
Taxi & private hire driver's licence

Guidance for applicants



Elmbridge
Borough Council

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Version control

Version	Initials	Date	Changes Made
V2	AK	01/01/26	Adoption of taxi and private hire policy 2025-2030

You should read this guidance document together with Elmbridge Borough Council's:

- Taxi & Private Hire Licensing Policy
- Convictions Policy and
- Penalty Points Policy.

Introduction

We have produced this guidance document to help applicants and existing drivers, to apply for a taxi or private hire driver's licence. We have also included information for existing licensed drivers on how to renew your licence, let us know if your circumstances change, for example, if you change your name or address or receive a conviction for a motoring or criminal offence.

The guidance and instructions within this document form part of our overall taxi and private hire licensing policy and it links with our taxi and private hire Convictions Policy, our 'taxi and private hire Penalty Points Policy' and the Council's Environmental Health and Licensing Enforcement Policy. Before you apply for a licence, you should read all the above documents to understand the Council's approach to taxi and private hire licensing. All documents are available on the Council's website.

Public safety is paramount in our approach to taxi and private hire licensing, and it is the basis of our decision as to whether an applicant is a 'fit and proper' person to hold a taxi or private hire driver's licence.

Taxi and private hire drivers have responsibility for the safety of their passengers, the control of their vehicles and safety of other road users. Licensed drivers must ensure that the service they supply enables them to transport their passengers comfortably, safely, and conveniently. As professional drivers, the Council and passengers expect their driving and general behaviour to be of the highest possible standard and that they are honest and trustworthy.

We have set out several requirements in our taxi and private hire licensing policy, which you must complete before you apply to help us determine whether to grant your taxi or private hire driver's licence. We have explained our reason for each requirement in Chapter 3 of our policy and provide further guidance in this document.

You must supply evidence that you have completed each of the requirements before or at the time you give your application. The information you supply will help us to decide whether you are a fit and proper person to hold that licence.

You are responsible for completing each requirement and for any financial costs associated with demonstrating each requirement. The Council will not refund these costs in any circumstances.

Part 1: All drivers

If you want to apply for a new taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must complete all requirements as shown below. If the requirement shows "as applicable", you should decide if this requirement applies to you.

Existing taxi and private hire drivers should also read the requirements below to understand how they apply when you renew your licence.

Before you apply for a new driver's licence

Before you apply for your taxi or private hire drivers licence, you must complete all the following requirements. Please read Chapter 3 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy for a full explanation of and our reasons for each requirement. We have supplied more information about each requirement below.

Requirement 1: Driving licence and DVLA licence check code

Requirement 2: Practical driving assessment

Requirement 3: Enhanced DBS disclosure with barred list check

Requirement 4: Overseas criminal record check

Requirement 5: Child sexual exploitation training

Requirement 6: Medical assessment form

Requirement 7: Medical exemption request assessment (if applicable)

Requirement 8: Knowledge test pass certificate

Requirement 9: English language requirement

Requirement 10: Disability awareness training

Requirement 11: Photographs

Requirement 12: Immigration status check

Requirement 1: Driving licence

Your Driving licence

You must hold a full, current, valid driving licence issued by the DVLA, a member state of the European Union, European Economic Area, or a country recognised as issuing exchangeable licences.

Your driving licence must show your current residential address.

You must have continuously held your driving licence for at least three years prior to the date of your application for a taxi or private hire driver's licence.

The 'continuous three-years' must not include any periods when your licence was suspended or revoked. If you cannot evidence three, full, continuous years of driving experience due to age then the Council may accept evidence of having passed an advanced level UK driving course. Please see our policy at Requirement 1 for further details.

If you hold an exchangeable driving licence (one that has been issued in Andorra, Australia, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Republic of Cyprus, The Falkland Islands, The Faroe Islands, Guernsey, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Isle of Man, Japan, Jersey, Malta, Monaco, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland, Zimbabwe) you will be allowed to drive on that licence for 1 year, but after that you must exchange it for a UK licence.

Information about exchanging your licence is available at [gov.uk/exchange-foreign-](https://gov.uk/exchange-foreign-licence)

driving-licence

You must attach a copy of your driving licence photocard with your application for a taxi or private hire driver's licence. **If you do not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.**

DVLA driving licence check code

If your driving licence was issued in England, Wales, or Scotland, you must provide us with a DVLA check code.

The DVLA check code will allow the Council to view your driving record and check if you have any penalty points or disqualifications.

You can get your DVLA check code at: gov.uk/view-driving-licence

The service works on the basis that you first view your own driving record and you then share this information with the Council, by providing us with a 'share code'. We will then enter the share code along with the last eight characters of your driving licence, to access your information.

The DVLA check code will be valid for 21 days before it expires after which, we will need a new code for us to conduct an online check.

We recommend that you obtain your check code no sooner than 7 days before you give your application to us. This will allow us enough time to process your application and check your driving history.

You must give us the DVLA check code with your application for a taxi or private hire driver's licence. The DVLA code is 'case sensitive' so please enter the code exactly as it is written. **If you do not your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.**

Requirement 2: Practical driving assessment

Practical driving assessment

You must successfully pass a practical, taxi or private hire driving assessment. The test is designed to assess your skills and approach to driving as a taxi or private hire

driver.

The Council does not carry out the driving assessment. We will accept pass certificates from the following practical taxi driver assessment suppliers. We recommend that you book your test as soon as possible as you may have to wait for availability.

- The Blue Lamp Trust Driver Assessment:
bluelamptrust.org.uk/taxi_homepage/
- Green Penny Standard Taxi Assessment:
- www.greenpenny.co.uk/taxi-assessment-booking-form/

When you apply for your licence, you must attach a copy of the driving assessment certificate with your application. The pass certificate must show a pass date no earlier than six months before the date you give your application for a taxi or private hire driver's licence.

If you do not attach a copy of the pass certificate with your application, or the pass date on your certificate is over six months, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Requirement 3: Enhanced DBS disclosure

Your enhanced DBS disclosure

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) provides access to criminal record information and provides details of individuals barred from working in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults. Driving a taxi or private hire vehicle is a regulated activity.

You must obtain an enhanced DBS disclosure (criminal records check) with barred list checks before making your application for a taxi or private hire driver's licence.

Before completing your DBS application, you should read our Convictions policy which is available at elmbridge.gov.uk/licensing

You must apply for your DBS disclosure online through the Council's nominated disclosure provider, TaxiPlus. You must apply online and pay the relevant application fee directly to them.

Further information and step by step guides on how to complete your application form are available at: <https://www.taxiplus.co.uk/councils/elmbridge-borough-council>

The Council is unable to provide support with this process, the service is supported by the TaxiPlus Support Team. You can contact them on 01254 355679 or via hello@taxiplus.co.uk for assistance if required.

It can take around three weeks for the DBS to issue your disclosure information.

When you receive your certificate from the DBS, you must deliver the original document to the Licensing Team via the address at the end of this guidance. Please mark the envelope private and confidential. You should take a copy of your DBS disclosure certificate before you provide it to the Council as we cannot return the original form. You should also keep a record of the certificate number as you will need to send this to us with details of your DBS Update Service Registration (see below).

Please return your DBS disclosure at least 10 working days before you make your taxi or private hire driver's application. This is so that we can assess the information and resolve any queries in advance of you applying.

The DBS disclosure must have been issued no earlier than three months before the date you make your application. If not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it, (unless you have signed up to the DBS update service, see below).

DBS Update Service

The DBS update service is an online subscription that lets you keep your DBS certificates up-to-date and allows the Council to check your certificate during the life of your licence.

You must join the update service with 30 days of your DBS certificate being

issued.

Information on registering for the DBS Update Service is available at this website: gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-update-service-applicant-guide. Register for the update service at: secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/apply?execution=e1s1

When you apply for your licence, you must show that you have registered for the DBS update service and let us know your DBS certificate number, your name as it shows on the DBS certificate, and your date of birth. If you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

You must pay all costs incurred in obtaining your subscription to the DBS update service and you must keep your subscription up to date at all times during the life of the licence. Please be aware that if your payment card expires on your DBS update service account going forward, this will invalidate your subscription and you will have to apply for a new enhanced disclosure. Please check your DBS account and keep your card payment details up to date.

Requirement 4: Overseas criminal record check

Your overseas criminal record check

When you submit your licence application, you must complete a declaration informing us whether you have spent more than six continuous months outside the United Kingdom when over the age of 18 and provide the dates you were outside the UK. **If you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.**

If you have spent more than six continuous months outside the United Kingdom when over the age of 18, you must obtain an overseas criminal record check or 'Certificate of Good Character'. The certificate must have been issued no earlier than three months before the date you give it to us or your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

The application process for criminal records checks or 'Certificates of Good Character/Conduct' varies from country to country. You may have to apply in the country or to the relevant embassy in the UK.

Information and guidance on the process to obtain an overseas criminal record check is available at: gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants

We recognise that it is not always possible to obtain a certificate from countries that do not have functioning criminal record regimes or refuse to provide these to anyone other than their own citizens.

Public safety is the primary concern for licensing authorities. Regrettably, if you are unable to obtain a certificate we are unlikely to grant a taxi or private hire driver licence. However, should you choose to apply we will consider your application on its own merits.

Requirement 5: Child sexual exploitation training

Child sexual exploitation training

Drivers can play a significant role in safeguarding children and vulnerable people at risk of abuse. You must successfully complete an online classroom course on safeguarding and child sexual exploitation (CSE), which aims to help you with spotting signs that an individual may be at risk.

The Council does not deliver the safeguarding course. We will accept pass certificates from the following course providers:

- Blue Lamp Taxi Trust Taxi Safeguarding Virtual Classroom Course:
- <https://bltdrivertraining.co.uk>
- Taxi Plus Trust2Ride:
<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FSVL>

To undertake the test you will need to show photo identification to the course provider. We recommend that you book your test as soon as possible as you may have to wait for availability.

When you apply for your licence, you must attach a copy of your written pass confirmation/certificate. If you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Requirement 6: Medical assessment

Your medical assessment

All taxi and private hire drivers must meet the Group 2 medical standards applied by the DVLA in relation to bus and lorry drivers. In the case of insulin dependent diabetes, you must meet C1 standards. These standards are more stringent than those needed to obtain an ordinary UK driving licence. Information about assessing fitness to drive is available at the following websites:

gov.uk/guidance/general-information-assessing-fitness-to-drive

gov.uk/government/publications/at-a-glance

You must undergo a medical assessment with:

- a) a doctor with whom you have been registered for at least 12 months or
- b) by a commercial doctor who is registered with the UK General Medical Council (GMC) and who has access to your full medical records at the time of your assessment

The medical assessment must be undertaken using the Council's Medical Report Form. The medical report form will ask the doctor to confirm what information was available to them at the time of the medical examination e.g. whether they have had access to your full medical records. The doctor must also confirm their GMC registration number and place of work.

You can download a copy of our current medical report form from our website at elmbridge.gov.uk/licensing. You must return the original completed report to the Licensing Team via the address at the end of this guidance. Please mark the envelope private and confidential. You may wish to take a copy of your medical report before you give it to the Council as we cannot return the original form.

Please return your medical report at least 10 working days before you give or renew your taxi or private hire driver's application. This is so that we can assess your medical fitness and resolve any queries in advance of you making an application.

We may need further information from you or we may have to refer your medical assessment to the Council's specialist Medical Advisor for further assessment. This means that it will take longer to process your medical assessment and may delay your application.

You must pay all costs incurred in obtaining any other information that we need, and the cost of referring your medical assessment to the Council's specialist Medical Advisor.

When you apply for your licence, you must have sent us a copy of your correctly completed medical report and your doctor must have stamped both sides of each page. If not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Medicals undertaken by commercial doctors

The commercial doctor must have access to your full medical records at the time of your medical assessment. You should give your written consent to your own GP surgery to them sharing this information. A form for you to complete to provide your consent is available on our website at: elmbridge.gov.uk/taxis

We recommend you submit a written Subject Access Request (SAR), enclosing your completed consent, to your GP surgery (the surgery can advise how you submit a SAR). You should ask your GP surgery to send the written results of the request securely and directly to the commercial doctor by post or, alternatively, you can check with the commercial doctor whether they are prepared to receive the documents electronically and obtain a secure email address from them. The GP must provide the SAR results within one month from the date of your request. You will need to time your medical assessment with the commercial doctor so that your medical records are viewed at the earliest possible opportunity after issue.

In all cases the transfer of information should be direct between the GP surgery and the commercial doctor.

If we have reason to believe that the written medical history you rely on for your assessment has been amended or information has been omitted or removed we will not accept your completed medical form.

Medical requirements for an existing private hire driver applying for a new taxi driver's licence

If you are an existing private hire driver and have held your private hire driver's licence continuously for a minimum of two years, you will not have to undertake a new medical assessment if your medical circumstances have not changed since your last assessment and:

- a) you are aged under 65 years and you have completed a medical assessment within the last five years or
- b) you are aged 65 years or over and you have completed a medical assessment within the last 12 months

If we grant your application for a new taxi driver's licence, you must complete your next medical assessment by the date it is due under your existing private hire driver's licence.

Requirement 7: Medical and physical exemption

Your request for a medical exemption (if applicable)

You may request a medical exemption if you have a medical condition that means you would be unable to:

- a) carry an assistance dog in your vehicle or
- b) assist a passenger who is seated in a wheelchair to access a vehicle

Your doctor must certify your medical condition during your medical assessment under requirement 6 above.

Requirement 8: Knowledge test

Your knowledge test pass certificate

To offer a safe and efficient service to members of the public it is important that taxi and private hire drivers have an appropriate knowledge of the area in which they

work and a good understanding of our licensing requirements. All new applicants for a taxi or private hire driver's licence must pass a local knowledge test before we will issue your licence.

When you apply for your licence, you must send us a copy of your knowledge test pass certificate. If you do not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

You will need a good understanding of written English to complete the test. Please read these notes carefully to help you prepare for your test.

In advance of the knowledge test, you should familiarise yourself with the Council's policies as listed in paragraph 2 of the introduction to this document, the Council's Guidance and Instructions for taxi and private hire vehicles, and the law relating to driving a taxi or private hire vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Part II of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- b) Town Police Clauses Act 1847
- c) The Road Safety Act 2006
- d) The Health Act 2006 about smoking in work premises or vehicles

Booking your knowledge test

Tests take place twice a month. Please book your knowledge test by calling 01372 474748 or email licensing@elmbridge.gov.uk. You will need to pay for the test with a debit or credit card on booking.

If you have a disability which you think could exclude you from taking the test, please contact the Licensing Team.

If you wish to cancel your test, you must inform us at least 2 full working days in advance of the test date, otherwise we will keep the full fee to cover the cost of preparing for the test.

Arriving for Your Test

Please arrive at the Council's ground floor reception area no later than 15 minutes before the test is due to start.

You must bring your up to date DVLA driving licence with you (and photographic identification if you have a paper licence).

Your invigilator will take you to the test room and confirm your identity. If you are late you cannot enter the test and you will lose your test fee.

Instructions for taking the test

You must remain silent during the test. You may only speak to the invigilator and not to any other applicants who may be taking the test at the same time.

During the test, you cannot use any of the following:

- a) mobile phones;
- b) study notes;
- c) text books;
- d) hand held computers;
- e) satellite navigation devices; or
- f) any other devices or notes that may help you in the test

If we find evidence that you have used any of the above, we will cancel your test and we will not refund your fee.

You cannot usually leave the room during the test so please ensure that you have taken any comfort breaks before the test begins.

The pass rate for the test is 75% per section. The Council's decision as to whether you have passed is final.

We will usually let you know in writing within 14 days of the result of your test.

If you fail the knowledge test, you can sit the test again, but you must rebook and pay in advance.

We will issue a pass certificate to successful applicants. You must make your application for a driver's licence within one year of passing the test.

What does the test involve?

You will be required to complete the knowledge test on a computer at the Council's offices. The answer to each question is multiple-choice and you will have several options to choose from.

The invigilator will explain how to use the computer system before you start your test.

The taxi driver's knowledge test is different to the private hire driver's knowledge test. Both tests will include questions on the following:

- a) The Highway Code
- b) Numeracy
- c) Elmbridge Borough Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policies
- d) Locations of specific places within Elmbridge and the surrounding area

The taxi driver's knowledge test will also include questions on:

- a) Local routes
- b) Taxi fares

Why do I need to answer questions on the Highway Code when I have already passed my driving test?

Over time it is easy to forget some of the rules of the road. However, the Council's overriding concern is for the safety of the public and we therefore expect

professional taxi and private hire drivers to have a good and current understanding of the Highway Code. For example, a question may ask:

What is the national speed limit on a UK motorway?

Please ensure you familiarise yourself with the Code thoroughly before sitting the knowledge test. Information is available at: [gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code)

Why do I need to answer questions on numeracy?

Taxi and private hire drivers will handle cash payments and supply the correct change to passengers. This part of the test assesses your ability to handle cash and give correct change. For example, a question may ask:

If a journey costs £7.80 and the customer gives you £10, how much change should you return to the customer?

I want to drive a private hire vehicle, not a taxi. Why do I need to have local knowledge of Elmbridge?

One view is that because customers book private hire jobs in advance, the driver can study routes before a journey. But, as a private hire driver, you must collect passengers on time and if you keep stopping in between jobs to look at a map, you will delay the journey. Passengers can also change their minds about routes or add extra drop-off points and they are not always able to describe to you the route you should take.

You should not rely solely on satellite navigation systems. If you live outside of the area you may not be aware that the road name shown on your system is not within Elmbridge or the surrounding boroughs. The software for such systems can also become out of date. It is therefore more efficient for you and your private hire operator, if you obtain some local knowledge of the area before you start work.

You must show a level of local knowledge including being able to find the locations of certain key buildings or premises in Elmbridge such as pubs, bars, schools, train stations, golf clubs, village halls, supermarkets, and business parks etc. We may also ask you questions on key locations outside of the borough such as airports, amusement parks, famous buildings etc. You are not expected to learn routes.

Study Tips

To help you study for your test you should consider the following:

- a) spending time in the local area
- b) studying a map of the local area
- c) researching the names of the roads on which local landmarks or bars, restaurants, schools etc. are situated
- d) familiarising yourself with the Highway Code
- e) looking at the Council's taxi and private hire licensing policies and guidance which are available on our website
- f) using the Council's online facility at <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/licensing/alcohol-and-entertainment-licences-0/public-register> which supplies details and locations of licensed premises in Elmbridge.
- g) asking the operator who will be giving work to you or an experienced Elmbridge taxi or private hire driver for advice

Please note: We ask that where possible, you avoid telephoning local premises to obtain their locations.

Taxi driver's knowledge test

The taxi driver's knowledge test will last for 90 minutes and consists of six sections. You must answer 75% of the questions correctly in each section to pass.

- a) The Highway Code
- b) Numeracy
- c) Elmbridge Borough Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policies
- d) Locations of specific places within Elmbridge and the surrounding area
- e) Local routes

- f) Taxi fares and charges

What other questions are in the taxi driver's knowledge test?

Local Routes

This section needs you to show a detailed knowledge of the topography of the borough of Elmbridge. You will need to learn all street and road names and the locations of certain key buildings or premises in Elmbridge such as pubs, bars, schools, train stations, golf clubs, village halls, supermarkets, and business parks etc. We may also ask you to answer questions on key locations outside of the borough such as airports, amusement parks, famous buildings or similar. For example, a question may ask:

Starting at Weybridge Hospital head east on Church Street through High Street and Monument Hill. At the roundabout take the 2nd exit and then at the next roundabout take the 1st exit, you have reached your destination. Where are you?

Taxi fares and charges

This section needs you to show your knowledge of taxi fares and charges. For example, a question may ask:

“What is the booking charge for a taxi?”

Private hire driver's knowledge test

The private hire driver's knowledge test will last for 50 minutes and consists of four sections. You must answer 75% of the questions correctly to pass.

- a) The Highway Code
- b) Numeracy
- c) Elmbridge Borough Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policies
- d) Locations of specific places within Elmbridge and the surrounding area

The test has four sections:

- a) Section 1 consists of 40 questions with multiple choice answers about locations of premises and key buildings
- b) Section 2 consists of 15 questions on the Highway Code
- c) Section 3 of the test consists of 20 questions about the law relating to private hire, the requirements on private hire drivers and vehicles licensed in Elmbridge, and conditions under which we issue driver and vehicle licences.
- d) Section 4 of the test consists of 5 questions testing numeracy skills to show your ability to handle and give correct change

Requirement 9: English language requirement

English language requirement

Taxi and private hire licence holders need to be able to communicate with customers to discuss a route or fare, as well as to read and understand important regulatory and safety information.

It is also important that all licence holders can read and understand information that the Council provides to you. It is therefore essential for public safety that all taxi and private hire licence holders can communicate in English at an 'appropriate' level.

You must show that you have adequate English language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. We do not need you to take a specific test, but you must provide us with information about your qualifications to prove you have adequate English language skills.

When applying for your licence, you must send us a copy of your qualifications. If you do not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

What qualifications do I need to show?

If you completed your secondary school education in the UK or have any UK secondary school level qualification which was taught and examined in English, your level of English will be enough. This includes and UK:

- a) GCSE grade G or above
- b) GCE 'O' level grade E or above
- c) Certificate of Secondary Education grade 5 or above
- d) A level or AS level
- e) NVQ level 1 or above including BTEC and City & Guilds
- f) Higher National Certificate/Diploma
- g) Degree or higher

If you did not complete your secondary school education in the UK, but you were educated to the same level shown above, you can supply evidence of your qualifications if the qualification was taught and examined in English. You may need to obtain a letter from the examining body to confirm this.

Secure English Language Test (SELT)

The Home Office needs certain applicants for a visa to show a certain level of English Language by passing a SELT.

We will accept a Home Office approved SELT certificate as proof that your level of English is sufficient only if the SELT has assessed your reading, writing, speaking, and listening ability.

Information on approved SELT courses is available at this website.

[gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests)

English as a second language or foreign language qualification (ESOL)

We may accept some ESOL certificates if the examining board has assessed reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. Please contact us before starting an ESOL course so that we can confirm whether the course satisfies our requirements.

Requirement 10: Disability awareness

Disability awareness training

Passengers with disabilities rely on taxi and private hire services to transport them safely and comfortably. The Equalities Act 2010 makes it an offence to discriminate against any person with a disability. It also imposes a specific duty on taxi and private hire drivers to assist disabled passengers. Failure to comply without a relevant exemption is an offence.

Disability can take many forms. To ensure that licence holders are aware of their responsibilities we require all taxi and private hire drivers to successfully complete an online classroom course on disability awareness.

The Council does not deliver the disability awareness course. We accept pass certificates from the following course providers:

- Green Penny:

<https://greenpenny.co.uk/product/taxi-driver-disability-awareness-virtual-classroom/>

- Blue Lamp:

<https://bltdrivertraining.co.uk/taxi-private-hire-drivers/>

To undertake the test you will need to show photo identification to the course provider. We recommend that you book your test as soon as possible as you may have to wait for availability.

When you apply for your licence, you must attach a copy of your written pass confirmation/certificate. If you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Requirement 11: Photographs

Your photographs

The Council must be able to identify all licence holders to ensure it can uphold its public safety measures and that those measures are robust. In addition, taxi and

private hire drivers must display their drivers' badge, which has the driver's photograph and identifies them.

When you apply for your licence, you must send us an electronic photograph of yourself, which conforms to UK passport photograph standards. If you do not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Information on acceptable photos is available at:

[gov.uk/photos-for-passports](https://www.gov.uk/photos-for-passports)

Digital photos

Your photo must be:

- a) clear and in focus
- b) in colour
- c) unaltered by computer software
- d) at least 600 pixels wide and 750 pixels tall
- e) at least 50KB and no more than 10MB

In your photo you must:

- a) be facing forwards and looking straight at the camera
- b) have a plain expression and your mouth closed
- c) have your eyes open and visible
- d) not have hair in front of your eyes
- e) not have a head covering (unless it is for religious or medical reasons)
- f) not have anything covering your face
- g) not have any shadows on your face or behind you

If you are using a photo taken during your application, include your head, shoulders,

and upper body. Do not crop your photo – we will do this for you.

Do not wear sunglasses or tinted glasses. You can wear other glasses if you need to, but your eyes must be visible without any glare or reflection.

Your photo must:

- a) contain no other objects or people
- b) be taken against a plain light-coloured background
- c) be in clear contrast to the background
- d) not have 'red eye'

Requirement 12: Immigration status

Your immigration status

The Immigration Act 2016 requires licensing authorities to carry out right to work checks when considering applications for licences in the taxi and private hire sector. Licensing authorities have a legal duty not to issue a licence to you if you are disqualified from holding one due to UK immigration status.

When you apply for your licence, you must supply evidence of your right to work in the UK. If you do not, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it. There are two types of right to work checks:

- a. a manual check (the only option available to British and Irish citizens with a permanent right to work in the UK) and;
- b. an online check (persons with a relevant immigration status)

Online right to work check

We will not be able to carry out an online right to work check in all circumstances, as you may not have an immigration status that we can check online. The online right to work checking service sets out what information you will need.

Currently, we can only use the online checking service if you hold:

- a) an expired biometric residence permit; or
- b) a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account

If you would like us to check your right to work online, you must provide us with your:

- a) date of birth and
- b) right to work share code

The service works on the basis that you first view your own Home Office right to work record. You may then share this information with the Council if you wish, by providing us with a 'share code', which, when entered along with your date of birth, enables us to access the information.

The share code will be valid for 90 days, after which, we will need a new code to conduct an online check.

You can obtain your right to work code at [gov.uk/prove-right-to-work](https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work)

Manual right to work check

If you are unable to provide us with a right to work share code or you choose not to, we will carry out a manual right to work check.

There are three basic steps to conducting a manual right to work check. We will:

1. obtain original documents from you
2. check the document's validity in your presence and
3. make and keep a copy of the documents and make a record of the date we checked your documents.

You must provide us with original documents (not copies). If you have a permanent right to remain in the UK, you must provide us with documents from List A below.

If you have a temporary right to remain in the UK, you must provide us with documents from List B below.

We cannot accept any other form of document other than those listed in List A or List B which is published by the Home Office.

If there are restrictions on the length of time you may work in the UK, we will not issue a licence for any longer than this period. In such circumstances, we will repeat the check each time you apply to renew your licence. If, during this period, you are disqualified from holding a licence because you have not followed the UK's immigration laws, your licence will lapse and you must return it to the licensing authority.

List A - Permanent right to Remain in UK

1. A passport (current or expired) showing the holder is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
2. A passport or passport card³ (in either case, whether current or expired) showing that the holder is an Irish citizen.
3. A document issued by the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey or the Isle of Man, which has been verified as valid by the Home Office Employer Checking Service, showing that the holder has been granted unlimited leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU(J) to the Jersey Immigration Rules, Appendix EU to the Immigration (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Rules 2008 or Appendix EU to the Isle of Man Immigration Rules.
4. A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
5. A current Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the named person is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.
6. A birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their

name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

7. A birth or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.
8. A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

List B - Temporary right to remain in UK

Group 1: Documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts until the expiry date of leave

1. A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is currently allowed to do the type of work in question
2. A document issued by the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey or the Isle of Man, which has been verified as valid by the Home Office Employer Checking Service, showing that the holder has been granted limited leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU(J) to the Jersey Immigration Rules, Appendix EU to the Immigration (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Rules 2008 or Appendix EU to the Isle of Man Immigration Rules.
3. A current Immigration Status Document containing a photograph issued by the Home Office to the holder with a valid endorsement indicating that the named person may stay in the UK and is allowed to do the type of work in question, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

Group 2: Documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts for 6 months.

1. A document issued by the Home Office showing that the holder has made an application for leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU to the immigration rules (known as the EU Settlement Scheme) on or before 30 June 2021 together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.

2. A Certificate of Application (non-digital) issued by the Home Office showing that the holder has made an application for leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU to the immigration rules (known as the EU Settlement Scheme), on or after 1 July 2021, together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
3. A document issued by the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey or the Isle of Man showing that the holder has made an application for leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU(J) to the Jersey Immigration Rules or Appendix EU to the Immigration Rules (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Rules 2008, or Appendix EU to the Isle of Man Immigration Rules together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
4. An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office stating that the holder is permitted to take the employment in question, together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
5. A Positive Verification Notice issued by the Home Office Employer Checking Service to the employer or prospective employer, which indicates that the named person may stay in the UK and is permitted to do the work in question.

Apply for your new driver's licence online

Making your application

Once you have completed all the above requirements, you will be ready to make your application for your new taxi or private hire driver's licence.

You must use our [online application form](#). You will be able to upload your supporting documents electronically and pay your application fee at the same time.

We recommend that you have your documents ready and in the correct format, before you start completing your application form. We have supplied a document check list on the following page.

When you are ready to upload your documents, you should use PDF format where possible. However, you will have the option to take a 'live' photograph of the document, if it is only one page (for example your knowledge test pass certificate or DVLA or acceptable driver's licence)

- We will accept electronic photographs of documents, but only if the document is in focus and the information contained in the document is readable.
- Each document must be one separate file (for example, evidence of your right to work in the UK = one document, photograph = one document etc.)

Your application will be invalid if:

- **you do not complete your application form correctly, or**
- **you do not send the correct documents, or**
- **a document is missing or does not meet the standards set out above.**

We will always reject an invalid application. If we do, we will refer you back to this guidance, and you will need to re-send us the whole application.

Document check list (new driver)

You must have copies of your:

- Driving licence
- Practical driving assessment pass certificate
- DBS Update Registration and DBS certificate number
- Child sexual exploitation awareness training pass certificate
- Knowledge test pass certificate
- Disability awareness training certificate
- English language qualification
- Photograph
- Evidence of your immigration status

You might need copies of your:

- Overseas criminal record check

You must send these original documents to us at least 10 working days before you make your application

- Enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check
- Medical assessment report

When you submit your application

When you submit your application it will be checked to ensure it is complete, the payment has been made and that all of the relevant supporting documents are attached and valid. We will only contact you at the submission stage if there is anything outstanding.

We will then allocate your application to an officer who will only contact you if they have questions about your application.

We deal with applications in the order we receive them and we aim to process your application within our published application timescales. These are available at <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/licensing/taxis>

Sometimes, in exceptional circumstances, we may take longer to process your application. We will inform you if this is likely to be the case when you submit your application.

Our decision about your application

Please read Chapters 10 and 11 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy which explains our decision-making process and your rights if we do not grant your licence.

Issuing your licence

Before we issue your licence, you may have to attend an appointment at the Civic Centre and produce your original documents. We will then be able to verify your identity and will issue your driver's licence and badge at the end of the appointment.

Period of your licence

We will usually issue a taxi or private hire driver's licence for a period of three years. Please read Chapter 12 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy about period of licences.

Part 2: Existing drivers

You should read Chapter 9 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy about renewing your licence, and Chapter 13 about policy requirements for existing taxi or private hire driver's. You should also read Part 1 of this document to understand and complete our requirements before you renew your licence.

Renewing your driver's licence

It is your responsibility to renew your licence before it expires. We will not issue reminder letters, so it is important that you follow the guidance and instructions in this document and submit a valid application.

We also need enough time to process your application before it expires. You must send us your correctly completed application and supporting documents to renew your driver's licence **at least 20 working days (about 4 weeks) before the licence expiry date.**

We will not accept your application if you send it to us **more** than 40 working days (about 8 weeks) before the expiry date unless there are exceptional circumstances. We will make any such decision to accept an application on a case-by-case basis.

If you send your application late, or if your circumstances have changed and you have not previously updated us, we may not be able to issue your new licence before your existing licence expires. This means that you will be unable to work after your licence expires and until we issue your new licence.

Your application will be invalid if:

- **you do not complete your application form correctly, or**
- **you do not send the correct documents, or**
- **a document is missing or does not meet the standards set out above.**

We will always reject an invalid application. If we do, we will refer you back to this guidance, and you will need to re-send us the whole application.

If you apply to renew your licence after the expiry date, we will treat this as a new application and you will need to follow all relevant requirements for a new application as outlined in Part 1 of this document. In exceptional circumstances, we may waive or defer any application requirement, but we do not have to do this. We will make any such decision on a case-by-case basis.

Therefore, it is your responsibility to ensure you make your application and supporting documents correctly and in time, as set out in these guidelines.

Before you make your application

Before you apply to renew your taxi or private hire drivers licence, you should make sure you have documents or information that show you can meet the following requirements that apply to you.

Please read Chapter 3 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy for a full explanation of, and our reasons for each requirement. We have supplied more information about each requirement in Part 1 of this document. We have supplied more information below, to help you understand if the requirement applies to you.

- Requirement 1: Driving licence and DVLA licence check code
- Requirement 3: Enhanced DBS disclosure with barred list check (if applicable)
- Requirement 4: Overseas criminal record check (if applicable)
- Requirement 6: Medical assessment form (if applicable)
- Requirement 7: Medical exemption request assessment (if applicable)
- Requirement 9: English language requirement (if applicable)
- Requirement 10: Photographs
- Requirement 11: Immigration status check (if applicable)
- Requirement 12: Disability awareness training certificate

Tax checks

The Finance Act 2021 requires you to complete a tax check with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) when you:

- renew your driver's licence
- apply for the same type of licence you previously held, that ceased to be valid less than a year ago
- apply for the same type of licence you already hold with another licensing authority

We will ask for this information on your application form.

You will be able to complete this tax check on GOV.UK, through your Government Gateway account. You will only need to answer a few questions to tell HMRC how you pay any tax that may be due on income you earn from your licensed trade. If you do not already have a Government Gateway account, you can sign up on GOV.UK.

Guidance is available at gov.uk/guidance/complete-a-tax-check-for-a-taxi-private-hire-or-scrap-metal-licence.

Your DVLA driving licence

When you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must always:

- send us a copy of your DVLA photocard driving licence

AND

- enter your DVLA check code on your application form.

The DVLA code is 'case sensitive' so please enter the code exactly as it is written, **or we will reject your application.**

You must keep your DVLA driving licence up to date and it must show your correct and current residential address.

You must renew your DVLA photocard licence every 10 years and you must ensure it

is still in date while you are a licensed taxi or private hire driver.

When you renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, we will view your DVLA driving record and check if you have any penalty points or disqualifications. If you have received DVLA penalty points and you have not informed us, we may take enforcement action against you and we may refuse to renew your licence.

Your DBS Disclosure

When you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must always enter your current DBS Update Service registration number on your application form. You must also let us know your DBS certificate number, your name as it shows on the DBS certificate, and your date of birth.

Please read Chapter 13 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy about the Disclosure and Barring Service.

You must keep your DBS Update Service Registration up to date for the duration of your licence. Please be aware that if your payment card details expire with the DBS you will automatically be unsubscribed from the update service by them. We recommend you check your account with the DBS at intervals to ensure your card details remain live.

If you do not have a registration number for the DBS Update Service:

- you will have to obtain a new Enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check and send it to us by post before you apply to renew your licence

AND

- you must register for the DBS Update Service

AND

- you must enter your current DBS Update Service registration number on your application form to renew your licence. You must also let us know your DBS certificate number, your name as it shows on the DBS certificate, and your date of birth.

If you do not keep your DBS Update Service registration up to date, we may suspend your taxi or private hire driver licence until we receive your DBS certificate and DBS Update Service registration number.

Other information

As a licensed taxi or private hire driver, you must inform the Council within 5 working days of any convictions, cautions or penalties recorded against you. We have supplied full details in the taxi and private hire driver's code of conduct (see Appendix 2 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy) and in our Convictions Policy.

When you renew your licence, you must declare any convictions in addition to supplying your DBS disclosure certificate or details of your DBS Update Service Registration.

If you have received a conviction, caution, or penalty since we last granted your licence and you have not let us know, we may refuse to renew your licence.

Overseas criminal record check

When you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must you must complete a declaration informing us whether you have spent more than six continuous months outside the United Kingdom since we last issued your licence. **If you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.**

If you have spent more than six continuous months outside the United Kingdom when over the age of 18, you must obtain an overseas criminal record check or 'Certificate of Good Character/Conduct'. The certificate must have been issued no earlier than three months before the date you give it to us or your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

UNLESS

- a) You completed an overseas criminal record check when you applied for your new taxi or private hire driver's licence

AND

- b) You have not spent more than three continuous months outside the United

Kingdom since we granted your existing taxi or private hire driver's licence.

Please read Chapter 13 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy about travelling abroad.

If this applies to you and you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Medical assessment

Your medical assessment may not be due at the same time you renew your licence.

If your medical assessment is due at the same time you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must send it to us separately by post.

You are solely responsible for ensuring that you complete your medical assessment before your current one expires. It is important that you follow the guidance and instructions (at Requirement 6) in this document and read Chapter 13 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy about timescales for completing medical assessment.

English language requirement

Existing licence holders **do not** need to supply evidence to satisfy the English language requirement when you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence. However, where we have concerns that an existing licence holder does not meet the required level, we will need them to satisfy the requirement within a reasonable period.

Disability awareness training

All taxi and private hire drivers who hold a current licence issued before 01 January 2026 are required to successfully complete an approved disability awareness training course no later than 12 months from 01 January 2026 (i.e. by 31 December 2026).

Photographs

When you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must **always** send us an electronic photograph which meets the **UK passport photograph**

standards.

If you do not your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Your immigration status

When you apply to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence, you must provide us with proof that you have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom.

UNLESS

- you supplied your status when you applied for your new taxi or private hire driver's licence and the original documents were copied by us

AND

- your right to live and work in the UK is permanent.

If this applies to you and you do not give us this information, your application will be invalid, and we will reject it.

Your renewal application

Making your application

Once you have completed all the above requirements that apply to you, you will be ready to make your application to renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence.

You must use our [online application form](#). You will be able to upload your supporting documents electronically and pay your application fee at the same time.

We recommend that you have your documents ready and in the correct format, before you start completing your application form. We have supplied a document check list on the following page.

When you are ready to upload your documents, you should use PDF format where possible. However, if the document is only one page, you will have the option to take a 'live' photograph of the document (for example your DVLA driver's licence).

- We will accept electronic photographs of documents, but **only** if the document is in focus **and** the information contained in the document is readable.
- Each document **must** be one separate file (for example, DVLA driver's licence= one document; your photograph = one document; evidence of your right to live and work in the UK = one document, etc.)
- We recommend that you give each document a filename that can easily identify the document (for example your photograph could be named "photo")
- Please submit the document pages in the correct order (for example, pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and **NOT** pages 2, 4, 1, 3, 5)

Your application will be invalid if:

- you do not complete your application form correctly, or
- you do not send the correct documents, or
- a document is missing or does not meet the standards set out above.

We will always reject an application if it is invalid or if the documents do not meet the standards we have specified above.

Document check list (renewal)

You must have copies of your:

- Driving licence
- DBS Update Registration and DBS certificate number
- Photograph

You might need copies of your:

- Evidence of your immigration status
- Overseas criminal record check

You might need to send these original documents to us at least 10 working days before you apply

- Enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check
- Medical assessment report

When you submit your renewal application

When you submit your application it will be checked to ensure it is complete, the payment has been made and all of the relevant supporting documents are attached and valid. We will only contact you at the submission stage if there is anything outstanding.

We will then allocate your application to an officer who will only contact you if they have questions about your application.

We will deal with your applications in the order we receive them. We aim to process your application within our published application timescales which are available at <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/licensing/taxi-and-private-hire-licensing>

Sometimes in exceptional circumstances, we may take longer to process your application. We will inform you after we receive your application if this is likely to be the case.

Our decision about your application

Please read Chapters 10 and 11 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy which explains our decision-making process and your rights if we do not grant your licence.

Issuing your licence

Before we issue your licence, we may ask you to attend an appointment at the Civic Centre to produce your original documents. We will then issue your driver's licence and badge at the end of the appointment.

Period of licence

We will usually renew your taxi or private hire driver's licence for a period of three years. Please read Chapter 12 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy about period of licences.

Maintaining your licence

As a professional and licensed taxi or private hire driver, we expect your driving and general behaviour to always be of the highest possible standard.

If you do not follow the requirements listed below, we may take enforcement action against you including issuing penalty points, suspending, or revoking your licence.

Taxi drivers

Once we have granted your combined taxi and private hire driver's licence, you must always follow:

- a) The Council's Hackney Carriage Byelaws (see Appendix 1 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy)
- b) The taxi and private hire drivers' code of conduct (see Appendix 2 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy)

- c) The requirements set out in the Council's taxi and private hire licensing policies.

Private hire drivers

Once we have granted your private hire driver's licence, you must always follow:

- a) the taxi and private hire drivers' code of conduct (see Appendix 2 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy) and
- b) the requirements set out in the Council's taxi and private hire licensing policies.

Reporting a driving or criminal conviction

We recognise that sometimes things do go wrong. This does not necessarily mean that you will lose your taxi or private hire driver's licence but if things do go wrong you must let us know.

You must notify the Council's licensing team in writing within 5 working days of the event, if you:

- are convicted of **any** offence, or
- accept a formal caution for any offence, or
- receive a fixed penalty notice for any offence, or
- receive and accept an endorsable fixed penalty notice, or
- are made the subject of an ASBO or DBO, or
- receive a CPN, or
- are made the subject of any form of injunction or restraining order

If you are arrested for any matter, you must inform the Council's licensing team within 3 working days of the arrest (whether you are later charged or not).

If you are the subject of criminal proceedings, (including where you are acquitted as

part of a criminal case) you must notify the Council's licensing team in writing within 5 working days of being charged or summonsed for an offence.

You should be aware that depending on the type of conviction recorded, and because of the public safety implications, we may have to suspend your licence whilst the matter is under investigation and/or we may revoke your licence.

Please see our convictions policy for further information which is available at elmbridge.gov.uk/taxis

Reporting a road traffic incident

If you are involved in a road traffic incident that causes damage that materially affects the safety, performance and/or appearance of the vehicle and you are not the taxi or private hire vehicle licence holder you should inform them without unnecessary delay. The vehicle licence holder must then report the incident to us as soon as possible and in any case, with 72 hours using our online reporting form which is available at elmbridge.gov.uk/taxis

Making changes to your licence

If you change your name or address, you must inform us in writing within 5 working days, using our online reporting form which is available at elmbridge.gov.uk/taxis.

Please read Chapter 8 of our taxi and private hire licensing policy for information on making changes to your driving licence.

Other information

Updating this guidance

We will review this guidance document from time to time to ensure it still is current. When, and where necessary we may make amendments. If we amend this document, we will republish it on our website.

Contacting us

- Please do not visit the Civic Centre reception without an appointment.

- You should email us at licensing@elmbridge.gov.uk to request an appointment if required
- When applying for a licence, you **must** use our online application which is available at elmbridge.gov.uk/taxis/
- If you phone us, you may need to leave a message on our answer phone. We aim to respond to all messages within 24 hours (weekdays only). Please call 01372 474748

Please do not

- email or copy your email to individual officers
- phone us or individual officers to chase your application

You may also contact us by using our [online contact form](#)

Address for correspondence

You should send all correspondence to licensing@elmbridge.gov.uk.

If you need to send us your original documents, please address your correspondence to: Licensing Team, Planning & Environmental Health, Elmbridge Borough Council, Civic Centre, High Street, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9SD.

Customer feedback

We welcome your feedback on our service. If you would like to provide us with feedback please email us at licensing@elmbridge.gov.uk including details of the date you applied and the application type. We may not be able to reply directly to individual feedback but we will use it to shape our future service.