



C1 Driver Training Support to COVID 19 Response – Frequently Asked Questions

In response to the COVID 19 pandemic, student paramedics studying at partner universities have been enlisted to assist in a variety of operational ambulance roles alongside their clinical study.

To enable as many as possible to drive ambulance vehicles, C1 training has been provided along with some limited emergency response driving courses.

Looking to the future, it is anticipated that student paramedics may be required to assist further in the response to COVID 19 requirements.

As such the Trust will make available C1 development to eligible students. If you are eligible you will have:

- previously 'opted in' to the paid placement scheme with your university
- gained an ECA or temporary NQP contract
- attended an ECA or Temporary NQP Trust induction to enable you to work

The FAQs below are clarify understanding of this programme of development. It is important to note that the information contained within this document may change in light of COVID 19 response requirements, Trust requirements, or NHS England policy, funding or staffing requirements.

Q1. Who is eligible to undertake the training organised through SWAST and how do I know when I'll be trained?

Priority will be given to COVID 19 temporary NQP registrants. The focus will then be on 3rd years followed by 2nd year students who meet the eligibility criteria above.

Q2. What are you providing to help me with gaining my C1?

We will arrange a medical examination for you if you haven't yet submitted for a provisional licence. If you hold (or once you get) a provisional C1 driving licence then we will also



provide theory and hazard perception tests and practical training prior to the C1 practical test.

At the moment we are relying on the good will of Avon and Somerset Police to provide the theory tests. If this arrangement stops then we may have to review how we provide Theory tests.

Q3. Where does the training take place?

We are limited with the facilities we can use. For example, the Theory testing can only take place in Portishead. Medicals will take place in Gloucester, Taunton or Exeter.

Practical training and testing will take place in Exeter, Bristol or St Leonards.

Given the limitations on facilities which are open to support C1 licence acquisition we would ask for your support and understanding in attending one of these locations, even if it is some way to travel for you.

Q4. Will I need to pay for C1 training?

No you don't need to pay for your C1 training. In order to ensure students who have chosen to 'opt in' to the paid placement scheme do not incur costs, Health Education England (HEE) in their joint statements have set up a scheme whereby costs incurred supporting a student to be able to work within the COVID 19 response can be reclaimed. Please note that this support may be withdrawn at any time.

Q5. I've failed my test, can I have another go?

Yes, the first and second test for each learner will be covered, along with some additional training if required between the failed test and the second opportunity. Any further attempts necessary will incur an additional cost, which you will be expected to meet.

Q6. I undertook my C1 training privately (or with the Trust) prior to the COVID 19 Pandemic, can I claim my training costs back?

No. This financial support is a temporary measure whilst the NHS is in the response phase to the COVID 19 situation. Reimbursing previously incurred costs does not form part of HEE's scheme.

Q7. How do I book on to do my C1 training?

If you have 'opted in' to the paid placement scheme, and have an ECA contract, please contact Jennings Mitchell Jennings.mitchell@swast.nhs.uk (University Liaison Officer). We



will need to know what your current C1 status is (i.e. hold provisional, need medical etc). When a place becomes available for each component of the process we will contact you by email to get you booked in.

Q8. I can't make the medical / theory / training / test dates you have provided; can I rebook?

If you are unable to attend the provided date, you must let us know as early as possible. We will then add you back to the list to rebook you. However, it is not possible for you to select a date that suits you.

Q9. How long will you be providing this scheme for and how long will it be funded for?

Due to the changing nature of the response to the pandemic, we don't currently know how long this scheme will be in operation for. We will continue to be able to support students to go through the training until such time that funding is withdrawn.

Q10. I have not 'opted in' to the paid placement scheme and don't currently have an ECA or Temporary NQP contract. If I change my mind will I be eligible to gain my C1 with SWAST?

You can change your mind; you will need to liaise in the first instance with your university who will then approach SWAST to identify if you can be placed on the 'opt in' scheme. However at this current time SWAST is not in a position to offer any more contracts, due to ongoing national debate around the paid placement scheme, within the ambulance sector.

Q11. I don't live close to any of the test centres; can I claim my accommodation or travel costs?

No, accommodation or travel costs associated to this training are not supported within the scheme.