

Suitability Test

Knowledge of the Bedford Area Syllabus

Licensing Team
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP
Email: licensing@bedford.gov.uk)

TAXI (HACKNEY CARRIAGE) / PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS SUITABILITY TEST

As of 18 February 2004 (Executive Committee) every applicant applying for the first time for a Taxi/Private Hire Driver's Licence will be required to successfully show that they have a knowledge of the Bedford area and driving skills to an appropriate standard. In June 2022 the adoption of the Council's taxi and private hire policy replaced the knowledge test to a driver suitability test combining the former English and knowledge test together as one test.

The Council's Driver Suitability Assessment process is designed to ensure that applicants have a good understanding of Taxi/Private Hire law, Safeguarding, Council Policy and the English language prior to receiving a licence.

The assessment is divided into sections and will involve a meeting with an officer who will ask approximately 30 questions over a 60-minute period. Whilst the pass mark is 80% the tester does have discretion to fail an applicant regardless of this score based on public safety grounds. The officer conducting the assessment will advise you at the end whether you have passed or failed. The officer's decision is final and there is no appeal process. If you fail the Council's Driver Suitability Assessment, you will not be able to retake the test for a calendar month and will have to pay the fee again. Only two attempts are permitted.

A suitability test pass is only valid for a period of six (6) months. If a driver licence has not been granted within a period of six (6) months following the successful pass, a further suitability test pass will be required prior to a licence being granted.

Prior to being licensed you must successfully pass the Suitability Test set by Bedford Borough Council unless exempted on the following grounds:

- You have previously held a Taxi/Private Hire Drivers' Licence from the Council and you have had a gap of 6 months or more.

The syllabus for the Knowledge of Bedford Area is below:

As with any examination, applicants are advised to prepare for the Suitability Test.

This may involve reading and re-reading the syllabus, cross checking the syllabus against a map of the roads in the Bedford Borough Council area, familiarising yourself with the actual roads in Bedford, Kempston and other towns and villages within the Bedford Borough Council area undertaking practice tests with friends, family or colleagues.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE BEDFORD AREA TEST SPECIFICATION

You will be asked question relating to any of the following routes.

Bedford Train Station to Bedford Bus Station

Bedford Train Station to The Manor Hospital

Bedford Train Station to Bedford Rugby Club

Bedford Train Station to Wixams Retirement Village

Bedford Fire and Rescue HQ to Harter Road

Tesco Goldington Road to Roundmead

Sainsburys Supermarket to Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

Bedford Train Station to Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre Thurleigh Road
Milton Ernest

The Tiger Public House to Robinson Swimming Pool

Kempston Pool and Fitness to Kempston Academy

Bedford St Johns Train Station to Bedford Bus Station

Shortstown Primary School to Premier Inn Priory Marina

Premier Inn Bedford South to West End Elstow

Mowsbury Golf Course to Riverside Tennis Club

The Embankment Public House to Tesco Riverfield

Bedford Hospital South Wing to Bedford Police HQ

River Street to Bedford Modern School

Bedford College to Bedford Town Football Club

Bedford County Court to Wendover Drive

Bedford Borough Hall to Premier Inn Priory Marina

KNOWLEDGE OF BEDFORD AREA TEST

Property/Place

Address

IL BASILICO	MILL STREET BEDFORD
KINGFISHER, BARNS HOTEL	CARDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
BEDFORD ASPECTS LEISURE PARK	NEWNHAM AVENUE, BEDFORD
BEDFORD ATHLETIC STADIUM	BARKERS LANE, BEDFORD
BEDFORD BUS STATION	GREYFRIARS, BEDFORD
BEDFORD COLLEGE	CAULDWELL STREET, BEDFORD
BEDFORD CORN EXCHANGE	ST PAUL'S SQUARE, BEDFORD
BEDFORD COUNTY COURT OFFICES	ST PAUL'S SQUARE, BEDFORD
BEDFORD HOSPITAL	AMPTHILL, BRITANNIA & KEMPSTON ROADS
BEDFORD MODERN SCHOOL	MANTON LANE, BEDFORD
BEDFORD RUGBY UNION GROUND	GOLDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
BEDFORDSHIRE & LUTON FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HQ	SOUTHFIELDS ROAD, KEMPSTON
BEDFORDSHIRE PILGRIMS HOUSING ASSOC HQ	HORNE LANE, BEDFORD
BOROUGH HALL	CAULDWELL STREET, BEDFORD
BUNYAN MEETING CHURCH MUSEUM	MILL STREET, BEDFORD
BUNYAN SPORTS CENTRE	MILE ROAD, BEDFORD
CAMBRIDGE ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	CAMBRIDGE ROAD, BEDFORD
CECIL HIGGINS ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM	CASTLE LANE, BEDFORD
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU	HARPUR CENTRE, BEDFORD
BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE HQ	WOBURN ROAD, KEMPSTON
CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT CENTRE	HORNE LANE, BEDFORD
DALLAS ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	KEMPSTON ROAD, BEDFORD
DAUBENEY ACADEMY	ORCHARD STREET, BEDFORD
DESHI SPICE INDIAN RESTAURANT	TAVISTOCK STREET BEDFORD
BEDFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY – POLHILL SITE	POLHILL AVENUE, BEDFORD
DE PARYS HOTEL	DE PARYS AVENUE, BEDFORD
EDITH CAVELL PRIMARY SCHOOL	MANTON LANE, BEDFORD
ELMS FARM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE	NORSE ROAD, BEDFORD
AMICI ITALIAN RESTAURANT	ST. PETER'S STREET, BEDFORD
MILLER AND CARTER STEAKHOUSE	RIVERSIDE SQUARE, BEDFORD
KEMPSTON ACADEMY	HILL RISE, KEMPSTON
HAZELDINE SCHOOL	STANCLIFFE ROAD, PUTNOE LANE, BEDFORD
KEMPSTON SAINSBURYS	SAXON CENTRE, BEDFORD ROAD, KEMPSTON
KEMPSTON POOL & FITNESS	HILLGROUNDS, KEMPSTON
BEDFORD GIRLS SCHOOL	CARDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
BEDFORD PRISON	ST. LOYES STREET, BEDFORD
MANOR HOSPITAL	CHURCH END, BIDDENHAM

Property/ Place

MOWSBURY GOLF COMPLEX
OASIS LEISURE POOL
PRIORY MARINA
BEDFORD RAILWAY STATION
MERCURE BEDFORD
TRAVELODGE GOLDINGTON
RIVERSIDE LAWN TENNIS CLUB
ROBINSON SWIMMING POOL
SPRINGFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL
ST HELENA RESTAURANT
TRAVELODGE BEDFORD
THE VERVE HOTEL
TESCO 1 – EAST BEDFORD
TESCO 2 – SOUTH BEDFORD
THE BEDFORD SPORTS & HOCKEY CENTRE
THE BULL PUBLIC HOUSE
THE DEVONSHIRE ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE
THE DUKE PUBLIC HOUSE
PREMIER INN BEDFORD SOUTH
THE EMBANKMENT HOTEL
YARL'S WOOD IMMIGRATION CENTRE
THE GRIFFIN PUBLIC HOUSE
PREMIER INN PRIORY MARINA
THE KENT ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE
THE MILL PUBLIC HOUSE
THE PARK PUBLIC HOUSE
PREMIER INN TOWN CENTRE
THE SWAN HOTEL
THE TIGER
THE WHITE HORSE PUBLIC HOUSE
TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
WOBURN ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

WIXAMS RETIREMENT VILLAGE
WIXAMS ACADEMY
SHORTSTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

MAYPOLE FARM PUBLIC HOUSE

SHARNBROOK ACADEMY
BEDFORD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Address

KIMBOLTON ROAD, BEDFORD
CARDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
BARKERS LANE, BEDFORD
ASHBURNHAM ROAD, BEDFORD
ST. MARY'S STREET, BEDFORD
GOLDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
BRADGATE RD/GOLDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
FOSTER HILL ROAD, BEDFORD
ORCHARD STREET, KEMPSTON
HIGH STREET, ELSTOW, BEDFORD
THE HIGHTS, BRICKHILL DRIVE, BEDFORD
SHAKESPEARE ROAD, BEDFORD
RIVERFIELD DRIVE, BEDFORD
CARDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD
CHESTER ROAD, BEDFORD
LONDON ROAD, BEDFORD
DUDLEY STREET, BEDFORD
CHANTRY ROAD, KEMPSTON
FLETCHER ROAD, KEMPSTON
THE EMBANKMENT, BEDFORD
TWINWOODS THURLEIGH ROAD MILTON ERNEST
BEDFORD ROAD, KEMPSTON
BARKERS LANE, BEDFORD
SALISBURY STREET, BEDFORD
MILL STREET, BEDFORD
KIMBOLTON ROAD, BEDFORD
RIVERSIDE SQUARE
THE EMBANKMENT, BEDFORD
AVON DRIVE, BEDFORD
NEWNHAM AVENUE, BEDFORD
ST PAUL'S SQUARE, BEDFORD
WOBURN ROAD & A421, KEMPSTON

BEDFORD ROAD WIXAMS
GREEN LANE WIXAMS
BEAUVAIS SQUARE SHORTSTOWN

FLETCHER ROAD KEMPSTON

ODELL ROAD SHARNBROOK
MEADOW LANE



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

DRIVER CODE OF CONDUCT

C.1 General responsibilities of a licensed driver

C.1.1 Licensed drivers shall use their best endeavours to promote the image of the trade by:

- (i) complying with all aspects of this policy,
- (ii) maintaining their vehicles in a safe and satisfactory condition at all times,
- (iii) attending punctually when undertaking pre-booked hirings,
- (iv) assisting passengers entering into and alighting from the vehicle,
- (v) offering passengers reasonable assistance with luggage, and
- (vi) behaving in a civil, orderly and responsible manner at all times.

C.1.2 To avoid nuisance to residents when picking up or waiting for a fare, a licensed driver shall:

- (i) not sound the vehicle's horn illegally to attract the passenger's attention,
- (ii) keep the volume of all audio equipment to a reasonable level, and
- (iii) switch off the engine when required to wait.

C.1.3 Whilst waiting on taxi ranks, in addition to the requirements of subsection C.1.2, a licensed driver shall:

- (i) rank in an orderly manner and proceed promptly along the rank in accordance with rank protocol,
- (ii) remain in the vehicle, save for alighting to smoke or for comfort breaks, and
- (iii) ensure that the vehicle is not left idling at any time whilst parked.

C.1.4 Whilst waiting at private hire operator premises, in addition to the requirements of subsection C.1.2, a licensed driver shall:

- (i) not undertake servicing or repair of vehicles on the highway,
- (ii) not undertake servicing or repair of vehicles on the premises unless appropriate planning permission has been obtained,
- (iii) take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the business operation does not cause unnecessary disturbance to residents, and
- (iv) ensure that the vehicle is not left idling at any time whilst parked.

C.1.5 Drivers should be aware that they are in a position of significant responsibility, not only ensuring the safety of their passengers, but also the safety of the community as a whole. Any driver becoming aware of any criminal activity, suspected criminal activity, or safeguarding concerns is expected to report the matter to the police at the earliest opportunity.

C.2 Driver dress code

C.2.1 The Council believes that licensed drivers have a responsibility to dress professionally and appropriately whilst undertaking taxi or private hire work to promote confidence amongst members of the public, especially visitors to the District.

C.2.2 The following are deemed to be unacceptable standards of dress for a licensed driver and are not to be worn:

- (i) bare chests,
- (ii) clothing or footwear which is unclean or damaged,
- (iii) clothing printed with wording, logos or graphics which may offend,
- (iv) sports shirts e.g. football, rugby or cricket tops, or track suits with branding for a particular team (generic or sports manufacture branded tracksuits in smart condition are acceptable),
- (v) footwear that prevents the safe operation of the vehicle,
- (vi) headgear such as baseball caps*, or any headgear that partially or completely conceals the face or the identity of the driver (Religious clothing that does not cover the whole face will be allowable).*
- (vii) any shorts, other than smart tailored shorts.

*baseball caps or similar hats may be worn whilst driving where necessary to reduce glare from the sun.

**drivers should wear a face mask where it is a statutory requirement to minimise risk of infection. At times when it is not a statutory requirement, drivers may wear a mask whilst driving, but should ensure their face is uncovered when first greeting the passenger to ensure that the passenger can check that the driver is the person whose photograph is shown on the licence.

This list is not exhaustive and Authorised Officers will assess whether standards of dress are acceptable. If an Authorised Officer deems a driver's standard of dress to be unacceptable, the decision will have effect as though it were included in the above list.

C.3 Driver conduct

C.3.1 The driver shall be respectably dressed, clean and tidy in appearance at all times whilst his vehicle is being made available for hire.

C.3.2 The driver shall at all times, when acting in accordance with the drivers licence granted to them, wear or display such badge as supplied by the Council in such position and manner as to be plainly and distinctly visible at all times.

C.3.3 The driver shall not lend the badge to any other person or cause or permit any other person to wear it.

C.3.4 On termination or surrender of a driver's licence, the driver shall return the badge to the Council immediately.

C.3.5 The driver shall behave in a civil, polite and orderly manner at all times and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in, or entering or alighting from, the vehicle.

C.3.6 The driver shall not wilfully or negligently cause or permit the vehicle licence plate to be concealed from public view, or allow the licence plate to be so defaced as to make any information illegible.

C.3.7 The driver who has agreed to, or has been hired to, be in attendance with the vehicle at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such vehicle at such appointed time and place.

C.3.8 The driver, when hired to drive to a particular destination, shall proceed to that destination by either the shortest available route, or the believed cheapest route considering all known factors such as roadworks, delays, etc.

C.3.9 The driver shall not convey, or permit to be conveyed, in such vehicle any greater number of persons than the number of persons specified on the Vehicle Licence.

C.3.10 The driver shall convey a reasonable amount of luggage and afford reasonable assistance in loading and unloading luggage.

C.3.11 The driver must not solicit, by calling out or otherwise importune any person to hire or be carried for hire.

C.3.12 The vehicle shall be presented in a clean and tidy condition for each journey and free from any unpleasant odours.

C.3.13 The driver shall not smoke or 'vape' in a licensed vehicle at any time.

C.3.14 The driver shall not drink or eat in the vehicle whilst conveying passengers.

C.3.15 The driver must ensure that the noise emitted from any sound equipment in the vehicle does not cause annoyance to any persons, whether inside or outside the vehicle.

C.3.16 The driver shall not operate the horn as a means of signalling that the vehicle has arrived.

C.3.17 Drivers must not use a mobile phone whilst driving unless it is designed for hands-free operation.

C.3.18 The driver must notify the Council within 48 hours of:

- (i) any criminal conviction, caution, or fixed penalty notice,
- (ii) any driving endorsement,
- (iii) any change of medical condition that may impact on the ability to drive, or
- (iv) any change of name or address whilst the licence is in force.

C.4 Lost property

C.4.1 A licensed driver shall diligently search the vehicle periodically for any property which may have been accidentally left therein.

C.4.2 In the event of lost property being found that is identifiable to a known passenger the driver shall either return the property to the passenger forthwith or contact the passenger to arrange its return.

C.4.3 Any property found that is not identifiable to a passenger and not subsequently claimed within seven (7) days should be reported to the police and/or left in the custody of a police officer after obtaining a receipt. If advised to do so by the police, the licence holder can retain the property for the period advised by the police or taken to the Council offices.

C.5 Carriage of animals

C.5.1 A driver may not carry any animal not belonging to a passenger in a licensed vehicle whilst available for hire or carrying passengers.

C.5.2 Animals, other than assistance dogs, in the custody of passengers may be carried at the driver's discretion, provided they are restrained in a safe manner.

C.5.3 Assistance dogs

A driver must carry assistance dogs when requested to do so by a passenger unless they have been issued with a medical exemption certificate. Assistance dogs include guide dogs for blind or partially sighted persons, hearing dogs for the hard of hearing or deaf persons, and any other assistance dog which assists a disabled person with a physical or mental impairment.

C.6 Carriages of passengers with wheelchairs

C.6.1 Passengers with wheelchairs often prefer to travel in normal saloon, estate or multi-passenger vehicles rather than a specially adapted wheelchair accessible vehicle. In these circumstances, a driver must carry a passenger with a wheelchair unless the vehicle is unable to accommodate the wheelchair within the luggage compartment.

C.6.2 Drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles must:

- (i) not refuse to carry any passenger with a wheelchair,
- (ii) not charge any additional fare for passengers with wheelchairs,
- (iii) be fully conversant with the correct method of operating all ramps, lifts and wheelchair restraints fitted to the vehicle,
- (iv) ensure that all wheelchairs are firmly secured in the vehicle using an approved restraining system and that the wheelchair brakes have been applied prior to commencing the journey,
- (v) ensure that all ramps, lifts and wheelchair restraints fitted to the vehicle are available in full working order at all times the vehicle is available for hire.

The Council considers continued compliance with its Taxi & Private Hire Policy an essential requirement of the “fit and proper” test, failure to comply with all policy requirements is likely to result in enforcement action.

Please ensure you read the policy which is available via the following link as questions may relate to any part of the Policy not just the information above :

[Taxi Private Hire Policy 1 June 22.pdf](#)

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