

Driver Certificate of Professional Competence

NTF Advice sheet

Driver CPC

It is the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence for professional lorry drivers.

Implementation Date

Driver CPC comes into full force on September 10th 2014. All professional lorry drivers must hold a driver CPC if they drive a lorry over 3.5 tonnes.

Initial CPC qualification

The Driver CPC requirement was first introduced on 10th September 2009 and any new driver from that date will have needed to pass the initial Driver CPC theory and practical tests in addition to the licence acquisition theory and practical tests.

Anyone who has passed their test since 10th September 2009 must then complete a further 35 hours of approved periodic training every five years from the date of getting their licence to carry on driving.

Acquired CPC rights

A lorry driver who acquired their vocational licence (C, C1, C+E, and C1+E) before 10th September 2009 will have acquired rights if they have already been working as a lorry driver as their experience is counted the same as taking the initial qualification.

The CPC ongoing training applies to them too and every professional driver of a vehicle over 3.5 tonnes must have completed their 35 hours CPC training by 10th September 2014 or they will not be able to drive. They will then need to continue to further training, another 35 hours by 10th September 2019.

Periodic training

The requirement for period training is ongoing as outlined above.

Driver Qualification Card

Once a driver has either passed the initial qualification or for a driver with acquired rights has done their 35 hours of period training they will receive a Driver Qualification Card. The driver must then carry his DQC when driving a large goods vehicle.

Penalty for no Driver CPC or no DQC carried whilst driving

This would be a penalty of up to £1,000 for both the driver and the employer.

Exemptions

There are some exemptions to the requirement for a driver to have CPC including one that a driver does not need the Driver CPC if they are carrying equipment or material that they will use in the course of their work and driving is not the main part of the person's job.

We have been asked if someone driving a lorry to the races for whom driving is not the main part of their job could fall into this exemption.

Part time drivers are covered by the CPC requirement– the possible exemption is only for someone for whom driving is not the main part of the person's job whether full or part time.

We have taken legal advice upon this and there is a potential argument that materials could be interpreted to include livestock. However, we would advise the use of any exemption with caution and for the employer to consider the facts in each case including whether the person doing the driving is an "incidental" driver and whether the horse and any equipment carried was then being used by the person in their job. Whether or not the exemption did apply in any particular instance would only be decided by a court.

It is clear from the DSA guidance that the transportation of a horse to the sales would not fall into any exemption as one of the examples given in the Government guidance is that of a farmer taking cattle to market once a month. It states that they would need to have Driver CPC as the cattle are not being used in the course of their work since the cattle are intended for sale.

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