

Observer Training Note

From the Chief Observer

Thank you for showing interest in becoming and Observer for MYAM, I and the team very much appreciate it. You will find that Observing is very rewarding, especially when you get a call from your Associate to say that they have passed.

This training note aims to set out what is required.

1. The Process

To become an Observer there are a few steps which are necessary before you can start with an Associate. They are quite painless but can take a little while. Use this time to study the paperwork, mentioned within this note. The following is what will happen:-

- Confirmation that you are a full current member of IAM RoadSmart and MYAM. As you are reading this note this has already been confirmed,
- You will need to read through this Training Note and feel comfortable with what is expected, confirming back to me that you understand what is required and that you wish to join the MYAM Observer Team as a Trainee Observer.
- Approval from the MYAM committee that you are to be taken forward as a Trainee Observer
- Complete an IMI (Institute of the Motor Industry) registration form to register with the IMI and IAM RoadSmart. I will send you a copy of the form.
- Agree to being added to the Observers page on the MYAM website. A suitable photo will be required. This page is referred to when an Associate is allocated to an Observer so they know who to look for.
- Attend the Skill Check sessions and sit in on observed drives so you can see how other Observers work with Associates. Take plenty of notes and ask questions.
- Once your IMI registration number comes through, send a copy to me then you will be ready to work with your own Associate. You will be added to the list for invitations to take on a new Associate. Accept one which suits you.
- A Local Observer Assessor (LOA) will sit in on at least two runs with you observing. The LOA will complete assessments from those runs and issue them to IAM RoadSmart as a record of your progress.
- An LOA will need to see a demonstration drive from you as part of the ongoing assessments.

- Once the LOA is happy that you meet all the requirements they will sign you off with IAM RoadSmart who will then complete the assessment. You will then receive a certificate from the IMI, confirming that you are now a Local Observer.

The length of the process is very much dependant on how much effort you put in and the availability of a suitable Associate. 6 months is not uncommon but that said it is not something which needs to or should be rushed. It must however be completed within 12 months of registration with the IMI.

2. Chief Observer Support

I'm here to help as much as I can. If you need any advice or guidance please e-mail or call me. I do work during the day, generally 8am – 5pm, but free most evenings. I'm also free at weekends when I'm not out with another Observer or Associate. If you have any questions please get in touch, even if you have a question every day. I remember my first observed run, it felt like I had been dropped into the deep end with far too much to remember but it does get easier. Write yourself a list if necessary and follow it.

3. Local Observer Assessors

The Local Observer Assessors (LOA) are MYAM National Observers who are registered with IAM RoadSmart as LOA's. They are responsible for carrying out the assessments and issuing the progress reports to IAM RoadSmart.

Currently MYAM have two LOA's. David Rushfirth and David Stringer.

4. Training Manual

If you have not seen the Observers Training Manual yet I would encourage you to download a copy from our group Website <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire>.

You will find a Trainee Observer Resources page from the Resources menu. The manual is the first item. Have a read through, particularly from page 10 to page 25. Look at the left and middle columns and use it as a guide for writing a list. You could also use the Competency Criteria Check Sheet, also available on that page, as a basis for that list. This check sheet is the one used by the LOA for your assessments.

5. Other Observer Materials

In addition to the Observer training manual, you will be provided with:-

- A copy of the Observers version of the Associates Course Guide. This copy is essentially the same but does contain additional tips for Observers.
- A copy of the IAM RoadSmart road plan book. This book can be used with dry wipe pens to explain positioning to Associates.

- A copy of the current edition of Road Craft. This publication is used by the police as part of their driver training and follows the same principles as those covered by IAM RoadSmart.
- A copy of the Highway Code.
- Spare run sheets and declaration forms. Further stocks of these are available at the Social meetings or from the Caravan at the B&Q Skill check session.

Further documents including the MYAM Best Practice Notes and current Risk Assessments are available for download from the resources pages of the MYAM Website. These should be read and understood.

6. Associate

You will be assigned an Associate who will have been notified that you are in training and will have agreed to that on the understanding that I will be supporting both of you. You will be provided with the contact details for the Associate but it will be left with you to make contact with the Associate in order to arrange the first and subsequent observed drives.

IAM RoadSmart issue the Associate with the course guide within 10 days of signing up for the course. Our Membership Secretary will also have issued an Associates Welcome Pack together with a copy of the Cockpit Drill. Copies of the Welcome Pack and Cockpit Drill are available from the resources page of the MYAM website. Go to the Associates Resources page and you will find them at the bottom.

7. Associate Initial Contact

Your Associate will need to read up about The System or IPSGA (Page 24) and Observation (Page 30) before your first run. Also ask them:-

- If they have received a pack of information from IAM RoadSmart, which should include the Associate Course Guide Book and Membership Card.
- Ask them to complete and sign the declaration form, which is located at the rear of the course guide.
- Ask them if they have the latest Highway Code. If they or you do not have it then we do carry a stock of them either in the caravan or at the Social Evenings. Please note that these may not be the latest edition.
- Ask if they have received the welcome letter from MYAM. If not then let the Membership Secretary know. Contact Details are on the MYAM website following this link <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/mid-yorkshire/about-us/our-community/group-membership>.
- Tell them to bring all the above to each observed drive.

8. First Observed Run

Always try to use a route you are familiar with as you will need to give directions in plenty of time. You could use Google Maps and Street View to run the route on you PC if you are unsure of anything. Ideally run it in your car. Make route notes if necessary to use on the day. Take particular note of speed limit changes and signs you may wish to quiz your Associate about.

Before you set off on the first run do the following:-

- Check that they have all the necessary documentation as listed above with them.
- Make sure there is a blank marking sheet in the Associates Logbook.
- Check that they have signed the declaration form.
- Carry out an eyesight check by getting them to read a number plate at around 20 metres (approximately 5 car lengths).
- Tell the Associate what they will expect from the run, the subject(s) being covered, the approximate distance and the approximate length of time. Ask if they are happy with that before you commit to the run.
- Ask a few questions about them, what they do as a job and why they wanted to do an Advanced Driving course. It does break the ice and can be done during the run. Tell them a bit about yourself if you wish.
- Provide the disclaimer. This must be provided before every run. The disclaimer is not a fixed script but the following generally covers the requirements. Reword it to suit you making it different for each run if you wish. **"You are in control of the car at all times and are responsible for your own actions and safety. I will give directions in plenty of time. Where I do not provide directions then proceed on the current route. If I give an instruction you believe to be illegal or are not happy with then please do not carry out that instruction. Please however advise why at the next safe opportunity."**

When I take someone on a first run I just ask them to drive as they normally would for the first half of the session, then pull them over in a suitable spot and run through what you have seen. Doing this will give you an opportunity to see what type of driver they are and what you will need to work on.

Then start to apply your observations over the second part of the drive. It is a good idea to start with IPSGA and negotiating roundabouts helps greatly with that.

At the end of the drive give them a short but detailed debrief, about 10 minutes is usually enough. Anything longer than that and you will find the Associate will lose concentration. Let them know what they need to work on but always leave on a positive note, pointing out what

was good. Also make sure that you arrange the next session aiming to make one run per week.

As part of the debrief you will need to complete the run sheet. If you prefer and with the agreement of the Associate you can download an editable version of the run sheet from the MYAM website, Observer Resources page, which can be completed and e-mailed to the Associate. If you select this option it is important to issue the completed sheet within 24 hours of the observed run taking place. This option is useful as it provides you with a record of the runs.

Please keep me informed with dates of your meetings with the Associate. This will help me monitor progress and suggest occasions where the LOA can join in on the session.

9. Assessment

In order to qualify you as a Local Observer an LOA will need to come out with you and sit in the back for a number of the runs. The LOA will be checking your understanding of the Observer training manual and how you are applying the requirements.

Let me know when you arrange the runs and I'll see if I can make myself available. I will also need to assess your driving for about 40 mins. This could be done at one of the Skill Check session if you wish.

When you have demonstrated that you are competent at each element the LOA will confirm with IAM RoadSmart that you have reached the required level.

After approximately 3 weeks you will receive a certificate showing that you have qualified as a Local Observer.

END
