

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROCEDURE FOR VOCATIONAL DRIVING Guidelines for Managers

1. Introduction:

As an employer, the University recognises its statutory duty of care in respect of the health, safety and welfare of its employees. It also recognises that drivers of University vehicles (vocational drivers) are required to fulfil strict medical requirements similar to those applied to commercial drivers. Consequently the University is committed to ensuring that all vocational drivers, including casual staff undergo a medical assessment through the University Occupational Health Unit, to ascertain their fitness for vocational driving duties.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff who are required to undertake vocational driving duties contact Personnel and Staff Development. These staff will be referred, by Personnel and Staff Development, to the University Occupational Health Unit to confirm their medical fitness for these duties.

This procedure applies to drivers of University vehicles. It does not apply to drivers of private cars used for business purposes or to drivers of cars hired by the University for business purposes. Whilst the procedure focuses on all other vehicles either owned or hired by the University, particular emphasis is placed on driving the following vehicles:

- Light vans
- Other light load carrying vehicles
- Small Passenger Carrying Vehicles (PCV's)
- Special purpose vehicles (SPV's) such as tractors, land rovers, Heavy goods vehicles (HGV) and fork lift trucks (FLT's).

The procedure has been produced in consultation with the University Occupational Health staff, the Health, Safety and Environment Office, and Transport Manager, Hospitality Services. It focuses on the medical requirements and personnel procedures for appointing vocational drivers. Information relating to the *safety* aspects of vocational driving, such as safe driving practices, is available from Dave Archer, Transport Manager 01392 263932 d.k.archer@exeter.ac.uk and the University's policy on Minibus Passenger Transport (available at <http://www.ex.ac.uk/safety/docs/otherpolcp/Minibus/Minibus01.pdf>)

2. Definition of Vocational Driver

A vocational driver is defined as any employee who is required to drive a University vehicle as part of their duties, and applies equally to both regular and occasional drivers. Where the University either provides or hires a PCV e.g. a minibus, the University has a statutory duty of care to those passengers. In view of this, an employee who is required to drive the vehicle is also classed as a vocational driver.

3. UK Legislation

The EU Driving Licence Directive (1996, implemented in the UK from 1 January 1997) and the DVLA guidelines (February 2002) introduced specific medical standards relating to the issue or renewal of a driving licence. The legislation differentiates between cars and light goods/small PCVs. New light goods and mini bus drivers are required to meet specific medical standards to drive vehicles of 3.5 metric tonnes laden weight or more, or PCV's having 9 seats or more (see below).

University vocational drivers must meet more stringent medical standards which are in line with those for commercial drivers with PCV and LGV licences. Notes for Vocational Drivers – Guidelines for Employees details some medical conditions which may result in an individual being prevented from driving some or all categories of University vehicles. These include Epilepsy / Seizure, Diabetes, and poor Eyesight.

4. Implications of the DVLA Regulations 2002

The details below are based on information provided in the DVLA document D100.

4a Car licence held before 1 January 1997

University vocational drivers who held a licence before 1 January 1997, are entitled to drive a minibus with seating for up to 16 passengers, provided that it is not being used for hire or reward and provided that they meet the following criteria:

- Car drivers whose licence entitlement is group A (B for automatics) on old licences.
- Or
- Car drivers whose licence entitlement is B and D1 not for hire or reward, on new licences
- And
- Car drivers are aged 21 or over.

From 1 January 1997 the above entitlements remain valid in the UK, or on a temporary basis abroad, until the licence is renewed on or after that date. If the licence is renewed after that date, the entitlement to drive a minibus will only be granted if the driver makes a special application to the DVLA (which will involve meeting the higher medical standards).

In general car licences have to be renewed when drivers reach the age of 70, but younger drivers who have been issued with short term driving licences for medical reasons will also be affected by the new regulations.

4b Car licences issued on or after 1 January 1997

University vocational drivers may only drive vehicles with 8 passenger seats or less. To drive vehicles with between 9 and 16 passenger seats, drivers will need to meet higher medical standards and pass an appropriate DVLA test.

5. Recording Driving Licence Details

School or Service managers must ensure that a copy of employees' driving licences are held in their department. Copies must include both sides of the licence for old style licences and both the ID card and separate paper documentation for new style licences.

If employees are likely to either use their own vehicle or a vehicle hired through the University for University business, a copy of the employee's driving licence must be forwarded to their line manager. Employees should also ensure that they are covered for business use on their motor insurance.

6. Notification of changes which may affect capability to drive

It is the responsibility of any vocational driver to inform their line manager of any circumstances, legal or medical, which may affect their ability to drive. Please see No. 7b.

If an employees driving ability leads to capability or disciplinary procedures being invoked, it will be at the discretion of the university to request an assessment of driving skills either with an internal or external examiner. E.g. Devon Drivers Centre, Westpoint, Clyst St Mary.

7. Medical Standards for University Vocational Drivers

This procedure acknowledges the requirements of the new legislation and recognises the risks related to vocational driving. It also applies some stringent medical standards to staff who are required to drive the vehicles listed in the introduction to this procedure.

7a Vocational Drivers

All those employees who were assigned as vocational drivers prior to the introduction of this procedure will be required to be declared as medically fit by the University Occupational Health Unit.

7b Maintaining Vocational Driver Status

Any existing or new employees who have University vocational driver status and who subsequently suffer an accident or illness which may affect their driving ability, must advise their manager of this immediately, before returning to driving duties. See No. 6.

In the event that a manager has concerns about an individual's fitness to undertake driving duties on behalf of the University, the appropriate Personnel Manager should be contacted for advice. The University Occupational Health Unit may be contacted for further information where appropriate. University medical staff may wish to obtain a report from the employee's General Practitioner or specialist, with the signed consent of the member of staff.

7c Appointing New Vocational Drivers

All *newly* appointed individuals who are contractually required to drive University vehicles must first be declared as medically fit for vocational driving duties, by the University Occupational Health Unit. *An offer of employment to a successful applicant must be made conditional on medical clearance regarding fitness to drive.*

Existing staff *whose duties are revised* to include vocational driving will also be required to undergo a medical examination through the University Occupational Health before undertaking the new responsibilities.

7d Occasional Vocational Drivers

Occasional vocational drivers are staff whose duties do not include driving as part of their day to day duties, but who may occasionally undertake University vocational driving duties (eg driving a minibus for field trips). This does not include the use of private cars or cars hired by the University for business purposes but does include all other vehicles either owned or hired by the University as detailed in the Introduction to this document.

Occasional vocational drivers are required to meet the medical standards for vocational driving and should be given a copy of Notes for Vocational Drivers – Guidelines for Employees. They should also complete the pre-employment medical assessment form and forward this to the University Occupational Health Unit prior to undertaking the proposed driving duties. It will be necessary for them to attend a medical examination through the University Occupational Health Unit to confirm their fitness to undertake these duties.

8. Driving Competency

All vocational drivers will be required to undergo an assessment of their driving competence before they are able to drive university-owned vehicles. This will be carried out by the Transport Manager, Hospitality Services or a designated person.

It is the aim of the university for all university vocational drivers including occasional vocational drivers who may drive university –owned vehicles to attend an induction programme on the Hospitality Transport Policy and safe driving practices before using university vehicles. This programme will be undertaken by the Transport manager, Hospitality, or a designated person.

Specific training will be offered by individual schools or departments to those driving passenger carrying vehicles (PCV), fork lift trucks or heavy goods vehicles(HGV). Advice on completing tachographs and legislation concerning driver's hours with regards HGV's can be obtained from the Transport Office.

See also www.ex.ac.uk/dsd/staff

9. Other information

- **Transport Policy (Hospitality) www.ex.ac.uk/dsd/staff**
- **Minibus Drivers** Refer to Transport Policy (Hospitality) www.ex.ac.uk/dsd/staff
- Minibus Passenger Transport Vehicles - University Policy Code of practice and guidance notes from Health, Safety and Environment Office, 5th floor Physics
ph.01392 263049
www.exeter.ac.uk/safety/docs/otherpolcp/Minibus/Minibus01.pdf
- Obtaining a minibus via the Guild of Students Association. ph.1392 262432
- Student Guild Health and Safety website- **<http://xnet.ex.ac.uk/health-and-safety>,
GSA documents**
- **Notes for Vocational Drivers – Guidelines for Employees**

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