



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

DVSA earned recognition: authorised audit provider code of practice

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Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**



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Section 1: Introduction

DVSA has set out this Code of Practice to ensure a high and consistent set of standards for third parties carrying out audits on operators seeking accreditation to the Earned Recognition scheme.

DVSA will authorise either an individual or organisation to carry out auditing on their behalf in accordance with this Code of Practice and Terms and Conditions. These authorised bodies will demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism and expert knowledge in the fields of transport and operator licensing.

This Code of Practice is not legally binding; however, it is a requirement of the DVSA Earned Recognition scheme that an authorised audit provider ensures that they (and anyone acting on their behalf) adhere to this Code of Practice. In the terms of this Code of Practice:-

An 'Auditor' is an individual person either working independently, employed or contracted to an organisation.

An 'Audit Provider' is either an individual or organisation authorised by DVSA to deliver a transport management systems audit for the DVSA Earned Recognition scheme.

Section 2: Principles of Operation

1. Auditors shall act with honesty and integrity that ensures a process that is fair and without favouritism or prejudice.
2. Auditors shall take appropriate steps to ensure that neither the Auditor nor any of the Auditor's staff is placed in a position where, in the reasonable opinion of the DVSA, there is or may be an actual conflict, or potential conflict, between the pecuniary or personal interest of the Auditor and the Operator and the duties owed to the Operator under the contract for audit services for the Scheme. The Auditor will disclose to the DVSA and the Operator full particulars of any such conflict of interest which may arise.
3. The auditor must not have conducted any form of consultancy or training work related to systems or processes that form part of Earned Recognition standards for the organisation being audited in the previous 12 months and will not undertake any form of consultancy or training work related to systems or processes that form part of Earned Recognition standards for the organisation within the 12 months after they have carried out the audit. This does not preclude the audit provider (organisation) supporting the operator by undertaking consultancy or training work; however this must be demonstrated to be independent from the Earned Recognition audit.
4. The principles and legislative requirements in relation to personal data must be adhered to at all times, information that is regarded, or perceived to be so, as sensitive and/or official must be handled in the appropriate manner and not disclosed to anyone else unless required by law.
5. The Auditor agrees that processing of any personal or sensitive personal data will be protected under the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
6. The Auditor acknowledges that the DVSA is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA") and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ("EIR") and shall assist and cooperate with the DVSA to enable the DVSA to comply with its information disclosure obligations.
7. The Auditor acknowledges that the DVSA shall be responsible for determining in its absolute discretion and not withstanding any other provision in this Code or any other Agreement whether any information that has been requested under the FOIA or EIR is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the provisions of the FOIA or EIR.

8. In the event that DVSA are required to investigate an audit by an Auditor the Auditor agrees to cooperate fully and provide all necessary documentation and reports as required.
9. Auditors shall at all times treat everyone with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness; they shall act in an impartial manner and not respond to any form of intimidation. Should such instances of conflict or intimidation arise the audit provider is obliged to report the full facts to DVSA.
10. The auditor's function and remit must be clearly stated to any Operator they are contracting with. Investigation and any interviews must be carried out in a professional manner at all times. Decisions that contribute to the operator's level of compliance must be fully justified, sufficiently explained and fully documented in a capture form.
11. The Operator must be allowed all reasonable opportunities to present and narrate any evidence submitted for audit. Where issues arise in respect of the validity, currency and sufficiency of such evidence, guidance and support to the operator shall be provided by the Auditor.
12. Audits must be carried out in a systematic and appropriate manner with a level of sampling that ensures an informed judgement.
13. If an operator wishes to dispute an auditor's decision made within the audit process or make a complaint about the auditor's conduct, this must be initially handled within the audit provider's complaints procedure.
14. The Auditor understands that the decision whether to accredit a particular Operator is the sole prerogative of the DVSA. The audit report is intended to represent the Auditor's findings against the audit standards criteria but will not automatically result in any Operator being accredited. No such assurance should be made to the Operator or any third party.
15. DVSA will monitor and assess the conduct and performance of third-party auditors including but not limited to, separate quality checks by DVSA on audits undertaken by the Auditor.
16. The Auditor understands that it is the sole responsibility of the Auditor to ensure that the audit is carried out to the standard that is required by the DVSA.
17. The Auditor must ensure that the audit process is clear and transparent and that any decisions are supported with adequate reasoning that is presented to the Operator (save for any matters which for legal reasons must be treated as confidential).

18. Auditors shall operate within the confines of the audit standards defined by DVSA in the Earned Recognition Guidance Document, using audit documents as authorised by DVSA. The standards shall not be interpreted or altered in any way, which could result in any variance in audits. Auditors must follow clear and detailed auditing guidance that is authorised by DVSA.

Section 2: Auditor Competence and Certification

In order to obtain and maintain DVSA authorisation the Auditor is required to fulfil the following requirements:

19. Hold a current Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence in Road Haulage or Passenger Transport.
20. Have at least 2 years experience in passenger transport and/or haulage as appropriate for the audit being undertaken. The relevant experience should be either as a transport manager, operations manager or similar role in transport compliance or enforcement.
21. Undertake a 2-day Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence refresher course at least once every 5 years, which shall form part of a minimum 70 hours of continuing professional development in that 5-year period. The refresher course must be delivered by either a trade association (Logistics UK/ RHA/ BAR/ CPT), a professional body (IoTA/ CILT/ SOE/ IRTE), or an authorised training centre offering the Transport Management Certificate of Professional Competence qualification.
22. Have undergone auditor training, delivered by a recognised training provider. The course content should include:
 - Plan-Do-Check-Act methodology and other fundamental quality management principles
 - Business process auditing
 - Risk management
 - Quality management system implementation
 - Effective auditing techniques and good audit practice
23. Be of good repute and not prohibited from acting as a Transport Manager.
24. The Audit Provider is responsible for ensuring an auditor working on their behalf complies with this Code of Practice



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