

Accredited Trade Associations (ATA)

Standards required to obtain ATA status:

| Requirement | Reason for Requirement |
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| Must have been trading for a minimum of six months and they must have existing members | So that the effectiveness of their business can be determined |
| Must have a clear, enforceable Code of Practice (CoP) governing the conduct and business practices of their members. The CoP must describe the minimum standards required for compliance and be published on that ATA's website along with a list of their members | The Code of Practice is required to set the minimum standards for ATA membership. The list of members must be kept up to date so that DVLA staff are able to check if a company has ATA membership before information will be released – as this is a condition for electronic access, and where car parking companies are concerned, for manual requests also |
| Must demonstrate their auditing arrangements for ensuring members comply with the CoP and agree to those auditing procedures being further audited by the DVLA | So that we can judge how effective their operations will be |
| Must demonstrate that they have an independent appeals and complaints process | So that we can ensure that their members are treating their customers fairly and that the ATA is free from any accusations of bias |
| Must advise DVLA of any complaints received and of any issues that may arise. Respond to Trouble Reports raised by the Agency within agreed timescales and maintain records of all complaints and their resolution. | So that the appropriate action can be taken and so that we are able to see that they are handling complaints correctly and appropriately |
| Must have a clear system in place which details the sanctions which can be imposed on members for specific breaches of the CoP and also clearly defines how they can be applied with regard to suspension and expulsion of members | To ensure continued compliance and ensure they are able to maintain their ATA status |
| Must notify DVLA within 24 hours of the suspension/expulsion of a member; | So that the DVLA can take the appropriate action – suspend the release of DVLA data or withdraw it completely |
| Must investigate at DVLA's request any complaint about alleged breaches of the CoP or inappropriate use of information and | They must take responsibility for policing their Code of practice in order to maintain their membership and react appropriately to |

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| provide detailed reports on the outcome within agreed timescales as contained in a Memorandum of Understanding | any alleged breach of the Code of Practice |
| Must demonstrate impartiality when dealing with complaints/appeals | To ensure customers/motorists are treated fairly |
| Must provide details of the makeup of the company including the names of senior officials, those responsible for ensuring compliance with the CoP and a named liaison contact who is responsible for initial communications with DVLA | So that any complaints can be investigated appropriately |
| Must have procedures in place for ensuring key messages are disseminated to members | To ensure communications can be carried out effectively. Helps to set/maintain standards |
| Must have Companies House and DP registration | To demonstrate that they are bona fide |
| Must have their own independent office/address (not a PO Box address) | So that appeals/complaints can be dealt with |
| Must provide details of their fee structure and ability to manage a scheme based on income | To ensure that fees are realistic/manageable for members |
| Must ensure vehicle keepers are contacted by letter only and issued with a leaflet advising them of the reasons their details were requested, the complaints procedure by which the keeper can notify the Information Commissioner and DVLA if they believe their data has been used inappropriately and the appeals procedure if they feel that the enforcement action is unwarranted | To ensure that a fair system exists, in which the motorists are aware of their rights |
| Letters from DVLA or the ATA investigating complaints from keepers need to be responded to in full and within the timescales stipulated within the Memorandum of Understanding | To ensure that complaints are handled in a timely manner |
| Must have sufficient officials to monitor and ensure compliance | Schemes could not be run effectively if there is a shortage of manpower |
| Must commit to deal with alleged breaches of their code from DVLA or general public | In order to maintain their ATA status |
| Must demonstrate effective compliance and auditing procedures | So that we are able to gauge their effectiveness |
| Must agree to abide/enter into an MoU with DVLA | So that both parties are aware of their responsibilities and to set standards on both sides |
| Must agree to meet with DVLA officials, as set out in the MoU | Regular communications to help manage, maintain and set standards, and to allow discussions to be facilitated on current issues |

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| Evidence of Compliance Report to be completed before membership is granted | To ensure that a standard series of checks are made on all companies |
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ATA's responsible for the car parking industry must have a clear enforceable CoP which includes the following topics:

| Requirement | Reason for Requirement |
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| Must have prominent signage, setting out clearly that keeper details will be obtained if enforcement action is to be taken and information about the relevant ATA body in case of complaint | To ensure fair treatment of the motorist and to ensure parking charges are issued appropriately |
| Must ensure signs used by members are clearly visible to motorists | In order for them to be able to enter into a contractual agreement |
| Must have a clearly defined appeals procedure with no requirement to pay the penalty before the appeal is concluded and no loss of the reduced penalty period | To ensure fair treatment of the motorist |
| Signs and correspondence must include a contact (landline) number for enquiries | So that any disputes can be discussed between the parties concerned |
| Where an investigation reveals genuine error on the part of the data recipient, any ticket or penalty notice is withdrawn and an apology issued to the keeper, within 7 days | Fair treatment of the motorist |
| All contact with the keeper must be via a letter and county court action must be taken to permit a house call following non-payment of any penalty charges | Fair treatment of the motorist |

Requirements for an ATA Code of Practice:

The Code of Practice should contain the following information:

- **Introduction** - What does the Code cover?
- **Objectives** - What is the ATA hoping to achieve?
- **Conditions**
- **Warranty and Disclaimers**
- **Compliance Monitoring and Code Breaches**

- **Requirements** - e.g. landowner agreement
- **Keeping and disclosing information** - The rules that must be followed
- **Requirements for any vehicles that may be used in the course of their business**
- **Skills/learning/qualifications** - Where applicable
- **Insurance Liability** - the amount covered for any costs, damage etc
- **Licensing** - e.g. SIA Licence (where applicable)
- **Obtaining Registered Keeper Details** - Rules and timescales
- **Staff Attire and Standards** - if applicable
- **Challenges and Appeals** - How appeals should be dealt with, including timings
- **Use of third party sub-contractors** - minimum standards of enforcement, liability for compliance with the CoP
- **Fee Structure** - ATA membership fees
- **Signage** - wording, style, visibility, positioning
- **Ticketing** - wording, style,
- **Access to DVLA data** - Timings, security, availability,
- **Appeals**