



Press release
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First Nottingham City Taxi Drivers to Graduate with NVQ

More than 100 local taxi drivers are set to graduate from a new training course developed to raise standards of customer service. It follows an initiative by Experience Nottinghamshire to improve the quality of the visitor experience.

A graduation ceremony will take place at Trent Bridge cricket ground on Wednesday 28 January when the first graduates to take part in the scheme in Nottinghamshire collect their certificates.

The majority of drivers are from the city based taxi firms D&G and Trent Cars who have all successfully qualified for the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 in Road Passenger Vehicle Driver, following completion of their training carried out at the Stadium Leisure, New Basford. The qualification is equivalent to five GCSEs at grades A-C.

The pilot scheme for taxi drivers in Nottingham was created to help city-based taxi drivers develop their skills and knowledge, and gain a nationally-recognised qualification. It was commissioned by TWL Training Ltd and delivered by ABA Training Ltd.

Paul Fleming, TWL Senior Operations Manager, said: "Nottingham's taxi and private hire operators are extremely important in helping to keep the city moving, and are a key component of the local integrated transport system. By undertaking this training, the drivers are enhancing the customer experience of the thousands of residents and visitors who use them each year.

"We at TWL Training Ltd are delighted to be given the opportunity to work with the drivers and partners to help make Nottingham a great place to live, work and visit."

Provision of training and development opportunities for employees is, for many businesses, the key to surviving the economic downturn and improving performance. For the tourism industry, first impressions count and since most visitors to a city are bound to take a taxi, the service they receive can help form their view of a place.

Factors covered on the six-month training course included the Disability Discrimination Act, personal and passenger safety, customer services and the provision of tourist information on the city. Working with D&G Cars and Trent Cars places were offered free to eligible drivers in the city through the national Train to Gain project.

John Heeley, Chief Executive of Experience Nottinghamshire commented: "Each taxi driver is an unofficial ambassador for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and we hope that the skills and knowledge gained during the course will help them to further improve their levels of customer service and to promote the city to a growing number of visitors."

Anne Howes, Training Manager for ABA Training said: "We are very proud of all the drivers who have shown such dedication and enthusiasm in successfully completing

the course. This course has been a real success and much of that is due to the way drivers have supported and encouraged each other in taking up the challenge of learning new skills to improve their service.”

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For more information and images please contact:

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Notes to editors:

1. The NVQ training scheme was initiated by Experience Nottinghamshire with funding from the Learning and Skills Council.
2. The project forms part of the Quality Improvement Programme for Nottinghamshire, aiming to raise the experience of all visitors to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, funded by East Midlands Tourism.
3. Other partner organisations involved in the development of the pilot project include GoSkills – the Sector Skills Council for Passenger Transport, ANPHO - Association of Nottinghamshire Private Hire Operators and Nottingham City Council.
4. As the official tourist board for the county Experience Nottinghamshire aims to promote it as a great place to visit - for leisure or business.
5. Experience Nottinghamshire’s mission is to transform Notts into a leading tourism destination and to raise the profile of the county as a great place in which to invest, work, live, shop, meet, visit and study.
6. We promote Nottingham as regional capital, a great European city and short break destination and a centre of style, creativity, history and heritage.
7. Nottinghamshire is the real centre of England’s green and pleasant land, with a vibrant city and attractive market towns and villages. It’s easy to get to by road, rail and air and is world renowned as the home of Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest.

To find out more about Experience Nottinghamshire or to find out about what’s on and where to go throughout the county log on to www.visitnotts.com