



SURFACE VEHICLE RECOMMENDED PRACTICE

J3300™

MAY2025

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Superseding J3300 MAY2020

Driving Level Skill Certification

RATIONALE

This family of Recommended Practices describes various driving skill levels for operating automobiles and light trucks as they relate to vehicle operation, primarily for purposes of vehicle testing and evaluation or other professional driving. Each subject-specific document within this family describes criteria for establishing different skill levels, verification methods, and certification procedures for verifying the skill levels. These documents may also be used as a basis for developing a training program for drivers seeking certification. These documents reflect the current industry practice through the ongoing cooperation of OEM, supplier, independent test facilities, and other driving-related organizations. It is anticipated that this Recommended Practice will evolve into a broadly accepted SAE Standard, and will promote harmonization of driving skill level assessments across the industry.

SAE J3300 has been reaffirmed to comply with the SAE Five-Year Review policy.

1. SCOPE

This SAE Recommended Practice is intended to establish a procedure to certify the fundamental driving skill levels of professional drivers. This certification can be used by the individual driver to qualify their skills when seeking employment or other professional activity. These certification levels may also be used by test facilities or other organizations when seeking test or professional drivers of various skills. The associated family of documents listed below establish driving skill criteria for various specific categories.

- SAE J3300: Driving level
- SAE J3300/1: Low mu/winter driving
- SAE J3300/2: Trailer towing
- SAE J3300/3: Automated driving

Additional certifications to be added as appropriate.

This main document provides: (1) common definitions and general guidance for using this family of documents, (2) directions for obtaining certification through Probitas Authentication¹, and (3) driving level examination requirements.

¹ Probitas Authentication[®] is an SAE International affiliate organization that provides certification services for technical transportation professionals (<http://www.sae-itc.org/probitas/about/>).

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Full document details: SAE J3300_202505

For more information on this standard, visit
https://www.sae.org/standards/content/J3300_202505/

Documents

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2. REFERENCES

The following publications form a part of this specification to the extent specified herein. Unless otherwise indicated, the latest issue of SAE publications shall apply.

2.1 SAE Publications

Available from SAE International, 400 Commonwealth Drive, Warrendale, PA 15096-0001, Tel: 877-606-7323 (inside USA and Canada) or +1 724-776-4970 (outside USA), www.sae.org.

SAE J670 Vehicle Dynamics Terminology

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 ANNUAL DECLARATION

Statement by certification holder that maintenance requirements set forth in [4.5.1](#) have been met for the previous 12-month period.

NOTE: An annual declaration is required as part of the annual maintenance.

3.2 ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

Verification provided to Probitas Certification Group by the certification holder in the form of an annual declaration and a code of conduct, stating that all maintenance requirements for a certification have been met such that the certification may be maintained.

3.3 CANDIDATE

Individual participating in the SAE J3300 driving skill certification process pursuant to an application for certification.

3.4 CERTIFICATION

Credential affirming that the named individual has demonstrated the skills necessary to pass the requirements of SAE J3300 for the level and discipline stated.

3.5 CERTIFICATION HOLDER

Candidate who successfully completes the requirements set forth in SAE J3300 to attain a certification, subject to initial examination ([4.2](#)), annual maintenance ([4.5](#)), recertification ([4.4](#)), and decertification ([4.6](#)) requirements.

3.6 CERTIFICATION REVIEW TEAM

An elected SAE J3300 Driving Skills Standards Subcommittee responsible for arbitrating appeals (see [5.4](#)).

3.7 CERTIFIER

Individual authorized to accredit examiners, test sites, and test vehicles, and who is generally responsible for ensuring integrity and consistency of the SAE J3300 Recommended Practice (see [5.6](#)).

3.8 CODE OF CONDUCT

Signed statement by the certification holder, provided in [4.5.2](#), affirming truthfulness of annual declaration.

NOTE: A signed code of conduct statement is required as part of the annual maintenance.

3.9 COEFFICIENT OF FRICTION (μ)

The ratio of the maximum value of the tangential force between the tread rubber and the horizontal road surface to the absolute value of normal force attainable on a given road surface on a given rolling or locked wheel at specified test conditions. (Refer to SAE J670.)

3.10 DRIFTING

A driver maintaining limit-oversteer for an extended period of time.

3.11 ENDORSEMENT

Driving skill certification affirming that the named individual has demonstrated the skills necessary to pass the requirements of SAE J3300 for a specialized discipline, beyond the scope of foundational driving levels (DL).

NOTE: Endorsements include low μ (LM), trailer towing (TT), and automated driving (AD).

3.12 EXAMINATION

Test of a candidate's driving skills and proficiency administered by an examiner that may include operation of a vehicle or driving simulator, as well as written, verbal, or demonstrative knowledge assessments.

3.13 EXAMINER

Individual accredited by a certifier who is authorized to administer SAE J3300 examinations (see [5.5](#)).

3.14 LEAD CERTIFIER

Individual elected to ensure the integrity of the entire SAE J3300 program and continuous improvements as needed (see [5.7](#)).

3.15 LINEAR RANGE

The lateral acceleration range over which vehicle response to steering control inputs is nearly proportional (beyond the on-center range, typically to about ± 0.4 g). (Refer to SAE J670.)

3.16 LIMIT-OVERSTEER

Colloquial usage: Condition of vehicle operating in a rear wheel skid with high sideslip angle. (Refer to SAE J670.)

3.17 NON-LINEAR RANGE

The lateral acceleration range over which vehicle response to steering control inputs is not proportional. (Refer to SAE J670.)

3.18 VEHICLE DYNAMICS AREA (VDA)

Uninterrupted paved area, which should be at least 90 m (300 feet) in length and width, with a maximum gradient of 2% in any direction, and approved by the certifying body.

4. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

SAE J3300 is a driving skill certification Recommended Practice. It has multiple levels of certification based on complexity or difficulty of driving task, as well as endorsements for specialty applications. SAE J3300 examinations must be administered by an SAE-certified examiner, using an SAE-certified test course and test vehicle. Some SAE J3300 certifications have prerequisites. Each certification has a specified validity period after which recertification is required, as well as annual maintenance requirements. Certifications may be revoked (decertification) for specific cause or for failure to complete annual maintenance requirements. A summary of prerequisites, annual maintenance requirements, and recertification periods is presented in [Appendix A](#).

Basic car control skills are assessed through the driving level certification process. In most cases, driving level certification is a prerequisite for endorsement certification.

For “specialty needs,” such as towing trailers, operating automated vehicles, and operating in low mu/winter conditions, endorsements have been created. Further endorsements for specialty applications, such as high center of gravity vehicles, off-road driving, motorcycles, and manual transmissions, may be created in the future.

The principles adhered to in the development of this family of documents include the following:

- a. Obtaining and maintaining certification.
 1. Objective pass/fail criteria for all levels.
 2. Consistent recertification periods.
 3. Annual maintenance requirements including annual declaration and code of conduct.
 4. Conditions for decertification.
 5. Process for qualifying examiners.
- b. Broad applicability.
 1. Able to replicate across multiple sites.
 2. Able to replicate using a variety of vehicles.

4.1 Prerequisites

Driving levels do not have any prerequisites other than a valid government-issued driver's license. Most of the endorsements have a driving level prerequisite; details are contained within the descriptions of each endorsement. The only exception is the low mu/winter driving endorsements LM2, LM3, and LM4. For unusual situations where an individual only drives in snowy conditions, a driving level certification is not required as a prerequisite, as the low mu/winter driving certifications LM2, LM3, and LM4 have been designed such that they cover the basic car control skills for winter-only driving.

4.2 Examinations

All examinations include objective pass/fail criteria. The specific requirements for driving levels are presented in [Appendix C](#). The requirements for the endorsements are available in SAE J3300/1 and higher.

All examinations include criteria that assess the same basic facets of driver skill.

4.2.1 Objective criteria address:

- Safety: Demonstrate ability to maneuver test vehicle without striking objects in the operating environment.
- Control: Demonstrate appropriate level of smoothness and vehicle control.
- Consistency: Demonstrate ability to repeat consistently.
- Pace: Demonstrate appropriate and consistent level of pace.

4.2.2 Secondary criterion addresses:

- Behavior/attitude: Demonstrate sound judgment and self-control.

4.3 If Candidate Does Not Pass

If a candidate fails a certification test, an immediate re-test is not allowed. Although there will be no prescribed waiting period, the candidate must provide evidence of successfully completing additional training before retesting. The candidate must provide to the examiner documentation of what training was conducted, including content and duration.

4.4 Recertification

All SAE J3300 certifications (driving levels and endorsements) have the same validity period. Recertification is required by retaking and passing the examination every 10 years for Levels 1 and 2, and every 5 years for Levels 3 and 4, including endorsements. Examiners must be recertified every 3 years. Certifiers must participate in an annual calibration process led by the lead certifier.

4.5 Annual Maintenance

Each driving skill certification requires annual maintenance to remain valid. Annual maintenance is required to ensure that the skills represented by an SAE J3300 certification(s) were exercised sufficiently within the 12-month period preceding the annual maintenance due date. Specific requirements for annual maintenance of the driving levels are presented in [6.5](#). Requirements for endorsements are included in SAE J3300/1 and higher Recommended Practices, which are part of the SAE J3300 family of documents.

Annual maintenance is satisfied by submitting an annual declaration and code of conduct. An annual declaration and code of conduct must be signed and submitted by the annual maintenance due date. Reminders for the annual maintenance will be sent automatically at 3 months, 1 month, 1 week, and 3 days prior to one's due date, or until the annual maintenance has been completed. See [5.1.2](#) for further details.

If an individual does not complete their annual maintenance by their due date, they will receive an automatic notification that their certification has dropped by one level, and that a reinstatement requires retaking and passing the examination.

If an individual is at risk of not meeting annual maintenance requirements, they should contact a certifier before their certification is due to expire. They may receive a 30-day certification extension for good cause, such as illness, moving residences, lengthy jury duty, etc. (Annual maintenance extensions are only allowed once per renewal period.)

4.5.1 Annual Declaration

The annual declaration process is the same for all certifications. The annual declaration includes:

- Verification that all annual maintenance requirements have been met for the certifications that the individual possesses.
- Compliance with all other governing body requirements.

4.5.2 Code of Conduct

All recipients of any SAE J3300 diving skills certification must sign a code of conduct statement upon initial application for a certification and at each annual maintenance. The code of conduct is the same for all SAE J3300 certifications and is as follows:

"I will be truthful in my annual declarations and understand that if untruths are uncovered, all of my SAE J3300 driving skills certifications will be revoked immediately."

4.6 Decertification

If an individual does not submit their annual declaration and meet other governing body requirements by their anniversary date, they will receive an automatic notification that their SAE J3300 certifications have dropped by one level. Certifications may also be revoked with cause (e.g., significant safety violations or changes in health or physical ability). Failure to disclose a change in condition relevant to one's certification status is considered to be a violation of the code of conduct. Such relevant conditions include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to maintain a valid government-issued driver's license without suspension.
- Failure to report a suspension of driving privileges by employer.
- Failure to report changes in physical/health condition that may affect one's ability to drive at the certified level(s).
- Failure to report all at-fault accidents for SAE J3300 review.

A candidate who has had their certification(s) revoked for reasons other than failure to complete annual maintenance requirements may be ineligible for reinstatement for either a specified time period or indefinitely. All decisions to suspend or withdraw a certification must be ratified by the SAE J3300 Certification Review Team.

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Probitas Authentication® is designated as the personnel credentialing body for the SAE J3300 driving skill certification.

5.1 Application for SAE J3300 Driving Skill Certification and Recertification

- 5.1.1 All candidates for SAE J3300 certification and recertification are required to submit an application to Probitas Authentication® that includes all required information and supporting documentation. An application shall be submitted for each certification requested. The application shall also include the agreement to abide by the SAE J3300 code of conduct and the SAE J3300 annual declaration reporting requirements as identified in this Recommended Practice.
- 5.1.2 To begin the application process for SAE J3300 driving skills certification, please go to <http://www.sae-itc.org/probitas/> and follow the links to SAE J3300 driving skills. From the webpage, you may download the "Application Guide for SAE J3300 Driving Skills Certification."
- 5.1.3 A certification decision will be made after a review and evaluation of the submitted application against the requirements for the applicable SAE J3300 driving skills certification. Once the application has been approved and the applicant obtains certification, the name of the certified individual and the certification level awarded will be made available to interested parties through the Probitas Authentication® website.

5.2 Annual Maintenance Administration

- 5.2.1 The annual maintenance due date is established by Probitas and identified in the certification holder's personal Probitas account.
- 5.2.2 Annually and prior to the annual maintenance deadline, certification holders shall access their Probitas account to complete the annual maintenance reporting requirements. Information about the process for completing the annual maintenance and the requirements can be found on the Probitas website in the guide titled "Annual Maintenance Requirements for SAE J3300 Driving Skills Certification."

5.3 Certification Decision Authority

- 5.3.1 The information gathered from the applicant for SAE J3300 driving skills certification shall meet the requirements of this Recommended Practice and be sufficient for Probitas to make a decision to approve and certify. It shall be retained for traceability in the event, for example, of an applicant's appeal or a complaint.
- 5.3.2 Probitas confines its decision on certification to those matters specifically related to the requirements of the certification scheme and the authority granted by the SAE J3300 Recommended Practice.
- 5.3.3 The decision on certification is made solely by Probitas on the basis of the information gathered from the candidate's application and from the examiner. Probitas personnel who make the decision on certification shall not have participated in the assessment of driving skills or training of the candidate.
- 5.3.4 Certification shall not be granted until all SAE J3300 driving skills certification requirements are fulfilled, including agreeing to and signing the SAE J3300 code of conduct and making full payment to Probitas for examination and application services. For recertification, the SAE J3300 annual declaration is also required.