

## Taxi & Private Hire Driving Proficiency Test & Wheelchair Assessment

### Applicant Guidance

In order to satisfy the Council that an applicant is competent to drive at the standard required to be a professional driver, anyone applying for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence for the first time will be required to successfully pass a driving proficiency test.

It is **strongly recommended** that applicants seek guidance before attending the test from an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI). One or two lessons will help ensure you are correctly prepared and reduce the risk of failing and having to re-sit the test, which will have a time and cost implication.

In all cases, the driving proficiency test must not have been conducted earlier than **one calendar year** prior to the submission of a valid application to the Authority. i.e. If an application is submitted to the Authority on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016, the test must not have been conducted before the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

In addition any applicant applying to drive a Wheelchair Access Vehicle (WAV) will also need to successfully pass a wheelchair assessment, so that the Council can be satisfied that the applicant can safely load and unload wheelchair users, as well as, secure them in the vehicle correctly.

This fact sheet helps provide guidance to applicants regarding test providers and a basic summary of what the test(s) involve.

#### **What the driving proficiency test involves**

The test is based upon the taxi driving assessment that used to be offered by the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

#### **1. 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.

If you fail the eyesight test then it will not be possible to conduct the remainder of the test.

## **2. Practical assessment**

The assessment will include:

- A driving element lasting at least 40 minutes
- 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](#) 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.

The test provider will send further details of what the test entails after booking.

## **3. Vehicle requirements**

To sit the test your car must:

- be taxed
- be insured
- be roadworthy and have a current MOT (if it's over 3 years old)
- have no warning lights showing, for example, the airbag warning light
- have no tyre damage and the legal tread depth on each tyre - you can't have a space-saver spare tyre fitted
- be smoke-free - this means you can't smoke in it just before or during the test
- be able to reach at least 62mph and have an mph speedometer
- have 4 wheels and a maximum authorised mass (MAM) of no more than 3,500 kg (The MAM is the limit on how much the car can weigh when it's loaded. It'll be in the car's handbook).

## **4. 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.

## **5. After the test**

You will be provided with a copy of your test and a debrief from the examiner. If you have failed the test then you will be required to re-sit the test at a later date. This can be arranged through the test provider.

### **Test providers**

Several local organisations provide a driving proficiency test for applicants and are recognised by this Council. A list is provided overleaf. If you are uncertain whether Chichester District Council recognises a particular test provider, then please contact the Licensing Team on 01243 534744. Other providers may be added to the list as they become available.

You will need to contact the provider to establish cost and availability.

The Council also recognises any taxi/private hire driving test assessments that are accredited by the DVSA.

**Blue Lamp Trust** – To book contact 03337 000157, Monday to Friday 09:30 - 16:00. From 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016 it will also be possible to book through the website.

Tests are conducted in the Chichester area from a mutually convenient venue, as agreed between the assessor and applicant.

For more details about the Blue Lamp Trust and what the test involves, please visit - [https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/?f=Driver\\_Training/taxi\\_driver\\_assessment.php](https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/?f=Driver_Training/taxi_driver_assessment.php)

**1<sup>st</sup> Castle School of Motoring** – Based in Bognor/Chi - To book contact 01243 867502.

Please ensure that you make it clear that you are applying to Chichester District Council for a taxi/private hire driver's licence.

Tests are conducted in the Chichester area from a mutually convenient venue, as agreed between the assessor and applicant.

1st Castle also offer driving lessons, if you wish to receive some instruction prior to taking the test.

### **Wheelchair assessment**

Chichester District Council requires any applicant who wishes to drive a Wheelchair Access Vehicle (WAV) to sit a wheelchair assessment.

The DVSA will be withdrawing the wheelchair assessment as of the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017. At this current time an alternative provider is being sort by the Council.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 any new applicant who wishes to drive a WAV will be issued with a licence but will be required to sit the wheelchair assessment, once an alternative provider is found.

The reason for the assessment is to demonstrate 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

Any assessment will require you to bring a wheelchair accessible vehicle.