

## **Dangerous Goods Safety Adviser Examinations**

### **Guidance note**

#### **Introduction**

SQA has been asked via the Training and Advisory Panel to issue some guidance about the choice of candidate and the selection of papers. This note has been prepared by industry representatives and aims to provide help in:

- choosing the right candidate for the examinations
- choosing the most appropriate subjects.

#### ***Choosing the right candidate***

Clearly the selection of candidates is not a matter for SQA or DfT, but is the responsibility of each individual employer. However, the selection of the right candidate will avoid unnecessary expense and, for the individual, the stress of possibly struggling to come to terms with the examination and the prospect of failing to qualify.

Feedback from training providers suggests that a small but significant proportion of candidates who enrol for training have been selected by their employer without full consideration having been given to the requirements of the examinations. As a consequence these candidates struggle to achieve the DGSA qualification.

It is therefore vital that all parties carefully study the examination syllabus so that they appreciate the standard of the examinations and the areas of the legislation which will be tested. The DGSA qualification is not a reworking of the Dangerous Goods Drivers Vocational Training Certificate examination - it is significantly more challenging. Look at the sample examination booklets as they should help you and your prospective candidate in deciding whether they have the skills and experience to tackle the examination.

The DGSA examination requires knowledge of the duties of the consignor, for example

- principles of classification of dangerous goods, package selection and labelling  
as well as carrier responsibilities such as
- documentation, vehicle marking and labelling, and safety equipment requirements.

The amount of tuition and study required to fill knowledge and skills gaps can be considerable, particularly on top of the normal working day and for a candidate who has not undertaken a formal examination for some time.

Careful selection of the right candidate will go a long way to ensuring success in the examination.

### ***Selecting the subjects***

To qualify as a DGSA, candidates must undertake and successfully complete an examination in three subjects as follows:

Core paper

**and** *one mode paper*

Road *or* Rail *or* Inland Waterways

**and** *one of the class papers*

All Classes

General Chemical Classes

Class 1

Class 2

Class 3 (specifically UN 1202, 1203 and 1223)

Class 7

Candidates are required to qualify for the transport mode used by their business and for the classes of dangerous goods carried, however infrequently. Candidates should realise that the more classes they qualify for, the more versatile their qualification will be. Somebody who has passed the All Classes paper (along with the Core and relevant mode papers) will be able to work in any business handling all classes of dangerous goods. Similarly, they avoid the need for further qualifications should the nature of the dangerous goods carried change. A qualification in the more restricted papers – eg Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 (Mineral Oils) or Class 7 - may limit the business or the development of the individual.

The majority of the general principles covering the consignor and carrier responsibilities during the transport of dangerous goods are common to both the All Classes paper and the more specific class papers. Therefore, although in the All Classes paper there are more types of dangerous goods to learn about, the basic principles involved are often the same. Every attempt is made by those setting the examinations to ensure that the degree of difficulty of the questions within each class paper is similar. In many cases the questions are drawn from a common question bank.