Purpose: To investigate the reliability of using standard Snellen and modified ETDRS logMAR visual acuity charts to estimate the ability of patients with neovascular AMD to comply with the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) criteria for visual acuity (the standard number plate test).

Method: 50 Patients with neovascular AMD in at least one eye underwent monocular acuity test using 2m ETDRS chart, binocular acuity test using 6m Snellen chart and binocular number plate test at 20m (Gold Standard). The two theoretical cutoffs used for passing was >6/12 and >6/9 for Snellen and >70L and 77L on ETDRS chart. The percentage of patients who were overestimated by acuity chart testing compared to number plate testing was calculated.

Results: For the number plate test, 24 passed and 26 failed. In those who failed, 9 (35%) were 6/9 or better and 15 (58%) were 6/12 or better using the Snellen chart. 3 (11%) were 77L or better and 9(35%) were 70L or better using the ETDRS chart.

Conclusion: In patients with neovascular AMD, overestimation of their ability to perform the DVLA number plate test is less likely to occur if the ETDRS chart with a cut off of 77L is used. Using a cut off of 6/9 with the Snellen chart is 3 times more likely to result in overestimation. Caution is necessary when using visual acuity measurements obtained from clinic visual charts to estimate patient’s ability to perform the standard number plate test to satisfy UK driving standard.