

2023 Driver Audit Guide.

2023: Covert and Overt audits can take place anywhere across the network and will assess compliance with the criterion below.

Q1. Initial customer greeting / engagement

The audit assesses the driver's first interaction with the group of prospective passengers for the service, e.g. when the drivers first enter the coach station and make themselves known to the customers.

For example when opening the bay doors at a coach station or stepping off the vehicle and engaging the customers at a road side stop. This is important in terms of setting the tone and providing the customers with the information they need to make them feel welcome and informed.

Audit criterion passed:

The driver announces the service number AND destination AND has some additional customer engagement in a warm, friendly, courteous and professional manner.

Audit criterion failed:

Partial fail: The driver announces the service number AND destination in a warm, friendly, courteous and professional manner WITHOUT any additional customer engagement

Full fail: The driver only announces the service number OR destination, the driver announces the service number AND/ OR destination in a manner that is deemed not to be engaging for example not looking at the passengers whilst announcing or not making a loud or clear enough announcement. The driver fails to recognise passengers who may not have heard the announcement.

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Partial fail Major Not Compliant	Covert	20%	1 week
Full fail Major Not Compliant	Covert	30%	1 week

Q 3.1 Volume of tickets checked using OBT.

Audit criterion passed:

All tickets checked during the period of the observation were checked using the OBT device.

Audit criterion failed:

Partial fail: Some tickets checked during the period of the observation were checked using the OBT device.

Full fail: No tickets checked during the period of the observation were checked using the OBT device.

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Partial fail Major Not Compliant	Covert	10%	1 week
Full fail Major Not Compliant	Covert	25%	1 week

Q 4 Luggage Loading / Unloading

Audit criterion passed:

Driver loads all customers luggage in an appropriate way.

Audit criterion failed:

Partial fail: Driver loads luggage but without due care of customer's property and / or one or more Customers are able to load own luggage due to poor queue management by the driver.

Full fail: Driver fails to load customer's luggage and or directs one or more customer s towards lockers with no intention of loading luggage.

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Partial fail Major Not Compliant	Covert	10%	1 week
Full fail Major Not Compliant	Covert	30%	1 week

Additional info: A driver will not fail an audit if a National Express staff member supports the process Or if a driver needs a passenger's assistance and appropriately requests support.

Q 5 – 12 Uniform

Audit criterion passed:

The Driver complies with the driver uniform standard. As set out in the Dimensions uniform Catalogue.

NX tie worn (NX will communicate when the standard is relaxed, typically during the summer)

Name Badge is visible at all times.

Shirt Appearance, shirts should be pressed and tucked in. Full NX uniform: (clean and smart).

Smart black footwear should be worn, preferably with a non-slip sole for safety.

Hi-Vis worn whilst loading

Audit criterion failed:

Tie / scarf not worn,

Name badge not visible,

Shirt / blouse untucked,

Other non NX business wear, this includes NX Polo shirts work out of summer time.

Non NX approved hat. *

Hi-Vis not worn during loading

*(The only hats that are approved are if a risk assessment has taken place resulting in the need for a bump hat, the risk assessment and drivers it covers must be shared with your Service Delivery manager in advance so dispensation can be applied)

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
No tie / scarf worn Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	10%	1 week
Name badge not visible Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	5%	1 week
Shirt / blouse untucked Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	5%	1 week
Smart business wear Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	5%	1 week
Wearing personal items Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	20%	1 week
Wearing Trainers Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	8%	1 week
Wearing casual shoes Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	8%	1 week

Wearing non nx hat Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	8%	1 week
High vis not worn Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	15%	1 week

Q 14 – 24 Serious Issues

In addition to the above questions, any serious issues observed will be noted and flagged to the Operator via the Service Delivery Manager, examples of serious issues but not limited to, are noted below.

Audit criterion failed:

Not wearing seatbelt, Smoking or vaping, Closing lockers from inside the vehicle, Wearing earpiece, Using mobile device, Drive-cam deliberately obscured, Eating/drinking at the wheel, driver appearance below standard

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Serious Issue Major Not Compliant	Covert and Overt	30%	Immediate

Additional info: Audits with serious issues are published and emailed directly to the Service delivery team. The SD manager will contact the Operator agree actions. The audit is available in the system at the point of Audit so if viewed by the Operator in advance of the Service Delivery manager making contact the Operator should contact the Service Delivery Manager to agree the course of action in advance of resolving with the driver. The agreed action must be recorded in the audit system to close down the outstanding action.

Q25. Driver does not have ticket machine

Audit criterion passed:

The driver has an on-board ticket machine available

Audit criterion failed:

Driver doesn't have an on-board ticket machine available.

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	25%	1 week

Q26. Ticket machine working

The auditor assesses if the driver has a working ticket machine. Whilst it is recognised that a driver

may not be able to fix a non- working machine, the expectation is that the driver would make the operator aware of a non-working machine so appropriate actions can be taken in advance of any audits undertaken.

Audit criterion passed:

[Ticket machine is working.](#)

Audit criterion failed:

[Ticket machine is not working.](#)

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	25%	1 week

Q27. Air con settings.

Audit criterion passed:

[Temperature or System Settings correct in line with NX guidelines.](#)

Audit criterion failed:

[Temperature or System Settings incorrect / not in line with NX guidelines.](#)

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	40%	Immediate

Q28. Plug sockets not enabled at the dashboard.

Audit criterion passed:

[Plug sockets are turned on at dashboard.](#)

Audit criterion failed:

[Plug sockets are not enabled at the dashboard.](#)

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	30%	Immediate

Q29. Front Seat Availability

Audit criterion passed:

All seats available to customers

Audit criterion failed:

One or more seats unofficially blocked from use.

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
One seat blocked Not Compliant	Overt	5%	Immediate
Two seats blocked Major Not Compliant	Overt	10%	Immediate
Three seats blocked Major Not Compliant	Overt	15%	Immediate
Four + seats blocked Major Not Compliant	Overt	20%	Immediate

Additional info: Where seats are reserved using the seat reservation process, where possible the auditor will check the load chart. If seat reservation is displayed on seats that are not reserved on the load chart this would also be determined as an audit fail.

Q101 FRANCIS CARD COMPLIANCE

Audit criterion passed:

The driver has access to the required number of Francis cards as per the National Express updates.

Audit criterion failed:

The driver does not have access to the required number of Francis cards as per the National Express updates.

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	10%	One Week

Q102 Driver knowledge of emergency exit seat policy (Under 14's).

Audit criterion passed:

The driver is able to clearly describe the terms of the policy

Audit criterion failed:

The driver is unable to describe the terms of the policy

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	15%	Immediate

Q103 Driver's awareness of location of seat reservation covers & seatbelt wraps.

Audit criterion passed:

The driver knows the correct location of the seat reservation covers and seatbelt wraps

Seat reservation covers – nearside overhead locker, seatbelt wraps, glove box

Audit criterion failed:

The driver does not know the correct location of the seat reservation covers and seatbelt wraps

Status	Audit type	Audit score deduction	Resolution Timeframe
Major Not Compliant	Overt	10%	One week.

Dispensation requests

From time to time a Partner Operator may have a requirement to operate a service where the standards are not in place due to circumstances beyond their control. In these instances, a request for dispensation can be made.

Dispensation requests can only be agreed directly to your Service Delivery Manager. The audit team are not able to grant any dispensation against the standards.

A dispensation request must be made prior to putting a vehicle into service so an informed decision can be made by NX regarding dispensation against the standard. The process also allows the provision of support to help resolve this issue as soon as possible where dispensation is agreed.

Retrospective dispensation will not be granted. If an item is failed on an Audit and the dispensation process was not followed, then dispensation can only be agreed from the time when the Partner

Operator raises the issue. If dispensation is then agreed, this will apply against future audits but not retrospectively applied against the audit fail that prompted the request.

An example of an exception to the above could be where there is a network wide issue where NX agree dispensation across all operators.

Where dispensation is in place across all operators, or all criterion for a specific operator this will be set in the audit system and will be applied in real time by the audit system. Where specific criterion is agreed against vehicle registrations or driver names, these items will be added to a dispensation log. In these instances the auditor will audit what they see and the criterion will initially show on the audit as a fail. Dispensation will be applied after the audit has taken place (Normally each Monday) so the dispensation is reflected in tableau data update. (Operator's should not close down items in audit form if dispensation has been agreed.

Audit appeals:

In the unlikely event of a Partner Operator disagreeing with their audit result then they must raise this in writing to servicequalityteam@nationalexpress.com within two weeks of the date of audit.

Audit appeals can be made directly to the auditor, an appeal can be made where there is a belief that the audit criterion has been incorrectly marked against the criterion in the audit guide.

Once the appeal has been submitted the Auditor will present the appeal at the Service quality team levelling session where the appeal will be reviewed and a decision made.

This process ensures that where an appeal is granted or overturned any learning can be shared with the audit team to ensure we continue to offer a fair and level audit function.

Appeals should be made to noting the following information.

Audit Type:

Audit Reference:

Audit Question / Answer:

Details of why the appeal sets out to challenge the audit criterion selected by the auditor and which criterion the Operator believes should have been applied including any evidence to support the appeal. *Please note where evidence can't be supplied it is unlikely an appeal can be upheld.

Levelling sessions are held every other Tuesday, in the event there is no levelling session scheduled in time for the next evaluation table the team will ensure an ad hoc session takes place to align to the evaluation table cut off dates.