

Policy Note: 3rd August 2022
Hackney Carriage, Private Hire Operator,
Vehicle & Driver Policy 2022-2025



The purpose of this note is to provide further clarification and interpretation since the Policy was approved in early 2022. Both Councils have put this guidance note together in response to some requests by the Taxi Trade, for the Council to reconsider these conditions and review certain aspects of the Policy.

Age of Vehicles

Section 6.1.5 and 6.1.6

There is no change to the Policy on this matter at this current time. To have this age policy ensures that new vehicles are of a good standard and the policy is consistent with other local authorities in the Eastern Region. There is currently no maximum age limit for existing vehicles which is more flexible than some approaches elsewhere.

New vehicles

Be no more than eight years of age since the date of first registration.

New and existing vehicles

Where a currently licensed vehicle of either petrol or diesel reaches ten years of age it must be tested a minimum of twice a year to ensure the vehicle remains fully compliant and fit for purpose.

Training of Drivers

Section 2.19

New drivers, lapsed existing drivers and non-driver operators

You are required to undertake the **Level 2 Introduction to the Role of the Professional Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Course**.

The fee for the full two-day course is currently £150 via the West Suffolk College.

<https://www.wsc.ac.uk/find-a-course?keywords=role%20of%20the%20professional%20taxi>

The Licensing Authority will consider alternative providers of the course and all details of the proposed course will require approval by the Licensing Authority before the applicant undertakes this. This provides drivers with a choice of provider as the course consists of the following nine units which are mandatory.

They are:

- Health & Safety in the Taxi and Private Hire Work Environment
- Road Safety when Driving Passengers in a Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle
- Professional Customer Service in the Taxi and Private Hire Industry
- Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Maintenance and Safety Inspections
- The Regulatory Framework of the Taxi and Private Hire Industry
- Taxi and Private Hire Services for Passengers who Require Assistance (includes wheelchair observations)
- Routes and Fares in the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Industries
- Transporting of Parcels, Luggage and Other Items in the Taxi and Private Hire Industry
- Transporting of Children and Young Persons by Taxi or Private Hire Vehicles

Existing Drivers

You are required to undertake the '**Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver Safeguarding Training.**' The fee for the 2–3-hour course is £45 via the West Suffolk College.

<https://www.wsc.ac.uk/find-a-course?keywords=professional%20taxi%20safeguarding>

The Blue Lamp Trust is a virtual classroom which provides two courses, the first titled '**Taxi Safeguarding**' at a current cost of £25, and '**Disability Awareness**' at a current cost of £40. These both together cover the same content as the West Suffolk College course.

<https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk>

The Licensing Authority will consider alternative providers of the safeguarding and disability awareness course and all details of the proposed course will require approval by the Licensing Authority.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles and Loading

Section 6.1.11 and 6.22.2

The Council need to ensure that there is adequate wheelchair accessibility provision within the districts. A survey undertaken by Suffolk Disability Forum and Mid Suffolk Disability Forum identified that most wheelchair users within our District area prefer to prebook their vehicles rather than hire these directly from the rank. Therefore, this provision is for both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

All Hackney Carriage Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles shall be side loading when positioned on a rank.

Advertising on Vehicles

Section 6.16

This request by the Trade will be considered at the next Policy review.

Please note there will be no further review of this Policy during this current year 2022/23 however both Councils will be seeking views again in the future.