



BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Bristol City Council is dedicated to providing the city with a top quality Private Hire Vehicle and Hackney Carriage service for its residents and visitors alike. The process for obtaining a driver's licence is therefore targeted at various aspects to ensure that the Council can be satisfied you are a fit and proper person to hold such a licence.

TAXI DRIVER APPLICATION INFORMATION

AN APPLICATION TO BECOME A TAXI DRIVER SHOULD NOT BE MADE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS YOU HAVE FULLY READ AND UNDERSTOOD ALL THE INFORMATION IN THIS PACK AND FEEL CONFIDENT THAT YOU CAN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE PROCESS.

IN ORDER TO MAKE AN APPLICATION YOU MUST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE LICENSING OFFICE (01179142500). APPLICANTS WHO HAVE NOT MADE AN APPOINTMENT WILL NOT BE SEEN.

This information is designed to make applicants fully aware of what is required to obtain a Private Hire Vehicle or Hackney Carriage driver's licence. The aim is to assist with the completion of all paperwork and what needs to be submitted to the Licensing Office in order to make a smooth and trouble free application. We have also included information regarding conditions attached to driver and vehicle licences so that you can be aware of the controls that will exist if you are successful in obtaining a taxi driver's licence.

The Drivers Application Pack

Your application pack should contain all of the following:

1. Application form for the grant of a private hire vehicle / hackney carriage driver's licence
2. Medical test information and application form
3. DVLA mandate form to allow checks on DVLA driving licence
4. CRB disclosure application form. Please note the application form contains guidance as to how to complete the form on the front page.
5. Guidance on identification requirements for CRB checks
6. DSA pack on driving assessment for taxi drivers
7. The driving standards agency application procedure
8. Guidelines relating to the relevance of criminal behaviour

9. Conditions attached to Private Hire Vehicle Driver's licences
10. Conditions attached to Private Hire Vehicles and Hackney Carriages
11. Equality Monitoring Form
12. Customer Satisfaction Survey

Fees (Where fees are set by Bristol City Council they are correct as of 01 April 2011 until 31 March 2012 and may increase on the 1 April 2012)

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| • Application fee | £18.50 |
| • DSA Driving Test (Type Z) | £79.66 / £92.94 |
| • Medical examination | £102.00 |
| • Essential Skills | £11.00 |
| • Knowledge Test | £51.00 |
| • CRB (Police Check) | £49.00 |
| • DVLA Mandate | £8.00 |
| • Licence Fee (On issue) | £52.00 |

Application Requirements

1.(a) Submit a completed Bristol City Council driver's application form and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. You will be required to pay the licence application, CRB check, DVLA check and first essential skills test fees.

(b) The application form, CRB check, DVLA check and application for an essential skills test must be completed at the same time.

(c) If you consider that you may have some problem with the CRB it is worth your while to discuss this with a member of staff before you submit an application.

(d) Complete the CRB check request form in black ink only (your CRB application will be rejected if it is not completed properly in black ink).

(e) You must bring appropriate identification for the CRB check, please see the separate information sheet on what is required by way of identification for CRB checks.

(f) Please note that the CRB check will only be valid for six months and if you fail to complete all other stages within that six month period you will be required to repeat this check and pay the appropriate fee.

(g) Provide your DVLA licence (where you have a photo-card type you must bring the photo-card and the paper counterpart). Photo-cards or paper licences that have expired will not be accepted and the application will be rejected.

(h) Complete the DVLA mandate form and pay the DVLA mandate fee

(i) Book an essential skills test. You must successfully pass this test before you can progress to the next stages.

(j) Complete and hand in the Equality Monitoring Form

(k) If you have not already sent in the customer satisfaction survey you may hand it in at this stage

Points 2,3 and 4 may be completed in any order once point 1 has been completed.

2. When you have successfully passed an essential skills test you may book a knowledge test and pay the knowledge test fee. Booking can be made by telephone and pay the test fee when you attend at the office to sit the test.

3. Provide satisfactory medical documentation, the Bristol City Council form must be completed by a doctor unless you have a category C or D on your DVLA driving Licence. If you do not have the appropriate medical classification on your DVLA driver's licence the medical fitness to work documentation may be submitted at the final stage when you have satisfied all criteria and are attending the office to be issued with your drivers badge and licence.

4. Pass the DSA Drivers test and provide the Pass certificate. The certificate may be submitted at the final stage when you have satisfied all criteria and are to attend to be issued with your drivers badge and licence.

5. Contact the Licensing office to make an appointment to have photograph taken and pay licence fee. Badge and licence would then be issued during that appointment.

A. Bristol City Council Application Form

This application form must be completed in full. You are advised to print your details as clearly as possible to avoid any errors when we log your details onto the computer system. Failure to complete all information may result in the application being rejected.

B. Essential Skills Test

(a) The essential skills test is a way of the Council ensuring that you have the basic skills to become a Private Hire Vehicle / Hackney Carriage Driver.

(b) The test will last for a maximum of 45 minutes in which you have to answer 20 questions that are divided into 4 sections to test your numeracy, literacy and ability to read and understand an A to Z.

(c) You are allowed one mistake in each of the above sections. If you get two or more questions wrong in any section you will fail the test. If you fail you will be given details of where you went wrong. If you pass you will be given a pass certificate. Please note that at no time will you be given a copy of the questions so please do not ask for them. Should you fail the test it may be because English is your second language or you need some additional support with reading, writing or maths. There are several places that offer additional training and support, such as local colleges.

C. Knowledge Test

(a) The knowledge test is a way of the Council ensuring that you have the basic knowledge of Bristol and the surrounding districts in order to become a Private Hire Vehicle / Hackney Carriage Driver.

(b) There are 100 multiple-choice questions selected at random by a computer programme. Each question will have a choice of four answers, the one that you think is correct is the one you would select. It is important to have a thorough knowledge of all areas of Bristol. Useful sources of information can be found in various publications such as Venue Magazine,

Bristol Evening Post, the internet for such things as restaurants via www.restaurant-guide.com, Tourist information Office etc.: the test covers such issues as roads and districts in Bristol, location of venues such as pubs, clubs, cemeteries and places of interest, routes around Bristol and places outside of Bristol.

(c) The format for the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers is exactly the same. An overall pass mark of 90% is required to become a hackney carriage driver and 75% for a private hire vehicle driver. All applicants must also pass at least 50% of all questions in each section in order to pass.

(d) There is no easy way to study for a knowledge test and it may take several hours of travelling around the city and testing your knowledge with friends and relatives. It is a fact that 80% of applicants fail their tests due to a lack of preparation and knowledge.

D. Essential Skills and Knowledge Tests

(a) The tests take place in a separate room that has 4 test stations. On starting the test the computer will randomly select the appropriate number of questions (every test is different). You are advised to read the questions and the four possible answers carefully and then select the answer you think is correct and then move to the next question. The computer has a small display which counts down the time, and the computer will flash to warn you that you are nearing the end of the test. Please note that the test will end automatically at the end of the allotted time. During the allotted period you may go back through your questions to recheck or alter your answers if you wish. The test is set up so that you are not required to use the keyboard or any other parts of the equipment other than the mouse to work your way through the test.

(b) You are not permitted to make any notes in any form during the test and mobile phones must be switched off. You are not permitted to have pens, papers or any form of recording device. Cheating in any form is not tolerated including attempting to tamper with the computer equipment. In the event that anyone tries to cheat their test will be immediately suspended and they may not be allowed to take another test. Having started the test you may not leave the room until you have finished it. Conversation between people being tested is not permitted. Please note that normally the test will be conducted in silence however the tester may need to talk to other officers, work on his computer or answer phone calls so you should be prepared for some background disturbance.

(c) If you pass the test you will be given a pass certificate at the end of the test. If you fail the knowledge test you will be told what marks you had in each section. Discussion about individual questions and answers is not permitted at any time. Should you feel that some of your questions were unfair or inaccurate you may appeal to senior officers for a review of the test. The person conducting the test will give you a form that you can complete in the reception area of our offices and hand to staff. The test will then be reviewed and you will be advised by letter of the outcome of that appeal. If your appeal is upheld you will be invited in to re-sit the test with no additional charge, if the appeal is not upheld then you will be required to rebook a test and pay again.

E. Criminal Records Bureau Drivers Checks

(a) CRB checks will be carried out initially on all applicants and then at three yearly intervals for all licence holders. Please be aware that if you have had a CRB check completed previously for another organisation it will not automatically be accepted for the purpose of taxi licensing. CRB forms are submitted to the Bureau at Liverpool, via The Bristol City Council Licensing Office. The checks may take a few weeks to be concluded by the CRB, you will receive a copy of your check in the post. If you think that you may have a conviction that might cast doubt on your suitability to become a driver please discuss your options with a member of the Licensing Staff.

(b) Unspent convictions may be referred to Licensing Committee. For example a prison sentence of six to thirty months will be considered 'unspent' for ten years, fines (excluding fixed penalties) will remain 'unspent' for five years.

(c) The CRB have requested an increased level of identification before they will accept applications for checks. They require items to be produced for viewing by the designated Council CRB Representative, please see guidance information provided.

(d) Please read the guidance notes provided with the CRB form carefully, particularly with regard to the forms of identification that will be required.

F. Medical Examination

(a) The standard is equivalent to a Class Two Medical, the same as the one required for a licence to drive a lorry or a bus (HGV/PCV)

(b) If you already hold this type of licence it will not be necessary for you to have a further medical to obtain your Taxi Driver's Licence. Provided you have the Class 2 Provisional Medical entitlement placed onto your DVLA Drivers License.

(c) It is possible for applicants to obtain a class 2 medical from their own GP or a medical practitioner of their own choice.

(d) It will be necessary for applicants to apply to the DVLA – by submitting a completed D4 medical form (signed by the appropriate doctor) – Accompanied by a D2 form (a Provisional Licence Application Form) to drive a Class 2 Vehicle.

(e) D2 forms can be ordered from the DVLA online.

(f) D4 Medical Forms can be downloaded from the DVLA website www.direct.gov.uk

(g) If you intend to claim exemption from medicals as a result of having the medical on your DVLA licence you must bring the updated DVLA licence with the medical clearance on it.

(h) If you have not already passed a Class Two Medical you will be required to obtain a similar standard medical confirmation from a doctor of your choice.

(i) Your initial medical will remain current until you reach the age of 45 years. It must then be renewed at 5 yearly intervals until you reach the age of 65. (j)

(k) The medical is required annually from then on.

(l) If you have had a medical from another Local Authority it will be accepted provided that a Class Two Standard Medical was carried out no longer than nine month previous to the time of making your application and you will need to bring written proof from the Local Authority.

G. DVLA Mandates

(a) The DVLA Mandate enables Bristol City Council to obtain a printed record of the applicant's driving licence record. This is in order to check that the DVLA licence is valid.

(b) This check is usually completed on a 3 yearly basis following the grant of a licence.

H. DSA Driving Test

The DSA Driving Test for taxi drivers is pitched between ordinary and advanced driving test. It is referred to as a type 'Z' test in the information booklet provided. You will need to submit the DSA pass certificate with the application.

I. DVLA Licence

(a) If you have a photo-card type of licence then you will be required to submit both parts ie the photo card and the paper counterpart..

(b) Please note that it must be the most current licence and that failure to provide both parts will result in the application being rejected. In the event of any discrepancies between the photo-card and the paper counterpart your application will be placed on hold and further investigations will take place.

(c) Please note that the address on the driving licence must correspond with the application address. Expiry dates of the photo-card will also be checked and applications refused if the photo-card has expired.

(d) Please note you must have held a full DVLA driving licence or equivalent for at least 12 months. If you hold a non UK driving licence you should check with the licensing office.

J. Equality Monitoring Form

Equalities monitoring enables the Council to check that everyone in the city is accessing the services to which they are entitled and that no one is discriminated against unlawfully. In completing this form you will help us to ensure that our services are fair and accessible to all.

K. Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Council is always endeavouring to improve its level of service to all our customers, by completing this form you will assist us in improving the system and processes for obtaining a taxi drivers badge. Your input is important and useful to us.