

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 7

meeting date: 23 JUNE 2015
 title: STEERING TO SUCCESS – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP
 submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
 principal author: MAIR HILL - SOLICITOR

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek Committee approval to consult licence holders on the recommendations of the working group.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives - }
- Corporate Priorities - } The Council aims to be a well-managed authority these proposals support that objective.
- Other Considerations - }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 A report was brought to this committee on 17 March 2015, which highlighted issues which had been raised regarding the removal of the temporary licence for private hire drivers. Following public participation at committee it became clear that the issue arose more particularly from the need to complete the Steering to Success course before a licence was issued for both private hire vehicle drivers and hackney carriage vehicle drivers. Committee therefore resolved to establish a working group which would consider the content and organisation of the Steering to Success course and report back to this committee. The Head of Legal and Democratic services was also authorised to consult licence holders in advance of this meeting.

2.2 Licence holders were consulted upon their views on the steering to success course. The consultation documents are enclosed with this report as **Appendix 1** and the responses received to the consultation are enclosed in tabular form as **Appendix 2**.

2.3 A working group was established made up of the Chair and Vice Chair of this committee and Councillor Brunskill. The working group met twice on 14 May 2015 and 11 June 2011. It considered what arrangements were in place in the surrounding authorities as well as the views of licence holders express at committee and in the consultation. A table detailing the various requirement of surrounding authorities is enclosed as **Appendix 3**, as are details of the course content for the Steering to Success course, the DVSA taxi driving test and the Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) ("**NVQ**"). The course content for the NVQ is lengthy and so only the content page has been included in hard copy. The complete document can be found at [http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/NVQ-and-competence-based-qualifications/Road-Passenger-Vehicle-Driving-\(Taxi-and-Private-](http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/NVQ-and-competence-based-qualifications/Road-Passenger-Vehicle-Driving-(Taxi-and-Private-)

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 There were 5 responses to the consultation. 1 response stated that they felt that the steering to success course was more than adequate; another considered that it was a good idea for new badges. The other 3 responses were critical of the course and in particular noted:
- The emphasis on English and maths rather than private hire issues;
 - There can potentially be a 6 month delay in being able to start and complete the course due to the arrangements at the college;
 - There should be an exemption from those who already have public service vehicle licences;
 - There should be an assessment of a driver's ability behind the wheel;
 - The course should be at the driver's own expense not tax payers; and
 - Any replacement course should include:
 - Driver assessment
 - Practical guidance on disabled passengers
 - Basic vehicle maintenance
 - Motoring law
 - Maths/English test with preparation in user's own time.
- 3.2 The working group considered the alternatives to the steering to success course, the comments made at the meeting on 17 March 2015 and during its consultation and recommends that the Council remove the requirement for the steering to success course to be passed before a licence be issued. This will be replaced by a requirement that all applicants provide evidence that they have passed the DVSA taxi driving test before a licence is issued and a requirement that an applicant complete and pass the NVQ within 12 months of the licence being issued. Should this not be the case the licence would not be renewed.
- 3.3 The working group felt that this would address the concerns expressed by licence holders: it would provide a practical driving and wheel chair assessment prior to issue of a licence; requires a higher level of maths and English (with applicant's being referred for separate literacy and numeracy course if they are not able to achieve the required level at initial assessment) includes more detailed knowledge of disability issues, is a national qualification which is transferrable and is more widely available; contains assessment on safety requirements and maintenance of the vehicle; and assessment on knowledge of the legislation applicable to private hire and hackney carriage drivers, operators and vehicles.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications
- Resources – resources would be expended in altering the arrangements for the issue of licences. There would also be a cost to licence holders for each of these courses.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal - No implications identified.
 - Political - No implications identified.

- Reputation – No implications identified.
- Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Authorise the Head of Democratic and Legal Services to consult licence holders upon the recommendation of the working group outlined in paragraph 3.2 this report.

MAIR HILL
SOLICITOR

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS
(If any)

Report of the Chief Executive dated 17 March 2015

Appendix 1 – consultation documents

Appendix 2 – response to consultation

Appendix 3 – table of requirement at surrounding authorities and details of course content.

For further information please ask for Mair Hill, extension 3216.

REF: MJH/LICENSING/23 June 2015

APPENDIX 1

please ask for: DIANE RICE
direct line: 01200 414418
e-mail: diane.rice@ribblevalley.gov.uk
my ref: DER
your ref:
date: 13 May 2015

Dear Sirs

RE: Consultation on changes to DBS and additional checks on driver's licences.

I write to inform you that the Council's Licensing Committee has recently been considering potential changes to the DBS checking process and the introduction of additional checks on driver's licences from 8 June 2015, when the paper counter parts become invalid.

The Council's Licensing Committee considered a report on this issue on 17 March 2015. If you wish to read this report it is available on the Council's website or you can telephone Lindsay Crawford to request a copy.

The proposed change is outlined in the attached note.

The Council is also considering the merits of the Steering to Success Course and whether there are alternative courses available. Your views are welcome upon this also.

If you wish to respond with your views on the proposed change, please do so in writing using the enclosed form and submitting it to Mair Hill at the above address on or before **9 June 2015**.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

DIANE RICE
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

To all private hire operators and all private hire and hackney carriage drivers and vehicle licence holders

Ribble Valley Borough Council
Potential changes to Disclosure and Barring Service, the introduction of an additional check on drivers licences and the associated costs

The Council's Licensing Committee discussed these matters on 17 March 2015. Committee was informed that it was possible that the Council's status as a registered body for the DBS service may be withdrawn in the future and the Council needed to make arrangements should this occur. It was proposed that this be through use of a service provider to process the DBS checks on behalf of the Council and that this would have an additional cost of approximately £10, the cost to be borne by licence holders.

Committee was also informed that from 8 June 2015 the paper counterpart of driving licences would no longer be valid and that the DVLA would no longer issue these. Committee considered the introduction of additional checks to be carried out on driver's licences to validate the information which would otherwise have been available in the counterpart licence. This would have an associated cost of £5 which it is proposed should be met by licence holders.

The Council's Licensing Committee has therefore decided to consult upon these issues.

The Council is also considering the relative merits of the Steering to Success Course and whether there are possible alternatives. If you have any views upon this or any information on possible alternatives, these are welcomed by the Council.

Timetable

The next meeting of the Council's Licensing Committee will be held on 23 June 2015. It is proposed that the results of this consultation will be reported to that Committee. The Consultation will therefore run from 14 May 2015 to 9 June 2015.

More details on the above proposals can be found in the Committee report available on request or via the Council's website.

If you wish to respond with your views on the proposed change to the licensing conditions please do this by completing the enclosed form and submitting it to Mair Hill at the Council Offices on or before **9 June 2015**.

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Name:

Address:
.....
.....

Licence No:

Contact details:
.....
.....
.....
.....

I support/do not support the use of a service provider to process DBS checks with an additional cost of approximately £10.

Comments:
.....
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.....
.....

I support/do not support the introduction of additional checks on driver's licences with the additional cost of approximately £5 being met by licence holders.

Comments:
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I wish to comment/not comment upon the Steering to Success Course and recommendations of possible alternatives.

Comments:
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APPENDIX 2

Response to Consultation on steering to success course

I wish to comment/not comment upon the Steering to Success Course and recommendations of possible alternatives	Comments
Comment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The steering to success course is modelled around the provision of a Math/English qualification to those who have no qualifications. The time spent on Private Hire/ taxi issues is minimal to those spent on Maths/English. There is a need to remove this element of the course from those who can evidence an appropriate level of Maths/English attainment. 2. It is totally unreasonable to impose on any person who is unemployed the mandatory requirement to achieve completion of this course prior to commencing employment with an operator. Any new applicant currently wishing to apply for a Private Hire badge as of the above date cannot commence a Steering to Success Course until early September 2015. The course will complete in December 2015 meaning that they will have to wait 6 months to commence employment. 3. The continued imposition of the above course in its current arrangement is damaging to viability of quality private hire businesses. 4. Hyndburn BC require completion of the Steering to Success Course within the first 6 months of granting a badge. The 6 month temporary licence is not renewed to a 12 month permanent licence if the course is not attended. 5. If there is an insistence on completion of such a course then these should be accessible to commence at ANY time to be completed at the pace of the learner, by the possible development of an online based course through a local higher Educational Establishment. 6. Blackburn with Darwen BC several other local Council's undertake both a practical driver test and Private Hire legislation knowledge as part of their Geographical Knowledge test in house. 7. There needs to be some form of exemption from the Steering to Success Course for those licenced to drive vehicles of a higher category IE the holder of a licence to drive a Public Service Vehicle (bus) should be able to drive a Private Hire Vehicle without further examination or test.
Comment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The steering to success course is modelled around the provision of a Math/English qualification to those who have no qualifications. The time spent on Private Hire/ taxi issues is minimal to those spent on Maths/English. There is a need to remove this element of the course from those who can evidence an appropriate level of Maths/English attainment. 2. It is totally unreasonable to impose on any person who is unemployed the mandatory requirement to achieve completion of

	<p>this course prior to commencing employment with an operator. Any new applicant currently wishing to apply for a Private Hire badge as of the above date cannot commence a Steering to Success Course until early September 2015. The course will complete in December 2015 meaning that they will have to wait 6 months to commence employment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The continued imposition of the above course in its current arrangement is damaging to viability of quality private hire businesses. 4. Hyndburn BC require completion of the Steering to Success Course within the first 6 months of granting a badge. The 6 month temporary licence is not renewed to a 12 month permanent licence if the course is not attended. 5. If there is an insistence on completion of such a course then these should be accessible to commence at ANY time to be completed at the pace of the learner, by the possible development of an online based course through a local higher Educational Establishment. 6. Blackburn with Darwen BC several other local Council's undertake both a practical driver test and Private Hire legislation knowledge as part of their Geographical Knowledge test in house. 7. There needs to be some form of exemption from the Steering to Success Course for those licenced to drive vehicles of a higher category IE the holder of a licence to drive a Public Service Vehicle (bus) should be able to drive a Private Hire Vehicle without further examination or test.
Comment	Certainly a good idea for prospective new badges.
Comment	I feel that the S.S course is more than adequate.
Comment	<p>The Steering to Success Course is, in my view, largely a waste of the driver's time and council-taxpayers money.</p> <p>There are two useful elements to it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic vehicle maintenance • Practical guidance on disabled passengers <p>Each of these sessions lasted for one evening of 2-3 hours, from a total of I think 9 sessions.</p> <p>Several sessions were devoted mainly to basic maths and English. These are clearly important to provide a good service to fare-paying passengers, but for this to be the bulk of the contact time at ACROSS was completely unnecessary for more than half of those present – irrespective of ethnic background.</p> <p>Of the remainder, the session involving the Police was all around being 'eyes and ears' for them to help combat crime, and more particularly terrorism. I have no issue with doing that, and think most of the public would agree, but I had expect more on the subject of motoring laws, and safe driving techniques.</p>

This brings me to the huge omission of Steering to Success. Given that the role is driving the public at all hours of the day or night, and often involving long distances on all sorts of roads, there is no assessment of the driver's ability behind the wheel. Surely, this can't be right.

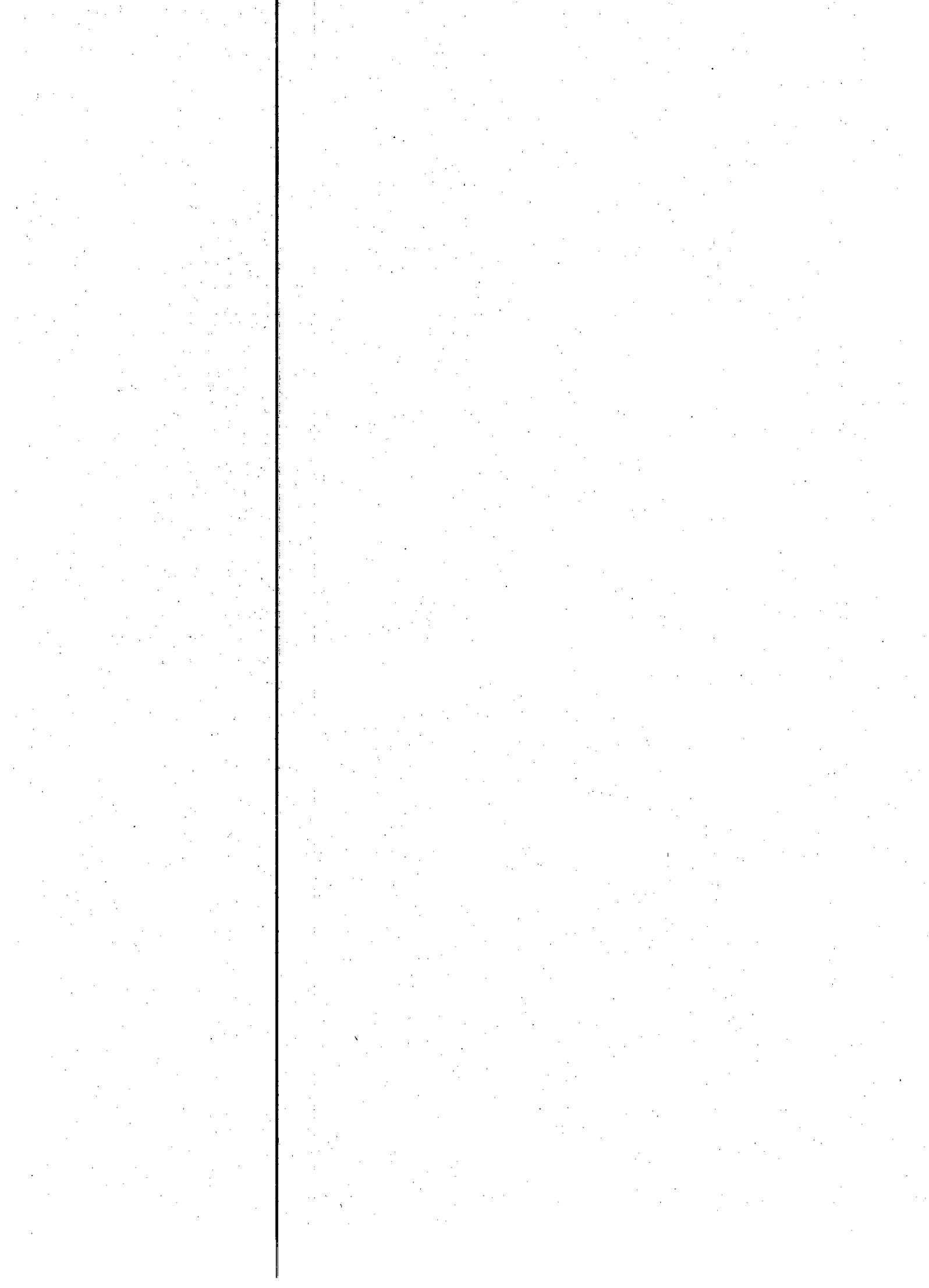
Finally, I also feel that courses of this nature should be at the user's expense, not the council tax-payer. Equivalent 'qualifications' for LGV or PCV licence would be at the user's expense and this should be too.

So far I have just dismissed the value of the current course. If it is to be replaced, I think the key elements should be:

- Driver assessment – a RoSPA course or something similar
- Practical guidance on disabled passengers
- Basic vehicle maintenance
- Motoring law – with particular regard to hackney and private-hire vehicles (including minibuses)
- Maths and English test (with preparation in user's own time).....

APPENDIX 3

Local Authority	Steering to Success Course	NVQ Level 2	Driving Standards Agency test	Duration of initial licence
Ribble Valley	✓			Licence not issued unless certificate presented.
Hyndburn	✓			Issued for 6 months and then extended to 12 months once steering to success course completed
Burnley		✓		Licence Issued but suspended if NVQ not passed within 12 months. Badge saying professionally qualified driver issued when NVQ passed.
Blackburn			✓	Licence not issued unless certificate presented.
Rossendale			✓	Licence not issued unless certificate presented.
Pendle				No additional qualifications required.



Information on Steering for Success Course

<u>Week 1</u>	Induction, course overview, initial assessments, enrolments, presenting a professional image.
<u>Week 2</u>	Relevance of number and literacy skills to taxi driving Numeracy diagnostic.
<u>Week 3</u>	Tax for the self-employed. Form filling, accident reports and making an insurance claim.
<u>Week 4</u>	Maths for taxi drivers – identifying and developing maths skills in preparation for Entry level maths exam.
<u>Week 5</u>	Customer service & Conflict resolution Presentation by the College's Information & Guidance Service regarding further study and pathways.
<u>Week 6</u>	Disability awareness & Disability handling – presentation and practical workshop.
<u>Week 7</u>	Community regulations, laws etc – input from Lancashire Police. Offences and penalties.
<u>Week 8</u>	M.O.T. vehicle presentation & practical workshop. Full use of Accross College's Motor Vehicle Facilities.
<u>Week 9</u>	Input from Licensing Authority – What are their expectations of you? Course evaluation, Celebration of Learning with presentation of certificates.

** We rely on guest speakers being available to present at several of these sessions.
The scheduling of the weeks may therefore vary from the order listed above.*



The car practical driving test

6. Practical driving test fees

! These are the prices to book your test using the official service (<https://www.gov.uk/book-practical-driving-test>). Unofficial websites may charge more.

Practical test type	Weekday price	Weekday evening (4:30pm onwards), weekend and bank holiday price
Car	£62	£75
Car and trailer	£115	£141

! You'll have to pay the full amount again if you don't pass your test and want to take another one.

Last updated: 8 June 2015

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Driving tests, motorcycle tests and learning to drive

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DVSA taxi driving test

You might need to pass the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) tax assessment to drive a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV) - contact your local council to find out if you need to.

There are 3 types of assessment you can take:

- the standard driving assessment
- the enhanced assessment - this includes a wheelchair exercise
- the upgrade assessment if you've done the standard assessment and now want to do the wheelchair exercise

Book your test

Contact your local council (<https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council>) to find out if you need to take the test.

Book your test (<https://www.gov.uk/book-practical-driving-test>) with DVSA if you have to take it.

What the assessment involves

The assessment lasts for about 40 minutes.

Eyesight test

At the start, you'll have to read a number plate from a distance of:

- 20 metres for vehicles with a new-style number plate
- 20.5 metres for vehicles with an old-style number plate

! New-style number plates start with 2 letters followed by 2 numbers, eg AB51 ABC.

You must use glasses or contact lenses during the whole test if you need them to read the number plate.

! You can't take the driving part of the assessment if you fail the eyesight test. You can still do the wheelchair exercise if you're taking the enhanced assessment.

Practical assessment

The assessment will include:

- a manoeuvre where you'll be asked to turn your vehicle to face the opposite direction
- around 10 minutes of driving without being given turn-by-turn directions by the examiner
- stops at the side of the road as if a passenger is getting in or out
- related questions, eg what to do if a passenger leaves property in your vehicle
- questions from the Highway Code (<https://www.gov.uk/highway-code>) and identifying traffic signs and road markings

You might also be asked to do an emergency stop.

! You'll pass the assessment if you make 9 faults or fewer. You'll fail if you make a serious or dangerous fault.

Wheelchair exercise

You'll have to do a wheelchair exercise if you're taking the enhanced assessment - you'll need to bring a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

You'll need to show your ability to:

- safely load and unload the wheelchair in your vehicle
- use the wheelchair brakes to secure and release it
- fasten the seat belts or safety harness
- secure any wheel belts or clamps fitted to your vehicle

Vehicle requirements

Your vehicle must meet the same requirements as the car practical driving test (<https://www.gov.uk/practical-driving-test-for-cars/rules-for-cars-used-for-driving-tests>), except it can't have L-plates ('L' or 'D' plates in Wales).

You're allowed to use a hire car to take the test.

If it has a private hire plate, the number must be the same as on the plate inside the vehicle.

It must also be wheelchair accessible if you're taking the enhanced test (eg London-style 'black cabs').

Documents you must bring

You must bring your driving licence.

If you have an old-style paper licence instead of a photocard, you must also bring a valid passport.

Passing the assessment

When you pass your taxi assessment, you'll get:

- a pass certificate (form TPH10)
- a copy of your assessment
- a debrief from the examiner

When you pass your wheelchair assessment, you'll get:

- a pass certificate (form WTA10)
- a copy of your assessment
- a debrief from the examiner

! Your local council will tell you what to do when you've passed the assessment.

Failing the assessment

If you fail the assessment you'll get:

- a debrief from the examiner
- a copy of your assessment

! You must wait at least 3 clear working days before you retake the assessment. Sundays and public holidays don't count as working days.

Driving and transport

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edexcel

Specification

Edexcel NVQ/competence
based qualifications

Edexcel Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) (QCF)

First registration January 2011

Issue 3

Edexcel, a Pearson company, is the UK's largest awarding organisation offering vocational and academic qualifications and testing, to employers, training providers, colleges, schools, and other places of learning in the UK, and in over 85 countries worldwide.

Our specialist suite of qualifications include NVQs, Apprenticeships, WorkSkills, Functional Skills, Foundation Learning, as well as our exclusive range of BTECs, from entry level right through to Higher National Diplomas.

This specification is Issue 3. Key changes are sidelined. We will inform centres of any changes to this issue. The latest issue can be found on the Edexcel website: www.edexcel.com

References to third party material made in this specification are made in good faith. Edexcel does not endorse, approve or accept responsibility for the content of materials, which may be subject to change, or any opinions expressed therein. (Material may include textbooks, journals, magazines and other publications and websites.)

Authorised by Martin Stretton
Prepared by Lucy Stewart

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