



English Language Requirement - Update

In [Notice 10/16](#), we announced that Transport for London (TfL) had approved new regulatory changes to raise standards in London's private hire industry, improving safety and convenience for customers. One of those requirements was that all new applicants and existing private hire drivers applying to renew their licence will be required to meet a new English language requirement.

It is essential for public safety that all licensed drivers can communicate in English at an appropriate level. Communicating with passengers to discuss a route, or fare, as well as reading, understanding and being able to respond to important regulatory, safety and travel information sent by TfL is crucial to a driver's role in transporting the public.

The purpose of this Notice is to provide an update on the English language requirement which will now apply to all applications for driver's licences which are received by TfL on or after **14 October 2016**. This includes applications for licences to be renewed as well as applications for new licences.

A transitional process will apply to all licence applications received by TfL on or after 14 October: licence holders must satisfy TfL that they have met the English language requirement by no later than **31 March 2017**. Any licence holder that fails to do this will face licensing action.

For applications received on or after **1 April 2017**, all applicants must provide evidence that they meet the English language requirement as part of their application **before** a licence will be issued.

In [Notice 14/16](#) we made it clear that it is no longer our intention to proceed with an exemption that would apply to those from a majority English speaking country.

Applicants may satisfy TfL of their ability to meet the requirement by providing:

- a certificate from a test provider appointed by TfL confirming that the applicant's level of proficiency in the English language is at level B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages ("CEFR") or above; or;
- documentary evidence of a qualification (whether or not the qualification was obtained in the United Kingdom) on the basis of which TfL is satisfied that the applicant's level of proficiency in the English language is equivalent to level B1 on the CEFR or above.

TfL has published guidance on how an applicant may satisfy the English language requirement which can be found here tfl.gov.uk/ph-language.

The amendments to the regulations implementing this change can be found here tfl.gov.uk/ph-language.

Next steps

We are currently finalising arrangements with the providers who will administer the English language test on our behalf.

Information on those providers and the detailed requirements of the test, as well as how you can book tests, will be published on tfl.gov.uk/ph-language in due course.

If you need further information please email us at tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk or call our licensing team on 0343 222 4444 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Chapman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Helen Chapman
General Manager
London Taxi and Private Hire**

14 October 2016

For previous Notices visit tfl.gov.uk/tph