

Driving Instructor interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for driving instructor roles focus less on qualifications on paper and more on how you actually run a lesson: how you read a nervous or overconfident learner, how you handle a dangerous moment in traffic, and how you keep your own accreditation and vehicle compliance in order. Expect a mix of practical process questions and situational judgement calls, since most of the job happens in real time in a moving car.

- **Process:** Questions about how you structure lessons, build a learner's skills over time, and prepare them for the practical test.
- **Behavioural:** Questions asking for a real example of coaching a specific learner through a fear, bad habit or setback.
- **Scenario:** Situational questions testing your judgement in a dangerous or high-pressure moment inside the car.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions checking your understanding of accreditation renewal, log book requirements and vehicle roadworthiness.
- **Client-facing:** Questions about managing bookings, cancellations and learners who are frustrated with slow progress.

Most interviews start with a conversation about your accreditation status and driving history, move into questions about how you teach and handle problem moments on the road, and finish with practical logistics like availability, vehicle arrangements and how you manage your own booking calendar.

1. Walk me through how you'd structure a first lesson with a complete beginner.

Why they ask

Interviewers want to see that you have a repeatable, safe method rather than improvising each lesson.

How to structure your answer

Give a step-by-step walkthrough: how you assess the learner before moving, where you start them driving, and how you build from basic control to traffic exposure.

Example answer

"I start off the road or in a quiet car park so I can see how they handle the basics: steering, braking, moving off. Once I'm confident they can control the car, I move to quiet residential streets and build up gradually, only introducing busier roads, roundabouts or lane changes once they've shown they're solid on the fundamentals. I always finish the lesson with a quick recap of what we covered and what we'll work on next time, so the learner and I both have a clear picture of progress."

2. Tell me about a time you helped a learner overcome a specific driving fear or bad habit.

Why they ask

This tests your coaching ability and patience with learners who are struggling, which is most of the job.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the learner's situation, the specific task or gap, the action you took to address it, and the result.

Example answer

"I had a learner who froze every time she had to merge onto a faster road, she'd slow right down and panic. I worked out it was a confidence issue with judging gaps, not a control problem, so I spent a few lessons just on gap judgement in lower-risk merging spots before moving her onto busier roads. By our last few lessons before her test she was merging smoothly without hesitating, and she passed comfortably."

3. A student grabs the wheel or panics mid-lesson in heavy traffic. What do you do?

Why they ask

This checks your judgement and control in a dangerous, time-pressured situation, which is central to instructor safety.

How to structure your answer

Describe your immediate priority, then the sequence of actions you'd take, in order, showing you think safety first and calmly.

Example answer

"My first priority is always to regain control safely, using the dual controls if needed to brake or steady the car rather than fighting the student for the wheel. I'd talk calmly and clearly, tell them exactly what to do next, and get us to a safe stop as soon as possible. Once we've stopped, I'd debrief what happened without making the student feel worse, and adjust the next lesson to rebuild their confidence in that specific situation before moving on."

4. How do you keep track of your instructor accreditation, vehicle compliance and log book requirements?

Why they ask

Instructors are personally responsible for compliance, so employers and franchisors need to know you manage this without being chased.

How to structure your answer

Give a straightforward checklist-style answer covering the main compliance items and how often you review them.

Example answer

"I keep a simple calendar reminder system for accreditation renewal dates, vehicle registration and roadworthy checks, and insurance. I check the dual controls and general condition of the car before each block of lessons, and I keep learner log books and any required paperwork up to date after every session rather than letting it build up."

5. How do you handle a student who keeps cancelling or seems unhappy with their progress?

Why they ask

As a largely self-employed role, managing the client relationship directly affects your income and reputation.

How to structure your answer

Explain your general approach to the conversation, balancing empathy with being clear about expectations and scheduling.

Example answer

"I'd have a direct but friendly conversation about what's going on, since repeated cancellations often mean the learner is anxious about the lessons rather than just busy. If it's a confidence issue, I'll adjust the pace or go back to easier skills for a lesson or two. If it's about scheduling, I'll try to find a more workable pattern, but I'm also clear that a cancellation policy exists because the time slot is reserved for them."

6. What's your understanding of the Graduated Licensing Scheme and how does it shape your lesson planning?

Why they ask

This checks your working knowledge of the regulatory framework that governs what learners need to demonstrate at each stage.

How to structure your answer

Explain your understanding in plain terms, then connect it directly to how it changes what you teach at each stage.

Example answer

"The Graduated Licensing Scheme moves learners through supervised driving with a log book, into a probationary licence with restrictions, before they reach a full licence. I plan lessons around where a learner sits in that process, focusing early lessons on core vehicle control and observation, and later lessons on the specific skills examined in the practical test, like hazard perception, roundabouts and reverse parking."