



Brighton & Hove City Council

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR NEW HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER APPLICANTS

To drive a Brighton & Hove Hackney Carriage or private hire taxi, you will need the relevant hackney carriage driver licence or private hire licence, issued by the council. The procedure for getting either licence is the same and it is possible to hold both licences at the same time. This document will provide you with the information you need to know about becoming a Brighton and Hove taxi driver - read it carefully.

This formation pack also includes an application form, a medical form, a DVLA mandate form, and an ethnic monitoring form. Make sure you have all these and do not discard them as you will need them for your First Application appointment.

Where do I start and what is involved?

1. You will need to make sure you are suitable to begin the process of becoming a Brighton & Hove taxi driver, see section **Suitability**.
2. You will need to start learning The Brighton and Hove Knowledge, see section **Knowledge Schools and the Knowledge Test**. It is highly recommended that you enrol at a knowledge school, as they will be able to provide you with the best tuition and guidance. They will explain to you what tests you will need to take and what time frames are involved.
3. You will need to pass the Driving Standard Agency (DSA) driving test. All enquiries regarding costs, booking, and suitable vehicles should be directed at the DSA which can be contacted on 0300 200 1122, or visit www.dsa.gov.uk.
4. You will need to hold Level 2 BTEC Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver Award, (see section **BTEC course**) which also meets the required literacy and numeracy skills as set by the Skills for Life Strategy for the passenger transport industry.
5. You will need to take and pass your Brighton and then Hove Knowledge and Route tests. Information on these tests can be found in section **Knowledge schools and the Knowledge Test**. Your Knowledge School will be able to provide you with detailed information regarding these tests. Please note that you cannot book any of the tests until the council has received a reply from the DBS known as an Enhanced Disclosure (which can take several weeks from the date of your First Application) and all other checks are complete and satisfactory including passing the BTEC & DSA test. Once you have commenced the knowledge tests you are required to complete them all within two months, otherwise you will need to retake all the knowledge tests again.

Suitability

To be granted a licence:

1. You must have held a full UK or EU driver licence for at least 12 months when you come in for your First Application appointment. An EU driver licence must be converted to a full UK driving licence prior to this appointment.
2. You must be a “fit and proper” person to hold a licence:
 - a. *Fit*: you must provide a completed medical form and comply with the medical requirements of the council (DVLA Group 2 driver licence medical standards) in order to be deemed medically fit. DVLA Group 2 standards are more stringent than those for an ordinary DVLA driver licence. Information on the DVLA Group 2 driver licence medical requirements can be found in the “At a Glance” leaflet at www.dvla.gov.uk/medical. Alternatively, drivers can call the DVLA on 0870 240 0009. If in any further doubt, you should contact the council’s Hackney Carriage officer for advice at your earliest opportunity.
 - b. *Proper*: in order to determine whether you are proper person, you will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. You must disclose all previous convictions, cautions, ASBO’s, fixed-penalty notices, whether or not they are spent, and an Enhanced DBS check will be made through the DBS. If you have previous convictions they may prevent you from being granted a licence. If this is the case, you are strongly advised to contact the council’s Hackney Carriage Officer at the earliest opportunity. Please note that Brighton & Hove Council follows the DBS code of practice (a copy of which can be made available upon request).
3. You will need to provide the council with the names and addresses of two people (not relatives and whom have known you for a minimum of two years) who can provide a character reference.

Please note: drivers under 25 and who have held a UK or EU driver licence for less than three years may find it difficult or very expensive to get taxi driver insurance. If you are in that category, it is advisable to speak to one of the taxi operators before going any further with your application.

Knowledge schools and the Knowledge Test

You can learn all the information you need for the Brighton and Hove Knowledge Test by enrolling and attending any knowledge school of your choice.

The Knowledge Test consists of both theoretical and practical testing of your knowledge of Brighton and Hove.

The Theoretical Tests

Before you will be able to undertake your route test the council must be satisfied that you are a fit and proper person and have successfully completed all the required elements to become a licensed Taxi driver including a satisfactory DBS disclosure, passing the medical, obtaining Level 2 BTEC Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver Award and passing the DSA test.

The theoretical tests are verbal tests and are split into Brighton and Hove, which require you to learn the locations of the city's roads, geographical areas, and places of interest. You are also required to understand the conditions that will apply to any Hackney Carriage and private hire licences issued by the council (see section entitled Licence Conditions Affecting Driver of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Cars).

- The Brighton test: you will be asked 10 questions about the places of interest in Brighton (with nine correct answers to pass). You will then be asked 50 questions about the locations of roads within Brighton (with a minimum of 45 correct answers to pass) - you will be given the name of road and you must answer by giving the names of the roads at each end. There is a 30 minute time limit to complete road test.
- The Hove test follows the same formula as the Brighton test but relates to places of interest and roads in Hove. A further 10 questions on licence conditions (nine correct answers to pass), see Section "LICENCE CONDITIONS AFFECTING DRIVERS OF HACKNEY CARRIAGES AND PRIVATE HIRE CARS".

Once you have successfully passed both of the Brighton and Hove theoretical tests, you will be able to book a time to sit the practical test, known as the Route Test.

The Route Test

The Route Test is a practical test where you must drive the examiner to 15 randomly selected destinations using the shortest possible route for each journey. These destinations are taken from both places of interest lists and road lists you have been tested on for Brighton and Hove. For each route two points are awarded for arriving at the destination (not driving passed it) and two points for taking the shortest route. You will also be expected to comply with the speed limits, road regulations, and all traffic signs. Failure to do so means you will fail this part of the test irrespective of how well you reach the destinations. The pass mark for the Route Test is 80% (48 out of 60).

Please note that the geographical boundaries within which you will be tested are those of the city council: in the east, Longridge Avenue in Saltdean; in the west, the city's western boundary which is marked on maps running northwest from St Richards Road, Portslade to include all of Portslade and Mile Oak; and, to the north, everything inside the bypass except the village of Falmer but including the Sussex University campus.

What happens if I fail?

You can take a test up to three times. Tests will be stopped if you fail any element of any the test but you can "bank" a pass in any completed element up to that stage. However, you must complete the Route test within 8 weeks of passing the Brighton Test if you do not you will need to retake the Brighton Test. If you fail on the third test

you will be refused a licence but you will be able to make a fresh application for a licence and go through the whole testing procedure again.

Making your First Application

You should submit your application to the Taxi Licensing Office, known as making your First Application. In order to do this, you must book an appointment (01273 294429) to come to the Taxi Licensing Office at Hove Town Hall in person.

During the appointment, you will need to bring these completed forms with you:

- Drivers Application form
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enquiry form*
- Medical form (must be completed and stamped by your own doctor)
- DVLA Mandate enquiry form
- Ethnic Monitoring form

All these forms are included with this information pack except the DBS enquiry form. A separate sheet which is included in this information pack and entitled DBS Guidance Notes tells you how to obtain the DBS enquiry form. * only fill in the sections of the DBS as outlined in the DBS Guidance booklet.

In addition to these completed forms, you will also need to bring:

- DVLA driver licence
- Passport (If you are a non EU national you must also provide evidence that you are able to live and work in the UK)
- 1 colour passport-sized photograph
- Proof of your national insurance number – i.e. A letter from the Inland Revenue or similar organisation showing that number. Please note that the National Insurance Card is not acceptable as evidence of your NI number.
- A separate proof of your address, such as a utility bill, a bank statement, a credit card statement, or a mortgage statement
- Driving Standard Agency (DSA) pass certificate (if passed)

During your First Application appointment, an officer from the Taxi Licensing Office will check that you have filled out all documents correctly and provided all the necessary personal identification for the DBS form. Please note that an incomplete First Application means you may be sent away and asked to book another appointment causing you a delay.

Authorisation to Work in the UK & Points-Based System. If you do not hold a UK or EU member state passport you must be able to provide evidence that you are able to live and work in the UK if requested. Your right to live and work in the UK may be checked with the UK Border Agency.

Please note: if you are living in the UK as a holder of a student visa **your application will be refused** as students are unable to work as a self employed persons.

Following the appointment, your completed DBS form will be sent off to the DBS by the Taxi Licensing Office. The DBS's reply is called an Enhanced Disclosure and you will need to present it to the Taxi Licensing Office before you will be able to book your first test. You should take into account that the DBS may take several weeks to undertake your criminal records check.

Please note that your DBS disclosure and medical are both valid for one year. This means that if you have not passed all your tests within one year, you will be required to re-submit a new medical and new DBS form.

BTEC Courses

You will need to find a training provider that can deliver the required training and testing for the Level 2 BTEC - Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver Award. Please speak to your knowledge school who will be able to advise you on finding a training provider. Please check that the provider can provide you with proof that you meet the required literacy and numeracy skills as set by the Skills for Life Strategy for the passenger transport industry. The provider must also be accredited by a nationally recognised awarding body. You must have completed the Btec before commencing the knowledge tests.

Fees

The fee for the First Application is £101. You will also need to pay £44 for the DBS check. That is a total of £145. You will be invoiced for these amounts shortly after you have made application. If you do not pay these invoices your application will not proceed and you will not be issued a licence. Upon successful completion of all the requirements to be licensed as a driver and the Route Test, there is no cost for your first set of either hackney carriage or private hire badges and licence. You will be charged £25.00 per knowledge test and £35.00 per route test which will be invoiced after each test. Please note that it is possible to have both a hackney carriage licence and private hire licence at the same time for an additional cost of £76.00.

Once the application is made, you will receive an invoice that must be paid soon as possible, or your application will not be processed.

Contact

For further information or to book an appointment, please contact one of officers at the council's Taxi Licensing Office on 01273 294429. The Taxi Licensing Office operates an appointment-only based system and for all appointments please present yourself at City Direct reception at Hove Town Hall. The council's Hackney Carriage officer is Martin Seymour and can be contacted on 01273 294429 or via email at: hco@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

Additional information on Brighton and Hove taxis can be found the Brighton and Hove City Council's website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk



Hackney Carriage Office
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ

(01273) 294429

POLICE CHECKS – FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

You need a Police check in connection with your application for your hackney carriage or private hire driver licence. These checks are now known as disclosures and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) carries them out. They charge £44 for an Enhanced disclosure. You pay that to the council and we send it on to the DBS. You will find an application form enclosed, complete it and then bring it to the hackney carriage office together with your licence application.

Do not return it to the DBS form yourself or take it to the Police.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW

- 1 You complete sections A to E of that form in **BLACK** ink, NOT BLUE. You can ignore sections W to Z – leave them blank and DO NOT CROSS THEM THROUGH. Do not send this form back to the DBS yourself. It has to be returned by the hackney carriage officer.
- 2 Call the Taxi Licensing Office on (01273) 294429 for an appointment.
- 3 When you go to the Taxi Licensing Office take with you your licence application form and your DVLA driver licence (if it's a photo licence bring the photo card and the paper counterpart), your passport, two separate proofs of address, documentary proof of your national insurance number (not the card itself as this is not accepted by the DBS as it is easily duplicated), 1 recent colour passport photograph.

The disclosure information will only be used in connection with your licence application. It will only be retained while the licensing process takes place. Brighton & Hove City Council follows the DBS code of practice a copy of which is available upon request or on the DBS website. The DBS website www.DBS.gov.uk contains information about disclosures.

About You: Equalities Monitoring

We want to make sure that our services are available to everyone in the community and that everyone is treated fairly when they use, or attempt to use, our services.

We will only use the information collected on this form to help us improve services and to identify gaps or barriers. You do not have to fill in this section and you can answer just some of the questions.

The information collected using this form is combined together so it is not possible to link any responses back to a particular person.

What age are you? <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	
What gender are you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
Do you identify as the gender you were assigned at birth?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/> No
How would you describe your ethnic origin?		
<p>White</p> <input type="checkbox"/> English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy <input type="checkbox"/> Traveller <input type="checkbox"/> Polish <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> Sudanese <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background (please give details)	<p>Black or Black British</p> <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Sudanese <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background (please give details)	<p>Other Ethnic Group</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish <input type="checkbox"/> Arab <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group (please give details) <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <u>After</u> you have ticked a box: If there is an ethnic category that is not included here that you think should be, please tell us what it is:
<p>Asian or Asian British</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background (please give details)	<p>Mixed</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Asian & White <input type="checkbox"/> Asian & Black African <input type="checkbox"/> Asian & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed background (please give details)	

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/ Straight <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian/ Gay woman <input type="checkbox"/> Gay man <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		
What is your religion or belief?		
<input type="checkbox"/> I have no particular religion <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu <input type="checkbox"/> Jain <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Pagan <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh <input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other philosophical belief (please state) <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (You do not need to answer the next question) <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say (You do not need to answer the next question)
If you answered 'yes' to the last question, please state the type of impairment which applies to you. If you have more than one impairment please indicate all that apply. If none of the categories apply, please mark 'other' and write an answer in.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory Impairment Disability/Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/> Long-standing Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning
Are you a carer? This means you look after or give help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either; long term physical or mental ill health because of a disability, a problem related to age. Please do not count anything you do as part of your employment.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
If yes, do you care for a.....?		<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Child with special needs <input type="checkbox"/> Other family member <input type="checkbox"/> Partner / spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please give details)
Armed Forces Service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you <u>currently</u> serving in the UK Armed Forces (this includes reservists or part-time service, eg: Territorial Army)? • Have you <u>ever</u> served in the UK Armed Forces? • Are you a member of a current or former serviceman or woman's immediate family/household? 		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No