



Driver Safety 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 an efficient and effective working 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 where this is practical

The University considers your safety a priority and has produced this policy which sets out what members of staff and others can expect from us and what we expect from you in managing work-related 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 in 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, hazardous substances, lifting operations or similar activities are covered under separate 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 to be employees for the duration of the activity or event.

3. Associated University Information and Guidance

Separate guidance and handbooks for specific vehicle groups and other safety considerations are listed below. It is essential that you read and abide by the following guidance should your role require you to do so:

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.

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 or student that carries out work-related driving for, or on behalf of, the University in a University vehicle.

University Vehicle

Any vehicle 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 and Travel and Fleet Departments.
- University owned or leased vehicles managed by individual departments are maintained in a roadworthy condition that complies with relevant statutory requirements. 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 Department 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 comprised, 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 Department

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
- 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 notify your Line Manager if there are any changes to your health that may affect your driving and specifically if you suffer any DVLA notifiable medical conditions, or if you are taking any prescribed medication that may affect your driving or 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 on disqualifications or convictions for driving offences or any suspension or revocation of your licence, for example any endorsed traffic offences or if your driving licence has been 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 those associated with driving grounds maintenance or agricultural vehicles and/or associated equipment

Vehicle

- Ensuring that all vehicles are safe to operate prior to use and, where appropriate, referring to the vehicle's operation manual or safe operating loads guidelines and any pre journey check lists provided
- Reporting all and any vehicle defects on University owned or leased vehicles to the Travel & Fleet Team. A journey can only be made if the vehicle is safe and legal to use

- Have a valid Ministry of Transport (M.O.T.) certificate, where applicable, and the necessary “business use” insurance if you are using a privately owned or leased vehicle for University business

Journey

- Considering the use of public transport or university owned or leased 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 or near-miss incidents that occur while driving for work to your Line Manager or if relevant the Police or University’s Insurance Officer including those incidents that do not result in damage or injury following the University’s incident reporting procedure at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/proc-prac/incident-reporting/>

7. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis no less than every two years.

The University will monitor the implementation of this policy and its effectiveness, pro-active monitoring by the Health, Safety and Environment Team through the audit schedule and inspection regime. Re-active monitoring will also be completed through incident investigation and insurance claims.

Breaches of the driving safely policy will be dealt with in relation to the university’s disciplinary policy and procedure.

8. Further Information & Resources

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf>

<https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/resources/free/employers/>

<https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/safer-driving-for-work-handbook.pdf>

9. Additional Guidance

9.1 Risk Assessments

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

For journeys or driving activities that present additional risks 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

9.2 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 fit for use. 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 valid MoT certificate (where applicable), is insured for use on your employer's business and is properly maintained in a legal and roadworthy condition.

9.3 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.
- You must not text or access any apps on a smartphone whilst driving, this includes using any in-vehicle touch screen technology that connects the phone to your vehicle
- Always stop in a safe and convenient place 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's fully hands-free.
- You are reminded that the penalty for using a phone/or other hand held communication device while driving is a £200 fine and possible points added to your licence, you will be responsible for paying this fine, in addition to any additional remedial action available to the

- University under its [disciplinary procedures](#).

9.4 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.

9.5 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

9.6 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 specialised 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 familiarisation processes that is in place.

9.7 Minibus Drivers

A higher level of competence is required to drive a minibus, as:

- The vehicle is larger/heavier (requires greater stopping distances);
- More passengers are taken leading to increased stress on the occupational driver e.g. 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 seats. To drive a minibus, occupational drivers need to gain a category D1 PCV entitlement on their licence. Further comprehensive details can be found in the Minibus Handbook.