

# SPOKEN ENGLISH TEST

## Assessment Test Procedure



1. It is a requirement that ALL new applicants for both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licenses can demonstrate an adequate and reasonable level of spoken English.
2. The purposes of this requirement are to:
  - Ensure that members of the public are safeguarded by ensuring licensed drivers can competently communicate and give and understand most instructions.
  - Ensure that applicants are safeguarded by ensuring licensed drivers can competently communicate and give and understand most instructions.
  - Ensure impartiality and fairness in determining applications.
  - Accommodate all eligible applications.
3. All new applicants for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licences will be required to provide evidence of having gained a qualification that was taught and assessed in English. Examples are but not limited to, GCSE's, 'O Levels' GCE, NVQ, BTEC, RFQ, City and Guilds or similar, Degree, HND, HNC etc or a qualification equivalent to any previously listed issued by a recognised examining body in an English speaking Country other than the UK). The weight given to the subject and grade achieved will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Applicants who do not have a suitable qualification or cannot provide the required evidence, will be required to undertake the Spoken English assessment.

### TAKING THE TEST

4. The spoken English assessment test is a pre-application requirement undertaken at the applicant's own expense. Please refer to the fees table at <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/licensingandpermits/taxilicensing/taxilicencefees>. The fee is payable before the test is taken and must be successfully completed before proceeding with the full application procedure.
5. Tests will be undertaken at a Council Office and will be confirmed at the time of booking.
6. If the applicant has a mobile telephone it must be switched off to avoid any interruptions.
7. Applicants will be informed that the tests are recorded by the test provider. One of the Council's Taxi Licensing Technical Support Officers will be present in the same room as the test and if there is any attempt to cheat, for example by using their mobile telephone to attempt to get a fluent English speaker to complete the test, then the applicant will be automatically failed and will not be permitted to undertake another test or proceed with their application.
8. Test dates will depend on demand and room booking availability.
9. On the day of the test, the applicant will be escorted to the designated room by a Technical Support officer who will set up the computer so that the test can be completed. The Technical Support Officer will remain in the room during the test.

10. The English test assessment consists of a 15 minute exercise, during which applicants will be tested on various aspects of their speaking and listening ability.
11. The assessment is provided by a specialist education and testing company and consists of:
  - 60 Questions
  - 5 Question types:
    - **Reading** – Read aloud a series of printed, numbered sentences, one at a time, in the order requested
    - **Repeats** - Repeating back sentences verbatim on request,
    - **Short Questions** – Listen to spoken questions and answer each questions with a single word or short phrase
    - **Sentence Builds** – Listen to a group of three short phrases presented in random order and then rearrange the phrases into a sentence
    - **Open Questions** – Listen to a spoken question, asking for an opinion and provide an answer with an explanation in your own words.
12. The test is entirely automated, and questions taken from an item bank.
13. The questions won't related specifically to taxi driving but will relate to normal life. There are no trick questions.
14. The applicant will be provided with an overall score along with sub categories; sentence mastery, vocabulary, fluency and pronunciation, all of which contribute to the overall score.
15. At the end of the test the Technical Support Officer will provide the applicant with their result, including a report with a score indicating their overall ability in the given spoken and listening English Language test.
16. The test scoring will be set at CEFR Level B2 (CEFR= Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).
17. For licensing purposes, the Council will require applicants to score at least **58** out of **90 on the Global Scale of English**. This indicates a good overall ability in use of the English language, where applicants will be able to speak fluently on a range of everyday topics and be able to give and understand most instructions.
18. When passed, the pass score sheet will be downloaded direct from the test provider's website the same day and provided to the applicant.
19. Failure to pass the minimum CEFR level B2 (58 out of 90) will require a further test to be taken.
20. There is no right of appeal where the applicant has failed to attain the minimum pass level of 58.
21. Unsuccessful applicants should be given an information sheet with the contacts of local colleges and courses where they may undertake further study to improve their spoken English. All training will be done at the applicant's own expense.
22. No person may re-sit the test within 28 days of taking a previous test.
23. Returning applicants may demonstrate a reasonable standard of spoken English either through the production of a certificate demonstrating the successful completion of an accredited spoken English qualification at point 3 above, or by successfully completing the spoken English assessment test detailed above.
24. Applicants choosing to re-take the spoken English assessment test will have to pay the required fee.