

What is a tourist guide?

Tourist guides are self-employed individuals who conduct guided tours and walks whilst giving a live commentary. Guides are responsible for sourcing their own work. VisitLiverpool (the Official Tourist Board for the Liverpool City Region) and other agencies will also book the services of qualified guides from time to time in return for a commission. The majority of the work is part-time and often takes place in the early evenings and at weekends. The work is demanding, fun and no two days are the same. Guiding should be viewed more as a paid hobby than as a steady job. Guiding rates vary from £8 a tour for open top bus tours to £95 for a two-hour coach tour.

All tourist guides require public liability insurance before undertaking any paid for guiding activity. This can cost up to £200 per annum. From 2014 any tourist guide or tour company wishing to be a member of VisitLiverpool must have a recognised qualification (e.g Blue Badge Guide) or successfully complete the VisitEngland [Quality Assured Tours](#) assessment.

What makes a good tourist guide?

- Do you enjoy meeting new people from different countries, cultures and faiths?
- Do you have pride in telling others about the City Region's heritage and diversity?
- Do you enjoy finding out about your City and its past?
- Are you friendly and confident with good communication skills?
- Do you want to do something new and enjoy a challenge?
- Are you interested in communicating Liverpool City Region's rich and varied heritage to international visitors?
- Are you available for guiding at short notice?
- Can you adapt what you say to the needs of different groups?

If you can answer yes to the above questions, you may make a good guide.

Also desirable are:

- The ability to speak a second language fluently
- Familiarity with the new Liverpool - its shops, restaurants, clubs, pubs and other developments

Becoming A Guide

VisitLiverpool is the official Tourist Board for the Liverpool City Region and is responsible for the recruitment, training and quality assurance of guides in Region.

Quality Assured Tours

After a successful pilot scheme VisitEngland will now assess tours using the [Quality Assured Tours](#) scheme. Any guide without a recognised qualification (e.g. Blue Badge) must go through the Quality Assured Tours assessment if they wish to become a member of VisitLiverpool. Prices start at £195 per tour. The assessment can be undertaken by any tour or tour guide operating in Liverpool City Region.

We review the need for guides on a regular basis and facilitate training for new tour guides according to demand. There are three nationally recognised guiding qualifications by the [Institute of Tourist Guides](#)

Blue Badge (Level 4)

The Blue Badge is the highest professional qualification for Tour Guides. Blue Badge Guides can guide throughout the City Region and have an in depth knowledge of British and local history, heritage, culture and traditions as well as communication skills and guiding technique. Training can take up to a year culminating with a practical and written examination that must be passed to gain the Blue Badge qualification.

There are currently no plans to run any further subsidised training programmes for Blue Badge Guides for the Liverpool City Region. It is possible to qualify as a Blue Badge Guide privately through distance learning and individual assessment. Click [here](#) for more details but expect to pay £4,000 or more for the privilege.

Green Badge (Level 3)

The Green Badge indicates similar in-depth knowledge as the Blue Badge with the main difference that it covers a fixed route or more focussed geographical area. In this region this means Liverpool and predominantly Liverpool City Centre.

Site Guide (Level 2)

Similar to Level 3 but restricted to individual sites or buildings.

There are currently no plans to train more site guides but contact individual sites for details of any voluntary guiding.

Other Guiding qualifications:

From time to time we run shorter locally accredited guide training programmes such as International Visitor Hosts.

MA Museum and Heritage Studies programme at Liverpool Hope University. For more information contact Dr Antionette McKane on 0151 293127 or email on E:mckanea@hope.ac.uk

www.hope.ac.uk/postgraduate/postgraduatecourses/museumandheritagestudiesma

Expressions of Interest

We have a waiting list of those who wish to become tour guides. Not everyone makes a good guide and when subsidised training programmes are offered, VisitLiverpool reserves the right to audition and select the best candidates.

If you would like to be considered for any future training programmes please complete the Expression of Interest form which you can download on your right. Please save and return this form to guides@liverpoollep.org or Guides, Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, 12 Princes Parade, Liverpool L3 1BG. We will acknowledge receipt and contact you when the next suitable training programme is being planned.

For any more information contact Natasha Mealor on 0151 237 3525 or email natasha.mealor@liverpoollep.org