

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE

PCV, Bus & Minibus Licence

How to get your D1 or D licence and start your passenger transport career.

Drive minibuses, buses, and coaches professionally

A Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) licence is required for anyone who drives a vehicle with more than eight passenger seats for hire or reward. Whether you want to drive a minibus for a care home, a bus for a local operator, or a coach for a tour company, GS Driver Training can take you from your current licence to a full PCV qualification.



Award-Winning School

6 consecutive industry awards for training excellence.



Male & Female Instructors

Choose an instructor you feel comfortable with.



DVSA Test-Standard Training

All training delivered to DVSA standards for PCV & CPC.

STEP 1

Choose the Right PCV Category

PCV licences come in two main categories depending on the size and type of vehicle you want to drive.

Category	Min. Age	What it covers
D1	18	Minibuses with 9–16 passenger seats (not for hire or reward unless you hold D1+E or meet specific conditions). Commonly used for care homes, schools, and community transport.
D1+E	18	A D1 vehicle towing a trailer where the combined weight exceeds 3,500 kg.
D	21	Full bus and coach licence – vehicles with more than 8 passenger seats, no weight limit. Required for most commercial bus and coach driving roles.
D+E	21	A Category D vehicle towing a trailer. Required for coaches towing luggage trailers on tours.

Which category do I need?

For most commercial driving roles – bus drivers, coach drivers, and community transport – you will need Category D. Category D1 is specifically for minibuses and is commonly required for roles in healthcare, education, and voluntary sector transport. If you are unsure which category applies to your intended role, call us on **01252 447808** and we will advise you.

Pre-1997 minibus entitlement

If you passed your car test before 1 January 1997, you may already have automatic D1 entitlement (not for hire or reward) on your licence. Check your photocard licence or contact the DVLA to confirm. This entitlement does not allow commercial minibus driving without the full D1 qualification.

Eligibility & Medical Requirements

Basic eligibility



Minimum Age

Category D1: 18 years. Category D (full bus/coach): 21 years. Some exceptions apply for drivers in vocational training schemes.



Car Licence

You must hold a full Category B (car) driving licence before applying for any PCV category.



Residency

You must be normally resident in Great Britain. Overseas licence holders may need to exchange their licence first.



Good Character

Certain criminal convictions and driving endorsements may affect your PCV licence application. The DVLA assesses each case individually.

The D4 Medical Examination

PCV licence applicants must pass a Group 2 medical examination (form D4), the same standard required for HGV drivers. This is conducted by a registered GP or approved medical practitioner and covers:

Vision — Group 2 standard: at least 6/7.5 in the better eye and 6/60 in the worse eye (with correction). Field of vision test required.

Blood pressure — Must be below 180/100 mmHg.

Diabetes — Insulin-treated diabetics may hold a PCV licence subject to annual DVLA review and CGM monitoring (rules updated November 2025).

Heart conditions — Must be declared; many are manageable with documentation.

Sleep apnoea — Untreated sleep apnoea is a bar to licensing; treated and controlled is generally acceptable.

Epilepsy — 10 years seizure-free off medication required for Group 2 licences.



PCV licence renewal

PCV licences are renewed every 5 years, and annually from age 65. Each renewal requires a new D4 medical. The D4 medical costs approximately £50–£100 depending on your GP or medical provider.

The Training & Test Process

From provisional licence to full PCV entitlement — the complete journey.

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Apply for a Provisional PCV Licence (Form D2/D4)

Complete form D2 (provisional licence application) and form D4 (medical report). Send both to the DVLA. Allow 3–6 weeks for processing. You cannot sit your theory tests until your provisional licence is issued.

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Pass the Driver CPC Theory Tests

PCV applicants must pass the Driver CPC Initial Qualification theory tests: Part 1a multiple choice (£26), Part 1b hazard perception (£11), and Part 2 case studies (£23). These are taken at approved DVSA theory test centres.

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Complete Practical Training

Practical training is conducted in a modern, DVSA-approved training vehicle. Most Category D students require 5–10 days of training. Training covers vehicle checks, passenger safety, manoeuvres, and road driving. GS Driver Training provides one-to-one instruction throughout.

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Pass the Practical Tests (Part 3a & 3b)

Part 3a covers off-road exercises and vehicle safety checks. Part 3b is the on-road driving test. You must pass Part 3a before taking Part 3b. Passing both satisfies the Driver CPC Initial Qualification practical requirement simultaneously.

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Receive Your Driver Qualification Card (DQC)

Once you have passed all four parts of the Driver CPC Initial Qualification, your DQC is issued. You can then drive professionally. You must then complete 35 hours of periodic training every five years to keep your CPC valid.



How long does it take?

From initial enquiry to holding a full Category D licence typically takes 6–10 weeks, depending on DVLA processing times and test availability. We will give you a realistic timeline at your initial consultation.

Costs & Career Opportunities

Typical cost breakdown

Item	Approximate Cost
D4 Medical Examination	£50 – £100
DVLA Provisional PCV Licence Application	Free
Driver CPC Part 1a Multiple Choice	£26
Driver CPC Part 1b Hazard Perception	£11
Driver CPC Part 2 Case Studies	£23
Category D Practical Training (5–10 days)	Contact GS for pricing
DVSA Practical Test Fee (Part 3a)	£55 (weekday)
DVSA Practical Test Fee (Part 3b)	£115 (weekday)

Costs are approximate and subject to change. Contact us for a personalised quote.

Where can a PCV licence take you?



Bus & Coach Operator

Drive scheduled bus routes or private hire coaches for tour and travel companies across the UK and Europe.



Healthcare Transport

Drive patient transport vehicles, care home minibuses, or NHS shuttle services — a growing and stable sector.



Education Sector

Drive school minibuses or college transport services, often with regular hours and school holiday breaks.



Airport & Hotel Transfers

Drive hotel shuttles, airport transfers, and private hire vehicles — flexible work with good earning potential.



Contact Us

Phone: 01252 447808

Email: gary@gsdrivertraining.com

Web: www.gsdrivertraining.com

Training base: Surrey, serving the South East and beyond.

Male and female instructors available. One-to-one training throughout.

Courses Available

- ✓ Category D1 Minibus
- ✓ Category D Bus & Coach
- ✓ Driver CPC Initial Qualification
- ✓ Driver CPC Periodic Training (35 hrs)
- ✓ Category C Rigid HGV
- ✓ Category C+E Articulated
- ✓ Category C1 / Ambulance

🏆 **Best HGV Training Company – 6 Consecutive Industry Awards**

DVSA Test-Standard Training • Fully Insured • DBS-Checked Instructors • 5-Star Rated

GS DRIVER TRAINING

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