are important to ensure that you know what you have to do during the test itself.
- Concentrate as hard as you can and try to shut everything else out.
- Try not to get flustered during the tests, stay calm and simply do your best.

What does the interview look at?

As part of your assessment centre, you may be asked to have an interview. The interview has been designed to assess your suitability to perform certain aspects of the Train Driver role. The interview might be quite different from others you may have had, as you will be asked to talk about examples of different situations from your past experience. You can choose whether to provide examples from your work experience, home life, education or training, or your leisure interests. Before the interview, you will be asked to complete a form. This gives you the chance to think about which past experiences you may want to talk about during the interview itself. The questions will be quite detailed, so make sure that it is something you feel comfortable talking about.

Hints & Tips for the Interview:

- Talk about what you did, rather than what other people did.
- Be clear and concise, answering the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.
- You may have many examples which relate to the question, but try to give an example which is most relevant to the question.
- Try to make the examples fairly recent so you can remember it well.
- Be as open and honest as you can in the answers you give; it is to your advantage to do so.
- Listen carefully to the question the interviewer is asking you and answer that question only, without going into irrelevant information.

What will happen on the assessment day?

- It is possible that you will be tested alongside a number of other applicants for the Train Driver job.
- The OPC's Talent Assessor (person running the day) will give you all the information and materials you need to do the exercises.
- Before each of the exercises you will be given instructions. These are to make sure that you know exactly what to do during the test itself. Make sure you listen carefully!
- Before each test starts you may have the chance to complete some examples. The OPC's Talent Assessor can help you with these if you are having difficulty, so make sure you ask them if you have any problems. They are there to help you.
- Make sure you ask all of your questions before the test starts because you are not allowed to ask the OPC's Talent Assessor, or anyone else, any questions once the actual test time has started. The tests themselves are done in complete silence.
- You will be told your outcome either by the organisation you applied to or by The OPC. However, this might not be on the assessment day itself.

What candidates have said about their assessment day...

- "I just wanted to say thank you for how professional and helpful your assessors have been throughout this process. They are a fantastic representation for the OPC."
- "It was a great experience for me going through all your assessment stages, and I want to congratulate you for the professionalism of the entire process and also of the OPC people I met so far."
- "Btw, the Test Administrators and the interviewer I met were absolutely incredible: extremely professional, helpful, nice and patient. So I just wanted to thank all of you for your time and great job."
- "Could you please pass on my thanks to all of the staff who have dealt with the face-to-face tests on my behalf. They were all very helpful, professional and put us all at ease, it really was a pleasure undertaking the exercises due to their positive demeanour."

General hints & tips for the day

- Go to bed early - get a good night's sleep.
- Try not to worry - worrying doesn't help you.
- Make sure you don't forget your glasses or contact lenses if you usually wear them.
- You won't need pencils, paper etc - everything is supplied.
- Make sure you eat breakfast before you come to the assessment session.



- Make sure you know exactly where the assessment centre is located before you attend and how to get there. Allow time for severe delays e.g. cancelled trains or heavy traffic.
- **Don't forget** to bring along your **photo ID** (driving licence or passport) and proof of **National Insurance number**.

How to get feedback

- Once you have received the outcome of your assessment you may want some feedback – you can obtain this by contacting the OPC directly via emailing: admin@theopc.co.uk
- Feedback is only provided verbally, so that we can answer all your queries quickly and efficiently. The recruitment process for Train Drivers within the UK is quite complex and therefore we want to ensure that you understand the results and what potential options are available to you going forward.
- If you have been unsuccessful at the driver process, it is important to seek feedback as this helps you understand where you haven't done so well. The assessor can potentially suggest development activities for you to try so as to improve your performance for next time, if this is something that you want to do.
- Please be aware:
 - Feedback can only be requested up to 3 months from your assessment date.
 - When you call, our team will take your details and an assessor will call you back when they are free to do so, which could take up to 2 weeks.
 - You will not be given ANY scores of your assessments. This is a requirement from various bodies such as the British Psychological Society (BPS), and Rail Assessment Centre Forum (RACF). However, we will try to provide as much information to you as we can with regards to your test results and potential next steps.
 - We cannot tell you if you have met other companies' standards as this would be unprofessional for us to do so. We will therefore only provide feedback to you for the company that you have applied to and their standards.
 - We will not provide you with any certificates or written confirmation of your assessment.

FAQs

Application

Question	Answer
How old do you have to be to apply for a trainee train driver position?	You must be at least 20 years old to become a train driver.
How do I notify a train organisation of any potential adjustments I may need?	If you require any potential adjustments to support you with completing any type of psychometric test because of a disability, then please notify the organisation you have applied to. They will ask for evidence of your diagnosis as this will typically outline the adjustments that have been recommended for you.
Can I apply to multiple companies at once?	This is not something that we would recommend. It is much better if you apply to one company at a time, receive your feedback and then apply to a second company if appropriate. As you can only be unsuccessful a number of times, we recommend that you only apply to organisations that you really want to work for, and not just because they are advertising.
How strong do my English skills have to be to apply for a train driver role?	All train operating companies will require strong English verbal skills as this is an important aspect of the train driver role i.e. communicating with control, signallers, on board staff, passengers etc.

The Psychometrics/Interview

Question	Answer
I have never sat the process before, what tests will I sit?	<p>There are certain tests that are universal to all companies, which we call 'core tests', that you must pass. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group Bourdon (GB) • The Trainability for Rules and Procedures Tests: Parts 1b & 2 (TRP) • The Test of Everyday Attention for Occupational Assessment (Tea-Occ) • The Vienna Test System (VTS) • The Multi Modal Interview (MMI) <p>Note: In addition to those above, some companies also make use of extra tests and exercises that they ask their candidates to pass.</p> <p>Please also refer to pages 3 - 4 of this document.</p>
What will happen on the assessment day?	Please refer to page 5 of this document.



Will I receive practice materials before attending the assessment?	Yes. You should receive these at least 7 days before you are due to attend the assessment day, and these will be sent to you by the organisation that you have applied to.
What scores are needed to pass the tests?	This information is not provided to you. However, feedback is available so please ensure that you receive this. Please refer to page 6 of this document.
How well do I need to do to pass the tests?	The RSSB have recommended a national minimum standard that candidates must achieve on each test. However, some companies use a higher standard that they require for their candidates to achieve on each test, or they may use additional tests. This is referred to as an 'enhanced' standard.
What do I need to do if I fail a train driver assessment?	<p>If you fail to the national minimum standard then you will have to wait a minimum period of time from your assessment date before you can re-apply to any other company in the UK for the role of Train Driver.</p> <p>If you have been unsuccessful to a company's enhanced standard, but passed to the national standard, then you could re-apply to a different company without needing to wait. This would be down to <u>you</u> to research what companies accept which standard.</p> <p>The OPC have a list of organisation's on our website as to whether they use an enhanced or national standard (which you can find here). However, this only details those organisation's who have given their permission to be listed.</p>
What should I wear to the assessment day?	We advise that you attend the assessment day dressed in a smart, but casual way. The day is long and therefore you need to be comfortable throughout the day and please be mindful of the weather conditions, i.e., to wrap up warm if it's cold.
What do I do if I can't make the assessment on the day itself?	Please inform the train company that you have applied to, as soon as possible. They may be able to fit you in on a different day, if possible, or offer a different date.
What do I do if I'm running late to the assessment day?	You need to inform the assessment centre as soon as you can, providing an estimated time of arrival. We may be able to accommodate lateness, however there is a possibility that you may also be turned away if you arrive after the designated start time. If this happens, you will need to contact the train company you applied to.

Your Results

Question	Answer
How long will I need to wait before getting my results?	<p>Once your test papers have been scored and verified, your results will be forwarded to the company to which you have applied to. They will be the ones to get in contact with you via email/phone. This typically takes 5-10 working days. Please do not contact us for your results as we are unable to provide this information to you.</p> <p>Note: For some companies or assessments, you will be told on the day whether or not you have met the required standards.</p>
Who owns my results?	Your results do not belong to you nor to The OPC, should we carry out your assessment. Your results belong to the company you have applied to.
Who has access to my results?	Your results will be available to the company you have applied to, The OPC, and all registered assessment centres. Your results can be accessed via a national database, where they will be stored to keep track of your past applications.
How are the results stored?	On a national database called RACF database.
What happens if I pass all of the tests?	<p>If you pass the psychometric tests and interview, the usual next step is for you to be invited by the recruiting company for a final interview with a manager or HR. Some companies may choose to conduct these interviews before you are sent to do your psychometric testing.</p> <p>If you are successful at a manager or HR interview then you will be asked to undertake a medical which will look into things such as your height, weight, eyesight, hearing and more. Should you pass your medical, there may be various other checks the recruiting company may want to carry out before you are offered a position as a trainee train driver e.g. references/criminal checks.</p>
I have failed the train driver process before, can I sit it again?	You can be unsuccessful to the national standard a small number of times in your lifetime, unless the process undergoes a significant change from its current form. If you want to apply again then you can do so once a minimum amount of time has passed.
I've sat the process and passed some of the tests before, will I have to sit them again?	This depends on the company you are applying to as they all have different policies on how long your passes are valid. Some companies may ask you to sit everything again if you have previously been unsuccessful, regardless of whether you have passed any of the tests before or not.

Feedback

Question	Answer
Can I receive feedback on my assessment?	<p>If you have been successful there is no feedback that can be given to you. We do not give out any scores and there is no grade or level of pass to feed back on, so there is nothing more we can tell you other than you have passed the process.</p> <p>If you have been unsuccessful then please email The OPC on admin@theopc.co.uk with details of the organisation you applied to and when. Please note, we can only provide feedback to you if we did your assessment, and that your assessment date has been within the last 3 months. Again, no scores are given out, however if the company you applied to uses enhanced scoring then we can let you know as to whether you met the national standard.</p> <p>If you are unsuccessful on the MMI interview, we can tell you which of the topic areas you were unsuccessful on but we cannot tell you exactly why i.e. what you said that led to you being unsuccessful.</p>
How do I get feedback?	Please refer to the section on page 6 of this document.
It's my 2nd attempt, so how do I find out what I need to sit this time around?	<p>To help you prepare for your second assessment, please ensure you receive feedback within 3 months of your first attempt. This feedback will allow you to work on those development areas that were highlighted to you. Please remember this information and do not contact The OPC for it at a later date as we will not be able to provide it to you.</p> <p>It may be that you are applying to a different company who has different standards, so please liaise with them directly and take guidance from them as to which tests you need to complete to their standard. If you're unsure on the advice you are being given, please engage with the company you are applying to and they will be able to assist you. It's important that you know what tests you will be asked to complete on your second attempt so that you can prepare yourself.</p>

The Process

Question	Answer
How does the 'attempts/lives' policy work?	You can only be unsuccessful at the train driver process a number of times in your lifetime. Please note that online tests can be included as part of your 'attempts' if this is part of an organisation's recruitment process. You should check with the company you are applying to as to what their policy is.
Who owns the train driver assessment process?	The UK train driver assessment process is a national process. However, it is managed by each train organisation that uses the process, therefore there is no governing body or one entity that is responsible for the process as a whole. But, all recruiting organisations will use a national standard called RIS-3751-TOM that was introduced by the Rail Safety & Standards Board (RSSB) in October 2013.