



The Value of Pathfinder

Authors: Dr. John Beckford, Chris Singer, Tom Silverwood

March 18th 2022

Around 20% of new drivers (DfT statistics) are involved in a reportable collision during the first year after passing the DVSA test. Pathfinder offers a unique approach to reducing that percentage.

Compared to their peer group (novice drivers aged 16-24 nationally) Pathfinder graduates show a 75% decrease in accident rate, 86% decrease in driving conviction rate and a 74% increase in their DVSA test pass rate. These statistics are drawn from a series of surveys covering more than 15 years of students and over 1000 participants suggesting that there is consistency, repeatability and robustness in our approach and methodology.

Pathfinder develops drivers who comprehend the ‘why’ of being safe drivers as well as ‘what’ and ‘how’ and the results are outstanding:

| | General Public | Pathfinder Graduates | Result of Participation |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 st Year Accident Rate | 20/100 | 5/100 | 75% reduction |
| DVSA Test Pass Rate (1 st) | 46% | 62% | 74% increase |
| Points on Licence | 14.3% | 2% | 86% reduction |

Pathfinder is the only novice driver programme offering a development methodology rooted in managing the rate of increase in cognitive load to suit the need of each individual student while matching that with duration and effective engagement by a trusted associate, most commonly a parent or other relative. This partnership approach is fundamental to successful learning, addressing as it does some common problems with traditional methods. No student has ever been turned away from Pathfinder on financial grounds or because of their particular health or learning needs.

Pathfinder adds to the conventional curriculum substantial insights about observation, understanding and mitigation of risk, managing the behaviour of the driver and others and the importance of communication. We create roads, layouts and challenges specifically designed to rapidly reinforce observation, car control and manoeuvring skills. The skills, knowledge, competences and experience required to provide such a programme are not commonly available through traditional routes. Pathfinder programme designers and volunteers draw on a deep understanding of educational activity, self-directed learning, motivation and engagement as well as participation and partnership working.



The typical cost of a Pathfinder Initiative event, delivered by volunteers many of whom are observers with IAMRoadsmart, is less than £10 per hour comparing favourably with commercial offerings which are generally less comprehensive.

The need for Pathfinder rests in the continuing vulnerability of our target participants and cannot be addressed affordably by commercial operators. Road deaths reportedly cost £1.9 million per occurrence with each serious injury £218,000.

Using a typical cohort of 32 students who had not completed Pathfinder, 8 would be involved in a collision. Our surveys show that for Pathfinder students, statistically only 2 would be involved in a road collision in their first year of driving, at a cost of £155,650 (average cost, all collision severities).

The saving from Pathfinder is estimated at £14,952 per student compared with a total delivery cost of £360 per student.

The real contribution is not the financial cost but the time each Associate invests in educating their child. 5 days invested seems a very small price to give your child a lifetime of safe driving.