

Guide for New Taxi Drivers in Milton Keynes



www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/taxi

This guide should provide you with all the help and information you need to apply to work as a licensed taxi driver in Milton Keynes.

If you still have any questions or queries email us at:

taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Alternatively you can book an appointment to speak to one of the Council's taxi licensing assistants for application advice. There is a charge of £20 for this service.

MK Council's Taxi Licensing Service (TLS) is the independent regulator and not the employer of licensed drivers. This book is designed to provide all the information you need to become a licensed private hire or Hackney carriage driver in Milton Keynes.



Introduction

MK Council is responsible for granting taxi licences for Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles (taxi) within the borough of Milton Keynes.

Licensed taxi drivers may be required to drive vulnerable people around MK including children and disabled passengers. We need to make sure that any driver with an MK badge and plate on their vehicle has met the standards we set as this assures the public that they are safe to be with you and your vehicle is safe to travel in.

The application process is designed for you to show that you meet these high standards. If you do not wish to undertake any part of the application process you should not apply for a licence.

Our legal duty is to only grant a licence if we are satisfied that an applicant is suitable to be a taxi driver. The application process is designed to help the council make this decision based on evidence and information received. It is important that we make these checks to ensure that people feel safe when using a taxi to travel.

Make sure you read this guide thoroughly and follow all the instructions so you are aware of what you need to do to make your application.

Our role is to regulate taxi drivers in order to protect the public, we do not provide taxi services or work for drivers. Before you apply for a licence please note that:

- You will be self-employed.
- MK Council cannot guarantee that you will have sufficient work.
- You will be required to obtain your own vehicle insurance.
- MK Council does not grant new Hackney Carriage vehicle licences.
- You should make enquiries with local operators to ascertain if they need new drivers and find out about potential earnings.

Before you apply – What is required?

Before applying for a licence you should consider the following carefully:

1.	Do you have any criminal convictions or driving endorsements?	Check our policy for guidance on this as this may affect your application. Alternatively email us for advice.
2	Have you held a driving licence for 12 months or more?	If not you cannot be granted a licence.
3	Are you from outside the UK?	If yes you will need to provide a certificate of conduct from that country.
4.	Do you have the right to work in the UK in a self-employed capacity?	If not you cannot be a taxi driver. You are advised to contact the home office for advice.
5.	Do you have an medical conditions which may affect your ability to drive a vehicle?	If yes, speak to your doctor for further advice before you apply.
6.	Do you have any language barriers preventing you from communicating in English?	You should consider taking an English Language course before you apply.
7.	Do you intend to use the car you currently own?	Check that it meets our requirements – if it does not you may have to purchase a new car.

If you are unsure whether you meet the requirements to get a licence you can contact us for advice and assistance with your application.

Email your questions to taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk or alternatively for a fee of £20 you can book an appointment to see one of our Taxi Licensing team.

Before you apply...

You must have the following items before you submit your application:

1.	Passport photograph	See page 5
2.	Relevant Taxi Driving Test	See page 6
3.	Group 2 Medical Pass certificate	See page 11
4	DVLA shared driving licence code	See page 14
5.	Certificate of Conduct (if applicable)	See page 18

After you submit your application you will:

1.	Obtain a DBS Criminal record check	See page 24
2.	Attend the Driver Assessment Suitability	See page 26

Once we have all the above documents we will carry out our checks and decide whether you are suitable to hold an MK taxi licence. You can read the Council's Policy to understand more about how we consider applications when completed.

Your Application Applying and Passport Photo

You can **only** submit your application using the online application service. If you cannot use this service for any reason you will need to attend the Taxi Licensing Office in Milton Keynes in person.

The Taxi Licensing Office is located at:
MK Council Synergy Park depot,
Chesney Wold,
Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes,
MK6 1LY

You must complete the MK Council application form and submit it with the required documents and the relevant fee (published separately).

Fees are not refundable should you chose to withdraw your application at any stage in the process.

Here's a checklist of the documents you will need before submitting your application:

- Relevant Taxi driving test pass certificate
- Medical Pass certificate
- DVLA shared driving licence code
- Certificate of conduct (if applicable)
- Passport Photograph

PASSPORT PHOTO

You must supply a photograph of you which will be displayed on your badge once granted. The photograph must conform to the general requirements of a passport photo. It should be taken against a white or pale background, you should not wear any hats, scarves etc. covering your head or face or glasses (unless worn by you for driving and which you have a prescription for).

Your Application

Relevant Taxi Driving Test

Relevant Taxi Driving Test

You must undertake and pass an assessment of your driving ability. As a licensed driver you will be on the road more often than other drivers. By licensing you and your vehicle we are saying to members of the public that they will be safe in your vehicle. Therefore we must be satisfied of your driving ability.

You should not attempt to take the test or obtain a licence if you are not confident of your ability to pass this test.

There are 3 types of assessment:

1. The standard taxi driving assessment
2. The enhanced assessment – this includes a wheelchair assessment
3. The upgrade assessment if you have done the standard assessment and wish to upgrade it to the enhanced one.

As a minimum you **MUST** complete the standard assessment. To take the assessment you will need to contact one of our approved testers. The cost of the test is between you and the company you chose.

Further details of the test and cost can be found by checking with one of our approved testers.

The approved testers are on the following page.

Your Application Relevant Taxi Driving Test

Approved Testers

AA Drive tech

Telephone: 0345 373 1360

Email: tellmemore@drivetech.co.uk

website: www.drivetech.co.uk

Green Penny

Tel: 08448 702647

Email: taxi@greenpenny.co.uk

Website: <http://www.greenpenny.co.uk/taxi-assessment-booking-form>

Manfleet Solutions

Tel: [07921777667](tel:07921777667)

Email: Mannfleetsolutions@mail.com

Website: <http://mannfleetsolutions.co.uk/taxi-assessments/>

If you have previously passed a relevant driving test we will accept any test certificate by one of the above companies and the following:

- DVSA test certificate
- A certificate by any national company that meets the same criteria or is equivalent to the DVSA test. We may need to check this so you should contact us first if you believe you have another type of certificate.

If you have committed driving offences or received driving endorsements since any earlier test, we may require you to carry out a further test.

We do not accept the PASS PLUS certificate. We do not accept a qualification that does not include a practical driving exam.

Your Application

Relevant Taxi Driving Test –

You should follow the instructions given to you by the company you book with. The following is for guidance only as company procedures may change.

On the day of the test

You should arrive at the arranged meeting place with the vehicle on time. The assessor will check the vehicle. If the vehicle does not comply with the below requirements the test will not go ahead. If you are committing a criminal offence (i.e. driving a vehicle without insurance etc.) you will be reported to the police and the taxi licensing team.

Your vehicle must:

- Be insured for the purposes of a driving test/assessment
- Be taxed or registered exempt
- Have a current and valid MOT (if over 3 years old)
- Be roadworthy
- They tyre tread depth must meet the legal requirements
- Have no tyre damage
- Not have a space saver tyre fitted
- Have no warning lights showing
- Be smoke free
- Be able to reach at least 62 mph and have a mph speedometer
- Have 4 wheels and a maximum authorised mass of no more than 3,500kg
- Head restraint and seatbelt for assessor
- Not be displaying trade plates or L plates.

You must provide to the assessor the following documents:

- Your driving Licence
- Your passport

Your Application

Relevant Taxi Driving Test

Eyesight test

You will be asked to read a number plate from a distance of 20 metres away. You are able to do this part of the test with the use of glasses or contact lenses if you wear them.

If you need to use glasses or contact lenses you will be expected to use them during the test and you should wear them whenever driving once licensed. If you fail the eyesight test, the rest of the assessment cannot go ahead. You should then visit an optician to have an eyesight examination.

Highway Code

You will also be asked questions on the Highway Code and questions relating to taxis.

The Practical test

The practical test lasts between 45 minutes and 1 hour. Treat the test seriously and display the best driving standard that you can. You should not assume that because you have a driving licence that your driving ability is at a safe and acceptable standard. If you are an experienced driver you may have developed bad habits or not kept up to date with any changes to the Highway Code or current driving practices.

Items on the test

You will be required to drive for approximately 10 minutes without being given directions. You are expected to drive safely and appropriately by following road signs.

1. You will be asked to stop at the side of the road as though dropping off or picking up a passenger. This may happen several times during the test.
2. Carry out a manoeuvre where you will turn around safely in the road to face the opposite direction.
3. You may be asked to carry out an emergency stop.

Your Application Relevant Taxi Driving Test

What the assessor will be checking:

The assessor will be looking to see if you are a safe and suitable driver. Some of the things that will be checked during your practical test are:

- Able to stop and set off safely.
- Display the correct use of speed
- Carry out the correct observations before manoeuvres.
- Understand road signs and road markings.
- Position your car correctly
- Select the correct gear to match the road and traffic conditions
- Anticipate hazards and traffic conditions.

If you make nine or fewer driving faults you will pass the assessment. However if you make a number of faults in one area you could be failed.

Serious or dangerous faults will result in a fail.

Wheelchair Exercise

The enhanced assessment includes a wheelchair exercise. Any licensed taxi driver of a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) must have passed this test. You will need to use a WAV on the test. If you do not a WAV you should contact one of our approved testers who may be able to provide you with one.

During the assessment you will need to show that you can complete the following:

- Safely load & unload the wheelchair in & out of the vehicle
- Secure the wheelchair using brakes and release it & fasten safety belts or harness
- Fasten the seat belts or any safety harness & secure all belts and clamps fitted to the vehicle

Your Application

Medical

Medical Requirements

You must not have any medical conditions which may hinder your ability to drive safely. The following elements all play a part in driving safely, and any medical condition that effects these may prevent you from passing the medical.

Vision	Visuospatial perception
Hearing	Attention and concentration
Memory	Insight and understanding
Judgement	Adaptive strategies
Good reaction time	Planning and organisation
Ability to self-monitor	Sensation
Muscle power	Control coordination

Taxi drivers also regularly carry out duties such as assisting passengers, and lifting luggage or shopping which requires a basic level of general fitness.

You also have a responsibility to your passengers and other road users. Licensed drivers may also be expected to take action to protect and help passengers following an accident. For these reasons it is important that all licensed drivers are medically fit.

Group 2 Medical

All applicants and licensed drivers are required to meet the DVLA Vocational Group 2 standard. This national standard is set by the government and gives us and the public assurance that licensed drivers are able to carry out their expected duties and are not at risk of injuring themselves, passengers or other road users.

Your Application Medical

DVSA Group 2 Medical

Applicants are required to be assessed to meet this standard by a medical practitioner or the applicants own GP. The medical practitioner or GP must complete the DVLA's D4 medical form and the MKC medical examination certificate. Once the form is completed, you should ask the chosen medical practitioner to give it back to the you so that you can submit the form to us.

Your medical can be completed by your own GP or a medical practitioner of your choice. The cost of the medical is to be met by the applicant.

There are four local medical centres that provide these assessments in MK. The medical form that needs to be completed is available on the MK Council website: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/taxis These are the contact details for the four known providers in MK for the medical assessment.

M.K. Occupational Health Ltd 12 Vincent Avenue Crownhill Business Centre Milton Keynes MK8 0AB TEL: 01908 262464	The Clinic MK 4 Station House 500 Elder Gate Central Milton Keynes MK9 1BB TEL: 01908 309290
Bloom Healthcare 2 Turpyn Court, off Newport Road Woughton on the Green Milton Keynes MK6 3BW TEL: 01908 693400	Peachy Health Clinic 11 canon Harnett Court Warren Clark, Wolverton Mill Wolverton, Milton Keynes MK12 5NF TEL: 01908 382065

Medical Conditions

Medical conditions that may prevent you being licensed

Common medical conditions that may prevent an applicant from passing the medical and a licensing being granted are below. If you suffer from any of these, similar conditions or are unsure you should consult your GP or other medical practitioner for advice before applying for a licence. You may prefer to undertake a medical first before you carry out any other part of the application process. If your application is refused due to you not meeting the medical grounds you will not be provided with a refund.

Neurological – This includes: Epilepsy, seizures or brain injuries, Transient loss of consciousness (blackouts), Chronic neurological disorders, Parkinson’s disease, Dizziness, Stroke and transient ischaemic attack (TIA), Tumours.	Cardiovascular This includes: Angina, Pacemaker implant, Coronary artery disease , Hypertension Cardiomyopathies, Heart failure, Cardiac resynchronisation therapy (CRT), Heart transplant, Heart valve disease	Miscellaneous Other conditions that could result in an applicant not passing the Group 2 medical include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive sleepiness, • Profound deafness, • Cancers, • Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and HIV infection, • Age-related fitness to drive, • Transplant, • Devices or implants, • Cognitive decline or impairment • Cognitive disability • Recent surgery • Medication effects
Diabetes	Epilepsy	
Drug misuse or dependency	Psychiatric Disorders This includes behavioural problems, anxiety, depression and personality disorders.	
Alcohol misuse or dependency		
Visual Disorders	Renal and Respiratory failures	

Your application DVLA Code

Before granting a licence we need to know that you are a competent and safe driver. We will check your driving history and look for any endorsements that are on your licence.

How we consider these are explained in the Council's policy.

To allow us to check your driving history you need to provide us with a **DVLA Shared Driving Licence Code**.

How to get your DVLA Shared Driving Licence Code

Go to: <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>

You will need to have the following information to hand:

- Your DVLA driving licence number
- Your postcode
- Your national insurance number

Once you have that information ready, click on the green icon that says "Start now."

Your Application DVLA Code

Tell us what you think of GOV.UK

[Take a short survey to give us your feedback](#)

[Close](#)

[Home](#) > [Driving and transport](#) > [Driving licences](#)

View or share your driving licence information

You can use this service to:

- view your driving record, for example vehicles you can drive
- check your penalty points or disqualifications
- create a licence 'check code' to share your driving record with someone, for example a car hire company

The 'check code' will be valid for 21 days.

You'll need:

- your driving licence number
- your [National Insurance number](#)
- the postcode on your driving licence

This service is also available [in Welsh \(Cymraeg\)](#).

[Start now >](#)



Related content

[Driving licence codes](#)

[Driving licence categories](#)

[Check someone's driving licence information](#)

Explore the topic

[Driving in the UK and abroad](#)

[Driving licences](#)

[Driving tests and learning to drive or ride](#)

[Cars](#)

[Lorries and buses](#)

[Motorcycles](#)

Elsewhere on the web

[Northern Ireland driving licences](#)

Problem getting a code?

If you cannot get a code online then you can call the DVLA on 0300 083 0013. You'll need to answer some security questions to validate your identity before they give you a code.

Your Application DVLA Code

Enter your Driving Licence, National Insurance Number and postcode in the relevant boxes.

Then click “I agree” to the data protection statement and then the green button “View now”.

Enter details

You should only use this service to view or share your own driving licence.

Use a different service if you want to [check someone else's driving licence information](#).

Your driving licence number

Example: MORGA657054SM9IJ

▶ [Where to find your driving licence number](#)

Your National Insurance number

Example: QQ123456C

▶ [Where to find your National Insurance Number](#)

Postcode

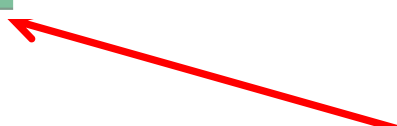
Example: EH1 9SP

To access this service online, details from your DVLA record and your National Insurance number will be shared with other government departments (HMRC and DWP) to check your identity, as described in our [privacy policy](#).

I would like to use this service and understand that my data will be shared as explained above.

I agree

[View now](#)



Your Application DVLA Code

Your driving licence details will then be displayed.

To share your licence with us you then need to click on the tab that says **“Share your licence information”**.

Click on the green ‘Get a Code’ button.

Get a licence check code

You can get a check code to share your driving licence information with someone else, like your employer or a car hire company. You may need to do this if you want to hire a car.

You must also give them the last 8 characters of your driving licence number.

Your code will be valid for 21 days.

[Get a code](#)

The website will then generate a unique code for you which will look similar to this

Your check code is:

wh MH RZ Ch

[Print or save a driving summary](#)

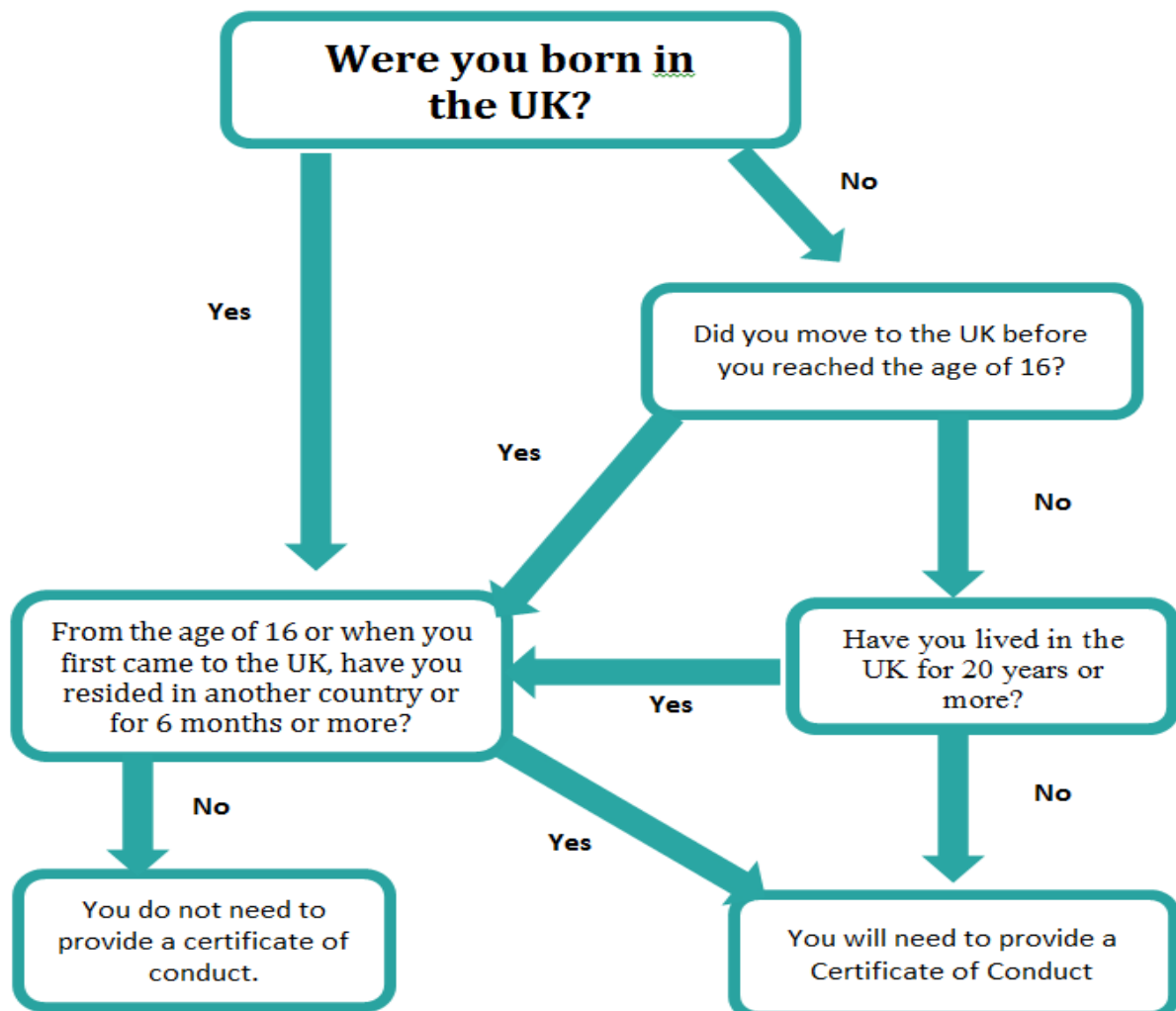
This code:

- is case sensitive
- is valid for 21 days
- can only be used once

Important! The code is case sensitive so you must clearly show us what are capital letters and what are lower case letters.

Certificate of Conduct

If you have not been living in the UK since the age of 16 for 6 months or longer in the last 20 years you must provide a certificate of good conduct from that country.



Certificate of Conduct

Certificates of Conduct (COCs) are criminal record checks provided by countries outside the UK. They may also be called Certificates of Good Character or Police Clearance Certificates.

It is our policy that a certificate of conduct is necessary if an applicant has not lived in the UK for 20 or more years **or** resided in another country for 6 months or more.

A DBS check will only identify offences recorded on the UK police national computer and not offences committed overseas.

We must be satisfied that a licensed driver will not cause harm to the public which is why we check the last 20 years of an applicants' criminal record and character as standard practice.

How to get a Certificate of Conduct

Check first if you need to get a certificate using our flowchart on the previous page.

If you need to provide us with a certificate you can get one through the Home Office website .

Got to www.gov.uk

In the search box type in: [Criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)

This will take you directly to the section you need.

Certificate of Conduct

How to obtain a CoC

Search box – type in this text here and click on the Q symbol



The screenshot shows the GOV.UK homepage. At the top left is the GOV.UK logo. Below it is the text 'Welcome to GOV.UK' and 'The best place to find government services and information. Simpler, clearer, faster'. A search box is located below this text, containing the text 'criminal records checks for overseas applicants'. A red arrow points from the text above to the search icon in the search box. To the right of the search box is a 'Popular on GOV.UK' section with links to 'Find a job', 'Renew vehicle tax', 'Log in to student finance', 'Book your theory test', and 'Personal tax account'.

[Benefits](#)

Includes eligibility, appeals, tax credits and Universal Credit

[Births, deaths, marriages and care](#)

Parenting, civil partnerships, divorce and Lasting Power of Attorney

[Business and self-employed](#)

Tools and guidance for businesses

[Childcare and parenting](#)

Includes giving birth, fostering, adopting, benefits for children, childcare and schools

[Citizenship and living in the UK](#)

Voting, community participation, life in the UK, international projects

[Crime, justice and the law](#)

Legal processes, courts and the police

[Disabled people](#)

Includes carers, your rights, benefits and the Equality Act

[Driving and transport](#)

Includes vehicle tax, MOT and driving licences

[Education and learning](#)

Includes student loans, admissions and apprenticeships

[Employing people](#)

Includes pay, contracts and hiring

[Environment and countryside](#)

Includes flooding, recycling and wildlife

[Housing and local services](#)

Owning or renting and council services

[Money and tax](#)

Includes debt and Self Assessment

[Passports, travel and living abroad](#)

Includes renewing passports and travel advice by country

[Visas and immigration](#)

Visas, asylum and sponsorship

[Working, jobs and pensions](#)

Includes holidays and finding a job

Certificate of Conduct

How to obtain a CoC

You will then see a page like this – click on the letter group for the country you need a certificate from for example if you lived in Japan then you would need to click on the document “Countries G to P”.

The procedure to obtain a certificate of conduct from that country will then be listed in that section.

Documents



[Countries A to F: applying for a criminal records check for someone from overseas](#)

PDF, 511KB, 57 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)



[Countries G to P: applying for a criminal records check for someone from overseas](#)

PDF, 861KB, 74 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)



[Countries Q to Z: applying for a criminal records check for someone from overseas](#)

PDF, 594KB, 63 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)



[Guidance on the application process for criminal records checks overseas](#)

PDF, 144KB, 6 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)

If you need help with the processes for any individual country you should contact the relevant embassy, consul, or high commission which is based in the UK. Contact details are also on the www.gov.uk website, use the search 'Foreign Embassies in the UK' this will take you directly to the page you will need.

Certificate of Conduct

If you already have a Certificate of Conduct either following an application for another licence, for immigration purposes or similar you may not need a new one.

If your certificate covers the dates you were in the relevant country and you have not spent more than 6 months outside of the UK since it was done we may be able to accept it.

How quickly you will receive your certificate will depend on the country you need to contact and their procedures. Some have online processes which can be done quickly where others may take a few months.

The timescales will be published in the original Home Office documents for the relevant countries (see page 23).

You will need your certificate before you send us your application, however in some circumstances we may be able to accept your application if you can prove that you've applied for it.

This will only be possible for those countries which have lengthy procedures. You can then start on the other parts of the application process that are necessary such as your medical, driving test and the DBS check.

Certificate of Conduct

How to obtain a CoC

If you can't get a Certificate of Conduct

We will allow an applicant to apply without a Certificate of Conduct only in strict circumstances which are:

- If the country from which you are requesting a certificate of conduct does not have a procedure for supplying one and this is confirmed by the Home Office.
- An applicant can provide proof they have tried to obtain one by following the home office procedure and there has been no response from that Country.
- For reasons of asylum the applicant cannot contact the country.

We will need to see proof of any of the above reasons

We advise that you use email or letter to request the Certificate of Conduct so you can give this evidence to us. Keep copies of all correspondence too.

If you are exempted from obtaining a Certificate of Conduct you will be required to submit a Statutory Declaration instead.

Any costs of obtaining a Certificate of Conduct or Statutory Declarations are to be met by the applicant e.g. international postage, Solicitor fees.

We cannot grant you a licence without a relevant Certificate of Conduct

Disclosure and Barring Service DBS Check

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to taxi drivers. All convictions are considered.

You must apply for an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal record check. We can direct you to how to do this after an application is submitted.

How to apply for an enhanced disclosure

After submitting your application we will give you the relevant information to apply for an Enhanced disclosure online with our third party supplier. There is a fee for your DBS of approximately £64.00 which you must pay.

What happens after you apply for your DBS Enhanced disclosure

The DBS receive the request to undertake a criminal record check of you and process it. They verify your identity and address history and instruct the relevant local police force for each address you have lived at to check the Police National Computer about you.

The DBS disclosure will reveal any convictions recorded against you. Additionally the police will also reveal any allegations made or information held about you that they believe is relevant to the job of a taxi driver and that we should be aware of

Disclosure and Barring Service DBS Check

When the criminal record check is complete the DBS disclosure will be sent to you at your home address.

You should consider carefully whether to apply for a DBS if you are in the process of moving home.

We will not get a copy of your DBS, you will need to bring the DBS disclosure certificate in to us within one calendar month of the issue date on the certificate.

If you do not bring the certificate to us we will not be able to grant your licence. If you do not give it to us within one calendar month of its issue date you will need to apply for a new check.

If your DBS check reveals convictions or information

How we assess convictions and allegations are explained in our policy. We will need to consider any applicant with convictions carefully and this will mean that a licence being granted is delayed. If you have any convictions you are advised to check the Council's Policy or meet email the Council before you apply for a licence.

As a licensed driver you will be alone in a licensed vehicle with the most vulnerable people in Milton Keynes. By giving you a badge and a plate MK Council is stating that the public are safe to be with you in your vehicle. This is why we make these checks so that we are fully satisfied that you are a suitable person to drive a taxi before your licence is granted.

Driver Assessment Suitability (DAS)

You should research what is expected of a taxi driver before applying.

Start with the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy which can be viewed on our website www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/taxi

You can also pick up a copy from the Council's Taxi Licensing Offices, Milton Keynes Council Synergy Park depot, Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 1LY.

There may be a charge of £5 for a copy. You may also find it useful to speak to licensed operators or other licensed drivers about the job of a licensed driver.

We must be satisfied that an individual has sufficient knowledge of the following:

- The legislation that will apply to them
- Council conditions
- Council Policy
- UK Vehicle safety, road traffic laws, road safety and the highway code
- English and maths ability
- Knowledge of the local area

The Driver Assessment Suitability (DAS) will involve the applicant meeting with a Council Officer to go through the above and identify if the applicant is suitable to be granted a licence.

What happens if you do not pass the DAS?

Do not worry – an applicant cannot fail the DAS as it is not a test. It is an opportunity for you to show the Council that you have a sufficient understanding of the relevant items you need to know to be a successful driver. If the Officer conducting your DAS interview thinks that there are some matters that you still need to learn, he will direct you to them, and give you some time to learn them. You can undertake a DAS interview as often as you wish and you will not need to pay any extra.

Driver Assessment Suitability (DAS)

What the DAS involves

This informal meeting is a chance to discuss anything about your application and you will be asked 50 practical questions and scenarios so you can show you understand the following topics. The matters you need to know are explained over the next few pages

Council Policy

An applicant must understand the basic matters explained in the Council Policy. The objective of the policy, which all drivers should uphold, is Public Safety and Public Safeguarding.

Public safety

A licensed driver is responsible for protecting the public and ensuring that passengers are safe in their vehicle.

Legislation

The applicant should understand some important legal principles.

- The difference between a private hire vehicle and a Hackney carriage, and what a Hackney carriage driver can do that the driver of a private hire vehicle cannot. Read Section 4.4 of our policy for more on this.
- The applicant must understand that once a vehicle is licensed by Milton Keynes Council, special rules apply to it so that only a driver licensed by MK Council can drive that vehicle.
- Licensed drivers must drive by the shortest route and not overcharge their passengers.

Driver Assessment Suitability

Driver licence conditions

The applicant should read the conditions in Appendix G of the Council's Policy that will be imposed on a drivers licence.

These include:

- A driver must wear or display their badge at all times.
- A driver must check his vehicle for lost property
- A driver must report a criminal conviction, driving endorsement or change in address within certain time periods.

Vehicle Licence Conditions

The applicant should read the conditions in Appendix C of the Council's Policy.

These include:

- The licensed plate must be displayed on the vehicle.
- Private hire vehicles must display door signs.
- A fire extinguisher and first aid kit must be kept in a vehicle.

Vehicle Maintenance

The applicant should be aware that the Council expects licensed drivers to check their vehicle every day to ensure that:

- Plate and door signs are fixed securely
- Tyres are in working order with tread depth of minimum 2mm
- There is no damage to the vehicle

Driver Suitability Test

Road Safety and the Highway Code

It is expected that all drivers should know and understand road safety requirements. Therefore we recommended that all applicants and licensed drivers keep up to date with the Highway Code.

These matters will not be checked specifically, but may form part of more practical questions, an applicant should therefore ensure they are up to date with the code.

A free online version can be found at www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk

Knowledge of Milton Keynes

The council considers it imperative for a licence holder to know the area in which they work. As a new city Milton Keynes is relatively concise but there are a number of towns and villages on the outskirts of the City. Residents of these villages are often reliant on “taxis” and it is therefore advantageous to licensed drivers to know how to get to and from these areas efficiently. Licensed drivers are also expected to know the mains sites in Milton Keynes.

Route knowledge questions

Applicants will be asked to provide details of the shortest route from pick-up to destination for at least five of the routes listed on the next page.

Driver Assessment Suitability (DAS)

- MK Train Station to Xscape
- Central Shopping Centre (McDonalds) to MK Stadium
- MK Train Station to MK Stadium (Bletchley)
- Xscape to Pink Punters (Fenny Stratford)
- MK Train Station to Central Shopping Centre (M&S)
- Central Shopping Centre (McDonalds) to central Stony Stratford
- MK Train Station to The Bowl (Furzton)
- Central Shopping Centre (McDonalds) to central Newport Pagnell
- MK Train Station to Bletchley Park
- Ikea (Bletchley) to Woburn Sands
- MK Train Station to MK Museum
- Jurys Inn (MK) to The Bowl (Furzton)
- MK Train Station to central Wolverton
- Jurys Inn (MK) to Pink Punters (Fenny Stratford)
- The Hub (Central Milton Keynes) to Taxi Licensing, Bleak Hall
- Pink Punters (Fenny Stratford) to central Wolverton
- Pink Punters (Fenny Stratford) to central Stony Stratford
- Pink Punters (Fenny Stratford) to central Newport Pagnell
- Coachway (near Jct 14 M1) to Central Milton Keynes (McDonalds rank)
- Coachway (NEAR Jct 14 M1) to MK Train Station

Disability Awareness

The DAS will also cover Disability Awareness as licensed drivers undertake an important role in society and must provide their service to ALL members of the public.

The Equality Act 2010 creates the following offences to protect disabled people.

A licensed driver cannot:

- **Refuse to take a passenger with an Assistance Dog.**
- **Charge extra for taking a passenger with an Assistance Dog**
- **Refuse to take a passenger who is in a wheelchair.**
- **Charge extra for taking a passenger who is in a wheelchair.**

MK Council has a zero tolerance approach to these offences.

Where a driver has committed any of these offences in Milton Keynes the Council will prosecute them.

If convicted the driver will face a penalty of £1,000 fine and we will also revoke their licence.

Disability Awareness

A number of people in Milton Keynes are assisted by dogs that help them overcome their disability to better enjoy their life.

Assistance Dogs are specially trained to help those with disabilities

The majority of Assistance Dog users will carry an ID book giving information about the dog and its training organisation together with other useful information. You are welcome to ask them for this.

Where should you put the dog in your vehicle?

The Assistance Dog should be seated with the passenger. The dogs are trained to sit at the feet of their owner in the footwell of a car. If the front footwell of the car is too small you should advise the passenger to sit in the rear with the dog behind the passenger seat. The passenger seat can be moved forward to make space.

Common misconceptions about Assistance Dogs

Some drivers refuse to take assistance dogs because the dog may bite or go to the toilet in their car. This is not true. These dogs are highly trained to act as the eyes and ears of a human or to detect epileptic seizures – it is not plausible to think that have not also been trained to not bite or to go to the toilet appropriately.

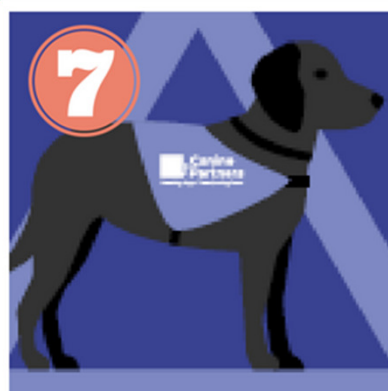
Identifying assistance dogs

Assistance dogs wear different coloured jackets depending on the type of assistance they give to a disabled person. A list of the types of dog are displayed on the next page and all drivers should memorise them.

Disability Awareness



How to
recognise
Assistance
Dogs.



Disability Awareness

1	Burgundy Coat Passenger is hard of hearing or deaf.
2	Yellow Jacket with white harness Passenger is sight impaired or blind.
3	Red Coat - Assistance in Disability (AID) dog. This dog helps people with a physical disability.
4	Red Coats are also worn by medical detection dogs. These dogs help passengers by warning them that a seizure or illness may occur.
5	Blue Coat. This dog helps passengers with a physical or who may have seizures.
6	Green coat is worn by a "Dog for Good" This dog helps passengers with physical disabilities or autism.
7	Purple Coat This is for a passenger who has a physical disability



Remember, if your passenger has an assistance dog you **MUST** take them and the dog. You are required to be fully aware of which disability your passenger has and make any adjustments.

Understanding the different types of assistance dog can help you to consider what reasonable adjustments you may need to make.

Disability Awareness

The driver of an MK Council licensed Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) must have undergone the wheelchair assessment (see page 12 regarding the relevant taxi driving test).

Wheelchair accessible vehicle driver duties

All licensed WAVs are placed on a designated list which means that the driver of that vehicle is legally required to:

- Carry the passenger while in the wheelchair;
- Not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- Allow the passenger to sit in a passenger seat and carry the wheelchair if the passenger chooses;
- Take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort; and
- Give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required – see below

Mobility assistance is:

- Helping the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle;
- If the passenger wishes to remain in the wheelchair, to enable the passenger to get into and out of the vehicle while in the wheelchair;
- To load the passenger's luggage into or out of the vehicle;
- If the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle.

Duties of all drivers

Some passengers can “transfer” out of their wheelchair and into the seat of any vehicle. This means that the above duties can apply to any driver depending on the customer.

Any driver of non- WAV should not assume that because their passenger is in a wheelchair they cannot be taken. If the passenger is able to transfer and the driver refuses he or she commits a criminal offence.

Always check with your passenger if they can “transfer” into your vehicle. If they can, you must give them reasonable assistance as above and carry the wheelchair.

Disability Awareness

Other types of disability

Whilst the law makes specific requirements in relation to passengers with wheelchairs and assistance dogs, there are many other disabilities that a licensed drivers customers may have.

Physical and mobility disabilities

Some passengers may have a physical disability that does not require the use of a wheelchair. For instance they may be unable to turn their neck in a certain direction or use one of their limbs. Or they may be unable to walk as quickly due to a condition such as arthritis.

Sight, hearing and communicative disabilities

Not all people with such disabilities will use an assistance dog. Some passengers may have part sight or hearing or a speech impediment.

Mental disabilities

There is a wide range of disabilities that a passenger may have which are not obvious. Drivers who carry out school contracts may encounter children with learning difficulties, ADHD and autism. Other passengers may have conditions such as Alzheimer's.

Invisible disabilities

Not all disabilities will be obvious. Some passengers may have conditions such as epilepsy which you would not know unless they told you.

Once you know that a passenger has a disability or recognise that a passenger may have a disability you must take reasonable adjustment.

Disability Awareness

Examples of reasonable adjustments

- A deaf person might need to be able to read your lips to communicate with you. You may wish to ensure that you do not seat them directly behind you.
- A blind person might be reassured by you advising them of who you are or which road you are driving down. You may need to read out the price on a meter.
- Knocking on a customer's door, introducing yourself, showing them your ID badge, confirming a booking, and escorting them to your car.
- Helping your passenger into your vehicle – ask them if they need help or let them hold onto your arm.
- Ensuring a passenger can exit your vehicle safely. Park appropriately and assist them. Remember: A blind person cannot see traffic coming, a deaf person cannot hear traffic from behind, a person with restricted mobility may take longer to exit a vehicle.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a popular phrase used to refer to the importance of people in a responsible position in our society to protect the health and well-being of individuals, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults, and to ensure that they live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Drivers licensed by MK Council are expected to uphold this safeguarding duty and report any matters of concern immediately to Crimestoppers – 0800 555111, this can be done anonymously, or MK Council on 01908 253169 alternatively you can email children@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Safeguarding risks

There are a number of possible types of safeguarding risk, which if identified, a taxi driver could help prevent getting worse and potentially save someone's life.

The risk may be:

- Child abuse
- Child sexual exploitation
- Modern slavery
- Human trafficking
- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory abuse

Safeguarding training

Before a licence is granted to a new driver they must either have already undertaken a Safeguarding training course or committed to doing one within the 6 months following their licence being granted.

Safeguarding Policy

Licensed drivers are expected to uphold the Council's Safeguarding Policy which can be found at this link: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/children/safeguarding-children>

Safeguarding

Risks to Children

Any child can be hurt, put at risk of harm or abused, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender or religion.

Everyone who has contact with children has a responsibility to protect and safeguard them. This includes taxi drivers.

Risks to Adults

Adults in need of safeguarding help may be elderly, frail, live alone or be in a care home. It may also be someone who has mental health issues, a physical disability or learning difficulties.

You should also be aware of other signs that a passenger may be vulnerable and need help or assistance such as being unwell.

All licensed drivers have a Safeguarding Duty and by undertaking training you will be able to be confident that you are contributing to the protection of everyone in Milton Keynes.

Contacts and further information

Children's Services Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

Tel: 01908 253169 or 253170 during office hours or 01908 265545 out of office hours

email: children@milton-keynes.gov.uk

For allegations about people who work with children:

Local Authority Designated Office (LADO)

Tel: 01908 254306

email: lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Adult Social Care Access Team:

Tel: 01908 253772 during office hours or 01908 605650 out of office hours

Minicom: 01908 253394

email: ascat@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Protecting Yourself

The main risk to taxi drivers

There are risks to people in all lines on business. The main risks are:

Passengers that refuse to pay / runaway
Racial abuse
Robbery/ Theft
Assaults

The main concern reported by taxi drivers is that customers sometimes don't pay. Whilst unfortunate it is a civil matter between you and the customer and neither MK Council or the police can help. You should contact a solicitor or the County Court for advice on what to do next.

We advise all drivers that you should accept that this may happen occasionally and should put it down as a business expense. Do NOT lock a passenger in your car if they refuse to pay. This is the offence of false imprisonment and classed as violence. If found guilty you will lose your licence.

Steps that you can take to protect yourself

The following are possible steps that may help reduce any risks to you as a licensed driver.

Use CCTV - (ask the Council about the rules).	Be polite and offer good customer service
Act in a non-confrontational manner	Do not try to fight back
Try not to leave your vehicle	Refuse a job if you feel unsafe
Do not give personal information to passengers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be careful if dropping off in a dead end.
Feel free to ask a passenger not to sit directly behind you.	Do not chase after a passenger – they may be leading you to a waiting gang of friends.
Use a decoy money bag and make regular stops to drop off your cash	Always say that you have not been busy and that you are finishing your shift to go home
Work with an Operator that tracks your vehicle via GPS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep in touch with your operator, friend or family so that they know where you are.

Licensing Your Vehicle

Please note:

Currently there is a limit on the Hackney carriage licences issued in MK. No new Hackney carriage licences are being granted. We will publicise any changes to this policy.

Once you are a licensed driver you will need to licence a vehicle.

There are two types of licensed vehicle:

- Hackney Carriage (Public Hire)
- Private Hire

Special requirements apply to Hackney Carriages which are:

- Be painted Black
- Be wheelchair accessible and load a wheelchair from the side or the rear
- Have a roof sign that can be illuminated as “for hire” or “taxi” positioned in the centre of the roof
- Have an installed and sealed taxi meter calibrated to the MK Council tariff.

Before buying a vehicle check that we will licence it

All vehicles must:	All vehicles must meet these MK Council conditions:
Have 4 doors.	Seat customers in comfort.
Seat 4 passengers.	Only have manufactured approved tinted windows
Seat no more than 8 passengers.	Not have any advertising
Be right hand drive.	Not be licensed by another Council
Have engine capacity of at least 1600 (1.6), its equivalent or be an Electric or Hybrid vehicle.	Not be fitted with a roof rack
Be no older than 6 years of age when first licensed.	Not be fitted with a trailer or tow bar.
	Tyres have 2mm tread depth

Licensing Your Vehicle

How to find out if the Council will licence your vehicle.

The vehicle details listed on the previous page are a basic summary.

Vehicle requirements can be complex and applicants are advised to read Appendix A of our Policy which can be found on our website.

To help you we have an approved vehicle list which identifies the vehicles that we know that will licence. If your vehicle is not on that list you should email taxi.licensing@milton.keynes.gov.uk with the details of your vehicle so that we can advise you.

The approved vehicle list and requirements are published in advance and we assume that you know of them before you licence a vehicle.

MK Council is not responsible for any financial loss you might if you attempt to licence a vehicle without it being on our approved list.

To check the updated approved list visit: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/taxi

Licensing your vehicle

Once a vehicle is licensed by MK Council it can only be driven by a driver who is also licensed by us. We therefore recommend that you do not licence your vehicle until you have been granted your “badge”.

The application process to licence a vehicle is much quicker than that to obtain a badge. Once your application for a badge is complete you should enquire with us as to how long it will take to grant (this may vary if you have convictions etc.) so we can advise you when to apply for your vehicle licence.

Licensing Your Vehicle

How to apply

You will need to submit the relevant application form, completed and signed by you and submit the following documents:

- Vehicle log book v5.
- Insurance
- MOT
- Road Tax

You will need to book a Council vehicle compliance test which will take place at the Council's Bleak Hall depot in Milton Keynes. Your vehicle will be tested twice a year by us.

Log book (V5)

This must show you as the registered keeper. If you have just purchased a vehicle you must have the New Keeper Supplement and the bill of sale.

Insurance

Private hire vehicles must be insured for private hire only and Hackney carriages for public hire.

MOT and Road Tax

Your vehicle needs to have a valid MOT if applicable. A private hire vehicle less than 3 years in age and a hackney carriage less than a year old do not need MOT's. Your vehicle must either be taxed or registered as exempt if applicable.

Vehicle test

The Council vehicle test includes the elements of an MOT and enhanced checks for public safety and compliance with Council conditions. If your vehicle fails it can be re-tested – however you must pay a vehicle re-test fee. We therefore encourage you to ensure your vehicle is in condition to pass the test.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer	Next step
I have a criminal conviction - will I be granted a licence?	The Council's Policy (appendix E) details how an applicant's criminal record will be assessed.	Read Appendix E of Policy. E-mail taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk
Are there any criminal convictions that will prevent me being granted a licence?	Generally convictions for serious violent, sexual or dishonesty offences, or offences relating to children and vulnerable people will result in a refusal.	Read Appendix E of Policy. E-mail taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk
Can I just apply for a DBS and the Council decide whether to grant a licence before I do everything else?	No. The Council's application process is to enable a full determination of whether someone is fit and proper – a criminal record considered in isolation does not do this.	Decide if you wish to apply for a licence.
Can I just sit the DAS and see whether I pass before I do everything else?	No. The Council's application process is to enable a full determination of whether someone is fit and proper.	Decide if you wish to apply.
I passed the DVSA test 5 years ago – do I need to pass the relevant taxi driver test again?	No. If you undertook the DVSA taxi test previously you do not need to it again unless, since you last took it, you have developed a poor driving record	Check you have your certificate or contact DVSA for a replacement.
What does the Relevant Driving test involve?	See page 6 of this guide.	
How do I get a Medical.	See page 11 of this guide.	
I was born /lived in another country. Do I need a certificate of conduct?	See page 18 of this guide.	Obtain Certificate of Conduct if necessary.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer	Next step
I need a Certificate of Conduct but cannot get one?	You need to show the Council that you took steps to obtain this. See pages 18 to 24.	Write to/e-mail your embassy and ask for advice. Keep copies of the letters/emails as evidence.
I cannot contact my country of birth for a certificate of conduct due to reasons of Asylum. What do I do?	You must disclose any documentary evidence you have from the home office to verify this. We will deal with this sensitively.	Provide the evidence you have of your Asylum claim being granted.
I have more than 6 DVLA points on my driving licence	The Council will normally not grant a licence to someone unless they fewer than 6 points.	Check when your points expire. Email E-mail taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk for advice.
I had my driving licence revoked previously – Can I apply?	The Council will not usually consider granting a licence until you have had your driving licence reinstated for at least 12 months.	Check how long you have had your licence back for.
I had my licence revoked or refused by the Council – can I apply?	Yes – we usually expect at least 12 months to have elapsed. However you will also need to consider the reasons for the revocation and the application of the Councils Policy.	Consider the reason for the revocation. E-mail taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk
Someone has made an allegation about me and the police are investigating – I am innocent – can I apply?	Yes – but you must disclose the allegation and we will not grant until the outcome of the investigation.. If you apply but do not tell us, we will be made aware by the Police and will refuse your application due to dishonesty.	Decide if you want to apply – if so, provide the Council the details of the allegation when relevant or email for advice. E-mail taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer	Next step
Can I work in [another Council area] with a Milton Keynes Licence?	We grant licences on the provision that you intend to work in Milton Keynes.	If you want to work full time in another Council area you should contact that Council for a licence.
I want to drive a hackney carriage – will the Council remove the limit?	The limit is reviewed at least every 3 years. A decision on whether it will remain occurs then and we can give no indication as to whether it will or will not remain.	Decide if you wish to apply. Ask to be placed on the Council waiting list.
Can I buy/share/rent a Hackney carriage that already has a licence?	Yes. If a Hackney carriage already has a licence you can make whatever arrangements you want with the owner of the vehicle to buy/share or rent it. The Council may have Policy restrictions which you should check first.	Notify the Council of any transfer or change in ownership or change of driver.

Do you have any questions not covered by this document?

You can get in touch with us if you have any queries by:

Tel: 01908 252542

E-mail taxi.licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk

There's also information including our policies at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/taxi