

## Appendices

### Appendix One – Youth Assembly Summary of Graduated Driver Licensing



# Graduated Driver Licensing

Youth Assembly Summary



# Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

**Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)** is a new system for learning to drive that will be introduced in Northern Ireland. Instead of going straight from learner driver to full driver, GDL introduces a **step-by-step approach**. This gives new drivers more time to build experience before driving completely independently. The changes mainly affect **young drivers aged 17–23**, who are currently **over-represented in serious road traffic collisions**.

## What does GDL include?

Under GDL, learning to drive will include:

- A **minimum six-month** learning period
- A **training programme** and logbook
- A two-year “new driver” period after passing your test
- Some temporary restrictions to reduce risk

The aim is to help people become **safe drivers**.

## Why is GDL being introduced?

In 2024, **164 people were killed or seriously injured** in collisions where a car driver aged 17–23 was responsible. Drivers aged 17–23 hold only 8% of licences, but were involved in **24% of fatal or serious collisions**. 12 people were killed or seriously injured in collisions involving motorcyclists aged 17–23.

**Young drivers are involved in a high number of serious collisions. GDL aims to reduce these numbers by helping new drivers gain experience gradually and in safer conditions.**



# Does GDL Actually Work?

**YES!**

Research shows that GDL systems can make a real difference. Studies from the **Transport Research Laboratory (TRL)** show that GDL systems can reduce:

- Collisions involving young drivers
- Road deaths by around 19–21%

Countries such as Australia, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland and parts of the United States already use GDL systems and have seen improvements in road safety.

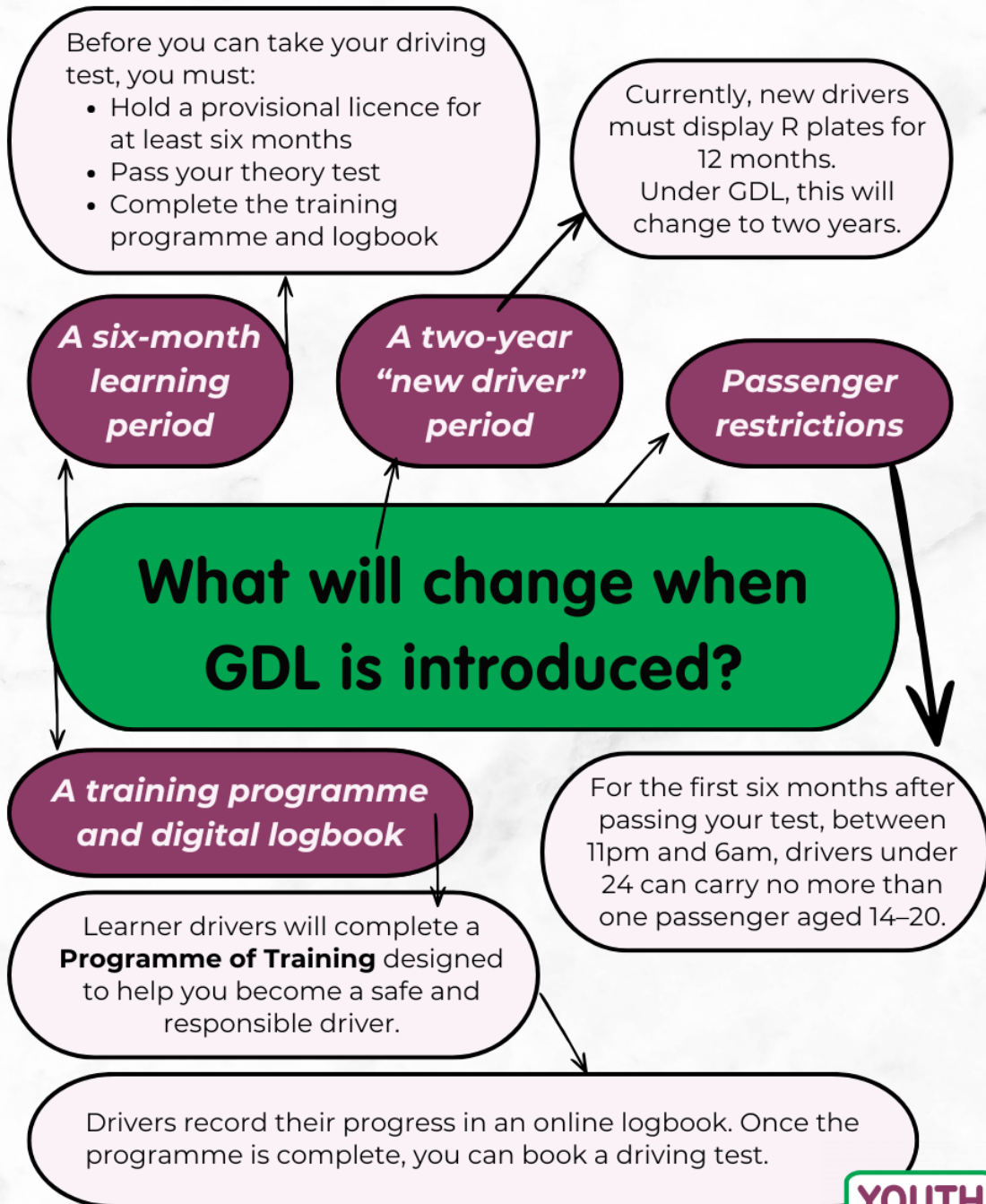
## ***Will GDL Punish Young Drivers?***

No. The purpose of GDL is not to take away independence. Instead, it is designed to protect new drivers during the riskiest period of driving. The restrictions are **temporary** and **focused on helping drivers gain experience safely**.

## ***Will there be any exemptions?***

Yes, learners who receive **Carer's Allowance** may be exempt from the six-month minimum learning period, because they might need a licence to support the person they care for. But, they'll still have to **complete the training programme and fill the logbook**.

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## How will the rules be enforced?

***The rules will be enforced through existing police powers. However, parents and guardians will play an important role in helping new drivers follow the rules.***

## What happens if someone breaks the rules?

Breaking GDL rules can lead to penalties. For example, if drivers don't display their R plates during the new driver period or carry too many passengers during the restricted hours, penalties could include;

- Up to £1,000 fine
- 3 penalty points

***During the two-year new driver probation period, if you get 6 or more penalty points, your licence will be revoked and you must re-take the test.***

## When will GDL start?

GDL will be introduced on 1 October 2026. The new driving test linked to the system will start on 1 April 2027, allowing time for learners to complete the six-month learning period. This is the biggest change to driver licensing in Northern Ireland in almost 70 years.

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