

1. Overview

! The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) and Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) have merged to form the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

You must get the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) [initial qualification](#) if you're new to professional driving and want to drive a lorry, bus or coach.

You'll get a [driver qualification card](#) when you qualify. You must have this with you whenever you're driving professionally.

! You can be fined up to £1,000 for driving professionally without Driver [CPC](#).

There are some situations [when you don't need Driver CPC](#).

Existing professional drivers

You'll have Driver [CPC](#) through '[acquired rights](#)' if you were already a professional bus or lorry driver before certain dates.

Keeping your Driver [CPC](#)

You'll need to do 35 hours of [periodic training](#) every 5 years to keep your Driver [CPC](#).

2. The Driver CPC initial qualification

The Driver Certificate of Professional Competence ([CPC](#)) initial qualification has 4 parts:

- part 1 - [theory test](#) (this includes 2 separate tests - multiple-choice and hazard perception)
- part 2 - Driver [CPC](#) case studies test (computer-based exercise with 7 studies based on real-life situations - eg driving in icy conditions)
- part 3 - [driving ability test](#)
- part 4 - Driver [CPC](#) practical demonstration test (this takes 30 minutes - you will

need to show you can keep your vehicle safe and secure, eg loading your vehicle safely)

You must pass all 4 parts to get your Driver CPC.

Booking the tests

You can book parts 1 and 2 online using the [theory test booking service](#).

You can book parts 3 and 4 online using the [practical test booking service](#).

What order you can take the tests in

You must:

- pass part 1 before you can take part 3
- pass part 2 before you can take part 4

You can take part 1 and part 2 in any order, and can take part 3 and part 4 in any order.

Taking part 1

For part 1, you can take the multiple-choice and hazard perception tests in any order, and on different days or on the same day.

You need to book them for different times on the same day if you take both on the same day.

3. Having Driver CPC through 'acquired rights'

You could have the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) through 'acquired rights' if you're already a professional lorry, bus or coach driver.

This means that because you've already been working as a lorry or bus driver, your experience is counted as the same as taking the Driver CPC initial qualification.

! You'll still need to do 35 hours of periodic training every 5 years to keep your Driver CPC.

Who has 'acquired rights'

You'll have 'acquired rights' if you're a:

- **lorry driver** and got your vocational licence (C, C1, C+E and C1+E) before 10 September 2009
- **bus or coach driver** and got your vocational licence (D, D1, D+E and D1+E) before

10 September 2008 - this includes a restricted vocational licence D(101) issued after 1991 and D1(101) issued before 1997 (though you should by now have completed periodic training)

! You'll need to pass all 4 parts of the Driver [CPC initial qualification](#) to be able to drive professionally if you don't have 'acquired rights'.

When you need to do periodic training

If you've got your Driver [CPC](#) by 'acquired rights' you must do 35 hours of periodic training by 9 September 2014 if you're a lorry driver.

If you're a bus or coach driver, you must have already done your training by 9 September 2013 to keep driving professionally.

Driving a larger vehicle and adding trailer entitlements

Your 'acquired rights' don't allow you to drive a larger vehicle of the same type or drive with a trailer if this isn't on your vocational licence.

You'll have to pass the lorry driving ability test to do this.

Example

You'd have to take the lorry driving ability test with a C+E vehicle combination if your vocational licence was only for a category C vehicle.

Driving a different type of vehicle

Your 'acquired rights' only counts for the type of vehicle you'd originally got your vocational licence for.

You'd have to get the Driver [CPC](#) initial qualification for the other type of vehicle.

Example

You'd have to get the Driver [CPC](#) initial qualification for buses and coaches if you only had 'acquired rights' for lorries.

4. When you don't need Driver CPC

You might not need Driver Certificate of Professional Competence ([CPC](#)), even if you're driving a large goods vehicle or passenger-carrying vehicle. It depends on:

- the vehicle
- what the vehicle is being used for

Vehicles you can drive without Driver CPC

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

- being road tested after repair, maintenance or technical development
- new or rebuilt and not been put into service yet
- limited to a top speed of 28mph

Vehicle uses where you don't need Driver CPC

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

- used for non-commercial carriage of passengers or goods for personal use
- used to carry material or equipment you use for your job - but driving the vehicle can't be the main part of your job
- used for driving lessons for anyone who wants to get a driving licence or a Driver CPC
- used by, or is under the control of, the armed forces, civil defence, the fire service and forces responsible for maintaining public order
- used in states of emergency or for rescue missions
- driven to or from pre-booked appointments at official testing centres
- driven within 50 km of your base, is not carrying passengers or goods, and driving a lorry, bus or coach is not your main job

You can read detailed [examples of Driver CPC exemptions](#).

5. The driver qualification card (DQC)

After you've passed the initial qualification you'll get a driver qualification card (DQC).

You must carry your DQC while driving a large goods vehicle or passenger-carrying vehicle.

If you have 'acquired rights'

You won't get a DQC if you have your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) through '[acquired rights](#)' until you've done 35 hours of periodic training.

Your driving licence is proof of your Driver CPC until you've done this.

You don't need to keep your licence with you, but, if asked by the police, you must show it at a later date as proof of your 'acquired rights'.

Getting your DQC

You'll get your DQC when you've completed either your initial qualification or your 35 hours of periodic training if you have a Great Britain photocard licence. It will be sent

to the address on your driving licence.

! The photograph and signature on your photocard licence will be used on your DQC.

If you have a paper licence

You'll need to [swap your paper licence for a photocard licence](#) before you can get your DQC.

If some of your periodic training was done in another EU member state

You need to write to the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to apply for your DQC if you've done some of your periodic training in another EU member state.

! You must have done at least the last 7 hours of your periodic training in the UK to apply to do this.

You'll need to include:

- your UK driving licence number
- your phone number
- the address and dates when you lived in that member state
- the names and addresses of your employers for that time
- the equivalent of your tax reference or national insurance number in the member states you worked in
- a £25 fee to add training taken abroad to your DQC

Driver CPC

DVSA

PO Box 280

Newcastle Upon Tyne

NE99 1FP

! You must include the original documents - photocopies are not allowed.

Non-English training documents must be sent with a translation on headed paper from an educational establishment or embassy.

Apply for a replacement DQC

! You must email [DVSA](#) if your [DQC](#) has been lost, stolen or damaged.

DVSA Driver CPC enquiries

cpcre@dsa.gsi.gov.uk

Tell [DVSA](#) your:

- name
- driving licence number
- date of birth
- address
- telephone number

[DVSA](#) will then call you back. You'll need a credit or debit card to pay the £25 fee for the replacement.

You can also apply by writing to the [DVSA](#) at the address above.

You can still drive professionally in the UK for 15 days from the day you pay for your replacement [DQC](#).

If your [DQC](#) doesn't arrive

You should get your [DQC](#) within 20 days after completing either your initial qualification or your periodic training. If you don't receive it, contact [DVSA](#).

DVSA Driver CPC enquiries

cpcre@dsa.gsi.gov.uk

You must pay £25 if:

- you didn't update your licence details and your [DQC](#) was sent to the wrong address
- you didn't get your [DQC](#) for any other reason

6. Driver CPC periodic training

! You must do 35 hours of periodic training every 5 years to keep your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence ([CPC](#)).

You can [check how many hours you've done](#) in the current 5-year period.

You have to do the training in the country where you work or are normally resident.

How to find training courses

Only [approved courses](#) taken with approved training centres count towards periodic training. It's up to you to decide which to attend.

! You only need to complete 1 set of training every 5 years if you drive both lorries and buses professionally.

When to take Driver CPC periodic training

It's up to you when you take the training courses, as long as you do them within 5 years.

When the 5-year period starts

Each 5-year period starts from 5 years before your current Driver CPC qualification runs out - not from the date you completed your last 35 hours of training.

Deadline for new professional drivers

You must complete periodic training by 5 years from the date you got the initial qualification.

Deadlines for drivers who had or have acquired rights

Training block	Lorry driver	Bus or coach driver	Dual-category (lorry, bus and coach) driver
First block of training	9 September 2014	9 September 2013	9 September 2013
Second block of training	9 September 2019	9 September 2018	9 September 2019*
Third block of training	9 September 2024	9 September 2023	9 September 2024

(*As a one-off arrangement, dual-category drivers will have 6 years to do their second block of training, rather than the usual 5 years.)

Dangerous goods training counting towards periodic training

If you take dangerous goods (sometimes known as ADR) training, the following can count towards your periodic training:

- up to 21 hours of the initial basic dangerous goods course
- 7 hours of the core module refresher course

Only dangerous goods training taken within the EU counts towards Driver CPC periodic training.

7. Driver CPC fees

Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) initial qualification fees

! These are the prices to book your tests using the official service. Unofficial websites may charge more.

Fee type	Weekday	Evening, weekend and bank holiday	From 1 October
Part 1a - theory test (multiple-choice)	£35	£35	£28
Part 1b - theory test (hazard perception)	£15	£15	£12
Part 2 - Driver CPC case studies test	£30	£30	£24
Part 3 - driving ability test	£115	£141	No change
Part 4 - Driver CPC practical test (vehicle safety demonstration)	£55	£63	No change

Driver qualification card (DQC) fees

Fee type	Cost
DQC (non-UK driving licences only)	£25
Replacement for lost, stolen or damaged DQC	£25

National Vocational Training (NVT) fees

Fee type	Cost
NVT concession card	£25

8. National Vocational Training (NVT) concessions

You can drive professionally for up to 12 months without taking the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) part 2 and part 4 tests.

To do this you must:

- be taking an approved National Vocational Training (NVT) programme
- have passed the Driver CPC part 1 and part 3 tests

! This is called an 'NVT concession' - you're only allowed to use it once.

When the concession period starts

The 12-month concession period starts from whichever of these is latest:

- the start date of the NVT programme you're taking
- the date you passed the Driver CPC part 3 test

When the concession period ends

The NVT concession lasts for up to 12 months. It will end sooner if you:

- stop taking the NVT programme
- complete the NVT programme

! You must have passed the Driver CPC part 2 and part 4 tests when the concession period ends. You must stop driving professionally if you haven't.

Apply for the concession

To apply, download the [Driver CPC NVT concession application form](#) and send it to the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA). You'll need to include the fee of £25 and proof that your NVT course qualifies.

Eligibility

You must be on an approved learning programme that lasts for at least 6 months and leads to a qualification.

The qualification must be:

- based on relevant National Occupational Standards
- at Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) level 2 or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 5
- accredited by a national awarding body that is externally regulated by the Office of the Qualifications and Regulations Examiner or the Scottish Qualifications Authority

Qualifications that meet the rules

Qualifications that currently meet these rules are:

- level 2 award in knowledge for a professional bus or coach driver
- level 2 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Diploma in passenger-carrying vehicles (bus and coach)
- level 2 Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) in passenger-carrying vehicle driving (bus and coach)
- QCF certificate in driving goods vehicles
- BTEC in carry and deliver goods
- SVQ driving goods vehicles

! DVSA can consider qualifications that meet the rules but aren't on this list.

NVT concession card

You'll be sent an NVT concession card to show that you're registered on the NVT scheme.

! By law you must carry the card when you're working.

You must return your NVT concession card to DVSA if you leave or complete the approved course.

9. Non UK, EU and third country licence holders

You can get a driver qualification card (DQC) from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) if you live and work in the UK.

You must also have a driving licence from non-UK, EU Member States and third countries such as:

- Gibraltar
- Guernsey
- Iceland
- Isle of Man
- Jersey
- Liechtenstein
- Norway
- Switzerland

! At least the last 7 hours of your periodic training must have been done in the UK.

To apply, send an email to DVSA asking for form DQC1.

DVSA customer services customer.services@dsa.gsi.gov.uk

! From then on, after doing 35 hours of periodic training in the UK, you'll get your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) qualification for 5 years.

Exchanging your driving licence for a UK licence

You can exchange your Driver CPC qualification if you exchange your non-UK country

or EU member state driving licence for a UK licence.

! Your Driver CPC qualification will still last until the date it was due to run out when you first got it.

When you exchange your licence, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) will tell DVSA for you.

If you already have a DQC

You'll need to send your DQC to DVSA if you already have one. You'll need to include your driving licence number in a short letter.

Driver CPC
Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency
PO Box 280
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
NE99 1FP

DVSA will send you a new DQC with the same number as your UK driving licence.

! From then on, after doing 35 hours of periodic training in the UK, you'll get your Driver CPC qualification for 5 years.

If you don't have a DQC

DVSA will automatically send you a DQC when you complete 35 hours of periodic training.

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