



**Lucketts Travel**

Broadcut, Wallington  
Fareham, nr Portsmouth  
Hampshire PO16 8TB

Tel: +44 (0)1329 237000  
Fax: +44 (0)1329 823855

sales@lucketts.co.uk

## **Coach Driver Training Scheme**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in our coach driver training scheme. If you are new to the coach industry and are thinking of a change in career, then you will of course have many questions concerning the practicalities of becoming a qualified coach driver. You will also be interested in the benefits in the job and your longer term prospects in the industry.

We have attempted in this guide to answer these questions in order to help you make your decision on whether to take up coach driving as a professional career.

### **So what does the job entail?**

Coach driving is a professional vocation and is probably the most challenging driving job there is. This is because you will be transporting different people and different age groups from 4 year olds to 90 year olds to different places every day and the customers will expect you to know where you are going.... And you will be expected to provide excellent customer service along the way!

The hours are very varied and are set by the requirements of that particular days hire and of course every hire and every day are often very different. The coach industry of course is also very much subject to seasonal demand, with all coach operators being much busier in the summer than the winter. Having said that, there are strict drivers' hours regulations in force, which are designed to protect drivers from being overworked and becoming over-tired, especially at peak times.

Furthermore, working at Lucketts means that your passengers and the type of work will vary greatly every day. One day you could be transporting a party of school children to a Zoo, the next day it could be the local W.I. or National Trust Group going to visit some gardens or perhaps a stately home. Also of course, once you are more experienced you could be doing holiday touring work in this country or overseas.

One of the many benefits of being a coach driver apart from the fact that the work, as highlighted above is so varied, is that you are more or less "your own boss" while you are out on the road, and your efforts to please your passengers will create tremendous job satisfaction.

Finally, we operate a top quality fleet of coaches which are a joy to drive once you have got the hang of them!

## **What basic qualifications and skills do I need to join the training scheme?**

### Age limits

- Firstly, you do need to be 20 years of age as a minimum, although there is a "young drivers" PCV Scheme, which allows you to train as a driver at the age of 18 or over. This scheme does have restrictions on the type of work you can undertake between the age of 18 and 20 and further details can be provided upon request. Furthermore, if you are already, or when you reach 45 during your career as a coach driver, you will need to undertake and pass a full PCV medical. This takes place every 5 years until the age of 60 and then every year from then on.

### Driving licence requirements

- Ideally you need a clean driving licence for cars (category B). Convictions for road traffic offences are taken into account when the traffic commissioners 'consider' granting your PCV licence (Passenger Carrying Vehicle licence) once you have successfully passed your test.

### Health requirements

- You must be in generally good health to undertake coach driving work. Prior to being accepted onto our PCV driver training course, you will be required to pass a full PCV medical examination. This can be carried out by your own doctor at a cost of approx. £90. This cost must be met by yourself. However, we do have a group agreement with our own company doctor who will carry out the examination for up to £70.

Driving a coach with up to 53 passengers on board is obviously a very responsible job and like any job it can be tiring at times. Therefore good health is essential.

## **What makes a good coach driver?**

It is important right from the start that you view coach driving as a professional career and the ideal coach driver, due to the varying nature of the work, possess the following:

- a cheerful and friendly personality.
- a positive and enthusiastic attitude to work.
- a desire to please and help customers.
- good communication skills, both talking and listening!
- good geographical knowledge and map reading skills.
- high quality driving skills, with a strong awareness of hazard
- perception and a total commitment to safe driving.
- an acceptance of flexible working hours!

## **What are the stages to becoming a qualified coach driver?**

We take training very seriously here at Lucketts. Only through proper structured training can we expect our drivers to carry out their duties to our customer's satisfaction. Consequently we have devised six clear steps or "stages" to the successful completion of the training course.

They are as follows:

### **Stage 1**

This is where you are now. After reading this leaflet you will complete the application form and return it to us.

### **Stage 2**

The application form will then be subject to strict scrutiny. If successful you will then be invited to attend an interview and an assessment drive. The interview will include a geography and map test, a highway code test, a driving assessment in a car and a formal interview.

### **Stage 3**

Successful candidates will be offered a "try-out day". This is your opportunity to experience first hand "what it is like to being a coach driver". We will put you in the care of one of our experienced drivers for a day or half day, travelling with him on a real live coach hire.

The candidates who pass the "try-out day" and who are happy with the experience of a coach hire, are then offered a position within the training academy. This will be subject to you meeting the Provisional PCV licence (Cat "D") entitlement, including the medical and approval from the traffic commissioner.

### **Stage 4**

Successful candidates will be offered a place on our training scheme and be asked to read and sign a "training contract" which provides among other things details of the fees that we impose if you should decide to terminate your involvement in a training course at any time. You are welcome to view this contract at any time and to see a copy please just ask.

At this stage you will also be required to undertake a PCV theory test which you will need to pass before you can proceed to the next stage. You will also at this time, be issued with a PCV medical form, a provisional PCV licence application form, and a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) form. You will need to complete all 3 forms and send them off to the relevant authorities. (Please note that the CRB check is required for all of our drivers, as your work will require you to be in contact with young people). Should you fail your PCV medical or your CRB check then your place on a training course will be automatically terminated.

### **Stage 5**

You will commence your training as a PCV driver, under the full instruction of our training team. You will also of course at this stage join the payroll! You will be issued with a training log with details of all the various elements of both your "in-vehicle" and "in-classroom" training. There will also be regular appraisals of your performance and progress and you must pass each appraisal before continuing to the next elements of the course. To complete your training you will need to pass your Driver CPC, normally immediately after completing your practical driving test. Your Driver CPC then becomes part of your requirement to drive a PCV and has to be kept up to date throughout your driving career.

### **Stage 6**

This is the final stage and the start of your year as a 'Newly Qualified Driver' (NQD). You will remain at NQD status for one full year following you passing your PCV test and during

this time, although you are now a qualified coach driver, you will remain under the authority of our training team. You will start off driving on one of our National Express diagrams, which will quickly enable you to build up your driving skills to enable you to move onto other sections within the company, should you wish to do so. Your first year is a very steep learning curve which must be carefully managed with additional support, help, and advice. Without a doubt, your first experience of driving a coach with up to 53 passengers sat behind you will be a memorable one indeed!

During this time you will also receive mentoring experiences for example, travelling on longer hires as a second driver, with an experienced driver to help you learn the ropes. There will also be further in-classroom training which will include subjects like drivers hours, customer care, first aid and disability awareness. Finally, during the whole year there will once again be performance and progress appraisals which you will be expected to pass.

This stage and the whole training course culminate in you "passing out" as a fully qualified coach driver, a full 12 months after passing your PCV test. Your training log will then be complete and a certificate will be issued to you.

### **Congratulations and welcome to the team!**

#### **What can you expect to earn as a coach driver?**

An important question of course! All our drivers are graded according to experience, skills and performance. Therefore your earnings will start with our training grade, which is then followed by the NQD grade once you have passed your test. Following successful completion of your NQD year you will then be graded according to your acquired skills in the job and your driving and damage record.

Please note that during your NQD year, if your performance and progress is excellent then we may well reward you by up-grading you to one of the driver grades before your NQD year ends. The various grades for our coach drivers are as follows:

Training -	£6.90	
NQD aged 20+	£7.40	(Under 20- £7.10)
Level 1 -	£7.75	First year
Level 2 -	£7.90	Year 2
Level 3 -	£8.05	Year 3 - 4
Level 4 -	£8.25	Year 4 onwards

Obviously our most senior and experienced drivers are on the top grades, but basically the faster you learn, perform, and take on new challenges, the faster you will rise up through the grades.

#### **Coach Driver – Private Hire**

Your minimum working week will be 45 hours. Additional hours will be worked as necessary to fulfil the company's obligation to its clients (Subject to EU Drivers Hours Regulations). This can be spread over any number of days during the working week (Mon – Sun). You are also entitled to 45 hours weekly rest per week, which can be reduced in certain circumstances. Due to the nature of the type of work we operate, rest days have

to fit in with the work patterns. Therefore, we do not guarantee which day(s) of the week you will have off if you are employed as a Coach Driver. However, we do recognise that you are entitled to a social life and measures are in place for specific requests.

### **Contract Driver**

We do offer positions for Contract Drivers, subject to vacancies. These drivers work a regular Mon – Fri work pattern and usually have the weekends free. However, the type of work is more repetitive and does not offer the wider variety of work that a Coach Driver will do. The pay rate is slightly different and the work pattern is geared around the school terms. Please ask for further details.

### **National Express Driver**

Operating out of our depot in Fareham to London and Bristol, we are able to offer a minimum of 40 hours per week plus additional hours when offered. The work is regular, following a strict shift rota. For those wanting to know their exact working pattern from week to week, this is the perfect coach driving job.

### **Additional Benefits**

- You are entitled to 20 days paid holiday per year plus bank holidays.
- Please note that we do not allow holidays to be taken in May, June, July, and September, as these are by far our busiest months.
- The industry does still have a tradition of tipping. The amount of these gratuities is entirely down to your own performance and on how well you have cared for your customers. All tips should be declared annually to the Inland Revenue.
- At some attractions, garden centres, visitor centres, and refreshment outlets you do sometimes receive a "commission" for bringing your passengers to their establishment. Again, these should be declared annually to the Inland Revenue.

### **What are the conditions of employment and uniform allowance?**

Yes of course we do have detailed Conditions of Employment which are too numerous to list here. They are not onerous and are simply based on our commitment to excellent customer service and commitment to continuous improvement. You are welcome to inspect them during any stage of your training with us, so please just ask. Furthermore, upon commencement of Stage 5, you will receive an in-depth 3 day induction course, which includes a fairly detailed look at conditions of employment and policies and procedures.

With regard to uniforms, we do provide a uniform which we expect you to wear at all times when driving. Once you have been accepted onto the training course at Stage 5, you will be provided with a full uniform issue.

### **What commitment is required and what are the longer term prospects?**

The training contract provides details of your responsibilities during your training with us and you may ask to see a copy of it at any time. The most important item to bring to your

attention is the fact that driver training is labour intensive and therefore expensive. We want you to stay for the long-term, however, we do need to claw-back our costs if you should decide at any time to leave us during the first 2 years of employment.

Your "liability" therefore to Lucketts for your training is the full cost of training within the first 12 months; £2500.00. This liability remains in force for a full 2 years from the commencement of your employment which is at the beginning of Stage 5. This liability is reduced to £1250.00 after your first full year of successful employment and then reduced at 1/12<sup>th</sup> for every month thereafter. So for example, if you chose to leave us after 19 months from the commencement of your training with us, you would be required to pay us back £730.00. At the end of these two years you are course free from any liability fees for your training.

I should also add here that in your contract with us, we are responsible for the cost of up to three PCV tests. After that, you yourself will be responsible for meeting the cost of further tests. (The current PCV test fee is £115).

We do of course hope that your career as a coach driver will be a long, successful and enjoyable one and of course, as mentioned previously, your long-term prospects are in your own hands. The better you are with your passengers, your coach, and with your commitment to increasing your geographical knowledge and experience, both in this county and abroad, the faster you will go up the grade ladder and the better the work you will receive as a coach driver.

## **Conclusion**

So there you have it, a quick introduction to a career as a coach driver. Yes, the job can be demanding at times, but every day you will meet new people, go to new places, and take in many new sights and experiences.

We hope you will choose Lucketts as your employer. We have been established since 1926 and are very much a friendly family company. The company is still very much an independent family run business and Steve and Ian Lockett are still very much "hands-on" Directors. We take great pride in providing excellent customer service, and it is very much for this reason that we are now one of the South's largest and most successful coach operators. This success is highlighted by the fact that we have won "Coach Operator of the Year" for our vehicle fleet size category, plus there have been many other awards for us over the years for training, brochures, and holiday programmes.

Should you have any questions at all with regard to the above information, then please just call one of the contacts on the list below.

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide and for your interest in Lucketts Travel.