

# Driver Certificate of Professional Competence

## What is a Driver CPC?

A Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (Driver CPC) is required by anyone who drives buses, coaches, minibus and goods vehicle over 3.5 tonnes on a commercial basis.

Driver CPC applies across all EU member states and aims to maintain high driving standards and improve road safety.

## What is the impact on new drivers?

Drivers who obtained their vocational licence to drive:-

- goods vehicles on or after 10 September 2009 or
- minibuses or coaches on or after 10 September 2008

will need to obtain an initial Driver CPC to be able to drive the vehicle on a commercial basis.

To obtain an initial Driver CPC the driver must take theory and practical tests, in addition to the licence acquisition theory and practical tests. Once the tests are passed, the driver will need to undergo ongoing periodic training to keep their Driver CPC qualification.

## What about existing drivers?

All existing goods vehicle, coach, bus, and minibus drivers will need to complete a minimum of 35 hours periodic training every five years.

The training requires attendance at courses but will not require drivers to take or pass further examinations.

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide general guidance and information only. Although every effort is made to ensure that the content is accurate, the BVRLA cannot accept any liability whatsoever for any inaccuracy contained within it, nor for any damage or loss, direct or indirect, which may be suffered as a result of any reliance placed upon the information provided, whether arising in contract, tort or in any other way.

Advice should always be obtained from your own professional advisers before committing to a specific action.

Minibus, bus, coach drivers who held their vocational licence (D\*, D1\*, DE\*, D1E\*) prior to 10 September 2008 have acquired rights until 9 September 2013.

Goods vehicle drivers (over 3.5 tonnes) who held their vocational licence (C, C1, CE, C1E) prior to 10 September 2009 will have acquired rights until 9 September 2014.

In order to drive commercially after these dates the driver must have completed a minimum of 35 hours of training.

## Are delivery/collection and internal movements included?

No, rental companies who have minibuses or commercial vehicles on fleet will need to ensure their employees who drive these vehicles have a Driver CPC in place by the above mentioned dates. This includes delivering and collecting vehicles, moving vehicles between branches and taking vehicles to annual test.

## What are the exemptions?

Drivers of the following vehicles are not required to hold a Driver CPC:

- a vehicle with a maximum authorised speed not exceeding 45 km/h;
- a vehicle used by, or under the control of, the armed forces, a police force, a fire and rescue authority;
- a vehicle undergoing road tests for technical development, repair or maintenance purposes, or of new or rebuilt Vehicles which have not yet been put into service;



## Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (continued)

### Further information

Just click each link or visit the BVRLA website:  
[www.bvrla.co.uk](http://www.bvrla.co.uk)

**BVRLA Guide to Driving a Minibus**

**Operator licensing (fact sheet 547)**

**London Low Emission Zone**

- a vehicle used in a state of emergency or assigned to a rescue mission;
- a vehicle used in the course of driving lessons for the purpose of enabling that person to obtain a driving licence or a CPC;
- a vehicle used for non-commercial carriage of passengers or goods for personal use;
- a vehicle carrying material or equipment to be used by that person in the course of his or her work, provided that driving that vehicle is not that person's principal activity. For example, a brick layer who drives a load of bricks from the builder's yard to the building site and then spends their working day laying bricks. In this case, driving a lorry is incidental to their main occupation.

### Training for new drivers

The initial qualification is divided into 4 modules to give new drivers flexibility to obtain their vocational licence only, or to gain Driver CPC at the same time.

The modules are:

- Module 1, theory test - The two tests will take a total of 2½ hours tests and can be taken separately.
- Module 2, case studies – The test will take 1½ hours to complete and can be taken at the same as module 1.
- Module 3, practical test – this will take 1½ hours to complete and includes eco-safe driving.
- Module 4, Driver CPC Practical Test – This test focuses on driving the vehicle safely.

A new driver who has already passed module 1 and 3, can drive professionally for up to 12 months until they are fully driver CPC qualified and completed modules 2 and 4. Members may wish to speak to their insurance provider to establish what effect this could have on their premiums or cover.

The average cost of training for a new driver is £1,250.00.

### Training for existing drivers

A periodic training course for existing drivers has to be a minimum of seven hours in duration. Where a course of seven hours is split into two parts the second part must start within 24 hours of the completion of the first part.

The syllabus for periodic training broadly covers:

- Safe and fuel efficient driving
- Legal requirements
- Health and safety, service and logistics

It could also include: fuel efficient driving style training, defensive driving techniques, first aid, health and safety, driver's hours regulations and tachographs.

Drivers of minibuses and commercial vehicles are only required to complete one set of periodic training.

The training does not require a test to be taken and on completion of the periodic training the driver qualification card will be issued and will need to be carried.

The average cost of training for an existing driver is £400.00

## Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (continued)

### Employing new and existing drivers

For new drivers, it is likely that the Driver CPC will be obtained alongside the vocational driving licence category and therefore for employers, it will be 'business as usual' in terms of employing new drivers, except that the minimum age for lorry drivers is reduced to 18 years if the driver holds a vocational driving licence and a Driver CPC.

For existing drivers, members will need to consider checking the existence of Driver CPC cards once the periodic training is completed. Whilst the training is being completed members will need to keep track of how much training has been done and ensure the rest is completed.

### Driver qualification card

Drivers' will be sent a Driver Qualification Card (DQC) after they have passed all 4 modules. There will be no charge for the card at the point of issue.

Drivers must carry their DQC whilst driving and there will be criminal penalties if they are found to be driving professionally without one. The driver is not required to carry their driving licence.

If a driver loses his or her DQC or it has been, stolen or damaged, they must report it to the Driving Standards Agency within 7 days and apply for a replacement card. There is a £25.00 fee to get a replacement card.

To report a DQC card lost, stolen or damaged contact: [customer.services@dsa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@dsa.gsi.gov.uk) (putting 'DQC Enquiry' in the subject field) or telephone 0300 200 1122

Once a card has been reported the driver will be able to drive on a commercial basis for up to 15 days without a card while a replacement is sent out.

### Useful information

**Where to get training courses** – a search facility for courses and locations

**New drivers leaflet** – leaflet on the requirements for new drivers to obtain a Driver CPC

**Periodic drivers leaflet** – leaflet on the requirements for existing drivers to obtain a Driver CPC

**Business Link** – Driver CPC

For questions on this or any other matter of law or regulation, contact the BVRLA Legal & Policy team:  
[legalandpolicy@bvrla.co.uk](mailto:legalandpolicy@bvrla.co.uk)  
01494 434747