GUIDANCE NOTES – FOR NEW PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS ONLY

If an applicant is looking to obtain a Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence, please read the FAQs at the end of this information.

An applicant who is looking to apply for a Private Hire Drivers Licence must first apply and successfully pass the council's Private Hire Knowledge Test. They can do this by applying online at www.newport.gov.uk/taxi. Please note that the Licensing Department no longer accepts paper application forms for the test. If an applicant does not have internet access, they can apply at their local library (www.newport.gov.uk/en/Leisure-Tourism/Libraries/Find-a-library/Library-locations.aspx).

Before an applicant applies to sit the test, they must:

1. Ensure they have held a British (DVLA) Drivers Licence (or EEA*) for a minimum of 12 months;

If the applicant holds a licence from the European Economic Area (EEA) country (www.gov.uk/eu-eea) they will be required to convert it to a full UK (DVLA) Licence after they pass the test.

2. Have lived in the UK for at least 5 continuous years;

If the applicant has not, they will be required to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct from the relevant embassy or embassies where they were residing within that period.

3. Be legally entitled to work within the UK;

Newport City Council (Licensing Department) complies with the Immigration Act 2016. It should be noted that if an applicant provides evidence of limited right to work in the UK, a licence will be granted, but will expire with the immigration status. For example if the right to work expires in 8 months, a Private Hire Drivers Licence will be granted but will expire along with the right to work. If the applicant obtains a further extension with the Home Office, they will be required to apply for a new licence and pay the required fees to do so.

4. Inform the Licensing Department if they have:

   • Been diagnosed with a medical condition
   • any criminal and/or a motoring convictions

Certain medical conditions and convictions may affect the application and it is important that they are discussed prior to them beginning the process. Failure to declare a medical condition and/or a conviction may result in the application being refused. Further information can be found within the council policy at www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Business/Licences-and-permits/Hackney-Carriage-and-Private-Hire-Policy.pdf

If the applicant is satisfied that they can meet the above, the application can be submitted (please note an email address will be required). After submitting the application form they will be advised (usually the next working day after the form was submitted) by email of the date and the time of when the test will be.
The Licensing Department does have a very high number of applicants who are waiting to sit the test, but once an applicant has applied, we aim for them to sit the test within a maximum of 6 weeks. If necessary extra test dates will be arranged.

**The Test Day**

It should be noted that the test is undertaken only on a Friday (usually the last of the month) and the applicant should make the necessary arrangements to attend promptly and prepare themselves to take at least 3 hours out of their day (this does not include travelling time to the venue).

**Location of test**

The majority of the tests will take place at the Civic Centre. The applicant will be advised of the location in the acknowledgement email. **If for any reason the location changes they again will be advised by email.**

The applicant will be required to arrive ten minutes prior to the start time and to report to the reception area. They will then be directed to the waiting area. They must not enter the room until they are called.

**Parking**

The nearest public (pay and display) car park to the Civic Centre is off Faulkner Road. This is very busy throughout the day and there will be limited space. If an applicant requires a parking space, it is recommended that they arrive early, especially if they need to park in a side street (legally) or another public car park. **If the applicant is late due to failure to find a parking space, will not be a relevant excuse and they will be refused to sit the test.**

**Please note that the car park off Fields Road is for staff only. Anyone who parks here without a permit will be liable to a fixed penalty notice.**

**The test**

The day is made up of two sessions -

**CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) PRESENTATION (APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES)**

Prior to the test each applicant will have received a leaflet (within their email) giving a brief outline of CSE. On the day the officer will give a more in-depth presentation on CSE and the importance of safeguarding when transporting children, young people and vulnerable adults. Further information can be found at [www.newport.gov.uk/en/Business/Licences--permits/Taxi-Licensing/Safeguarding.aspx](http://www.newport.gov.uk/en/Business/Licences--permits/Taxi-Licensing/Safeguarding.aspx)

**PRIVATE HIRE KNOWLEDGE TEST (APPROXIMATELY 90 MINUTES)**

After the presentation, the test will commence immediately afterwards. It consists of the following –

1. **Listening and understanding (Basic English section) (multiple choice)**

Five sentences will be read out twice and the applicant will be required to match what they hear **(The pass mark is 4 out of 5)**
2. **Best answers (Basic English section) (multiple choice)**

Ten sentences will be read out twice and the applicant will be required to choose the best reply to each sentence (pass mark is 8 out of 10)

3. **A-Z**

**Part 1**

Using an A-Z (that is provided), the invigilator will read out FIVE road or street names in Newport. The applicant will then be required (by using the index of the book) to write down the map page number and grid reference for the places that they hear (pass mark is 4 out of 5)

**Part 2**

With the use of the A-Z, the applicant will be required to find places of interest based in Newport (e.g. a Newport based school, museum, tourist attraction) or a particular area (suburb) of Newport. (The pass mark is 4 out of 5)

4. **Children, young people and vulnerable adults (CSE and safeguarding)**

Following on from the presentation to ensure understanding of the topic and will include 10 multiple choice questions (pass mark is 9 out of 10)

5. **Private Hire Licensing Law (multiple choice)**

Applicants will be tested on their knowledge and the understanding of the law and council’s conditions and policies. Also included will be disability issues they may encounter (in view of the special considerations to be made when dealing with passengers of differing physical abilities) (Pass mark for this section is 9 out of 10).

In order to prepare for this section the applicant can view the policy and the conditions at www.newport.gov.uy/taxi

6. **Highway Code**

Applicants will be asked to answer a number of multiple choice questions regarding driving skills, road information and etiquette as set out in the Highway Code (pass mark is 8 out of 10).

7. **Numeracy (arithmetical skills)**

Applicants will be asked a number of questions of an arithmetical nature (particular to the fact that they will be dealing with money on a daily basis). A calculator will not be permitted. (Pass mark is 4 out of 5).

**After the test**

The applicant will receive notification in writing of the result of the test within 10-14 working days. The applicant should only contact the Licensing Department after this time period, as they will not receive a response beforehand.
There will be two simple outcomes – the applicant has either passed or failed.

1. If the applicant passes (all sections), they will receive an application pack and an appointment to discuss the application with an officer. Please see FAQs for the breakdown of the procedure.

2. If the applicant fails, they will be notified of what section(s) they failed. The Licensing Department will not discuss what questions were answered incorrectly (or correctly) nor will they be permitted to view the paper. **If they wish to dispute the result they can make an appeal to the Licensing Manager by emailing environment.licensing@newport.gov.uk**

   If the applicant wishes to continue the process, they will be required to reapply (including paying the test fee) and sit the presentation and test once again.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (TEST DAY)**

Q – I have received my test paper when can I begin?
A – Once you have received your paper you must complete the front page. You must however not open it until the officer advises the test has begun.

Q - Can you repeat the question?
A - Where the officer reads out a question, it shall be read out twice and twice only. Do not ask again or you shall be disqualified. You must listen carefully.

Q - I have marked down the wrong answer, what shall I do?
A – If this happens, please cross out what you think is the wrong answer and circle (or place) the correct answer.

Q – Can I ask the officer if I have the correct answer or give me the correct answer?
A – Do not ask this question. You are sitting strict test conditions. If you ask either question you will be disqualified.

Q - Can I request extra time?
A – No, if you continue writing after the officer has advised the test is over, you will be automatically disqualified.

However, if you wish to return to any section during the required time to check or change any answer you can do so (although this will not be possible for the basic English sections).

Q – My documents have not been checked, what should I do?
A – Please leave out your documents that you were required to bring. They will be checked during/after the test.

If your documents have still not been checked at the end of the test, please make it aware to an officer as failure to be seen will result in disqualification.

Q – When will I find out my result?
A - Once you have sat the test you will receive your result in writing within 10-14 days. Do not attempt to contact the licensing department.

If you **pass** you will be invited in to see an officer to begin the process.

If you **fail** any section and you wish to continue, you must reapply and resit the entire test.

For further information, please visit [www.newport.gov.uk/taxi](http://www.newport.gov.uk/taxi)
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (AFTER THE TEST)

Q – I have failed can I see/have my answer paper after it has been marked?
No, this will not be possible. We will however advise of what section(s) has been failed so that you can concentrate on those particular sections.

Q – I understand that I require a medical, when can I get this?
Once you have been advised that you have passed the test you can apply for the medical by downloading the document from www.newport.gov.uk/taxi. It must be completed by your own gp or a doctor who has viewed your entire medical history. Once completed you must return it to the licensing department within 2 month of it being completed.

Q – How much will the medical cost?
The cost of the medical is between you and your GP and not set by the council.
For a full list of other fees please visit the licensing website.

Q – I have criminal/motoring convictions; can I still apply for the medical?
If you have any criminal or motoring convictions, it is advised that you wait for your appointment and speak with the officer. In certain circumstances, an application may be refused / rejected if the applicant has convictions.
It should be noted that if you apply for a medical and then your application is then subsequently refused/rejected, the council will not refund any medical fee.

Q- What happens at the appointment?
At the arranged appointment (which occurs at the Information Station, Queensway), the applicant will be required to produce the following –

- Completed application
- DVLA driving licence showing full name and current address.
- Current valid passport
- Biometric residence permit or work visa (if necessary)
- 1 additional form of identification taken from the disclosure and barring service list (or 2 additional if applicant is unable to provide a valid passport)
- A valid email address (in order to apply online for an enhanced criminal disclosure)
- A code from the DVLA in order that the applicant can share their driving licence history with the licensing department. This can be done online at www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence or by telephoning 03000 830013. It should be noted that this code expires after 21 days.
- A recent passport sized photograph (in colour)
- A certificate of good conduct (if applicant has not resided in the UK for at least 5 years)
- The required fees will be also be required to be paid (please visit www.newport.gov.uk/taxi for the current fees). This will include the licence fee and the DBS disclosure fee.

Q – When will I be issued with my private hire driver’s licence?
There is no set answer to this and it all depends on each applicant. The licensing department has an obligation that all applicants are considered to be fit and proper to hold the required licence and all checks must be carried out to a satisfactory conclusion (i.e. DBS / DVLA / medical). If an applicant has nothing of concern a licence can be granted between 1 & 3 months.
Once issued the licence will be valid for 3 years (or the length of time the applicant has the right to work in the UK)

**Q – I’m looking to apply for a hackney carriage driver’s licence, how do I go about this?**

Newport city council issues two type of drivers licence, private hire drivers (entitles the holder to drive NCC private hire vehicles only) and dual licence (entitles the holder to driver both private hire and hackney carriage vehicles).

In order to apply for a dual licence, the applicant must first apply to sit the private hire test. Once they successfully pass, they can apply to sit the hackney carriage knowledge test.

If they do this within 6 months of passing the private hire test, then no further fee will be required. After 6 months the test fee will be required to be paid.

**Q – I’m already a private hire driver with NCC, how can I upgrade my licence to a dual licence?**

If the applicant is already a private hire driver with Newport City Council, they can automatically apply to sit the hackney carriage test (once the test fee has been paid) and once passed they can upgrade their licence. They will be advised in writing of what will be required to do so.

**Q - What are the additional sections for the hackney carriage test?**

There are 3 additional sections –

1. Hackney Carriage licensing law.
   
   Applicants will be tested on their knowledge and understanding of Hackney Carriage law and council’s Hackney Carriage conditions and policies.

2. Locations section
   
   You will be required to advise where certain landmarks are located in the Newport area (multiple choice)

3. Knowledge routes
   
   Prior to the test date, you will be provided a list of routes which you will be required to learn. At the test you will be required to show the shortest location from the start location to the final destination. You should also be able to name the roads and directions you travel along and identify any major features on the route (e.g. traffic lights; roundabouts; schools; pubs etc.)

**If you have any other questions, please contact the licensing department on 01633 656656.**