

# **Minibus and Accessible Vehicle Driver and Passenger Assistant Training and Assessment**

**(for vehicles that can be driven using a car driving licence)**

## **Information Pack**

**August 2012**



*Working for  
Warwickshire*

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## **A. Introduction**

This document **outlines**:

1. The legal and County Council requirements for driving a minibus or accessible vehicle (hereto referred to jointly as minibus) using a normal car driving licence.
2. The minibuses that can be driven using a full car driving licence.
3. The minibus and accessible vehicle driver training and assessment requirements.
4. The passenger assistant training for operators of specialist minibus and accessible vehicle wheelchair accessible equipment.
5. How to book driver and passenger assistant training and assessment.

## **B. The requirements to drive a minibus**

The tables overleaf provide a quick guide to the legal and County Council requirements for individuals who wish to drive minibuses but do not have a PCV licence. Use this table to establish:

- Who is entitled to drive a minibus.
- The operating restrictions that apply.
- The type of minibus that can be driven.

The requirements are complex and vary according to when the driver passed their driving test and whether they have D1 minibus entitlement on their driving licence.

It is recommended you consult the County Council Driving at Work Policy documents and the DVLA website for more detailed information regarding driver entitlement to drive minibuses and to ensure the driver fully complies with all legal and County Council requirements prior to booking any training or assessments.

### **How to use the tables**

1. Select the appropriate table according to when the driver passed their driving test or last renewed their driving licence.
2. Follow the statements on the left hand side of the appropriate table. If the driver can answer yes to all of the questions they will be able to drive a minibus (with restrictions) using a car licence.
3. Read the notes and explanation column which includes guidance on what to do if the statements do not apply to the driver.
4. Carefully read the driving entitlement boxes which outline the legal and Warwickshire County Council restrictions that apply. Failing to abide by these restrictions could mean the driver is driving a vehicle illegally.

**Table 1: For drivers who passed their car driving test BEFORE 1 January 1997.**

Statement	Notes and explanations				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I passed my driving test or last renewed my licence before 1 January 1997.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	<p>You will have D1 minibus entitlement on your licence. If you do not have D1 minibus entitlement additional conditions apply (see table 2).</p>				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I am at least 25 years old, am not over 65 and have held a car drivers licence for at least 2 years.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	<p>To legally drive a minibus you must be at least 21 years of age, however to be insured through the county council you must be at least 25.</p> <p>If you are aged 21 to 24 or older than 65 you should seek advice from the County Council's Insurance Team.</p> <p>Drivers aged 70 or over must pass a full 'PCV' medical to renew their minibus entitlement and be approved by the Council's insurance team.</p>				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I will not be driving for hire or reward.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	<p>You cannot drive a minibus using a standard car licence if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment is made for carriage, or</li> <li>• You are specifically contracted or employed to drive a minibus (minibus driving should not be shown as essential in your job description), or</li> <li>• You receive payment for driving.</li> </ul> <p>If payment is made for carriage, a Section 19 Permit must be in place, however no profit can be made and the driver must not be paid.</p>				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I have passed an approved County Council minibus driver training course within the last 3 years</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	<p>From September 2011 the required standard is the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS). Drivers who demonstrate this standard will be approved to drive a minibus up to and including the size of vehicle in which they passed their assessment. Existing approved drivers can continue to drive a minibus until their reassessment is due at which time they must take MiDAS.</p>				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">My licence has no more than 3 penalty points for any one offence and no more than 6 points in total.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	<p>If you exceed this requirement you must obtain the approval of the County Council Insurance Team to drive vehicles insured under the County Council's Fleet insurance arrangements (including hired vehicles).</p>				
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**Table 2: For drivers who passed their car driving test ON OR AFTER 1 Jan 1997.**

Statement	Notes and explanations				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I passed my driving test or last renewed my licence on or after 1 January 1997.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	You will not have D1 minibus entitlement on your licence.				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I am at least 25 years old, am not over 65 and have held a car drivers licence for at least 2 years.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ YES ↓</p>	<p>To legally drive a minibus you must be at least 21 years of age, however to be insured through the county council you must be at least 25.</p> <p>If you are aged 21 to 24 or older than 65 you should seek advice from the County Council's Insurance Team.</p> <p>Drivers aged 70 or over must pass a full 'PCV' medical to renew their minibus entitlement and be approved by the Council's insurance team.</p>				
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## **C. Minibus driver required training and assessment**

Warwickshire County Council requires minibus drivers to pass an approved minibus driving assessment. This rule applies to individuals who:

- Drive a minibus (owned, hired or leased) on County Council business.
- Drive a minibus that is owned or managed by the County Council. This includes minibuses that are:
  - owned or managed by the County Fleet
  - owned or leased by local sites such as schools.
- Drive a minibus that is insured by the County Council.

The task of minibus driving requires skills over and above those required for driving a car. The training and assessment is necessary to equip the driver with the knowledge and skills required to safeguard themselves, the passengers and other road users.

### **C1. The Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS)**

The County Council has adopted the nationally recognised Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) as the required standard to drive a minibus. MiDAS is a thorough training and assessment programme that is delivered to a national standard endorsed by the Community Transport Association. Existing approved drivers can continue to drive a minibus until their reassessment is due, at which time they will have to take MiDAS.

The MiDAS standard requires drivers to:

- Complete minibus driving theory training.
- Pass a minibus driving theory assessment.
- Pass a minibus practical driving assessment.

Refresher training and theory and practical reassessments are required within three years.

Please note: MiDAS training does not include trailer towing. Drivers are required to receive training and assessment before they tow a trailer with a minibus. Please contact us for advice on suitable training and assessment.

### **C2. MiDAS Driver theory training**

A two hour classroom based theory training session delivered using an interactive PowerPoint presentation. The training covers:

- Legal requirements
- Driving for safety and economy
- Passenger safety
- Personal safety for drivers
- Breakdown, collision and emergency procedures.

### **C3. MiDAS Driver theory assessment**

A written, multiple choice theory assessment designed to ensure drivers are fully aware of the legal, practical and safety issues surrounding minibus driving. The assessment typically involves 20 multiple choice questions. The pass mark is 80%.

Drivers are advised to prepare for the assessment by familiarising themselves with the Highway Code, and if taking a re-assessment, by studying the MiDAS Handbook. The assessment is taken at the end of the driver theory training.

### **C4. MiDAS Practical driving assessment**

An extensive on-road driving assessment that lasts approximately one hour. The assessment is designed to ensure driving is of an acceptable standard and to identify areas where drivers may need further help to bring their skills up to the required standard. The assessment includes:

- Eyesight check
- Basic vehicle familiarisation
- Demonstration and commentary drive
- Driving familiarisation
- Driving assessment.

Warwickshire's policy is that drivers will be approved to drive a minibus up to and including the size of vehicle in which they passed their assessment. The maximum length of vehicle a driver has been assessed and approved to drive will be recorded on the driver's MiDAS certificate. The practical assessment should therefore be taken in the largest vehicle that a driver will be required to drive. Should a driver need to drive a larger vehicle in the future they will need to be re-assessed in the larger vehicle.

### **C5. Practical driver training**

It is recommended that new and occasional minibus drivers book an hours minibus driving instruction before their practical driving assessment to help them achieve the MiDAS standard. Hour long sessions can be booked to take place immediately prior to the driving assessment.

Further training can also be offered to help raise the skills of drivers who have previously failed to display the driving standard required to pass the practical assessment.

### **C6. Theory and practical driving reassessments**

All drivers will need to pass a reassessment within 3 years of achieving the MiDAS standard. This will involve:

- A driver theory refresher course
- A driver theory assessment
- A practical driving assessment.

## **D Passenger assistant required training and assessment**

### **D1. MiDAS for Passenger Assistants**

Warwickshire County Council requires all drivers and passenger assistants who operate accessible equipment on minibuses such as ramps, tail lifts and equipment to secure wheelchairs to complete the MiDAS for Passenger Assistants (PATs) training and assessment.

The combined theory and practical course lasts approximately 3 hours and covers:

- Passenger awareness.
- Passenger assistance.
- Safe use of passenger lifts and ramps.
- Wheelchair and passenger restraint equipment.
- Legal requirements and good practice.

At the end of the training, attendees will undergo a multiple choice theory test and a practical assessment. MiDAS for Passenger Assistants can be taken with the standard MiDAS driver training and assessment, or as a standalone course.

Drivers and passenger assistants must re-take the training and pass a reassessment within 3 years of achieving the PATs standard.

## **E MiDAS training and assessment - further information**

### **E1. Certificates and handbook**

MiDAS training certificates are issued on successful completion of MiDAS assessments and remain valid for three years. The maximum length of vehicle a driver has been assessed and approved to drive will be recorded on the driver's MiDAS certificate. All course attendees receive the MiDAS Handbook, a valuable reference tool for both drivers and passenger assistants. Certificate holders must regularly refer to the handbook to refresh their knowledge. New guides will be presented at re-assessments to ensure drivers and passenger assistants have up to date information.



## **E2. What happens if an individual fails an assessment?**

<b>Assessment failed</b>	<b>Course of action</b>
Driver theory assessment	Retake theory training and assessment. Cannot progress to practical assessment until theory assessment has been passed.
Practical driving assessment	Retake practical assessment. Instructor may recommend further training prior to retaking assessment.
Passenger assistant theory assessment	Retake theory training and assessment. Cannot progress to practical assessment until theory assessment has been passed.
Passenger assistant practical assessment	Must retake full training course and theory assessment prior to retaking practical assessment.

## **E3. Who provides the training and assessment?**

Warwickshire County Council's Road Safety Team offers MiDAS training and assessment using approved driving instructors who have been certified by the Community Transport Association to deliver MiDAS.

## **E4. Where does the training and assessment take place?**

MiDAS training and assessment can be provided at any venue in Warwickshire specified by the sponsor (organisation or individual making the booking). The only requirement is that a quiet, private room suitable to deliver a PowerPoint presentation is made available for the driving theory and Passenger Assistant training.

The Road Safety Unit can organise a training venue, however this will incur additional cost.

## **E5. What vehicle is used for the training and assessment?**

The sponsor is responsible for providing a suitable minibus for the training that meets driver eligibility. The vehicle must be taxed, suitably insured, roadworthy and have sufficient fuel ready for the training and assessment.

Warwickshire's policy is that drivers will be approved to drive a minibus up to and including the size of vehicle in which they passed their assessment. The maximum length of vehicle a driver has been assessed and approved to drive will be recorded on the driver's MiDAS certificate. The practical assessment should therefore be taken in the largest vehicle that a driver will be required to drive. Should a driver need to drive a larger vehicle in the future they will need to be re-assessed in the larger vehicle.

If PATS training is being provided the sponsor should provide a wheelchair and a suitable vehicle for the training that is either:

- The type of vehicle that will be used by the passenger assistant being trained along with all types of wheelchair accessible equipment that the trainee will be required to operate.
- Equipped with the same wheelchair accessible equipment that trainee will be required to operate.

## F. How to book the training and assessment

### F1. Booking process

Please complete and return the enclosed booking form and fee, giving three dates in order of preference. The dates should be at least three weeks from the time of returning the booking form.

New or infrequent minibus drivers are strongly recommended to undertake training. This can be booked for the same day as the practical assessment.

Write the name of each driver or passenger assistant against the relevant time period on the booking timetable, indicating what the session will be used for (driver theory, driver training etc). Please note the duration of each session from the table below and the following guidance:

- Training sessions should run consecutively, but incorporate a 15 minute break after each two hour block of training. Training session lasting more than four hours should incorporate an hours lunch break for the instructor
- Bookings should incorporate a maximum 8 hours training in a single day. The day should begin no earlier than 8.30am and finish no later than 6pm. **(NB: Practical training and assessment can only be provided during daylight hours.)**
- Training can be provided Monday to Saturday, however an additional fee is charged for training delivered on Saturdays.
- Sessions can be split to run over two days where the total duration of the training and assessment is five or more hours with at least two hours per session.

Session	Duration	Client numbers in session
Driver theory	2 hours	Max 6
Driver practical assessment	1 hour	1
Practical driver training	1 hour	1
Passenger assistant training and assessment	3 hours	4

We will send the sponsor a letter of confirmation which details the day the training/assessment is taking place and the name of the instructor.

### Booking Example 1. Driver training and assessment in one day

Time	Driver(s) name	Activity (tick)		
		Theory & assessment	Practical training	Practical assessment
8.30am	John Smith Janet Smith David Smith Rosie Smith	✓		
10.30am	Break			
10.45am	John Smith		✓	
11.45am	John Smith			✓
12.45pm	Lunch			
1.45pm	Janet Smith			✓
2.45pm	David Smith		✓	
3.45pm	Break			
4.00pm	David Smith			✓
5.00pm	Rosie Smith			✓
6.00pm	Finish			

### Booking Example 2. Driver training and assessment split over two days

Time	Driver(s) name	Activity (tick)		
		Theory & assessment	Practical training	Practical assessment
<b>Day 1</b>				
3.30pm	John Smith Janet Smith David Smith Rosie Smith	✓		
5.30pm	Finish			
<b>Day 2</b>				
9.00am	John Smith		✓	
10.00am	John Smith			✓
11.00am	Break			
11.15am	Janet Smith			✓
12.15pm	David Smith		✓	
1.15pm	Lunch			
2.15pm	David Smith			✓
3.15pm	Rosie Smith			✓
4.15pm	Finish			

### Booking Example 3. Passenger assistants course

Time	Passenger Assistant name(s)
9.00am	1. John Smith 2. Janet Smith 3. David Smith 4. Rosie Smith
12.00am	Finish

## F2. Fees

### Driver training and assessment

A standard MiDAS driver training and assessment session will comprise of:

- A two hour theory session that can be attended by up to 6 people.
- Practical assessments that last approximately one hour per individual.
- Practical training (advised for new minibus drivers and infrequent drivers) booked in hour slots.

Training required	Hours booked	Fee	Fee per student
1 theory session plus 1 assessment	3	£207	£207
1 theory session plus 2 assessments	4	£340	£170
1 theory session plus 3 assessments	5	£471	£157
1 theory session plus 4 assessments	6	£604	£151
1 theory session plus 5 assessments	7	£735	£147
1 theory session plus 6 assessments	8	£870	£145
Practical driver training	1	£30	£30

The fees are based on the sponsor providing a minibus and a suitable room for the theory training. In the examples provided above four drivers have been trained, two of whom are new to minibus driving and have therefore received an hours driver training prior to their practical assessment. The cost would therefore be:

Item	Cost
One theory session plus 4 driving assessments	£604
Two practical training sessions	£60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£664</b>

### Passenger assistant training and assessment

A standard MiDAS passenger assistant training and assessment session will comprise of theory training and assessment followed by practical training and assessment. The training and assessment session lasts approximately 3 hours and can be attended by a maximum of 4 people. The course cost is £207 regardless of the number of attendees.

**Saturday bookings:** Training delivered on Saturdays will incur an additional charge of £5 per hour.

### **F3. Payment**

Payment can be by either cheque or credit/debit card. Cheques should be made payable to “Warwickshire County Council” (please write in full) and must be sent to Road Safety with the booking form. The only exceptions to this are ‘non cheque book’ organisations, internal to the County Council, who must authorise Road Safety to raise an internal invoice as soon as the booking is made. Please do not combine with other payments.

### **F4. Cancellations and amendments**

Refunds will only be provided if the sponsor gives a minimum of 10 working days notice of cancellation or amendment.

Note: Extra sessions may be requested upon submission of a new booking form, plus the extra fee, well in advance. However, booking is subject to the availability of the instructor and no guarantee can be given.

### **F5. Insurance**

The sponsor must satisfy themselves that the driver is entitled to drive the vehicle and that they are covered by the appropriate insurance.

Drivers must be covered by the vehicle insurance. The Sponsor must certify this on the booking form. Warwickshire County Council’s insurance requirements are specified in the document ‘Driving at Work, Guide 3; Use of minibuses on WCC business’.

Check with the vehicle manager whether the vehicle is covered by Warwickshire County Council insurance. For vehicles not covered by Warwickshire County Council insurance, please ensure that both your drivers and the instructor will be covered and send a photocopy of the insurance certificate with the booking form.

## **G. Further information**

It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the more detailed information and policy relating to the use of minibuses contained in Warwickshire County Council’s Driving at Work policy documents.

<b>Query</b>	<b>Further Advice</b>
Training and Assessments	Road Safety Unit Tel: 01926 418619
Driving Licences	County Fleet Manager Tel 01926 412885 DVLA Tel 0870 240 0009 <a href="http://www.dvla.gov.uk">www.dvla.gov.uk</a>
WCC Insurance	County Insurance Manager Tel: 01926 412337

## H Driver training and assessment checklist.

Use the following checklist to ensure that the training and assessment can be delivered. Driver training and assessment can only be provided if:

Item	Check
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The driver(s) are legally entitled to drive the minibus and they also meet all County Council minibus driver requirements. This includes ensuring the minibus weight and number of seats are within the legal restrictions (see pages 3&amp;4).</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The driver and vehicle are ready and able to drive off at the appointed time.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The vehicle is the largest that the driver is required to drive</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drivers can show their valid driving licence to the instructor. Copies are not acceptable. If drivers have a photocard licence they must also produce the counterpart paper licence as well.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drivers are covered by the vehicle's insurance. Drivers will be required to sign a declaration to that effect.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drivers can pass an eyesight test (reading a number plate at the prescribed distance).</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The instructor is satisfied that it is safe and legal for the driver and the vehicle to be on the road.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The instructor is satisfied that the driver is familiar with the vehicle being used during the training or assessment.</li> </ul>	
<p>Where driver theory or passenger assistant training is being provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A quiet, private room is provided that is suitable to show a PowerPoint presentation.</li> </ul>	
<p>Where passenger assistant training is being provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minibus must be available along with all types of wheelchair accessible equipment that the trainee will be required to operate.</li> </ul>	

**Please note:** If any of the above requirements are not met we may not be able to provide the training or assessment. In this situation you will still be charged the full rate.

## I. Drivers Checklist and Declaration.

Please provide each attendee with a copy of the following form in advance of the training and assessment to ensure they are prepared for the training. The attendee must present their instructor with a signed copy of the form before their training commences.

### 1. Driver / Passenger Assistant details

First name: ..... Surname: .....

Address: .....

Date of Birth: .....

### 2. Training details

Date of training: ..... Vehicle registration no.: .....

Location: .....

### 3. Driving licence details (To be completed by drivers only and to be checked by the instructor against licence.)

Licence No: ..... Licence held (no. of years) .....

Classes: ..... Photocard licence expiry date: .....

Details of endorsements including any that are pending (if none state 'none'):

.....

### 4. Checklist

Please ensure you comply with all relevant parts of the checklist. If any of the requirements are not met we may not be able to provide the training or assessment, however you will still be charged the full rate.

Item	Check
<b>Drivers &amp; Passenger Assistants</b>	
I know where and at what time my training / assessments are taking place. (Please ensure you arrive 5 minutes early.)	
I have checked that the minibus is available to use and will ensure that it is ready for use (in the right place, in good condition and with sufficient fuel).	
The vehicle is the largest that the driver is required to drive	
I am familiar with the vehicle being used for the training / assessment.	
I have checked that a suitable room has been made available for the driver theory / passenger assistant training.	

Item	Check
<b>Drivers</b>	
If an existing MiDAS certificate holder I have re-familiarised myself with the MiDAS Handbook.	
I comply with both the legal and County Council requirements to drive a minibus using a normal car driving licence. This includes ensuring the weight and number of seats is within the legal restrictions (see pages 3 & 4).	
My use of the vehicle for the purposes of the assessment or training is covered by a valid insurance policy which satisfies the requirements of the relevant legislation.	
I have a valid driving licence and will be able to show my original licence to the instructor. (Copies are not acceptable. If you have a new photocard licence you must produce the counterpart licence as well.)	
I will be able to pass an eyesight test (reading a number plate from the prescribed distance).	
I have re-familiarised myself with the Highway Code.	

### 5. Declaration:

I comply with all of the items listed in the drivers checklist.

Name: (Print) .....

Signed ..... Date: .....



## J. Instructor Checklist

Client name: ..... Training date: .....

- ☐ Minibus does not exceed 17 seats (including the drivers seat)
- ☐ If driver passed test on or after 1 January 1997, the vehicle MAM does not exceed 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if fitted with specialist accessible equipment).

### Training / assessment received

Training / assessment	Attended	Passed	Failed
Driver theory			
Practical driver training			
Practical driver assessment			
Passenger assistant theory			
Passenger assistant practical			

### Vehicle administration / familiarisation

Item	Check	Item	Check
Log Sheets		Vehicle Defects	
Daily Check Sheets		Emergency Breakdown Procedure	
Vehicle height, weight, length		Speed limit of vehicle	
Passenger and weight capacity		First aid box	
Vehicle instruments		Types of fire extinguishers	
Security of vehicle			

### Vehicle used for practical assessment

Make & model of vehicle	.....		
Length of Vehicle	.....	Length recorded on certificate	

Instructor name: ..... Date: .....

Instructor signature: .....