



EXAMINATIONS HANDBOOK

Standard Operating Procedure 61

Policy on Blue Badge Tourist Guide Candidates

Amendments and date of issue

Amendments to this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) can be authorised only by the Chair of the Qualifications Board in consultation with that Board and the Examinations Committee.

This issue is 2025 version 1 and is dated November 2025

Register of amendments

Version	Brief description of Amendment	Amendment	Date approved
2025.1	Core Knowledge syllabus replaces Background Knowledge syllabus	p.2	September 2025
2025.1	Minimum number of practical examinations for Blue and Green Badge Tourist Guide candidates	p.3	September 2025
2024.1	Existing Guides exempt from an examination cannot take it.	p.3	08/2024
2020.2	Five-year limit for the Communication Seminar for existing guides	p.2	29/11/2021
	Walk and religious building as portable units	pp. 2-3	
2020.1	New handbook		23/11/2020

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Policy on Blue Badge Tourist Guide Candidates

Any existing holder of a Blue Badge qualification who wishes to qualify for another region must enrol on an Institute-accredited training programme. They will be termed Blue Badge Tourist Guide Candidates (BBTG Candidates). Such Candidates may not necessarily participate in the full training programme for that region.

The Institute strongly encourages the training provider, which term for the avoidance of doubt includes Course Directors, for that region to offer some essential training for their region which will allow the BBTG Candidates to become familiar with all aspects of guiding the examination sites for that region and any other essential aspects of guiding in that region.

The Institute will produce a framework for this which will be a minimum amount of training/continuous assessment. Each training provider should recommend the specific requirement for their region subject to approval by the Institute and cost it accordingly. It is their decision as to how they decide to deliver this training. It could be together with the full-time course students, or as a separate group undertaking a short intensive training period, or a mix of both.

Training providers must submit the BBTG Candidates training requirement at the same time as the main course when they send details for accreditation.

The BBTG Candidates will be registered as being on the course by the training provider and will pay the registration fee to the training provider. All examination correspondence will be via the training provider in the same way that all full-time course students receive this. The BBTG Candidates must attend a two-day Communications Seminar if they have not previously attended a two-day Communications Seminar within the last 5 years. BBTG Candidates must also attend the Chief Examiner's briefing.

The training provider will confirm in writing to the Institute to state that the BBTG Candidates have participated in the training provided.

The Core Knowledge examination and Project are portable units and do not need to be repeated for a new region if these examinations have been successfully completed since 2002.

The Institute recognises that it does not influence the intake of students for any course and that there may be a need to limit places for BBTG Candidates on any course, therefore an application is not a guarantee of a place.

The Institute, however, requests that training providers offer an interview to all applicants who have a Blue Badge qualification, whether they are applying for the main course or the BBTG Candidate training, and to all applicants with a Green Badge qualification.

The urban and/or rural walk examination and the major religious building examination are regarded as portable units. Blue Badge Candidates only need to take and pass these examinations ONCE. A pass in these examinations remains valid throughout an individual's career. Blue Badge Tourist Guides subsequently seeking qualification in another Blue Badge region will not need to take these examinations again (subject to Institute's revalidation policy).

The exemptions granted to existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides for the urban and/or rural walk examination only apply to like for like examinations. If an existing Badge Guide has not taken and passed a rural walk and this is one of the four examinations for a Blue Badge, then they must take and pass the rural walk. The same applies for the urban walk. Similarly, if the walk examination is part of a combination examination with a museum or gallery, the existing Blue Badge Tourist Guide must take and pass the whole examination. If the examination is a combination of urban and rural walk and the existing Blue Badge Tourist Guide has not passed both examinations previously then they must take and pass the whole examination.

If a Green Badge Guide wishes to qualify as a Blue Badge Tourist Guide, then their walk examination is regarded as a portable unit. Existing Green Badge Guides DO NOT need to take and pass this examination again if they wish to qualify as a Blue Badge Tourist Guide. A pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career (subject to Institute's revalidation policy). This exemption only applies to like for like examinations. If the Blue Badge walk examination is a rural walk or a combination of rural and urban walk, then the Green Badge Guide must take and pass this examination. Similarly, if the walk examination is part of a combination examination with a museum/gallery or religious building, the existing Green Badge Guide must take and pass the whole examination.

If an existing Blue Badge or Green Badge Guide is exempt from a practical or written examination, they will not be permitted to take that examination when qualifying for a new region or location.

If a Candidate already holds either a Blue or Green Badge for a different location, they must still take and pass the site or religious building examination to be awarded their Green Badge in a new location.

To be awarded a Blue Badge in a new region, an existing Blue Badge Tourist Guide must pass **at least two** practical examinations. To be awarded a Green Badge in a new location, existing Blue Badge or Green Badge Tourist Guides must pass **at least one** practical examination.