

Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Testing Requirements

A - Hackney Vehicles

1. No vehicle on its first test shall be over 7 years of age (see section D for exemptions).
2. No vehicle shall continue to be licensed over 10 years of age on the anniversary of its first registration date unless, in the opinion of the Council and its official vehicle tester, it is in exceptional condition and well maintained. This does not apply to any vehicle first licensed with the Council prior to April 2002.
3. The vehicle should be clean inside and outside, tidy and in a safe condition.
4. The seat fabric should be fault free and proper carpets fitted.
5. The boot area should be properly lined and tidy.
6. The body trim must be complete.
7. The bodywork must be uniform and free from any significant damage or rust.
8. All wheel trims shall be in place (purpose made alloy wheels exempted).
9. A spare wheel shall be carried at all times and shall conform to the tyre depth regulations unless:
 - i) the vehicle has no facility for the carriage of a spare wheel and is supplied with a Conti Mobility Kit or similar manufacturer's recommended kit along with foam and instructions. In the event that a puncture occurs, the vehicle shall not be driven at a speed exceeding 50mph (80kph) or for more than 125 miles (200kms);
 - ii) the vehicle is fitted, as standard, with manufacturer's recommended 'run flat tyres' as supplied, in which case it can be driven at no more than a maximum speed of 50mph (80kph) or driven for a distance of no more than 50 miles (80kms).

Any affected tyre shall be repaired or replaced as soon as reasonably practicable and a new repair kit shall be purchased before the vehicle is used for hire.
10. The previous servicing record shall be available for inspection if requested.
11. The mileage odometer shall be in working order.
12. The vehicle shall be fitted with a minimum of 4 doors.
13. The engine rating shall not be less than 1300cc (1.3 litres).
14. All seats shall be forward or rearward facing.
15. Each seat in the rear must have a minimum length along the front outside edge of 40cm per seat.

16. If the distance from the ground to the top of the sill exceeds 40cm then a suitable step is to be provided.
17. The vehicle must have a suitable luggage compartment or area to facilitate the storage of one piece of luggage per passenger.
18. Every window of the vehicle that has a window opening mechanism must allow the window to move upwards and downwards.
19. The current table of fares must be clearly displayed (provided by the Council).
20. The plate number and passenger number restriction must also be displayed inside (provided by the Council).
21. Every passenger seat must be fitted with a seat belt harness.
22. A fire extinguisher must be fitted of at least 0.9kg dry powder type or a 2.0kg for minibuses or similar vehicles complying with EN3 standard. The vehicle plate number shall be permanently marked thereon.
23. A suitable first aid kit containing appropriate first aid dressings and other appliances shall be carried so as to be readily available for immediate use. The vehicle plate number shall be permanently marked thereon.
24. A sign indicating a no smoking ban in the vehicle shall be displayed either in words or picture form.
25. A hackney meter shall be fitted and calibrated to the current fare rates. The meter shall be so visible to the passengers.
26. A roof sign shall be firmly affixed displaying words Hackney/or Taxi/name of company or a telephone number or a sign which illuminates indicating the vehicle is for hire.
27. Every vehicle over 5 years of age shall be subject to a retest every 6 months.
28. On a first test if the vehicle should fail, then a second test will be provided free of charge if it is returned to the garage within 72 hours. If a return test is not convenient during this period, due to extenuating circumstances, and the vehicle has covered minimal mileage in the ensuing period no charge will be made.
29. Upon a satisfactory test result (this applies to brand new vehicles also) the testing station will issue a 'Pass Certificate' and a current MOT certificate. The vehicle operator must produce the pass certificate to the Licensing Section.
30. Upon production to the Licensing Section of:
 - a) Compliance Test Pass Sheet;
 - b) MOT Certificate;
 - c) current policy of insurance;
 - d) registration document (if first licence application)

the vehicle licence will then be issued.

31. If relevant, load sensing devices fitted to the vehicle will be subject to testing.

B - Private Hire Vehicles

1. A vehicle must not be over 7 years of age on its first test.
2. The maximum age policy also applies as hackney carriage.
3. If a hackney meter is fitted it shall be calibrated to the current fare rates, visible to the passengers and a current fare card shall be displayed.
4. Any roof sign fitted shall not include the words Hackney, Taxi or Cab.
5. All other requirements/policies are deemed the same as hackney vehicles.

C - Emergency Licensing of Hackney/Private Hire Vehicles

The emergency licensing procedure is intended to allow taxi proprietors to continue to provide a service to the public in light of exceptional circumstances, ie their own vehicle has been forced off the road by either breakdown or has been involved in an accident.

1. The temporary licence will last a maximum of 7 days, beyond which the vehicle must be subjected to the normal test at the Council's authorised testing station.
2. The temporary plate will be issued only on completion of the following criteria:
 - i) the vehicle is booked into an authorised testing station and, owing to exceptional circumstances, the test cannot be completed within 7 days;
 - ii) the vehicle has been subjected to an MOT test in the last 28 days;
 - iii) the vehicle complies with the standard Hackney/Private Hire conditions, ie meter fitted and calibrated, fire extinguisher, first aid kit etc. Please note that the current age policy would apply.

In this situation the vehicle must also be suitably insured. The checks to ensure compliance with the current standard conditions would be conducted by the Council's Licensing Section.

Application for this temporary licence should be made through the Licensing Section at the Town Hall, Penrith during normal office hours.

D - Vehicles over 7 and 10 Year Age Limits

An overall limit of 10 years is adopted as the maximum age for which a vehicle may be licensed by the Council, with an exception that any vehicle over 10 years of age on the anniversary of its first registration date will not have its licence renewed unless, in the opinion of the Council's appointed vehicle testers and the Licensing Officers the, vehicle is in exceptional condition and well maintained. The following criteria refers to any new application for vehicles over 7 years and to those over 10 years first licensed by the Council after April 2002.

Exceptionally well maintained exterior

1. All bodywork to be clean and sound, free from rust, dents, scrapes, or significant

scratches or loose panels.

2. All paintwork to be in first class condition with no egg-shell finish or different shades or colours either inside or outside which are visible to the public.
3. All wheel trims to be fitted according to the manufacturer's specification and all matched.
4. Door or wing mirrors to be in good condition.
5. Front and rear registration plates to be clean, clear, unbroken and conform to the relevant legislation.
6. Front and rear bumpers to have no rust, dents, cracks or scrapes and be securely fitted.
7. Mud flaps if fitted should be maintained.
8. No broken, cracked or missing glass or surrounds on all front and rear lights where fitted.
9. Radiator grills should be secure and the original specification.
10. Windscreen and rear screen wiper arms should be in good condition and rust free and properly fitted.
11. All door locks and boot locks fitted to be in working order.
12. All doors should be easily opened.
13. All door handles should be properly fitted easily operated and of original specification.
14. A spare wheel which conforms to legal requirements must be carried and securely fitted along with the relevant, jack and wheel brace.
15. All tyres to conform to legal requirements.
16. All road wheels to be clean, and free from significant marks or damage and rust free.
17. Vehicle to have a current MOT certificate.
18. A full service history to be produced.

Exceptionally well maintained interior

1. All seats to be manufacturer's original design, should all match, be securely fitted with no stains, holes or tears, without seat covers.
2. All seat belts should be clean, in good working order. All anchorage point covers should be properly fitted and match original trim.
3. All panels should be clean and match original trim.
4. Fitted carpets should be of original specification securely fitted with no stains or holes.
5. All instruments, accessories, ash trays etc fitted securely and matching trim.

6. Headlining to be stain free, clean with no holes or tears.
7. All windows to operate correctly and easily.
8. Brake, clutch and accelerator pedal rubbers to be fitted and in good condition.
9. The inside of the vehicle should be free from any trailing or loose wires.
10. The boot and/or luggage space should be clean and tidy with an unstained carpet or cover to manufacturer's specification. Any panelling should be in good condition.
11. If a hatchback, the boot cover must be original with both lifting straps fitted. A cargo guard should be fitted in estate vehicles.
12. Gear lever gaiters, if fitted, should be in good condition.
13. All lights should be in working order with appropriate covers securely fitted.
14. Window locks, handles where provided by the manufacturer to be in working order.
15. Heated rear screen to be in proper working order.