

South Gloucestershire Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2018
Driving assessment requirement for new applicants

South Gloucestershire Council was in receipt of a letter from DVSA, dated 31st August 2016, stating that Taxi Driving Assessment provision will be withdrawn on 31st December 2016.

On 8th December 2016, the Regulatory Committee were presented with a report to consider and agree a proposed amendment to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy in relation to the requirement for a Taxi Driving Assessment, with the cessation of the DVSA Taxi Driving Assessment on 31st December 2016, and how this will affect applicants for new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver's licences.

The reason that this was necessary, is that the requirement to pass a DVSA Taxi Driving Assessment was stated in this Licensing Authority's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, previously section 7.7 (now section 7.10), in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers, that all new applicants must pass a Taxi Driving Assessment as a prerequisite to being granted a driver's licence in the South Gloucestershire District.

The DVSA Taxi Driving Assessment, introduced on 1st April 2008, was designed to test the skills required to drive hackney carriage and private hire vehicles safely and included assessment of awareness and anticipation, effective planning relating to road traffic conditions, correct use of speed, passenger safety and comfort, taxi manoeuvres and a special taxi related exercise.

Following initial contact with respective service providers and reviewing the assessment/test criteria set out by each, four service providers/assessors have now been identified which the Licensing Service proposed to carry out Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driving Assessments to the same standard of the DVSA Taxi Driving Assessment. The four service providers are:

DIAMOND Advanced Motorists (DIA)

Cost to candidate: prices start from, Enhanced - £95, Standard - £85

Coverage: National

Booking: Online platform

Website: [here](#)

Blue Lamp Trust

Cost to candidate: prices start from £87

Coverage: National

Booking: Online platform

Website: [here](#)

Green Penny

Cost to candidate: prices start from, Enhanced - £94.50, Standard - £82

Coverage: National

Booking: Online platform

Website: [here](#)

Drive53

Cost to candidate: prices start from, Enhanced - £100, Standard - £85

Coverage: Local

Booking: Phone booking or e-mail

Website: [here](#)

The Regulatory Committee were advised that the Licensing Service are conscious that the current service demand for driver applications is at an all-time high, and does not wish to place further barriers in front of applicants seeking potential employment, therefore four potential service providers/assessors gives choice and reduces the risk of significant waiting times.

The Licensing Service was of the opinion that no formal consultation process be required as the proposal is an amendment to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, to an equivalent standard. The Regulatory Committee were also given the option to remove the driving assessment requirement from the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

The Regulatory Committee agreed the following:

- 1) That this Licensing Authority continues to require all new applicants for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver's licences to take and pass a Taxi Driving Assessment test equivalent to the current standard required by the DVSA Taxi Driving Assessment;
- 2) That new applicants for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver's licences have flexibility to choose from the four agreed service provider/assessors at the standard of the current DVSA Taxi Driving Assessment; and
- 3) That this Licensing Authority continues to reserve the right to require an existing South Gloucestershire Council licensed driver to take a Taxi Driving Assessment if, with evidence, it becomes necessary for remedial purposes.

The Licensing Authority has been in contact with and agreed partnership working arrangements with the four service providers named above, and new driver applicants in South Gloucestershire are now able to book a driving assessment test with their chosen service provider/assessor. Booking arrangements are stated on each respective service provider website, along with contact details should they be required.

Should new applicants wish to clarify or discuss the driving assessment requirements in the current Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy then please contact the Licensing Service on 01454 868001 or e-mail licensing@southglos.gov.uk