



Update on English Language Requirement and Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding Requirement for London Private Hire Vehicle Drivers

New transitional arrangements are being introduced which provide more time for drivers to comply with the English Language Requirement (ELR) and Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding (SERU) requirement.

This Notice explains the new arrangements for compliance which supersede those in [TPH Notice 14/21](#).

Background

All London PHV drivers must demonstrate an appropriate level of English language proficiency (known as the ELR). The appropriate level is equivalent to B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The ELR was introduced in London in 2016 and transitional arrangements were put in place to allow drivers time to comply. The Department for Transport published Statutory Standards, to further enhance the safety of passengers using taxi and private hire services, in July 2020. One of these Standards was for licensing authorities to test the English language proficiency of taxi and private hire drivers.

On 1 October 2021, we changed how we assess London PHV drivers' English language skills and introduced a requirement for drivers to show an understanding of safety, equality and regulatory matters (the SERU assessment). Drivers must satisfy the ELR by taking and passing a new speaking and listening test and the SERU

assessment is used to assess their reading and writing skills. The standard needed to meet the ELR remains at Level B1 on the CEFR.

All new applicants for a London PHV driver's licence and existing licensees who have not met the ELR, are required to take and pass both the speaking and listening test and the SERU assessment. Existing licensees who provided satisfactory evidence that they meet the ELR before 1 October 2021 only have to pass the SERU assessment.

Transitional arrangements were put in place to provide drivers with sufficient time to take the assessments. However, in the light of experience in administering the requirements and as the industry is still recovering from the impact of the pandemic, we have decided to extend the transitional arrangements. This will allow more time for drivers to prepare for, undertake and pass the ELR and SERU requirement.

New transitional arrangements

The new dates by which individual drivers will need to comply with the ELR and SERU requirement will depend on which of the four categories they are in:

1. PHV drivers who did not provide ELR evidence by 30 September 2021

Any PHV driver who did not provide any evidence that they met the ELR by 30 September 2021 now has **until 30 September 2023** (an additional 12 months) to take and pass the English language speaking and listening test and the SERU assessment.

2. PHV drivers who provided ELR evidence by 30 September 2021

Any PHV driver who provided evidence that they met the ELR by 30 September 2021 will have their evidence reviewed by TfL. The majority of evidence has been reviewed and TfL is contacting each driver to confirm whether or not their evidence is satisfactory.

- If their evidence is **satisfactory**, drivers will be required to undertake the SERU assessment by **31 March 2025** (an additional 24 months) but they will not be required to take and pass the English language speaking and listening test.
- If the evidence is **unsatisfactory**, drivers will have until **30 September 2024** (an additional 18 months) to take and pass the English language speaking and listening test and the SERU assessment.

3. Applicants for a PHV driver's licence who applied on or after 1 October 2021

Anyone who applied for a new PHV driver's licence on or after 1 October 2021 and was licensed without having taken and passed the English language speaking and listening test and SERU assessment now has **until 30 September 2024** (an additional 18 months) to take and pass both assessments.

Please note: this deadline applies to drivers who submitted an application for a new PHV driver's licence between 1 October 2021 and 31 March 2023 inclusively (see below for requirements on or after 1 April 2023).

4. Applicants for a PHV driver's licence who apply on or after 1 April 2023

Anyone who applies for a new PHV driver's licence on or after 1 April 2023 will be required to take and pass both the English language speaking and listening test and SERU assessment **before they can be licensed**.

Next steps

We will be writing to applicants and drivers to provide a date and time for their speaking and listening test and SERU assessment.

Once you hear from us with a booking, please make every effort to attend. If you are unable to attend on the date and time specified, please get in touch with us to reschedule your appointment.

We will also be producing a video showing drivers and applicants what to expect from their assessments and to help them prepare.

The SERU assessment is based on information found in the [PHV Driver Handbook](#). Drivers and applicants should read and familiarise themselves with the Handbook before undertaking the assessment.

We also have an [online assessment guide](#) which includes example questions within the subject areas covered by the Handbook which we encourage applicants to use.

If you have any concerns about which of the above category you are in and what you need to do, please contact us by emailing tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk.

More information on these requirements can be found on our website:

tfl.gov.uk/ph-language.

Graham Robinson

**General Manager
Taxi and Private Hire
Transport for London**

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For previous Notices and additional licensing information, please visit tfl.gov.uk/tph