

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Specifications :

Preliminary Matters :

1. All Licensed Vehicles must comply in all respects with the requirements set out below as appropriate for the type of vehicle. This is in addition to all requirements of the Road Traffic legislation, which relates to all motor vehicles.
2. All vehicles must comply with the requirements of **Section A**. Private Hire Vehicles must comply with the requirements of **Section B**. Hackney Carriages must comply with the requirements of **Section C**.
3. If making a new Application for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence, the vehicle must be wheelchair accessible vehicle and must also comply with the requirements of **Section D**.
4. All vehicles must have the appropriate type of approval.
5. The following vehicle specification must be maintained throughout the Licence period, unless changes have prior approval by the Council.

Section A - General Specification for All Vehicles :

General Construction :

1. The vehicle must comply fully with all relevant statutory provisions relating to the construction of motor vehicles and including in particular those contained in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, (or any successor legislation).
2. Any modification to the vehicle, (eg. conversion to wheelchair accessible vehicle, alteration of the original seat configuration, or any other "adaptation"), must be approved by the Council and the appropriate certificate produced.
3. The vehicle must be right hand drive with a fixed head type body.
4. The vehicle must be capable of carrying in reasonable comfort at least four passengers.
5. The vehicle must be M1 category. In the case of post registration conversions Individual Vehicle Approval is required.
6. The vehicle must have a minimum unladen height of 1.325 metres, (53 inches).

Passenger Comfort :

1. Every passenger seat in the vehicle must meet the following minimum dimensions, :-
 - (a) Individual seat width – 41cm, (16 inches);
 - (b) Bench seat width, (ie. rear seat of a saloon vehicle) – 124.5cm, (49 inches);
 - (c) Width between door handles –124.5cm, (49 inches);
 - (d) Width between rear doors – 132cm, (52 inches);
 - (e) Seat squab height measured from vehicle floor - 30cm, (12 inches);
 - (f) Seat squab depth – 45cm, (18 inches);
 - (g) Headroom measured from centre of seat to underside of roof – 87.5cm, (35 inches);
 - (h) Legroom measured from seat back diagonally to vehicle floor – 94cm, (37 inches); and
 - (i) Unobstructed space in front of seat measured from seat back – 63.5cm, (25 inches).

As to the suitability of a vehicle where the measurements are below the above dimensions, discretion may be applied and each case will be treated on its individual merits.

2. There must be no obstructions, or features in the vehicle, (eg. prominent transmission tunnels, door furniture, vehicle controls etc.), which in the opinion of the Council materially interferes with the comfort of any passenger.
3. The vehicle must have an adequate heating and ventilation system for the comfort of all passengers.
4. The vehicle must be equipped with either, :-
 - (a) A spare wheel of full, or space save design above the legal tread requirement and the tools to change a wheel;
 - (b) An emergency puncture repair kit, (with compressor / inflation pack);
 - (c) Run flat tyres; or
 - (d) Provide evidence of a contract with a mobile tyre replacement specialist.

In the event of a space-saver tyre, run flat tyres, (when punctured), or puncture repair kit being used, it is only to complete a fare and must comply and be maintained in accordance with the manufactures' recommendations. Any such defective wheel should be replaced before taking another fare to ensure passenger safety.

Passenger Safety :

1. As from and including **1st December, 2022** the Council's specification relating to the use of tinted windows in Licensed Vehicles is as follows, :-

- (a) The windscreen is to have a minimum light transmission of 75%;
 - (b) All other front windows are required to have a minimum of 70% light transmission;
 - (c) Beyond the B pillar only vehicle manufactured body tinted glass will be permitted to be used. The tinted glass must be part of the whole vehicle design when produced and pre-registered for that model and specification. In the event that such glass is required to be replaced for any reason, then it must be replaced with glass that is equivalent to the originally fitted vehicle manufactured body tinted glass;
 - (d) No tinted glass whether manufactured, or otherwise will be permitted to be added to a vehicle retrospectively following vehicle manufacture completion; and
 - (e) No retrospective tint application, or film will be permitted to be applied
2. The vehicle must have at least four doors and open sufficiently wide so as to allow safe and easy access and egress. Each passenger, other than a front seated passenger, must have access to at least two doors.
 3. Every passenger seat must be either forward or rear facing and must be fitted with an approved, (lap and diagonal), seat belt, with the exception of Limousines fitted with side facing bench-seats.

Luggage Capacity :

1. The vehicle must have capacity to convey an appropriate quantity of luggage.

Section B - Specification for Hackney Carriages :

1. Hackney Carriage Vehicles must be white in colour.
2. Hackney Carriage Vehicles must have fitted on the roof, an internally illuminated TAXI top sign meeting a specification in relation to size and colour approved by the Council and relevant to the type of vehicle.
3. Hackney Carriage Vehicles must be fitted with a Taximeter, properly tested and sealed, and calibrated to enable testing in accordance with the Council's current Hackney Carriage Fare Table.

Section C - Specification for Private Hire Vehicles :

1. The vehicle **must not** be white in colour, or a colour which closely resembles white in the opinion of the Licensing Officer.
2. If the Private Hire vehicle is fitted with a meter, it must be properly tested and sealed.

Section D - Specification for New and Replacement Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles :

Vehicle Requirements, Safety and Comfort :

1. The vehicle must comply fully with all general policies and specifications of the Council which relate to Hackney Carriage, or Private Hire Vehicles.
2. The vehicle must comply fully with Sections A - C of the preceding "General Specification for all Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles".
3. Any vehicle to be licensed must have Category M GB Type Approval, (or equivalent), shown on the registration document. Converted vehicles must have one of the following certificates : European Whole Vehicle Type Approval / Individual Type Approval, (IVA), or European low volume Type Approval, (or GB equivalent once published).
4. The vehicle must be capable of accommodating at least one wheelchair in either a forward, or rear facing position, whilst the passenger remains seated in the wheelchair allowing adequate space to ensure the safety and comfort of the wheelchair user, and without interfering with the safety and comfort of any other passengers.
5. If a vehicle is side loading and requires the wheelchair to be turned in order to be in a forward, or rear facing position, there must be sufficient space for the wheelchair to be manoeuvred safely and comfortably.
6. The passenger compartment must have sufficient space to safely and comfortably accommodate an Assistance Dog that accompanies a passenger and at least one additional passenger.
7. The design of the vehicle must ensure that any wheelchair is loaded from the side, or the rear of the vehicle.
8. The vehicle must be right-hand drive.
9. Windows must be provided at the rear and sides along with means of opening and closing not less than one window on either side.
10. All surfaces over which a wheelchair user may travel must have a slip resistant finish applied.
11. Handrails / handholds must be provided for passengers entering / exiting the vehicle and when manoeuvring inside the vehicle.
12. Handrails and handholds must be slip resistant, capable of being easily and firmly gripped and visually contrast with surroundings.

Access and Egress :

1. The vehicle must have a minimum four doors, which are capable of being opened from the inside. The rear passenger compartment must have a minimum of two openable doors.
2. All doors used for passenger access and egress must have a mechanism to positively hold them open.
3. The vertical distance between the highest part of the floor and door lintel, (doorway height), in order to gain access into the wheelchair passenger area must be no less than 1.23 metres, (48 inches).
4. The doorway used for wheelchair boarding must have a minimum width of 75cm, (29.5 inches).
5. The vertical distance between the highest part of the floor and the roof in the wheelchair passenger area must be no less than 1.35 metres, (53.1 inches).
6. Access to and exit from the wheelchair position must not be obstructed in any manner at any time except by wheelchair loading apparatus.

Boarding Ramps and Lifts :

1. If the means of entry to the vehicle is by use of a ramp, a single one-piece ramp with a minimum width, (between the rails), of 70cm, (27.5 inches), must be provided.
2. The single ramp must be of a suitable design to ensure that it does not slip, or tilt when in use and provide a suitable gradient when in use.
3. The single ramp must accommodate all four wheels of a wheelchair to load and unload passengers wishing to travel in the vehicle whilst remaining seated in their wheelchair.
4. All ramps must have a safety lip on each side and the edges should be highlighted to reduce the risk of trips.
5. Ramps used for loading passengers in wheelchairs must have visible marked reference to a safe working load, (SWL), of at least 250kgs and certification to BS 6109, (as amended).
6. Ramps and lifts must be securely stored in the vehicle before it may move.
7. Where manual / portable ramps are used, such ramps must have a designated stowage location which can store the equipment such that it does not present a risk of injury.
8. Where a vehicle features mechanical, hydraulic or pneumatic lifting equipment for the purpose of loading and unloading passengers, the Council will have

regard to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations, (LOLER), and will require evidence of thorough examination of such by a competent person at least annually. Records of the most recent inspection should be kept until the equipment is re-inspected.

9. The edge of any ramp, or lift surface must be highlighted and emphasised by a band of a contrasting colour.
10. All required items must be well maintained and available for all journeys.

Anchorage and Restraints :

1. Anchorages compliant with ISO 10542-1 "Wheelchair Tie-down and Occupant Restraint System", (WTORS), must be provided for the wheelchair. These anchorages must be either chassis, or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic, or static tests.
2. Where removable anchorages and restraints are used, such equipment must have a designated stowage location which can store the equipment such that it does not present a risk of injury.
3. The anchorage must be secured in such a position as not to obstruct any emergency exit.
4. Wheelchair internal anchorage must be installed and fitted by a competent person able to verify in a professional capacity that it has been fitted in accordance with all relevant legislative safety standards and requirements.
5. Restraints for the wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other.
6. All passenger seats must have three-point fully operational diagonal seatbelts, one for each passenger carried, fully compliant with British Standards.
7. All required items must be well maintained and available for all journeys.

General :

1. Once licensed, a vehicle must always remain compliant with all of the Conditions detailed above, under which it was first licensed, or renewed, regardless of the nature of work it is carrying out. However, Private Hire Vehicles may remove and re-install seating for specific pre-booked Private Hire journeys as required.
2. The Council believes its specification makes available a wide range of vehicles for owners and users alike. However, it also accepts that certain one-off adapted vehicles can also meet these needs, provided they are converted to a high standard and gain any necessary certification. Drivers who wish to present such a vehicle do so entirely at their own risk as each one will only be validated and accepted for testing after a visual inspection, along with a V5

and certificate check by a Licensing Officer of the Council. Previously accepting a similar vehicle is not a guarantee that a vehicle presented will also be accepted because, by definition, these vehicles are individually produced and therefore will be individually assessed.

