



Driving Policy

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1. Policy Statement

The University will manage the risks associated with work-related driving activities falling under its control in such a way as to mitigate the risks to occupational drivers and other people potentially affected by work-related driving activities.

The University will achieve this policy by:

- Assessing significant risks associated with work-related driving activities and implementing control measures to reduce these risks to a tolerable level
- Only allowing people with the necessary competence to drive University owned or leased vehicles
- Providing advice and guidance to occupational drivers to meet the legal responsibilities placed on them by relevant legislation
- Ensuring that people who drive their own vehicles on University business do so legally by the provision of relevant advice and guidance and by periodic checks (e.g. on driving licences, insurance and other documentation)
- Managing University owned and leased vehicles to ensure that these are kept in a roadworthy condition in accordance with any statutory requirements. Where vehicles fail to meet this standard, they will be taken out of use until such times as any defects are remedied
- Prohibiting the use of hand-held mobile phones and communications devices by occupational drivers when they are carrying out any work-related driving activities, on University land as well as public highways
- Promoting the use of public transport and car sharing where this is practical
- The Travel and Fleet section are responsible for assisting departments with fleet and driving compliance matters. The section forms part of the Estates, Facilities & Residences (EFR) department and is responsible for monitoring adherence to this policy. In addition, pro-active monitoring by the Health, Safety and Environment Team through the audit schedule and inspection regime and re-active monitoring through incident investigation and insurance claims will be completed.

The University considers your Health & Safety, and anyone associated with driving activities a priority. This policy sets out what members of staff and others can expect from us and what we expect from you in managing work-related driving activities and journeys.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the driving of any type of vehicle and applies to all staff that drive on University business. This includes:

- Employees who are required to drive vehicles as an integral part of their work (e.g. staff, Academic research and Professional Service areas); or
- Employees who drive either University vehicles, or their own vehicle or hired vehicles as part of their work or to carry out some aspect of the University's business (e.g. staff attending meetings or conferences or events, or travelling to off-site destinations for research or fieldwork or any other University activities). This includes any work-related driving activities that may take place overseas.

Commuting journeys between an employee's home address or place of residence and their normal place of work fall outside of the scope of this policy.

Risks associated with the carrying of certain loads (large, irregular or abnormal), [hazardous substances](#), lifting operations (fall in scope of LOLER regs) or similar activities may need additional consideration. Further information can be found in the [health and safety policy, standards and guidance](#).

This policy applies to students if they are asked to drive on University business or who drive as part of a University managed or organised activity. Driving activities by students for or on behalf of the Students Union (for example, driving minibuses as part of a club or society activity) fall under the control of the Student Union and as such are excluded from this policy.

Volunteers or other individuals who may be asked to drive on University business (for example to support an activity) would normally be deemed as employees and would need to comply with all protocols and procedures for the duration of the activity or event.

3. Associated University Information and Guidance

It is essential that prior to driving on university business you read and familiarise yourself with the Driver Safety Handbook which provides guidelines for all drivers.

Separate guidance and handbooks for specific vehicle groups and other safety considerations are listed below.

[Minibus Handbook](#) – this guidance is for anyone who drives a minibus and transports passengers on behalf of the University or Student Union.

[Specialist Vehicles](#) – this guidance applies to occupational drivers of vans, grounds maintenance vehicles and agricultural vehicles.

[Staff Travel Policy](#) – this policy is applicable to all staff making or intending to make significantly long journeys or require travelling abroad.

[Lone Working Policy](#) – this policy applies to any occupational driver who will be making journeys alone or working on their own.

[Trailers & Towing](#) - this policy applies to any occupational driver who drives a vehicle with any form of trailer attached.

[Adverse Weather Policy](#) – this policy applies to all occupational drivers and staff.

[Drug and alcohol policy](#)- this policy applies to all occupational drivers and staff.

4. Legislation and Codes of Practice

The legislation applicable to driving and vehicles reinforcing this policy is derived from the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by the 1991 Act; the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986; The Motor Vehicle (Driving Licence) Regulations 1999, as amended and the Road Safety Act 2006.

It should also be borne in mind that health and safety legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, together with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998, apply to all work-related journeys and to vehicles operating in and around the workplace.

All of the above acts may be further amended and shall equally apply.

Guidance is given in the 'Highway Code', which is deemed the relevant Code of Practice for all occupational drivers.

It is a requirement that anyone driving on University business must drive in accordance with the Highway Code. It should be remembered that sections in the Highway Code that state '**Must**' or '**Must Not**' are points of law. It must be remembered that ignorance of the law is never an excuse and occupational drivers are personally responsible for any breach of traffic law.

It is the University's responsibility to ensure that all legal requirements are met for the vehicle/s to be driven, including both University supplied vehicles and private vehicles used on the University's business.

5. Definitions

Work-related journey

Any other journey you make on behalf of the University, regardless of the frequency or distance or whether it is made in your own vehicle, if permitted, or a vehicle provided by the University is considered a work-related journey.

Your commute from home to your normal place/s of work and back are not considered work-related. The exception to this rule is if you divert from your normal place/s of work to attend an appointment or task after leaving home, this is not considered your normal commute, the whole journey is therefore considered work-related. Similarly, if you leave your normal place/s of work and attend an appointment or task on your way home, the whole journey is considered work-related.

Occupational Driver

Any employee, student or external contractor – (has a fixed contract of employment with the University), and as part of their role are expected to carry out work-related driving for, or on behalf of, the University in a University vehicle.

University Vehicle

Any vehicle or plant (Grass cutting machine, forklift, loading shovel, telehandler, mechanical sweeper etc) that is owned, leased, hired or operated by the University.

Private Vehicle

Any vehicle used by an employee or student for University business which is not owned, leased or hired by the University.

Minibus

A vehicle that can carry between 9-16 passengers (inclusive) at any one time in addition to the occupational driver.

6. Responsibilities

The following sections set out the responsibilities to operate any vehicle or associated equipment safely, legally and comply with this policy.

6.1 The Vice Chancellor and University Executive

The Vice-Chancellor, as Chief Executive Officer of the University, has overall responsibility to the University Council for the promotion, administration and implementation of the University's Health and Safety Policy and any associated Policy Standards. The Vice-Chancellor is supported in this day-to-day responsibility by the University Executive, in accordance with the University's management structure. The Vice-Chancellor and University Executive members require all those with managerial or supervisory responsibilities to exercise sufficient oversight and control to satisfy themselves that due regard is paid to the requirements of the Health and Safety Policy within the areas or for activities under their control or direction.

6.2 Line Managers (Including Faculty PVCs, Heads of Academic and Professional Service Departments)

Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Academic and Professional Service Departments are responsible for implementing suitable arrangements in their Faculties or Departments for the effective management of health and safety, including:

Implementing systems to ensure that:

- Occupational drivers hold the necessary licences, training and qualifications to drive University owned or leased vehicles. Where an occupational driver discloses that their licence has been revoked, suspended or withdrawn for any reason or discloses that they are not medically fit to drive then they must be relieved of their work-related driving duties until further advice has been sought from the University's Human Resources Department and Travel and Fleet section.
- University owned or leased vehicles managed by individual departments are maintained in a roadworthy condition and to preserve the warranty and life expectancy, are serviced and maintained in line with the prescribed recommended intervals of the manufacturer. Where vehicles are found or are suspected of not meeting the statutory roadworthiness requirements then these are taken out of use until such times as any defects can be remedied.
- Ensuring that risk assessments for all work-related trips (aligned to the vehicle type, including any specialist equipment attached to or carried in the vehicle) are carried out and control measures are identified and implemented. This could include promoting the use of alternative forms of transport, providing occupational drivers with any necessary training, supervision and equipment, including personal protective equipment, in order to reduce significant risks to a tolerable level.
- Work-related driving risk assessments are monitored and updated as necessary at least on an annual basis.
- Ensuring that the University's Travel and Fleet section is notified, in advance, of any proposals to purchase or hire of new vehicles.
- Work schedules are monitored to ensure that safe driving practices are not compromised, for example through excessive working hours that could lead to fatigue or tiredness.
- This policy is communicated and promoted to all members of staff who undertake work-related journeys on behalf of the University, regardless of who owns the vehicle.

In addition, consideration should be given to promoting the use of public transport for work-related driving activities where this is viable.

6.3 Travel & Fleet Section

The Travel and Fleet Department will maintain systems, processes and databases (ensuring full compliance with GDPR) to promote safe driving across the Institution. This includes

- Maintaining the list of University approved occupational drivers, along with the necessary document checks, for example on driving licence and insurance where appropriate
- A driving licence check will be carried out every 12 months as part of the application for Authorised, Grey Fleet or Combined. If a licence is identified as having more than 3

points, you may be subject to more frequent checks.

- Liaising with the Finance Department to ensure that mileage claim applications are from relevant approved occupational drivers.
- Assessment of individual driving needs and experience to provide training in line with the type of vehicle being driven for work purposes and job roles.
- Collect data on collisions, driving offences and near-miss incidents to ensure continuous improvement and review of this policy.
- Managing and progressing insurance claims for University vehicles and any vehicle that has been approved for hire on University business.

6.4 Occupational Drivers

Whenever you drive on University business or drive a University owned vehicle you must record details of the journey in the vehicle log book provided. You must not do so under conditions which you or the University deem illegal or unsafe. You will do this by:

General

- Reading, understanding and adhering to this policy
- Being familiar with and adhering to any advice, requirement or guidelines contained in the Occupational driver Safety Handbook applicable to your vehicle group
- Complying with Departmental or Faculty risk assessment and systems relating to work-related driving activities

Driver

- Being responsible and accountable for your own actions when driving
- Ensuring you are medically fit to drive and meet the vision standards required to drive (or have and use the appropriate corrective appliances). You must be able to read (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after 1st September 2001 from 20 meters. Book an eye test and notify your line manager if you are unable to read a number plate from 20 meters, as you may be driving illegally. You must also notify your line manager if there are any changes to your health that may affect your driving and specifically if you suffer from any DVLA notifiable medical conditions, or if you are taking any prescribed medication that may affect your driving or your ability to operate equipment or machinery safely.
- Holding the appropriate licence, training or other qualification for the vehicle that you will be required to drive. You must bring to the immediate attention of your line manager any information that may affect your ability to drive. This includes but is not limited to; disqualifications or convictions (including pending) for driving offences or any suspension or revocation of your licence, for example any endorsed traffic offences or if your driving licence has limitations placed on it.
- Ensuring that you are familiar with and confident to drive any vehicle that is about to be used. If in any doubt, contact your Line Manager prior to making or continuing any journey. You must be familiar with any vehicle related operational instructions/guides, particularly specialist vehicles/equipment associated with grounds maintenance and/or agricultural vehicles.

Vehicle

- Ensuring that all vehicles are safe and roadworthy to operate prior to use and, where appropriate, referring to the vehicle's operation manual or safe operating loads guidelines and always carrying out a pre-journey daily defect check prior to first use.
- Reporting all and any vehicle defects on University Vehicles (owned, hired and leased) to your line manager. A journey can only be made if the vehicle is safe and legal to use
- Have a valid Road Fund Licence (Tax), Ministry of Transport (M.O.T) certificate and valid LOLER certificate where applicable.

Journey

- Considering the use of public transport or university vehicle in preference to using your own vehicle when travelling on University business.
- Planning your journey to allow sufficient time to reach your destination safely and legally, leaving sufficient time for rest breaks on longer journeys. You should consider the weather conditions and other factors that can affect journey time.
- Complying with any statutory requirements placed on you by road safety or other legislation including the wearing of seatbelts, not using handheld mobile phones whilst driving and not smoking in University Vehicles or on any work-related journey
- Reporting any collisions whereby there is damage to a university vehicle or third-party vehicle and/or property, this also includes any incidents driving on behalf of the University in any other vehicle; Any near-miss incidents that occur while driving for work, all must be reported to your line manager and the Travel and Fleet section (including those incidents that do not result in damage or injury) following the University's incident reporting procedure. If relevant, the Police must also be informed.

7. Additional Guidance

7.1 Use of Own Vehicles

The law states that it is the responsibility of the occupational driver to ensure that any vehicle driven on the public highway is safe and roadworthy. In the case of employees who use their own private vehicle for work business it is their responsibility to ensure that the vehicle has a Road Fund Licence (Tax) and valid MOT certificate (where applicable) and is insured for use on your employer's business and is properly maintained in a legal and roadworthy condition. To check whether your vehicle has valid Tax and MOT, please visit [here](#).

Drivers should carry out a daily vehicle defect check on their vehicle prior to first use to ensure it is roadworthy. Checklists are available [here](#).

7.2 Mobile Telephones and Communication Devices

You are advised to ensure you have a means of summoning assistance while engaged on work-related journeys, this could be either a mobile phone or radio. The following must always be observed:

- You must only make or receive calls as permitted by law – the law states you must be either safely parked with the engine off OR you need to call 999 or 112 in an emergency, and it is unsafe or impractical to stop.
- Use of a mobile telephone or interactive communication device is not permitted whilst driving, for the use of receiving or making of telephone calls, messaging purposes, or accessing applications whilst driving. The only exemption, in which a driver is not in contravention of the regulations relating to use, is whereby the hand-held mobile telephone or interactive communication device is being used to make a contactless payment at a contactless payment terminal whilst the vehicle is stationary.
- Always stop in a safe and convenient place, switch off the vehicle's engine, to make or receive a phone/radio call. Ensure that you do not inconvenience any other road users by your choice of location to stop.
- You are advised not to engage in any hands-free mobile conversation while driving unless absolutely necessary and must remain in control of your vehicle at all times. The police have the power to stop you if they believe you have been distracted by using a mobile phone while driving, even if it is fully hands-free.

7.3 Dangerous Goods

The carriage of dangerous goods as classified by the UNECE Transport of Dangerous Goods [Regulations](#) within University vehicles is only allowed with prior agreement from your line manager. A formal risk assessment needs to underpin all such activities

7.4 Alcohol, Drugs & Medication

You MUST NOT under any circumstances drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs, so called 'legal highs'. The University Drugs & Alcohol policy can be found [here](#).

Any conviction relating to this would be regarded as Gross Misconduct and may lead to dismissal. A conviction for failing to provide a drink/drug specimen to the Police will be considered in accordance with the University Disciplinary Policy and Procedure applicable to all staff.

Important - The Law makes no distinction between illicit drugs or prescribed/over the counter drugs. If unsure, please check with your GP/Medical Practitioner/ pharmacist.

7.5 Occupational drivers of Specialised Vehicles

The University has a diverse fleet of vehicles, particularly those driven by Grounds Maintenance, IBERS and Farms.

If your role requires you to drive any specialized vehicle, or operate any associated equipment, those other than a standard car or small van, you must seek advice from your Line Manager and follow any training or familiarization processes that is in place.

7.6 Minibus Drivers

A high level of competence and consideration is required to drive a minibus, as:

- The vehicle can be larger and/or heavier (requires greater stopping distances);
- More passengers than normal can be carried, which may lead to increased stress on the driver i.e., extra responsibility, noise and distraction
- Minibuses tend to be used for long distances and on an infrequent basis.

The legal requirement with regard to qualifications is that occupational drivers who obtained their full driving licence before the 1 January 1997 may drive a minibus in the UK. Those who have obtained their licence on or after the 1 January 1997 are only licensed to drive a vehicle with up to 8 passengers. To drive a minibus, occupational drivers may need to gain a category D1 driving licence entitlement on their licence. Further comprehensive details can be found in the [Minibus Handbook](#) or via this [link](#).

7.7 Towing Trailers

Towing and use of trailers is demanding and should only be carried out by competent, experienced and where applicable undertake training. Drivers must have the correct driving licence entitlement category, be knowledgeable of the risks, requirements and restrictions in place on what permissible loads can/cannot be carried or towed. If a trailer has any fixed equipment, drivers must be trained in how to operate the equipment.

All loads must always be secure before and during transit. Loads should be checked periodically during a journey, particularly on long journeys, travelling on an uneven terrain or when carrying irregular loads. Load type and load security also applies to any load carried by a vehicle. A daily trailer defect check must be carried out prior to first use. When a load is added, removed or amended to a vehicle or trailer it must be secure.

However short the journey or even when maneuvering at a destination the vehicle or trailer load must be secure at all times.

Further information on towing trailers and load securing can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/load-securing-vehicle-operator-guidance/load-securing-vehicle-operator-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/towing-with-car>

7.8 Fines, Tolls and Charges

- Employees whilst parking a vehicle, must ensure that the vehicle is parked legally in an appropriate and safe place. Vehicles must not be allowed to cause any obstruction of the Highway (this includes any footpath unless signs indicate to the contrary).
- Reimbursement for any tolls or parking charges can be made in line with the [University expenses policy](#). This does not include any fines relating to parking illegally, congestion charge, low emission zones (LEZ), or contravention of any car park or toll terms/rules.
- Some toll charges are collected via automated number plate recognition, it is the driver's responsibility to either pre-pay the charges with the correct registration number plate details before the journey or pay the toll within the required time limit after the journey. This can be done through prior arrangement with their line manager via a university cost centre or paid by the driver and claimed back via the university's expenses policy.

7.9 Speeding Offences and Roadside Incidents

- All speeding offences (regardless of a speed awareness course being undertaken), pending convictions relating to driving or anything that may affect a driver's ability to drive, must notify their line manager in a reasonably and timely manner. Any fines, appeals and associated costs, rehabilitation courses (speed or seat belt awareness course etc.) relating offences committed, whilst driving a university vehicle or on behalf of the University are liable to the driver and will not be paid by the University.
- Should a driver be stopped by the Police or the DVSA, relating to an offence or potential offence, whilst driving on behalf of the University or in a university vehicle. Drivers are expected to notify their line managers when safe and reasonable to do so. In the event of a vehicle being deemed unroadworthy, the driver is responsible for notifying their line manager. The line manager is then responsible for making arrangements, for the vehicle to be repaired roadside or recovering the vehicle to a local garage where necessary.

8. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments for any work-related driving activity should follow the same principals as those for any other work activity as outlined in the [University Risk Assessment guidance](#).

Please see driving risk assessment [here](#)

For journeys or driving activities that present additional risk or hazards a more detailed assessment should be completed and recorded. Examples of where this would be appropriate include:

- Non-routine long-distance journeys or trips that include driving overseas
- Driving that is expected to take place in severe weather conditions
- Journeys that involve lone working in remote or potentially dangerous areas
- Trips that involve driving types of vehicles that are not normally driven or where the occupational driver may be inexperienced or have a poor accident record.
- The transport of dangerous goods or animals
- The transporting of large numbers of passengers, for example in a minibus

