

Train Driving Licences and Certificates:

Key facts for train drivers



Protecting the interests of rail and
road users

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What are the licence and the certificate, and why do I need them?

All train drivers on the mainline railway must have by law a licence and certificate to drive mainline trains.

How do I get a licence?

- To get a licence you must pass a general professional competence examination, medical examination and occupational psychological fitness examination. These will be organised by your employer.
- You must also be aged at least 20 and have at least 9 years education.

Who issues the licence?

- The Office of Rail and Road (or another national safety authority) issues the licence
- Once issued, the licence is your personal property

How do I get a certificate?

- To get a certificate you must pass the professional knowledge and rules of the route for infrastructure and rolling stock set by your employer .
- The certificates show which rolling stock you may drive and over which infrastructure.

Who issues the certificate?

- Your employer issues the certificate.
- Once issued, the certificate is owned by your employer although it is held by you (this differs to your licence which is owned by you).

You must carry your licence & certificate when driving a train.

Your employer should have arrangements in place if you forget to bring them with you at the start of a shift.

How long is the licence valid for & how does it stay valid?

- The licence is valid for 10 years, but..
- .. you must pass regular medical examinations to ensure you are still fit to drive. Your employer will arrange this.
- Medical examinations are at least every 3 years until you reach 55. After 55 they take place every year.

If you think your state of health raises doubts about your fitness to drive trains you must tell your employer.

How long is the certificate valid for & how does it stay valid?

- Your employer will set how long the certificate is valid but...
- ..you must pass regular professional knowledge examinations on both infrastructure (route knowledge) and rolling stock.

What happens to the licence and certificate if validity is not maintained?

- If the conditions for holding a licence are not maintained, we may suspend or withdraw it. If we do this, you must return your licence to us. You can appeal to the Secretary of State for Transport against our decision.
- Your employer may refuse to update or issue a certificate or withdraw or suspend it. You can appeal to us against this decision.

Keeping licence information up to date & lost or stolen licences or certificates

- If any of the information on your licence changes tell us or your employer. In some cases we will issue a new one. The email address is: TDL.Applications@orr.gov.uk
- If you lose your certificate or licence, or it stolen or destroyed, you should tell your employer who will arrange for duplicate to be issued.

Changing your employer

- Your licence remains valid when you decide to work for someone else as a train driver.
- Your previous certificate becomes invalid and that employer must issue a certified copy to you.

More information...

Detailed guides are available at: <https://www.orr.gov.uk/guidance-compliance/rail/train-driving-licences-and-certificates>