

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 23 JANUARY 2018

INTRODUCTION OF BTEC QUALIFICATION FOR LICENSED TAXI DRIVERS

Executive Summary

Taxis (Hackney Carriages) and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are vital to our communities, providing essential transport links for many. The Local Government Association Taxi and PHV Licensing – Councillors' Handbook, states that the Licensing Authority is responsible for ensuring the public travel safely and receive a good level of service, and that the council systems attract good, reputable drivers.

In order for us to do this, Woking Borough Council's Licensing Department is seeking to introduce the adoption of the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver as a mandatory requirement for all Taxi or Private Hire drivers in Woking.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that

- That (i) the change in requirements for all new drivers to complete the BTEC Level 2 Certificate be approved; and**
- (ii) the change in requirements for all current drivers to complete the BTEC Level 2 Certificate within 3 years be approved.**

This item will need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to the Council.

Background Papers:

None.

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Introduction of BTEC Qualification for Licensed Taxi Drivers

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Taxis (Hackney Carriages) and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are vital to our communities, providing essential transport links for many. The Local Government Association Taxi and PHV Licensing – Councillors' Handbook, states that the Licensing Authority is responsible for ensuring the public travel safely and receive a good level of service, and that the council systems attract good, reputable drivers.
- 1.2 Hackney Carriage (taxi) and Private Hire Operators, drivers and vehicles are principally governed by a regulatory framework including:-
 - Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976;
 - Town Police Clauses Act 1847;
 - Rules, Regulations and Conditions for taxi and private hire licences and vehicles, as approved by Woking Borough Councils Licensing Committee.
- 1.3 Sections 51, 57 and 59 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (the 1976 Act) collectively bar a Council from granting either a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver's Licence to an applicant unless the Council is sure that the applicant is a 'fit and proper person' to hold such a licence. Furthermore, existing drivers must act in a way as to satisfy the Council that they continue to be 'fit and proper' to hold a licence.
- 1.4 Under these provisions the Council's 'fit and proper person' test currently includes the following:
 - Criminal records check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
 - Driving history check with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA);
 - Medical Check;
 - Successful completion of a practical driving assessment; and
 - Topographical/knowledge test
- 1.5 Hackney Carriage (taxi) and Private Hire Operators, drivers and vehicles all receive copies of their driver and vehicle licences accompanying their badges and vehicle plates. These licences clearly state the legal requirements of being in possession of respective licences, as well as expectations of behaviours.
- 1.6 Although there are many competent and professional drivers in Woking, the Licensing Department has experienced an increase in instances of minor infractions committed by drivers, and complaints regarding attitudes, behaviour and competence, these could be eliminated and avoided with greater awareness and a strengthened skill base. Comments and complaints have been received from a variety of sources, such as the travelling public, other road users, local groups such as the Woking Access Group, as well as from Licensing Enforcement events.
- 1.7 Woking Borough Council has a duty of care to other road users and the general public to ensure that licensed drivers are equipped to the highest possible standards and delivering an outstanding service.
- 1.8 In order for us to do this, Woking Borough Council's Licensing Department is seeking to introduce the adoption of the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver as a mandatory requirement for all Taxi or Private Hire drivers in Woking.

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- 1.9 Woking Borough Council Licensing would like to strengthen the local trade through professionalising and increasing the knowledge of our drivers with this qualification. The BTEC qualification is a nationally recognised programme and, accredited on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
- 1.10 This qualification is based on current best practice needed to be a modern taxi/private hire driver. The purpose of the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver is to allow drivers to improve their skills in customer service, and provide the knowledge and skills to be ambassadors for Woking through a professional, safe and reliable service to the community.
- 1.11 Currently there is no formal training requirement, with a reliance on the local area knowledge test formulated and administered by the Licensing Team. A number of other Local Authorities do however require drivers to obtain a qualification. If the requirements for driver registration in the Borough were set lower than neighbouring Councils, we could run the risk of attracting drivers with lower standards of behaviour and customer care than elsewhere. This would be detrimental to the local economy, potentially put passengers at risk of harm and could adversely impact the Council's reputation with its residents and those visiting the Borough.
- 1.12 The Department of Transport has also recommended a nationally recognised qualification as being best practice, stating in 2010 that "There may well be advantage in encouraging drivers to obtain one of the nationally-recognised vocational qualifications for the taxi and PHV trades." (*Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance - March 2010*)
- 1.13 The Department for Transport has also stated that "Authorities may wish to note that nationally recognised qualifications and training programmes sometimes have advantages over purely local arrangements (for example, in that the qualification will be more widely recognised)." (*Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance - March 2010*)
- 1.14 As well as covering the core functions of a driver this BTEC also focuses on vital skills needed to be able to offer a professional service such as communication, wheelchair accessibility, customer service, legislation, vehicle maintenance and driving safety.
- 1.15 The Department for Transport states that "The Department is aware that, in some cases, taxi drivers are reluctant to pick up disabled people. This may be because drivers are unsure about how to deal with disabled people, they believe it will take longer for disabled people to get in and out of the taxi and so they may lose other fares, or they are unsure about insurance arrangements if anything goes wrong. It should be remembered that this is no excuse for refusing to pick up disabled people and that the taxi industry has a duty to provide a service to disabled people in the same way as it provides a service to any other passenger. Licensing authorities should do what they can to work with operators, drivers and trade bodies in their area to improve drivers awareness of the needs of disabled people, encourage them to overcome any reluctance or bad practice, and to improve their abilities and confidence. Local licensing authorities should also encourage their drivers to undertake disability awareness training." (*Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance - March 2010*).
- 1.16 As the contents of the BTEC include units on passengers who require assistance, we believe this would not only alleviate concerns raised by the Woking Access Group but would also improve the overall ease of use for those who require Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles, as well as ensuring that Drivers are complaint and understanding of their legal requirements as highlighted by Section 165 of the Equality Act 2010.

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2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that all new applicants for Drivers Badges be required to obtain the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver (QCF) prior to being licensed. This would be in addition to the requirements listed in 1.4 above and any further requirements introduced from time to time.
- 2.2 It is proposed that existing drivers are given three years from adoption in which to complete the BTEC.
- 2.3 After this date, all renewal applications for applicants who do not hold the qualification will be assessed for determination. The authority will need to consider each case on its merits. The only grounds on which the Council can refuse to renew a licence are those set out in Section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, of which the applicable ground would be 'any other reasonable cause'. The Council would therefore need to take into account all relevant factors, including the driver's history and reasons for not having completed the training before deciding whether there was reasonable cause to refuse to renew their licence.
- 2.4 Licences are renewed every three years at which time each drivers registration is reviewed against the requirements listed in paragraph 1.4 and in addition this would include a driver holding the BTEC qualification.
- 2.5 Applicants and existing drivers would be responsible for arranging to attend a course directly. To assist, the Council will supply a list of local course providers. A number of delivery modes are available (e.g. day and evening courses held over consecutive days or weeks) and support both during the course and assessment is available to candidates with learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
- 2.6 Applicants will fund the course directly, which costs approximately £250-350. However in some instances central government funding is available.

3.0 Course Details

- 3.1 The BTEC course is a nationally recognised course comprising of nine different modules, covering legislation, vehicles, driving, customer service and disabilities:

Unit 1: Health and Safety in the taxi and private hire work environment

Unit 2: Road safety when driving passengers in a taxi or private hire vehicle

Unit 3: Professional customer service in the taxi and private hire industry

Unit 4: Taxi and private hire vehicle maintenance and safety inspections

Unit 5: The regulatory framework of the taxi and private hire industry

Unit 6: Taxi and private hire services for passengers who require assistance

Unit 7: Routes and fares in the taxi and private hire vehicle industries

Unit 8: Transporting of parcels, luggage, and other items in the taxi and private hire industries

Unit 9: Transporting of young children and young persons by taxi or private hire vehicle

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- 3.2 To achieve a full BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver (QCF) Candidates must complete all nine units.
- 3.3 As each course provider has their own timetables and arrangements, the time frame can vary considerably on how long the course can take. However, the majority of course providers are aware that the course is to be fitted in amongst the drivers and applicants busy work schedules, and offer a wide variety of options, such as intensive two day courses, or the allowance for the workload to be spread out over a period of days to best facilitate the applicants schedules.
- 3.4 A list of course providers will be maintained by Woking Borough Council. Whilst ultimately, these providers would not be endorsed or recommended specifically by the Council, any provider would be able to request to be included on the list. Each provider would set their own fees for the Course, and be responsible for scheduling their own timetable. Drivers would be responsible for paying all fees associated with the Qualification direct to the course provider and would be advised to contact a provider to best suit their needs.
- 3.5 In order to give an example of the variety of course providers, details of the course providers that Guildford Borough Council are aware of are attached as Appendix 1, and a summary of some of the time frames that some of the providers advise is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.6 Whilst a list of course providers is given in Appendix 1, it is important to remember that the applicant is not limited to choosing from these providers. As the course is a nationally recognised course it is provided by many other organisations unlisted. The applicant is free to apply to any of the colleges or training providers that carry the BTEC Level 2 Certificate Introduction to the role of the professional Taxi and Private Hire driver, and it would be up to them to ultimately choose where and when they wanted to carry out the course. The list is provided purely for an example.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 On the 15th of August 2016, Woking Borough Council Licensing Authority carried out a consultation with members of the trade as well as local taxi and private hire businesses, responsible authorities and relevant Councillors.
- 4.2 At the time, both the BTEC and a 'points based' offences system were being considered, and the consultation letter dealt with both subjects.
- 4.3 A total of 1005 (one thousand and five) letters and 40 (forty) emails were sent out notifying the basic details of the BTEC and Points System, linking to our online website which gave a much more detailed overview – and inviting comments or suggestions prior to the 19th of September 2016. A copy of this letter is attached as Appendix 3.
- 4.4 Woking Borough Council received 32 replies to the consultation, giving views both positive and negative on the BTEC. A summary of these are attached as Appendix 4.
- 4.5 Careful consideration has been given to the results of the consultation process. Having assessed the result of the Consultation – it is clear that the largest concern relates to the issue of “grandfather rights” – i.e. that those drivers who have been driving for an extended period should not have to carry out the BTEC as they are able to display that they are all good drivers without any issues.
- 4.6 An analysis of the complaints, suspensions, refusals and revocations over the year 01 January 2017 to 31 December 2017 demonstrates that there is no evidence that new

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drivers are any more likely to generate complaints or issues than drivers who have been driving for a period of time, and as such it seems that improved training would benefit all aspects of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade. The result of this analysis is attached as Appendix 5.

- 4.7 Having considered this issue it has been proposed that existing drivers be allowed a 3 years period in which to obtain the BTEC.
- 4.8 It is also to be noted that Guildford Borough Council carried out a similar consultation when considering the introduction of a BTEC for their drivers. The outcome was similar – with a majority support from the public and the trade for an improved training scheme for applicants, but reluctance from the existing drivers that they themselves should be required to attend. The BTEC has been introduced and Guildford Licensing Authority has received positive comments in relation to this requirement. A few of the positive comments that Guildford College received from drivers who have completed the training are attached as Appendix 6.

5.0 Summary

- 5.1 The Licensing Departments main aim is to ensure the safety and comfort of the travelling public, it is believed that it can be improved by following the Department for Transport's best practice guidance relating to nationally recognised qualifications and training programmes.
- 5.2 The BTEC course is designed to develop, support and enhance the knowledge of prospective or existing drivers and will help begin or develop careers in transporting passengers. It is our ambition that this will ensure that drivers are as qualified as in neighbouring areas, it will help local drivers to secure more contracts and return customers and will support the local economy through greater visitor and customer satisfaction which in turn will lead to greater numbers of return visits to Woking.
- 5.3 It is proposed that Licensing Committee consider the benefits that a BTEC qualification would bring should it be implemented as part of the application process for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers as well as for existing drivers.

Financial

- 5.4 None

Human Resource/Training and Development

- 5.5 An improvement in Driver skills and abilities would hopefully result in a decrease in complaints and as such a reduction in officer time spent dealing with them. This should mean a slight reduction in financial costs.

Community Safety

- 5.6 An improvement in driver skills and abilities would mean an improvement in community safety.

Risk Management

- 5.7 An improvement in driver skills and abilities would mean potentially safer transport for the travelling public.

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Sustainability

5.8 None

Equalities

5.9 The introduction of the BTEC and the improvement of drivers understanding of their requirements in relation to passenger assessment would go towards ensuring drivers are compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

REPORT ENDS

APPENDIX 1 - EXAMPLE LIST OF THE VARIETY IN COURSE PROVIDERS

PROVIDER	CONTACT DETAILS	WEBSITE
Guildford College	Guildford College Stoke Road Guildford Surrey GU1 1EZ Tel: 01483 44 85 00 Email: info@guildford.ac.uk	http://www.guildford.ac.uk/CourseInformation/ShortCourseDetails.aspx/727000198451648/Professional%20Qualifications
Value Group Training Services	Unit 7-8 Whittle Road, Churchfields, Salisbury, Wiltshire. SP2 7YS 01722 333333 claregreen@salisburyvaluecars.co.uk	http://valuegrouptrainingservices.com/trainingbtec.htm
Driver Periodic Training	Driver Periodic Training Ltd Brooklands House Petersfield Avenue Slough SL2 5DY 01753 424515 info@dptraining.org.uk	http://www.learninginmotion.co.uk/index.php/btec/
Eastleigh College	Eastleigh College Chestnut Avenue Eastleigh Hampshire SO50 5FS 023 8091 1000 goplaces@eastleigh.ac.uk	http://www.eastleigh.ac.uk/careers/motor-vehicle/course-listing/level-2-certificate-in-professional-taxi-and-private-hire-driver-(edexcel)-part-timefaculty/
PDM Training Consultancy	Pavilion Business Centre, Stanningley Road Pudsey Leeds LS286NB 0113 2709637 appadminsupport@jtdsgroup.com	http://www.pdmtc.co.uk/
Skills UK	Syke Breck Farm Blidworth Lane Blidworth Nottinghamshire NG21 0NZ 01623 499200 jackiec@skillsuk.org	http://www.skillsuk.org/2.html
PTDQ	Logis-Tech Associates, UK 0141 423 6911 07941582561 ptdq@logis-tech.co.uk	http://www.ptdq.org/level-2-course
Unite	The Old Faith School	https://www.liverpoollep.org/membe

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	Bute Street Liverpool Merseyside United Kingdom L5 3LA thomas.mcintyre@unitetheunion .org 0151 207 7522	rship/member-directory/unitetaxieducation/
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APPENDIX 2 - COURSE TIME FRAMES

- Eastleigh College runs their courses over six evening sessions and requires all candidates to attend Eastleigh College to complete training. There are a set of online tests to complete.
- DPT states that the course will normally be delivered over 2 sessions lasting approximately 7 hours each which includes the online testing and the wheelchair assessments. However, they realise that the industry is 24/7 and they do try to be as flexible as possible to fit training around work commitments. This may include evening and weekend courses, and use of the workbook and private reading/study is encouraged. As many drivers find it difficult to get 2 days off to do the training, DPT has also developed an open learning route where the driver studies in his own time, and when ready comes and takes the relevant test. This way, the applicant has access to the DPT tutors at any time and they can re-sit the tests as many times as they like at no extra cost. DPT has stated that they find this route more suitable to experienced drivers who are already working in the industry.
- Value Group Training Services advise that the BTEC, An Introduction to the role of the professional taxi and private hire driver, can be delivered and assessed in a classroom near to the applicant. The course is broken down into 3 x 6 hour modules. These modules can be delivered on days and at times to suit the applicant, or alternatively, they be delivered as an intensive course – the choice is up the applicant and they should contact the provider for further information.
- Guildford College state that they began with the intention of running the course one day a week for six weeks but from talking to drivers on the rank in Guildford they soon decided to run it two days a week for three weeks, there is also the possibility of three days a week for two weeks.

APPENDIX 3 - COURSE OVERVIEW FROM GUILDFORD COLLEGE



Introduction to the Role of the professional taxi and private hire driver

Program delivery

	Deliver	Exam
Week 1	Unit 1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3
Week 2	Unit 4, 5, 6	4, 5, 6
Week 3	Unit 7, 8, 9	7, 8, 9

Observation in the last week

The Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver (QCF) is designed to develop, support and enhance the Knowledge of prospective or existing drivers who wish to begin or develop a career in transporting passengers.

Adult learners studying for the qualification bring with them a wealth of important experience which will be utilised to maximum effect by tutors.

Exam Questions

Tests are delivered through the Edexcel Onscreen Testing System, The tests will operate on a test banking system. Where a group of learners is taking a test at the same time, different learners will be presented with different tests from the bank. Each test will have a set number of questions each worth 1 mark. The main question format is to choose the correct response from one of four answers, either through answering a question or completing a statement. There is no use of questions with more than one right answer. No questions will require specific manipulation, such as “drag and drop” and there are no videos. Some images are used and may be presented in colour. After completing the test, each learner will receive a score report which will show the learner’s individual strengths and weaknesses against the areas covered on the test.

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Test number	Unit names	Number of questions	Duration of test
1	Unit 1: Health and safety in the taxi and private hire work environment	24	35
2	Unit 2: Road safety when driving passengers in a taxi or private hire vehicle	30	45
3	Unit 3: Professional customer service in the taxi and private hire Industry	20	35
4	Unit 5: The regulatory framework of the taxi and private hire industry	60	75
5	Unit 6: Taxi and private hire services for passengers who require Assistance <i>(Learning outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 only)</i>	30	45
6	Unit 7: Routes and fares in the taxi and private hire vehicle industries	20	35
7	Unit 8: Transporting of parcels, luggage and other items in the taxi and private hire industries	20	35
8	Unit 4: Taxi and private hire vehicle maintenance and safety inspections	25	35
9	Unit 9: Transporting of children and young persons by taxi or private hire vehicle	25	35

APPENDIX 4 – CONSULTATION LETTER

Consultation on potential introductions to WBC Practice and Policy

If this letter arrives addressed to more than one person/company, please ensure all are informed.

You are being contacted as a group or individual whose input has been deemed desirable or relevant in order to consult upon any potential changes to Woking Borough Councils Licencing Practices.

As you are aware, Woking Borough Council, as the Licensing Authority, has a duty of care to ensure the safety of the general public as well as ensuring that the standards of the service being provided are high and something that the drivers and operators should be proud of.

Firstly, in order for us to do this, Woking Borough Councils Licensing Department is considering bringing in a points based system that allows us to easily identify those who repeatedly breach the conditions on their licences and deal with them accordingly. Not only does this make it easier for us to establish which drivers consistently flout regulations, it provides clarity to the drivers in that the boundaries become clearer, and goes part of the way to eliminating the grey areas of officer discretion.

Secondly, following in the footsteps of many local Council Authorities, and upon recommendation from the Department of Transport, Woking Borough Council will be looking in to the introduction of a BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver becoming a requirement in order to drive a Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle in Woking. It is our belief that this would help raise the standards of the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles in Woking Borough, and thus maintain a continual and good service that the trade can be proud of.

Further information on the proposed schemes can be found online at <http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/licensing/taxi/taxiconsultation2016>

Please note that this consultation ends on the 19th of September 2016, and any suggestions or comments should reach the Licensing Team in writing at the Civic Offices by 4.45pm on 19th of September 2016.

Kind regards,

Woking Borough Councils Licensing Department

For further information please don't hesitate to contact us on 01483 755855 or by emailing licensing@woking.gov.uk

APPENDIX 5 – SUMMARY OF REPLIES TO WBC CONSULTATION

On the subject of “Grandfather Rights”

- “ something that could potentially replace [*the topographical test*] and be of benefit to the driver and ultimately the customer is great but perhaps also employing a degree of “grandfathering” rights would also be prudent”
- “I am not against the decision of introducing this however am against the fact that you will look to make qualified drivers who have been driving over 35 years do this BTEC course.”
- “I think it should be new applicants, or badge holders who have held their badge for less than 5 years.”
- “I don’t think there is requirement for BTEC LEVEL 2 for current taxi badge holders as most of drivers have done Nvq level course voluntarily, however I do think it should be implemented on new drivers.”
- “I strongly oppose this for current badge holders. I think its unfair & time consuming for current drivers, most of them have been driving taxis over long period and have done Nvq voluntarily, I believe its good idea to implement this on new applicants.”
- “I strongly believe that existing licensed drivers like myself should not have to pay to take the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver and that only new applicants for Drivers Badges/existing licensed drivers who have not already obtained the EDI Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) qualification should be required to obtain this. Why would someone who has already been a professional taxi/private hire driver for years need to take an "Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver"? I believe that it is completely unnecessary for drivers who have already completed the EDI Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) to now have to complete this BTEC Level 2 as the qualifications are very similar. I do not believe that forcing us to take another qualification will help raise the standards of the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles in Woking Borough at all.”
- “I believe asking drivers who has worked in the borough for over 25 years to do a BTEC is being disrespectful because they have served the trade very well without any complaints and now the Council is slapping them in the face saying that what they have been doing for all this time has not been great, the BTEC it has to be brought in should be obligatory to new applicants not existing ones who have been working in the borough for a very long time.”
- “I would find it demoralising, that I have to do a course in something which is second nature after all this time.”
- “Most of what is in the Btech, strikes me as common courtesy/sense and I thought most of it was covered in the licensing and passing of the Hackney/Private Hire test. It shouldn’t be, nor would I have thought it necessary to teach courtesy, especially when it is a drivers livelihood at stake.”
- “The BTEC Level 2 Certificate is called - Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver and as such I feel that this should be part of any new Taxi Driver Application. I do not think that we should make any existing Licensed Taxi Driver take this course.”

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- “I have been a taxi driver since 1991. I have rented my plate for the last 25 years, and there has never been a complaint made against me. The proposed qualifications and assessments, I do not believe, would add any value to my already outstanding service.”
- “I do not think that existing drivers should be made to do this. This should be put in place for new drivers. I myself have been in the Taxi/ Private hire business for over 14 years, and find it ludicrous that drivers such with a wealth of experience with no breaches should be penalised to sit this course.”
- “I think that BTEC Level 2 certificate will be a burden both mentally and financially on taxi drivers and also only covers one perspective of the taxi service. Most taxi drivers have years of experience, already know the rules and regulations and have read by-laws.”
- “I have been in this industry for over nine years. Three as a chauffeur, four as a private hire driver and just under two years as a Hackney driver. I have gone through all the variations of the trade and have built my skills in these trades. I believe that experience is the key and this is why I am opposed to the BTEC.”
- “I have been a Hackney licensed taxi driver in Woking for the last 18 years and I have never had any problem or complaint about the service that I have provided. I am now at the age of 63 and feel that by asking me to take this course you are undermining me. Communicating with customers has never been a problem as I have been able to take customers to wherever they need to go without any difficulty, at the same time I have been able to provide a professional service to customers. So I feel there is no need to have a BTEC certificate in order for me to do my job as I clearly demonstrated I have been able to do so throughout the time that I've been a Woking Hackney taxi driver. So for existing drivers I feel that they should be exempt from this BTEC course. I suggest bring out the course for new applicants which could be a criteria for them.”
- “I do not think existing drivers should be made to do this. This should solely be for new drivers if they are looking to join. I have been a taxi driver in Woking for over 10 years now and find it baffling drivers with such experiences with no previous breaches should be asked to complete this course.”
- “If such a course were to come into place, this should not be mandatory to existing drivers and should only be a requirement to new drivers. On the whole the quality of drivers we have on our borough is good and I do not think it is fair to penalise all drivers by introducing this course.”
- “The BTEC Level 2 course should only be targeted at new applicants and problematic existing drivers who continually breach and disregard their licencing conditions and have complaints made against them!”
- “It will be wholly unfair and waist of time and money for some one who is been in the trade for 20 odd years plus and never had a complaint against them.”
- “Having been in the taxi and private hire industry under Woking borough council for over thirteen years I personally feel that a BTEC is irrelevant and cannot be compared to what I have learnt first hand and this is why I am against the BTEC.”

On the subject of Safety Aspects

- The BTEC is hugely unpopular with the trade in other parts of the Country, the argument usually goes that why is it necessary to have a written qualification when the most important thing is safety of the travelling public, which is regulated separately. Furthermore, it is often said that

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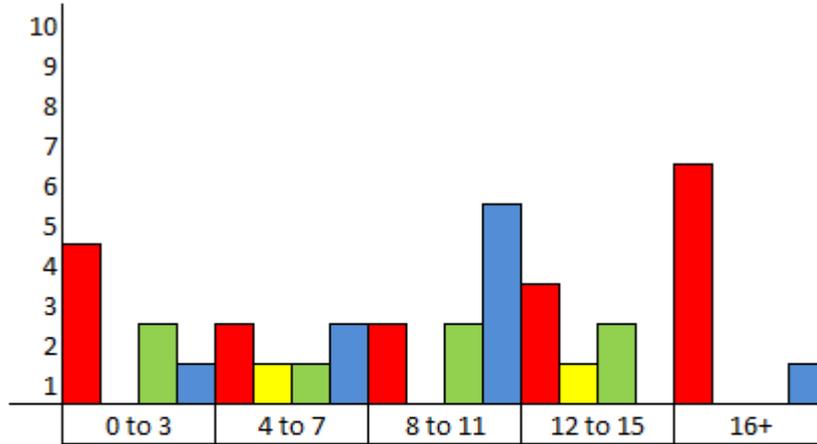
most drivers do not have great written skills, or English is an additional language, and so feel unduly penalised by the imposition of a written qualification.

On the subject of Time and Money

- Whilst I am not totally opposed to taking this, I do wonder for whose benefit it is. Is it just another Government scheme that takes up our time and money that in the taxi/private hire business already costs a lot of money for not very much return?
- from my undertaking the BTEC costs around the £300 and is over a course of a few days, as we are self employed taxi drivers, taking out the time is very difficult, as the balance of work and life is difficult as it is. Will the council pick up the cost of the BTEC for each driver? Having to do a medical, pay for the badge, as well as a DBS is quite a costly process and putting the BTEC for existing drivers is just pushing the boat out too far.
- I believe that forcing existing drivers to do the Btec would be stressful and hit drivers hard financially and would not serve any purpose
- Mass training initiatives. Schemes brought in to ensure that people were trained to a certain standard but have not been maintained. The Training Companies profited highly from these schemes - no one else did.
- The cost and time to study and pass these exams will result in less earnings and not being able to pay my bills.
- I do not agree with the btec because I've already done mbq level 2 it was funded by the government the majority of our drivers have done mbq level 2 and it's not that the drivers have to pay Money to get this btec done and which drivers that don't have the Money and Please try to consider the drivers Financial States is not good
- We agree that training is important, however, training needs to be proportionate to the work that is being carried out. A qualification for the sake of a qualification will not add to the service provided. We are of the opinion that for the job, the introduction of a qualification of this type is unnecessary and too onerous. People depend on this industry for their livelihood, and where time is money, skills need to be relevant and proportionate, and not be unnecessarily time-consuming

APPENDIX 6 – ANALYSIS OF GRANDFATHER RIGHTS

Number of Years Driving	Complaints	Suspended	Refused	Revoked	Total
0 to 3	4	0	2	1	7
4 to 7	2	1	1	2	6
8 to 11	2	0	2	5	9
12 to 15	3	1	2	0	6
16 +	5	0	0	1	6

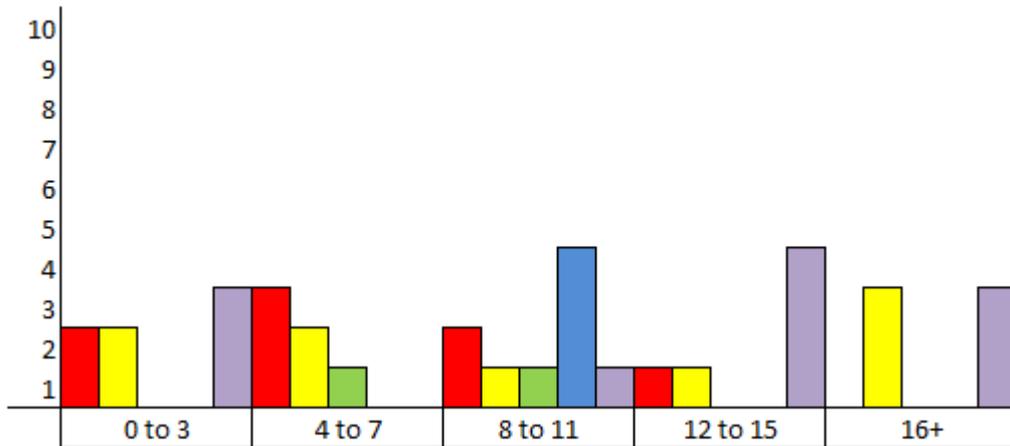


Number of incidents by numbers of years driving



Introduction of BTEC Qualification for Licensed Taxi Drivers

Number of Years Driving	Criminal Activities	Dangerous Driving	Medically Unfit	No Right to Work	Unprofessional behaviour	Total
0 to 3	2	2	0	0	3	7
4 to 7	3	2	1	0	0	6
8 to 11	2	1	1	4	1	9
12 to 15	1	1	0	0	4	6
16 or more	0	3	0	0	3	6



Type of incidents by numbers of years driving



Introduction of BTEC Qualification for Licensed Taxi Drivers

APPENDIX 7 – COURSE COMMENTS

The following comments have been received by Guildford College from drivers and applicant who have completed the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver.

“The B Tech course at the college was very helpful and was fitted around my school run so I did not lose any money.”

-G.D

“I would say that the course was relevant and interesting and run at times which suited the drivers.”

-K.K.

“After doing the course at [course provider], [the tutor] made it easy for you to get to grips with all of the requirements to be a professional taxi/private hire driver. I have found it easier to understand the national rules and regulations because I have been able to sit and discuss them with other drivers and the tutor.”

-J.C.

“As I am a new Private Hire Driver, I felt the course was very enlightening, it made me fully aware of the customer service required to the members of the public. Also, very helpful in making me aware of the regulations of the taxi and private hire industry and in general very informative. I also feel a lot of taxi/private drivers would benefit from this Btec course as the industry has changed and updated over the years.”

-R.H.