EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY

Drive a Train Experience Terms and Conditions

These terms explain your booking, safe participation, guests, vouchers and cancellation arrangements. Read them alongside the ELR General Booking Terms, Conditions of Carriage and Gift Voucher Terms. The product description and booking confirmation identify the experience you have purchased. Nothing here limits your statutory rights.

1 Your experience and booking

1.1 These terms apply to Steam and Diesel Drive a Train experiences supplied by the East Lancashire Railway (ELR). They take priority on matters specific to these products. Your contract is with the supplier identified in the booking confirmation; any agent's role and mandatory fees will be explained before payment.

1.2 Before purchase, we will state the price, booked date or voucher basis, joining arrangements and principal inclusions. Driving, firing, driver assistant duties, guarding, tours, catering and guest travel are included only as described for your chosen package. Steam and diesel activities can differ.

1.3 Check your confirmation promptly and tell us about errors. The participant must satisfy the relevant safety requirements. A gift purchaser should share those requirements with the intended participant before committing to a dated booking. Contact us before purchase if suitability is uncertain.

1.4 Experiences take place under crew supervision. They do not provide a driving qualification or authority to operate railway equipment independently. Staff control the activity, including any movements or tasks reserved to trained personnel.

2 Medical requirements and fitness to participate

2.1 Participants must be at least 18 on the experience date and fit to carry out the booked activities safely. Before booking, tell the experience team about any physical or mental health condition, treatment or medication effect that could affect mobility, balance, concentration, dexterity, coordination, consciousness or the ability to understand and follow instructions. Tell us promptly about any relevant change before your visit.

2.2 Participants must be able to climb into and out of the locomotive, including evacuation to track level. Depending on the locomotive, this may involve a vertical climb of up to 3 metres with steps approximately 0.6 metres apart. Contact us before booking if you cannot do this unaided. We will assess the particular locomotive, emergency arrangements and possible reasonable adjustments; essential safety requirements cannot be waived.

2.3 Participants must be able to read a vehicle number plate from 20 metres, using glasses or contact lenses if needed, and hear and understand safety instructions in a noisy environment. Tell us about any visual, hearing, or communication needs so we can assess safe participation and reasonable adjustments before the day. Bring any corrective lenses, or other agreed aids you need.

2.4 The experience can involve heat, cold, weather exposure, variable lighting, heights, tunnels, noise and vibration. Steam activities can require physical effort when firing. Tell us if these conditions could affect your health or ability to participate. The guided tour has separate walking and access demands; we will assess each guest's suitability for the activities they will actually undertake.

2.5 Participants aged 75 or over must provide a doctor's letter confirming fitness for the relevant activities at least one week before the experience, in accordance with ELR's published requirement. Contact the team before booking to discuss the information required or any difficulty obtaining it. We will consider individual circumstances, proportionate alternative evidence and reasonable adjustments; age alone is not a reason to refuse participation.

2.6 If you have fainted during the three months before the booked date, you must notify ELR and must not undertake the operational activities unless ELR has reviewed the safety risk with appropriate medical advice and confirmed that participation can proceed safely. Also report any other recent episode affecting consciousness or control that could be relevant to safety. A medical letter does not by itself guarantee acceptance.

2.7 Do not attend operational activities while impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication. Do not stop or change prescribed treatment to attend. Ask your prescriber about any effects relevant to the activities and tell ELR about those effects. If you become unwell, feel faint or cannot safely continue on the day, tell the crew immediately.

2.8 We assess relevant functional abilities and risks individually, including for people with autism, learning disabilities or other access needs. We may arrange a discussion, practical access assessment or request relevant medical evidence where reasonably necessary. We will explain the reasons and consider reasonable adjustments. A diagnosis alone will not determine eligibility, and a companion cannot take over the participant's safety duties.

2.9 ELR staff may pause or prevent participation where reasonably necessary for safety. We will explain the decision and consider safe alternatives where practicable. Cancellation, transfer and refund arrangements will be assessed under sections 6 and 7 and applicable law; a medical issue does not automatically mean loss of the full booking price. Health information will be limited to what is needed, handled confidentially and used in accordance with ELR's Privacy Policy and data protection law.

3 Arrival briefing and safe conduct

3.1 Follow the confirmed reporting time and location. Allow enough time for registration and the mandatory safety briefing. Late arrival may prevent safe participation; contact us immediately if delayed. Any resulting cancellation or lost activity will be assessed under section 6, taking account of responsibility for the delay.

3.2 Follow crew instructions and use the protective clothing and equipment specified in the joining information. Wear secure footwear and suitable clothing; secure loose items. We will explain any additional steam or diesel requirements before the day.

3.3 Do not participate while impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication. Do not stop or alter prescribed medication to attend; seek advice from your prescriber and discuss any relevant effects with ELR. Tell staff if you become unwell or cannot safely continue.

3.4 Only use phones, cameras or recording equipment when the supervising crew authorise it. They must not distract from driving, firing or other safety duties. Keep clear of operational equipment and restricted areas unless accompanied and instructed.

3.5 We may pause or stop an activity where reasonably necessary to protect safety. We will explain the reason and, where practicable, consider adjustments, an alternative activity, or another appropriate solution. Ending participation does not automatically remove a refund or other remedy: the outcome depends on the circumstances, applicable terms and statutory rights.

4 Guests tours and catering

4.1 Only guests included in the confirmed booking may attend the experience activities. The product information will state the allowance, charge and inclusions. Guest admission does not include locomotive driving or cab access unless expressly stated. Children must be supervised and may enter only the areas and activities expressly permitted for them.

4.2 Tours enter working railway areas. Follow the stated access route, footwear and supervision requirements. Contact us about access needs before booking where possible; we will discuss whether an adjusted tour or other arrangement is reasonably available. Assistance dog arrangements will be considered individually in light of access and safety requirements.

4.3 Tell us about allergies and dietary requirements when booking. We will confirm whether we can meet them and explain relevant limitations before you rely on an arrangement. Adding guests or changing meals depends on availability and the deadline stated for your package.

5 Experience vouchers

5.1 Experience vouchers are product specific and valid for two years from purchase, subject to the ELR Gift Voucher Terms. The expiry date will be shown. Redeem online in advance or in person at Bury; experience vouchers cannot be redeemed at other stations or on the train.

5.2 Available experience dates and places are limited. Book early and redeem before expiry. Any requirement for travel itself to take place before expiry must be clearly stated and agreed before purchase. Once a date is confirmed, the dated booking cancellation provisions apply.

5.3 If ELR cannot offer a reasonable opportunity to redeem the purchased product during validity, contact us before expiry so we can agree an appropriate extension, alternative or refund as required. A replacement product or additional payment will not be imposed without agreement or a lawful contractual basis.

6 Cancellation transfers and changes by you

6.1 Tell us as soon as possible if you cannot attend. A change of date is subject to availability and agreement. You may ask to transfer the place to another eligible person; provide their details and allow time for the required safety assessment. We will not unreasonably refuse a suitable replacement.

6.2 If you cancel a dated booking, ELR may retain only a fair amount reflecting loss directly caused by that cancellation. We will account for costs saved and any resale, take reasonable steps to reduce loss and refund the remainder. The charge will not exceed the cancelled booking price and will not duplicate recovery elsewhere. We will explain the calculation on request.

6.3 Late cancellation or non-attendance may cause a substantial loss, potentially up to the booking price, but does not automatically justify retaining the full amount. Any booking fee deduction must be fair and justified and will not be charged twice. Illness or inability to participate will be considered on the facts; there is no automatic forfeiture solely because of a medical condition.

6.4 Any statutory cancellation right applicable to your purchase remains available. The cancellation treatment of an undated voucher purchase is governed by the Gift Voucher Terms and applicable law; it must not be assumed to be identical to that of a dated experience. Optional protection products have their own claim terms and do not replace ELR's obligations.

7 Changes or cancellation by ELR

7.1 We may need to adjust operations for genuine safety or operational reasons. We will tell you promptly about a significant change using the contact details supplied and explain the options. Routine timetable or crew allocation changes must not remove the principal experience purchased.

7.2 The booking information will identify whether a locomotive class or traction type is a promised feature. Where an advertised diesel class is unavailable, you may accept the substitute or ask to defer to an available date for that class. If the promised experience cannot be supplied within a reasonable time, or a material change substantially affects it, we will explain any right to cancel and receive a refund. Steam-to-diesel substitution will not be treated automatically as immaterial.

7.3 If ELR cancels the experience and does not provide it, we will offer a full refund of the cancelled experience and mandatory ELR booking fees. A transfer or voucher may be accepted by agreement; it is not compulsory in place of a refund that is due. We will address linked guest bookings and unused included services appropriately.

7.4 If only part of the service is not delivered as agreed, a suitable repeat performance, price reduction or other remedy may be due. Events beyond our control do not automatically remove consumer remedies. We do not exclude liability where doing so would be unlawful.

7.5 Refunds will be made without undue delay and within applicable legal deadlines. A refund under section 56 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 will be made within 14 days of agreement that it is due, using the original payment method unless you expressly agree otherwise, without a refund fee.

8 Contact and complaints

8.1 For suitability, joining arrangements and experience queries, contact events@eastlancsrailway.co.uk or call 0333 320 2830. For complaints, contact customer.services@eastlancsrailway.co.uk or write to Customer Services, ELR, Bolton Street Station, Bolton Street, Bury, BL9 0EY. The ELR Customer Complaints Procedure explains investigation and final review by the Head of Passenger & Customer Services, with an independent internal reviewer where a conflict of interest arises.