

Driving and Use of Vehicles Policy

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1. Introduction

Anyone who drives or operates a vehicle has a legal duty to take all reasonable precautions to ensure that it is operated safely. It is an offence to cause or permit a vehicle to be driven on the road when its condition, or the way in which it is driven, could cause danger to anyone in the vehicle, other road users or pedestrians.

1.1. Scope

This policy applies to all vehicles operated by the University, whether owned by the University or leased, and to all University staff who are authorised to drive, or who travel in, such vehicles.

Private vehicles which are driven by staff on University business are also covered by this policy, this would include all journeys to somewhere which is not their normal place of work.

Staff driving to London Met as part of their normal commute to work are not covered by this policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. Dean of School and Directors of Professional Services Department

Deans of School or Directors of Professional Services Departments are responsible for ensuring:

- To make sure that staff is aware of the policy and that safe systems of work are in place, including risk assessments.

2.2. Senior Managers and Line Managers

Senior managers and line managers of staff driving on university business must ensure:

- As far as is reasonably practicable that vehicles are safe and legal to drive by having vehicles being visually inspected for damage with a pre-inspection checklist and regularly maintained, having a valid MOT certificate where appropriate.
- All drivers are referred for annual Health Surveillance. Those drivers with medical conditions which may affect their ability to drive are referred to Occupational Health. See section 3.4. Fitness to drive.
- Safe systems of work are in place for the use of University vehicles which includes having activities risk assessed and journeys pre-planned to include rest breaks.
- The provision of driver training as appropriate to meet the requirements of the University's insurers and the requirements of the operating School or Department.
- Liaising with Procurement department to ensure that proper provisions have been made for insurance.
- Anyone who drives vehicles (whether University owned, privately owned, hired, or leased for their use) for University business or related activities has a valid

driving licence and are eligible to drive. This should be achieved by viewing and photocopying the original driving licence prior to vehicle use (and thereafter at least on an annual basis). All photocopies should be signed and dated by the licence holder and Department Administrator.

2.3. Staff Driving on University Business

All members of staff driving on university business and/or university owned vehicle must:

- Inform their manager of any changes to their driving licence or medical conditions reportable by law under Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) requirements which affect their ability to drive for work.
- Have a valid Driving Licence to drive in the UK for the category of vehicle they are required to drive on business. See Advice on driving in UK on a foreign licence on the <https://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence> website.
- Drivers must not drive under the influence of alcohol, or other intoxicating chemicals, including illicit substances, prescribed or non-prescription medicines that may cause drowsiness or otherwise make you unsafe to drive.
- Staff driving University owned vehicles or who drive their own vehicles on University business more than twice a year are required to take an eyesight test every two years or more frequently depending on medical advice.
- Presenting, when asked to do so and within a reasonable period, original documentation such as a valid driving licence to the appropriate member of staff, so that their current entitlement to drive can be verified.
- Follow the [Highway Code](#).
- Does not drive while suffering from tiredness, illness, health conditions or taking medication which impairs their ability to drive.
- If pregnant, informs their line manager of any issues arising from the pregnancy that may be made worse by driving. Measures to control risk to pregnant women should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment for New and Expectant Workers.
- It is illegal to hold and use a phone, sat nav, tablet, or any device that can send or receive data, while driving. This means you must **not** use a device in your hand for any reason, whether online or offline (you must not text, make calls, take photos or videos, or browse the web).
- Consider whether the journey is avoidable. It may be possible to use telephone, video, or telephone conferencing.
- Plan the journey to include regular breaks (15-minute break every 2 hours is recommended).
- Avoid setting out on a long drive after having worked a full day.
- If necessary, plans an overnight stop with agreement of their Line Manager.
- Arranges workload, when possible, to include driving time within their normal working hours.

- Allows adequate time to get to the destination.

2.4. Drivers of the University owned or hired vehicles

- Carrying out and recording vehicle checks using vehicle checklist and reporting any faults or damage for repair. Liaising with their line managers as to the advisability of driving the vehicle.
- Follow risk assessments and methods of work received from their line manager for any task that includes an element of driving, whilst exercising their own judgement regarding factors that may change such as weather, road conditions etc. and raising any safety concerns with their manager immediately they arise.
- Always ensure the safe usage of University vehicles.
- Ensure prompt and appropriate action is taken in the event of damage to, or an accident involving, a University vehicle, including the formal reporting of all such incidents to Health and Safety using the [Incident reporting form](#) and line manager.
- Drivers must comply with no smoking legislation in vehicles, no use of mobile phones whilst driving and no idling engines while vehicle is unattended.
- Not to modify University vehicles or tamper with stickers, decals etc.
- Not to haul loads which could structurally damage the vehicle or trailer or to make improper use of trailers and/or towing equipment.

2.4.1 Private vehicles on university business

- Ensure the vehicle they use for university business have passed an MOT (where applicable) and the vehicle is taxed (where applicable).
- Carry out visual inspection before driving the vehicle. Do not drive vehicles appearing unsafe.
- The law requires all persons who drive on the public highway to be adequately and appropriately insured. This means that any person driving, albeit occasionally, in connection with the business of their employer must be covered for 'business use'. <https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/work-own-vehicles.pdf>

2.5. Procurement – vehicle hire

- Provide information on reliable vehicle providers who supply vehicles that are well maintained and are hired to the university in a safe condition.

2.6. Occupational Health

- Provide annual and starter health screening for those who drive regularly for university purposes and for those who drive whose medical condition changes.

2.7. Health & Safety team

- Monitoring/auditing the management systems for use of vehicles on University business.

2.8. University Insurance

Procurement of the university's motor insurance is centralised. The Finance Department coordinate the information gathering process for London Met, but it is up to the appropriate departments to provide the relevant information.

Procurement of the motor insurance is centralised, however, it is the responsibility of managers within departments to provide the information requested by insurers, provide any updates of relevant information and to understand the policy conditions.

For any claims, the Estates department deals directly with the insurers claims handling department.

3. General Requirements

3.1. Induction

All new staff must be made aware of the health and safety risks (including driving and vehicle safety) applicable to their work and working environment, and in accordance with the H&S Training Policy.

3.2. Risk Assessment

All risks associated with departmental driving activities must be assessed. Wherever possible, staff and students should eliminate or reduce the need to undertake journeys and use safer modes of transport than cars/ vans.

Three important elements where risk can be controlled are:

- The Driver
- The Vehicle
- The Journey

3.3. Qualification to drive

All persons who drive University owned or leased vehicles as an essential part of their employment must present their driving licence for inspection by their line manager on an annual basis, to ensure their continued eligibility to drive.

When Departments are recruiting for a job involving driving, successful applicants at interview must not be recommended for the post until a driving assessment has been undertaken by the department by ensuring that they have a valid driving licence to drive in the UK and have been assessed by Occupational Health with an employment assessment.

3.4. Fitness to drive

It is every individual's responsibility to ensure that they are medically fit to drive on the public Highway.

<https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/workfitness.pdf>

Drivers of University vehicles must declare to their Line Manager and [DVLA](#) if they are suffering from any medical condition which might adversely affect their ability to drive safely (e.g. uncontrolled epilepsy, diabetes or vision impairment).

A management referral should then be made to Occupational Health. An Occupational Health assessment will then be arranged for the employee to assess their health issues including their fitness to drive. Occupational Health will advise the manager of any concerns and any recommended adjustments if deemed appropriate. It is recommended that the employee refrains from driving a works vehicle until the Occupational Health assessment has been carried out.

The University will seek to support individuals to ensure that fitness to drive is achieved where the person drives on behalf of the University either as an essential part of their employment, or where the driving is part of an approved activity (e.g. driving a University minibus).

This support includes:

- Employment new starter and annual screening Annual Driving medical assessments.
- Health assessment examinations upon commencement of employment for vocational and minibus drivers.
- Annual health surveillance can help to ensure that work related health issues that may affect an employee's ability to drive are detected early and suitable measures to address them are identified. It is also a good opportunity to discuss health promotion and to assess the status of a long-term health condition.
- Counselling Service.

3.5. Dealing with medical conditions affecting the ability to drive including eyesight

Where employees are required to drive University owned or lease vehicles as an essential part of their duties, they must inform their line manager and [DVLA](#) immediately at the onset of any new medical condition which would prevent them from driving legally on the public highway.

Occupational Health will advise the manager if the employee is unable to undertake driving duties and they will advise them further regarding adjustments/ modifications

etc. that are recommended for them. Occupational Health may require further information from the employee's medical doctor(s). It is then for the manager to decide if any adjustments can be accommodated if operationally feasible. Advice regarding accommodating any adjustments should be sought from Health and Safety Office/ Human Resources.

Drivers must be able to satisfy the eyesight requirements set out in the Highway Code. If in doubt, they should arrange to discuss the matter with their General Practitioner (GP) or Occupational Health. Free eyesight tests are available via [Eyecare Voucher Scheme](#).

3.6. Disqualification from Driving

Where employees are required to drive University owned or leased vehicles as an essential part of their duties, they must inform their line manager immediately of any disqualification which prevents them from driving legally on the public highway.

3.7. Reporting accidents and incidents

Where employees who are driving on university business who, are involved in road traffic accidents or incidents which result in damage to vehicles, loss or damage to property or injury to persons, they must have sufficient information in order to complete Accident and Incident Report from.

Accidents and incidents must be reported to the line manager and via the [online reporting form](#) as soon as reasonably possible.

3.8. Pre-Use Vehicle Checks

All university owned vehicles should be inspected for use before driving using Vehicle Safety Checklist.

The Road Traffic Act states that the driver is responsible for the roadworthiness of any vehicle, and the load being carried, whilst travelling on the public highway. It is therefore recommended that University employees intending to drive their own vehicle on University business, they should undertake appropriate checks prior to using the vehicle, for example:

- Tyre tread depth, and general condition.
- Foot and hand brake operation.
- Lights, indicators, and hazard warning lights operate, and are clean.
- Horn operates.
- Screen wash and wipers operate.
- Seat belts fitted and functioning.
- Mirrors secure, undamaged, correctly adjusted, and clean.

These are tasks which do not require any technical expertise and are the basic checks included in the current UK driving standards examination. Additional checks for long journeys might usefully include: -

- Fluid levels (oil, coolant, and screen wash)
- Tyre pressures
- Locks and security functional
- Fuel level

3.9. Road Safety

The law states that it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that any vehicle driven on the public highway is safe and fit for use.

<https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/>

Where an employee uses vehicles owned, leased, or hired by the University, appropriate service and maintenance arrangements will be established in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations to ensure that the vehicle is fit for use.

3.10. Seatbelts

Where vehicles are provided with seat belts, it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure it is used, and that they are also used by all passengers.

3.11. Speed Limits/Restrictions

When driving on internal roads, drivers must adhere to the speed limit.

When driving on the public highway, speed limits, as displayed, must be always adhered to, the only exception to this being any vehicle which, in order to conform with relevant regulations, has its speed restricted to a lower rate.

3.12. Passenger Safety

Drivers are responsible for ensuring the safety of their passenger(s), taking all reasonable measures; including adhering to the relevant requirements contained in this procedure. They must always drive in a manner that will not cause unnecessary risk and draw to the attention of passengers the need to behave in a manner that will not cause distractions to the driver. If any passenger is not prepared to comply with such requirements, the driver is authorised to refuse transport to that person.

The transport of unauthorised passengers (e.g. hitchhikers) is strictly prohibited.

3.13. Security of vehicles

Any vehicle not in use must have its engine turned off. Vehicles left unattended, irrespective of the time period must have the ignition keys removed and be locked. They must be parked with the handbrake secured and in a location that will not create a hazard or obstruction for other drivers or pedestrians.

3.14. Visibility from the Driving Position

Drivers must always maintain a clear view of the road, including for the purposes of reversing safely. The loading of a vehicle in such a way as to cause restricted vision is strictly prohibited.

3.15. Route planning/scheduling

[Driver fatigue](#) is a major cause of road traffic accidents and the University has a legal 'duty of care' towards its employees and other road users. Therefore, **under no circumstances** must employees drive if they feel sleepy even if this might result in delaying originally planned schedules. The Highway Code states that drivers should take 15-minute break every two hours; drivers will need to take this into account in their journey planning. Drivers for University business should not drive more than 8 hours in one day.

Where a vehicle is fitted with a tachograph, it should be checked by the manager responsible to ensure that drivers are adhering to the prescribed driving times.

Where employees are required to undertake work-related driving, it is expected that the schedule of driving, work activities and periods of rest are agreed with their Line Manager and determined so as not to place an undue burden on the driver.

The assessment of schedules should consider:

- Route selection.
- Distance, time, and duration of travel.
- Opportunities for rest breaks.
- Age and (in)experience of drivers
- Prevailing weather conditions.
- The nature of any goods being transported

3.16. Driver and passenger lanyards

Drivers and passengers are recommended not to wear lanyards which have sharp objects such as keys attached to them while driving. Serious injuries can be caused by sharp objects attached to lanyards on those involved in vehicle crashes.

4. Driving Abroad

Those intending to take a University owned or leased vehicle overseas on University business must include it in the [travel risk assessment form](#) and consult with insurance@londonmet.ac.uk to confirm if driving abroad is covered by the University insurance.

Different countries have specific driving requirements and require in some cases specific compulsory equipment.

5. References

Drivers with non-UK driving licences <https://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence>

ROSPA Road Safety Advice
<https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/>

Driver fatigue
<http://think.direct.gov.uk/fatigue.html>

Driving at Work Managing work-related road safety
<https://www.btpolfed.org.uk/ref/hands4.pdf>

The Highway Code
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>

Compare old and new driving licence categories: <https://www.gov.uk/old-driving-licencecategories>