

Private hire vehicle specification

172. The licensing authority will only generally issue a licence in respect of a private hire vehicle if:

- It is fit for its purpose, safe and comfortable for its users and any members of the public;
- It has not been subject to a Category A, B or S insurance write-off;
- It is less than 10 years old (the age of the vehicle shall be taken from the date of first registration shown on the vehicle registration document, V5C). The policy with regards to vehicle specification shall be applied in the majority of cases when considering licensing applications, but the licensing authority will consider each application on its individual merits and may, at times, allow exceptions to this policy. Where exceptions are made in this regard, vehicles shall be subject to three mechanical inspections each year;
- It has - a front nearside door for the use of persons conveyed in the vehicle;
 - a rear nearside door for the use of persons conveyed in the vehicle;
 - a rear offside door for the use of persons conveyed in the vehicle; and
 - a separate means of ingress and egress for the driver.
- The front windscreen allows at least 75% of light through and the front side windows allow at least 70% of light through³⁴;
- It has nearside and offside exterior rear-view mirrors;
- A spare wheel conforming to legal requirements has been provided and properly fitted in the vehicle along with a jack and wheelbrace, unless a manufacturer's alternative is provided;
- It is equipped with a minimum of four road wheels fitted with manufacturers' recommended size tyres;
- It has a clean and smart appearance, both externally and internally;
- It is right hand drive;

- It has a permanent roof which is watertight – standard sunroof allowed (i.e. sunroof fitted when new by manufacturer);
- It has seating arrangements in accordance with the current Construction and Use Regulations³⁵ and the manufacturer’s specification (unless the modification has been approved via the voluntary Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) scheme);
- It has rear seat belts (irrespective of age);
- It has a separate locking luggage area or in the case of an estate vehicle, a permanent grille, luggage bar(s) or manufacturer’s recommended device fitted sufficiently to prevent luggage carried in the rear compartment from coming into contact with persons using the rear seat;
- It has means for carrying a reference wheelchair³⁶ and luggage sufficient for the number of passengers for which the vehicle is licensed to carry (if seats are located within the luggage space, the vehicle may be licensed to carry a lower number of passengers in order to comply with the luggage space requirement); and
- There are sufficient means by which a passenger can communicate with the driver.