



The Driver CPC is a new qualification that all professional bus, coach and lorry drivers will need to have if they want to drive for a living. Driver CPC is being introduced across the European Union to maintain high driving standards. It started on 10th September 2008 for bus and coach drivers and 10th September 2009 for lorry drivers. It has no connection with the CPC qualification that is needed for Operators Licence compliance, if you hold a CPC under that category you still need to have a Driver CPC. Driver CPC applies to drivers of vehicles on roads open to the public and for which a driving licence in any of the following categories is required.

1 C1, C1 + E, C or C + E

2 D1, D1 + E, D or D + E

All drivers of the above categories who are either

1. Nationals of an EU member state or
2. Nationals of a non-EU member state but who are employed or used by an organization based in an EU member state will have to hold a Driver CPC if they wish to drive professionally.

Just holding a vocational driving licence will not be sufficient for someone who wishes to drive such vehicles for a living.

The main benefit is road safety and better qualified drivers to help reduce road casualties. The Driver CPC is expected to bring an improved professional image to the profession, attracting more people to drive buses, coaches and lorries for a living. It is aimed not only at improving the knowledge and skills of PCV and LGV drivers when they start work, but also at ensuring these skills are maintained and developed throughout their working life. If you hold a licence in both categories you only have to obtain one Driver CPC.

The Driver CPC is an EU requirement. The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) is responsible for implementing it in Great Britain and is working with transport industry representatives to ensure it is introduced successfully. If you already hold a bus, coach or lorry driving licence on the start dates, you will have 'acquired rights' for the following 5 years and do not need to hold a Driver CPC during that period. But you will need to start work towards getting your Driver CPC periodic training completed, if you wish to continue driving beyond those 5 years.

'Acquired rights' or grandfather rights as they are often known, applies to people who already hold a full vocational licence to drive buses, coaches and lorries on the Driver CPC start date. They do not have to pass an initial qualification to drive professionally and are allowed to retain the rights they previously acquired. But they do have to start their 'periodic training'

'Periodic training' is regular training that will continue throughout your professional driving career to help you as a driver and to encourage safe driving for life.

Every professional driver will need to complete 35 hours of 'periodic training' every 5 years to retain their Driver CPC.

There will be a range of approved courses available grouped under three headings:

- Safe and fuel efficient driving (this may include vehicle loading, fuel consumption and pollution)
- Legal requirements (rules for tachograph drivers' hours)
- Health and safety, service and logistics (including first aid, passenger safety, customer service)

Only courses approved on behalf of the DSA and delivered by accredited training organisations such as Don Hunter Ltd will count towards your 'periodic training' which will enable you to obtain your Driver CPC.

Anyone obtaining or applying for a lorry, bus or coach licence after the implementation dates must obtain a Driver CPC before they can drive professionally. The DSA will offer new drivers the opportunity to acquire the Driver CPC at the same time as they obtain their vocational licence by completing 4 Modules.

1. 2½ hours theory test
2. 1½ hours theory test (case study)
3. 1½ hours practical test
4. 1½ hour practical demonstration of vehicle safety

There will be no formal test for existing drivers or any formal test after any periodic training. A Driver CPC lasts for five years. To qualify for a further Driver CPC, you will need to complete 35 hours of 'periodic training'. If the end date passes without any such training, then your Driver CPC will expire, and you could face legal charges if you continue to drive in a professional capacity.



Don't leave your training to the last minute

If you require further information on training courses please contact us



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You cannot ignore Driver CPC

If you are a bus, coach or lorry driver and you are not covered by any exemptions you will need to take action. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that they have undertaken sufficient periodic training hours by the relevant date to maintain their Driver CPC. Drivers will have access to the central training record to check on their progress throughout the period. The employer must not knowingly allow someone to drive professionally without a Driver CPC. Employers will be able to access the central training record with the permission of the driver.

The regulations require that the 35 hours are completed within 5 years. Your business will possibly dictate how you spread this. For many reasons it is being recommended that a 7 hours per year regime be adopted.

- It creates an even flow of training and many of the apprehensions are overcome early in the process.
- Cash flow is even.
- It will help retention if other operators are adopting a similar process.
- Training in its own right has a beneficial effect both for financial and staff morale reasons.
- Planned training indicates a planned attitude to risk assessment and could be well received by company insurers. The danger of postponing the training is that there may be a shortage of provision and that the cost of getting the final spaces on courses will be expensive.

You don't need a Driver CPC if the vehicle you drive is:

- Not authorised to exceed 45 kph.
- Being used by or under the instructions of the armed forces, the police or a fire and rescue authority.
- Undergoing road tests for technical development repair or for maintenance purposes.
- Being used in a state of emergency as part of a rescue mission.
- Being used for driving lessons for either driving licence or Driver CPC purposes.
- Carrying materials or equipment for your work, where driving is not your principal activity.

This list is only intended as a guide, it is recommended in all cases where it is felt an exemption applies, the driver seeks independent legal advice.

No Driver CPC

- Max. fine £1000.00

Permitting or causing a driver to drive without a Driver CPC

- Max. fine £1000.00

Failing to produce your Driver CPC while driving

- Max. fine £1000.00

Falsification of documents to obtain a Driver CPC

- 2 years imprisonment and/or fine

Making false statements to obtain a Driver CPC

- 2 years imprisonment
and/or fine

