



WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019 – 2024

Summary Document

Vehicle Age, Type and Design

Introduction

This is a summary document. The details listed below do not replace the clause or conditions contained in the Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019-2024. This document lists the basic requirements in order for potential applicants to make an initial decision concerning the licensing of a particular vehicle. It is not comprehensive and should not be relied upon as such.

Additional requirements, conditions and further information are available to read in separate documents, particularly the Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019-2024, and we strongly advise you to read these documents before purchasing any vehicle and before submitting an application for a vehicle licence.

Hackney Carriage and Private Vehicle Specification

Vehicle Type Approval

Vehicle Type Approval is the confirmation that all production samples of a particular vehicle design will meet specified performance standards.

In general the council will only consider licensing vehicles which have type approval in the category M1. **This type approval must be shown on the V5 registration document.**

It is acceptable for converted, low volume or imported vehicles to be type approved under any of the following schemes:

European Whole Vehicle Type Approval (EWVTA)

National Small Scale Type Approval (NSSTA)

Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA)

Full detail of IVA requirements are contained in the Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019-2024.

Any vehicle that does not comply with European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA) or equivalent will not be licensed past 31 March 2020.

Vehicle Design and Size

Hackney carriages must be either:

a purpose-built wheelchair accessible hackney carriage, or a professionally converted vehicle which is capable of carrying a passenger whilst sitting in a wheelchair (providing such vehicle has the appropriate approval certificate per section Vehicle Type Approval above); or

a saloon, hatchback, estate or multi-purpose people carrier with at least 4 doors and sufficient luggage space to carry a folded wheelchair.

A Private Hire Vehicle must be:

a saloon, hatchback, estate or multi-purpose people carrier with at least 4 doors and sufficient luggage space to carry a folded wheelchair,

a purpose built wheelchair accessible vehicle (providing such vehicle has the appropriate approval certificate per section Vehicle Type Approval above) **but not one that looks like a taxi** (i.e. with in-built roof light, 'taxi' signage, 'for hire' signage – an example would be a London style black cab).

There must be reasonable space between the seat cushions and the lowest part of the roof to safely accommodate the driver and passengers in reasonable comfort.

Knee Space: there must be reasonable space between the front, back (and rear-most) seats to safely accommodate the driver and passengers in reasonable comfort.

Reasonable is open to discussion and, if in doubt, we suggest you telephone the licensing department to discuss the vehicle type before purchase.

Age Limits for vehicles **at first time of licensing**

All time periods are given from the date of first registration.

Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle (of any design) powered only by an internal combustion engine (traditional car engine)	no more than 7 years old at the date of application.
Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle (other than a wheelchair accessible vehicle)	no more than 7 years old at the date of application.

powered by a petrol/electric-hybrid engine	
Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle which is a fully wheelchair accessible vehicle powered by a petrol/electric-hybrid engine	no more than 9 years old at the date of application
Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle (of any design) powered by an electric motor with or without on-board range extending generator	no more than 9 years old at the date of application

Maximum Age of Vehicle before Replacement/Emission Standards

At time of licensing, from date:

01 April 2022	No vehicle first registered with the DVLA before January 2006 will be licensed or re-licensed.
01 April 2025	Any vehicle using diesel or petrol fuel only (or diesel or petrol alternative such as biofuel/LPG) must be rated as at least Euro 6. Any petrol/electric hybrid must be at least Euro 5.

Alternative Fuels

All fuel types are permitted providing that the fuel type complies with national safety regulations and the relevant required euro emission rating for petrol or diesel is reached as a minimum.

Conversions must be carried out by competent a person or business and a certificate of installation must be produced.

A vehicle powered by LPG or other approved alternative fuel, which does not have a provision for a spare tyre, must carry a suitable means to repair punctures

The V5 document must show the correct fuel type.

Changes to the fuel type used must be notified to the licensing authority within 7 days of conversion and the certification of installation provided. Appropriate time will be allowed for the change to the V5 document.

Number of Doors

Vehicles must have at least 4 doors with 2 on either side of the vehicle.

Doors must open wide enough as to allow easy access into and egress from the vehicle.

All vehicles, including multi-purpose vehicles, must have sufficient safe and suitable access and egress from the vehicle for the driver and all passengers, excluding the rear exit and the driver's front door.

Number of Seats

Vehicles must have a minimum of 4 passenger seats and a maximum of 8 passenger seats.

The maximum number of passengers which the vehicle will be licensed to carry will be the number of seats recorded on the V5C registration document (logbook) as being suitable for carrying passengers not including the driver.

Left Hand Drive Vehicles

Left-hand drive vehicles will not be considered as suitable for licensing on safety grounds.

Engine Size

Where a vehicle is powered only by an internal combustion engine (ICE) the engine shall produce at least 90hp and 200 NM torque.

Body work and Cleanliness

Keeping a vehicle in good condition is important to promote service excellence and to demonstrate to customers that passenger safety is the highest concern of the service.

Full details of the inspection requirements for body work and cleanliness are available in the Vehicle Licensing Policy (sections 12.12 and 12.13)

Accident/crash repaired vehicles

Only vehicles categorised as N or S insurance write offs may be presented for licensing.

Applicants must produce an engineer's report detailing the repairs made to the vehicle.

Where a V5C has comments in the special information section concerning previous accidents or repairs or any comment that gives rise to concerns over the safety of the vehicle it shall be the duty of the applicant to provide additional information to satisfy the authority that the vehicle is safe to be licensed

Autonomous Vehicles/Assistive Technology

In general any vehicle capable of operating autonomously will only be licensed where it can be shown that the driver will remain in control of the vehicle and that there are systems in the vehicle that monitor the driver's performance.

Vehicles with driver assistive features such as radar controlled assistive braking, cruise control and parking will be permitted.

Assistive Technology must not be used to allow the driver to relinquish control of the vehicle at any time when carrying passengers.

Tinted Windows

Window tints are only permitted as long as they are allowed within normal MOT tolerances.

These tolerances are found in Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 and are, for vehicles first used after 1985:

Front windscreen – must allow 75% light through

All other windows – must allow 70% light through

If the vehicle already has a licence and is to be modified to include a window tint, permission must be obtained from the licensing authority first.

Luggage

In general there must be sufficient space to carry luggage and the luggage space must be kept clean and in good condition.

Vehicle Modifications

Once a vehicle is licensed, proprietors must ask for written permission from the council before making any modification to the vehicle, including its seating capacity.