

# Vehicle Specifications

## Taxi and Private Hire Car (Purpose Built Vehicles)

1. Safety is of paramount importance to East Ayrshire Council. Therefore, the taxi/private hire car which will conform to the latest EEC standards i.e. M1 or M2 Whole Vehicle Type Approval (Category M1: vehicles used for the carriage of passengers and comprising no more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat) or (Category M2: Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass not exceeding 5 tonnes that have been adapted to be fitted with no more than eight seats in addition to the driver and have been issued with an Individual Vehicle Approval Certificate by the DVSA.)

The vehicle must comply in all respects with the requirements of any Act and Regulations relating to motor vehicles and be of the orthodox type. The Council has the right to specify the number of passengers the taxi/private hire car can carry and the seating layout.

An operator who intends to substitute an existing Taxi or Private Hire Car with a Purpose Built Vehicle must, on completion of the vehicle substitution form, produce a Certificate of Conformity to confirm that the vehicle is subject to an EEC M1 Whole Vehicle Type Approval and is a Purpose Built Vehicle. The Operator must also produce the V5 Vehicle Registration Document that confirms that the vehicle body type is registered as 'Taxi'

2. The vehicle must be in a proper state of repair for the use as a taxi/private hire car. Any vehicle operating as a taxi within East Ayrshire must be under the age of 10 years from the original date of registration or if a purpose built vehicle until the vehicle is deemed unfit for public service thereafter.
3. Purpose built vehicles are required to undergo and pass an inspection annually up to the age of 8 years old from original date of registration and thereafter bi-annually, until no longer deemed fit for service.

This means that the vehicle is due to be inspected *6 months from the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the date of its original registration*, and every 6 months thereafter, irrespective of the date of expiry of the current test certificate, until it is removed from service, i.e when deemed unfit for public service.

4. The Licensing Section will be advised of all test failures. Should a vehicle fail two consecutive tests a formal letter will be issued. If there are three or more failures, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Licensing Panel whereby suspension or more frequent testing would be a consideration.
5. A taxi shall have a taximeter which is incapable of multi-tariff operation and has been stamped or sealed by the Council after testing and approval as to distance and time in accordance with the approved taxi fares and charges. Once such a taximeter is fitted to the taxi the seal can only be broken if the taximeter is removed for repair. In this event the taximeter must be tested and re-sealed by the Council before the taxi is returned to service.

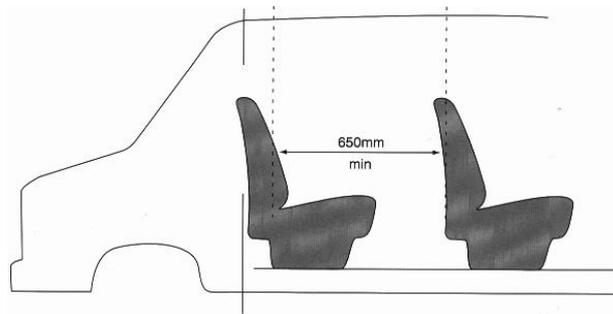
If a private hire car has a taximeter installed then the same criteria applies.

A taxi can also be permitted to have a GPS taximeter that complies with the Measuring Instruments Directive (MID) 2004/22/EC. If the taxi is fitted with such a device, this must be a fully sealed unit that can only be programmed or updated by an authorised agent of the taximeter manufacturer or supplier. In the event of the device or system being updated following a change in taxi fare tariffs, the operator must produce the relevant certification as proof that all devices have been updated, this should include the serial numbers and date of update.

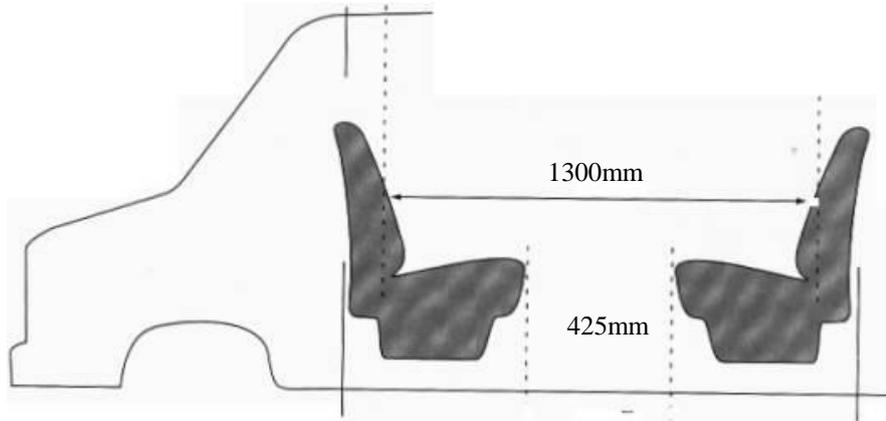
If a Private Hire Car has a GPS taximeter installed, the same criteria applies.

The taximeter must be in an approved position so that the fare display will be readily visible to passengers being carried and must not obstruct the driver's view to the front.

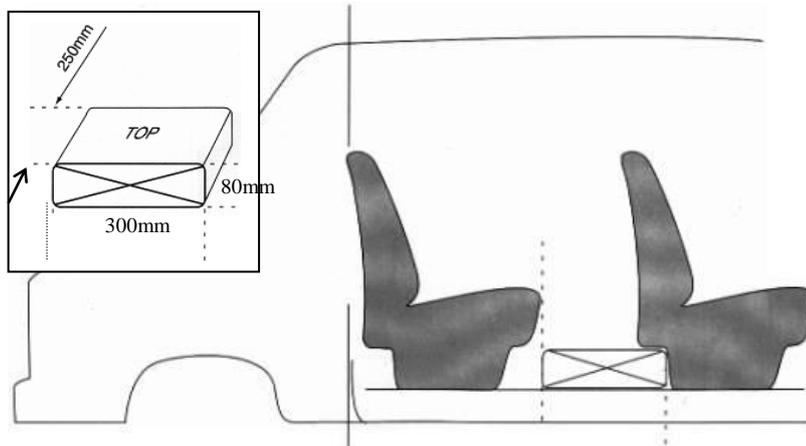
6. The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.
7. The minimum engine size must be suitable for the application as a taxi or private hire car.
8. The vehicle must have a minimum number of four doors or if the vehicle is Category M2, a minimum of four emergency exits that comply with annex 7 of ECE R 107.
9. The vertical distance between the point of maximum deflection of the seat cushion when a passenger is seated to the room immediately above that point must not be less than 96.5 centimetres. The width across the rear seat cushion must not be less than 1.07 metres.
10. All the passenger seats in the vehicle must have easy access and without obstruction.
11. To provide adequate knee room, the distance between the front surface of all seat backs and the back(s) in front or any obstruction must be at least 650mm.



12. Where seats face each other, the distance between the seat backs measured in a horizontal plane through the centreline of the individual seating position along the top surface of the seat cushion must be not less than 1,300mm. The distance between the front edges of the seat cushions must be a minimum of 425mm.



13. To provide adequate room for passenger's feet there must be clear floor space in front of the seat of 300mm long, 250mm wide and 80mm high.



14. The rear seat base width is a minimum of 116.5mm at rear of base and 122mm at front of base.
15. All seats should be either forward or rear facing.
16. If the vehicle is fitted with rear facing seats, the vehicle body must be of the fixed head type with a partially glazed safety glass or perspex partition separating the passenger from the driver, the safety glazing must be made from glass or plastic so constructed or treated that if fractured it does not fly into fragments likely to cause severe cuts. Each piece of glazing must display the relevant permanent marking applied by the glazing manufacturer, for example, E4 or 43R-002439 marking. The vehicle must be provided with an approved means of communication between the passenger and the driver (where a driver/passenger intercom system has been fitted it must incorporate an induction loop for hearing aid users). When a sliding window is fitted at the rear of the driver's compartment, the maximum width of the opening must not exceed 11.5 centimetres. All glass must be made of safety glass in accordance with the British or European Standards in force at the time and be capable of affording an unrestricted view of the vehicle interior (no dark tinted glass in internal partition). The Council's decision on what is an unrestricted view shall be final.

If the correct documentation detailed in Condition 1 has been produced to confirm that the vehicle is a purpose built vehicle and all passenger seats are facing forwards, there is no requirement for a partition to be fitted separating the passenger from the driver.

17. The vehicle must have a luggage compartment. The luggage compartment must be sufficient in size in order to safely stow an adequate amount of luggage in conjunction with the number of passengers authorised to carry by Council. In the event of there being no separate luggage compartment, all luggage must be securely restrained by use of cargo netting or other similar approved method. The Council's decision on a similar approved method shall be final.
18. The vehicle should have a spare wheel fitted with a pneumatic tyre of the same size and type as the other tyres and wheels on the vehicle.

In the absence of a spare wheel being supplied by the vehicle manufacturer, a space saver wheel and tyre (as provided by the manufacturer) or a foam canister repair kit must be present to be used as an alternative.

In the event of a puncture, a space saver wheel or foam canister repair kit may be used as per manufacturer's instructions until the completion of the hire. The tyre must then be repaired or replaced at the earliest opportunity and prior to the next hire and / or carriage of passengers.

19. The front and rear plates must be affixed to the exterior of the vehicle by means of screws. If fitting the plates to the vehicle bumpers the plates must be affixed to either the centre or the driver's side of the vehicle, or alternatively, alongside a square registration plate. If using brackets, the brackets must be affixed to the vehicle registration plate by means of screws. The information on the plate must be clearly visible and in a vertical position on or above the bumper.
20. The Licensing Authority transfers must be affixed to the exterior of the front doors of private hire vehicles. This must be a permanent fixture.
21. Advertising the name and telephone number of the company/proprietor (self-advertising) for both taxi and private hire cars shall be permitted on the front and rear windscreen glass of a vehicle outwith the windscreen wiper pattern area and to the satisfaction of the Chief Governance Officer. Lettering shall not exceed 75mm in height and shall be contained in one line, unless smaller lettering is used, but the combined height of any lines shall not exceed 75mm in height.
22. Advertising in the form of full livery self-advertising or commercial advertising is permitted on taxis only, and is permitted on the sides, bonnet and boot of the vehicle. Full body wrap advertising is also permitted. Each individual design must be submitted for approval by the Chief Governance Officer of East Ayrshire Council. Contravision will be permitted on the rear window and on any luggage compartment areas where no passengers are seated, following the relevant authorisation being received. There must be a clear unobscured view through the rear view mirror. If full body wrap advertising is applied to the vehicle and the main colour of the vehicle is changed, the operator must update the DVSA of the new colour. The operator must also apply to the Testing Centre that issued the Certificate of Compliance for the necessary amendment to be made and apply to the Licensing Department for replacement front and rear vehicle identity plates to be issued.

23. Taxis and Private Hire Cars will be permitted tinted windows, however, the front windscreen must be 75% clear and the front driver and passenger windows must be 70% clear. There will be no restriction on all tinted and anti-glare windows fitted but they must comply with the relevant Road Traffic Act and / or Construction and Use Regulations requirements. Only tinted and anti-glare windows fitted by the vehicle's manufacturer are acceptable. After-market (stick-on type) window tints are not permitted.
24. A wheelchair ramp at least 750mm wide and not more than 1,700mm in length is required and must be part of the vehicle's equipment at all times. A pair of channel ramps must not be used. When the ramp is deployed onto the road, the ramp slope must not exceed 1 in 4 (25%). It must be possible to deploy the ramp onto both a level road and a 125mm kerb. When the ramp is in use, it must be securely located at the point of wheelchair entry. The surface of the ramp must have a slip-resistant finish and all outer edges must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour.
25. All passenger entrances and the area immediately outside these entrances must be well lit. All entrances must have a maximum first step height of 325mm from ground level which may be achieved with a folding or slide out step. The first step height before deployment must not exceed 325mm from ground level. All step nosing and surfaces must be of slip-resistant material and all outer edges must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour.
26. There should be an approved security arrangement for the wheelchair user to remain within their chair while using the taxi.
27. The requirements on the rear door access for wheelchairs should be a minimum of 1,170mm high and 680mm wide.
28. If operating as a taxi, the vehicle must have a "Taxi" roof sign fitted centrally to the front section of the roof, which must be illuminated when plying for hire. The roof sign must be automatically extinguished when the "Fare Meter" is engaged.
29. All bodywork must be free of any damage, including scratches, and have professional automotive finished paintwork of the same colour and shade.
30. No fittings other than those approved may be attached to or carried upon the interior or exterior of the vehicle. These include tow bars and fittings, roof racks, roof mounted luggage containers, etc (this list is not exhaustive).
31. Should the Operator wish to install an electronic security system capable of recording and storing a record of entry or exit of passengers by way of video images, the camera must be positioned so as not to obstruct the driver's normal view of the swept area of the windscreen.
32. The Council will approve the number and layout of passenger seats on any given Taxi/PHC.
33. Childproof safety locks with an automated motion sensitive locking system of an approved design must be fitted. Driver's door must be capable of locking independently from passenger doors.

# **Taxis and Private Hire Car (Non-purpose Built Vehicles) & Minibuses**

1. Safety is of paramount importance to East Ayrshire Council. Therefore, the taxi/private hire car/minibus which will conform to the latest EEC standards i.e. M1 or M2 Whole Vehicle Type Approval, must comply in all respects with the requirements of any Act and Regulations relating to motor vehicles in force at the time of licensing. Category M2 - Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass not exceeding 5 tonnes that have been adapted to be fitted with no more than eight seats in addition to the driver and have been issued with an Individual Vehicle Approval Certificate by the DVSA.
2. The vehicle must be in a proper state of repair for the use as a taxi or private hire car. Any vehicle operating as a taxi or private hire car within East Ayrshire must be under the age of 10 years from the original date of registration.

This means that when the vehicle reaches the age of 10 years old from its original date of registration, the vehicle will cease to be used as a taxi/private hire car with immediate effect.

3. The Operator shall require their vehicle to undergo and pass an annual or bi-annual inspection by the Council. The vehicle will be inspected annually up to the age of 5 years from the original date of registration and thereafter bi-annually up until 10 years old from original date of registration.

This means that the vehicle is due to be inspected *6 months from the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the date of its original registration*, and every 6 months thereafter, irrespective of the date of expiry of the current test certificate, until it is removed from service, namely at 10 years old.

4. The Licensing Section will be advised of all test failures. Should a vehicle fail two consecutive tests a formal letter will be issued. If there are three or more failures, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Licensing Panel whereby suspension or more frequent testing would be a consideration.
5. A taxi shall have a taximeter which is incapable of multi-tariff operation and has been stamped or sealed by the Council after testing and approval as to distance and time in accordance with the approved taxi fares and charges. Once such a taximeter is fitted to the taxi the seal can only be broken if the taximeter is removed for repair. In this event the taximeter must be tested and re-sealed by the Council before the taxi is returned to service.

If a private hire car has a taximeter installed then the same criteria applies.

A taxi can also be permitted to have a GPS taximeter that complies with the Measuring Instruments Directive (MID) 2004/22/EC. If the taxi is fitted with such a device, this must be a fully sealed unit that can only be programmed or updated by an authorised agent of the taximeter manufacturer or supplier. In the event of the device or system being updated following a change in taxi fare tariffs, the operator must produce the relevant

certification as proof that all devices have been updated, this should include the serial numbers and date of update.

If a Private Hire Car has a GPS taximeter installed, the same criteria applies.

The taximeter must be in an approved position so that the fare display will be readily visible to passengers being carried and must not obstruct the driver's view to the front.

6. The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.
7. The minimum engine size must be suitable for the application as a taxi or private hire car.
8. The vehicle must have a minimum of four doors or emergency exits excluding any doors at the rear of the vehicle. Passenger doors must be capable of being readily opened and must be of such construction so as to permit reasonably unrestricted access for passengers.
9. The vehicle must have a luggage compartment. The luggage compartment must be sufficient in size in order to safely stow an adequate amount of luggage in conjunction with the number of passengers authorised to carry by Council. In the event of there being no separate luggage compartment, all luggage must be securely restrained by use of cargo netting or other similar approved method approved by the Council. The Council's decision on a similar approved method shall be final.
10. If the vehicle is an estate type, people carrier type or a minibus, the passengers must be protected from loose luggage by a suitable grill or other approved arrangement.

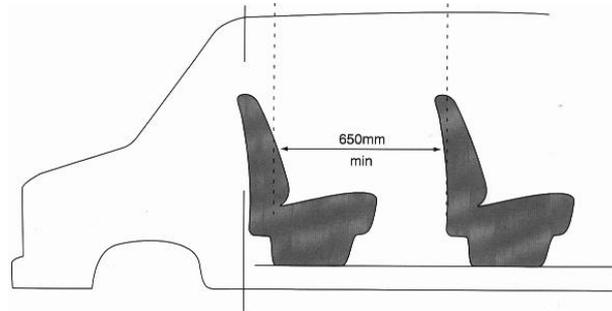
The vehicle should have a spare wheel fitted with a pneumatic tyre of the same size and type as the other tyres and wheels on the vehicle.

In the absence of a spare wheel being supplied by the vehicle manufacturer, a space saver wheel and tyre (as provided by the manufacturer) or a foam canister repair kit must be present to be used as an alternative.

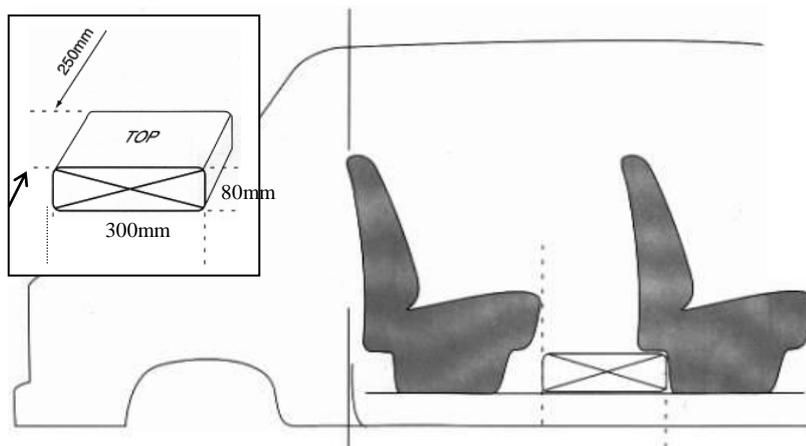
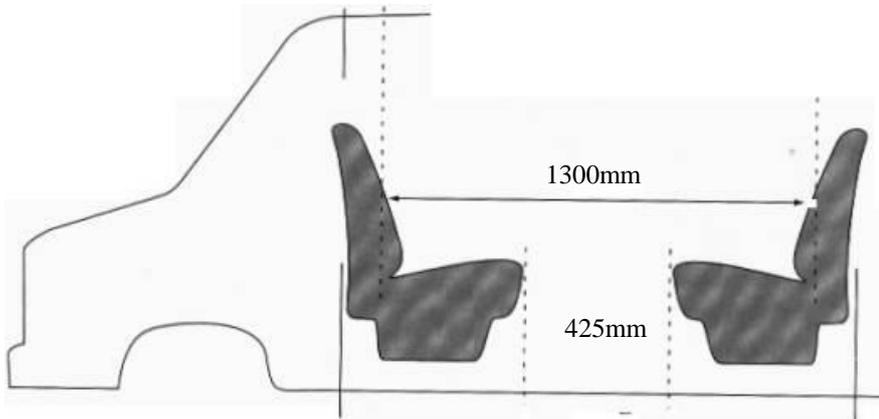
In the event of a puncture, a space saver wheel or foam canister repair kit may be used as per manufacturer's instructions until the completion of the hire. The tyre must then be repaired or replaced at the earliest opportunity and prior to the next hire and / or carriage of passengers.

11. The front and rear plates must be affixed to the exterior of the vehicle by means of screws. If fitting the plates to the vehicle bumpers the plates must be affixed to either the centre or the driver's side of the vehicle, or alternatively, alongside a square registration plate. If using brackets, the brackets must be affixed to the vehicle registration plate by means of screws. The information on the plate must be clearly visible and in a vertical position on or above the bumper.
12. All bodywork must be free of any damage, including scratches, and have professional automotive finished paintwork of the same colour and shade.
13. All the passenger seats in the vehicle must have easy access and without obstruction. The rear seat base width is a minimum of 116.5mm at rear of base and 122mm at front of base.

14. To provide adequate knee room, the distance between the front surface of all seat backs and the back(s) in front or any obstruction must be at least 650mm.



15. Where seats face each other, the distance between the seat backs measured in a horizontal plane through the centreline of the individual seating position along the top surface of the seat cushion must be not less than 1,300mm. The distance between the front edges of the seat cushions must be a minimum of 425mm.



16. To provide adequate room for passenger's feet there must be clear floor space in front of the seat of 300mm long, 250mm wide and 80mm high.
17. All seats should be either forward or rear facing.
18. All passenger entrances and the area immediately outside these entrances must be well lit. The nearside entrance must have a maximum first step height of 325mm from ground level which may be achieved with a folding or slide out step. The first step height before deployment must not exceed 325mm from ground level. All step nosing and surfaces

must be of slip-resistant material and all outer edges must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour.

19. All vehicles other than saloon and estate type must be provided with childproof safety locks with an automatic motion sensitive locking system of an approved design. The driver's door must be capable of locking independently from passenger doors.
20. The Licensing Authority transfers must be affixed to the exterior of the front doors of private hire vehicles. This must be a permanent fixture.
21. Advertising the name and telephone number of the company/proprietor (self-advertising) for both taxi and private hire cars shall be permitted on the front and rear windscreen glass of a vehicle outwith the windscreen pattern area and to the satisfaction of a nominated council officer. Lettering shall not exceed 75mm in height and shall be contained in one line, unless smaller lettering is used, but the combined height of any lines shall not exceed 75mm in height.
22. Advertising in the form of full livery self-advertising or commercial advertising is permitted on taxis only, and is permitted on the sides, bonnet and boot of the vehicle. Full body wrap advertising is also permitted. Each individual design must be submitted for approval by the Chief Governance Officer of East Ayrshire Council. Contravision will be permitted on the rear window and on any luggage compartment areas where no passengers are seated, following the relevant authorisation being received. There must be a clear unobscured view through the rear view mirror. If full body wrap advertising is applied to the vehicle and the main colour of the vehicle is changed, the operator must update the DVSA of the new colour. The operator must also apply to the Testing Centre that issued the Certificate of Compliance for the necessary amendment to be made and apply to the Licensing Department for replacement front and rear vehicle identity plates to be issued.
23. Taxis and Private Hire Cars will be permitted tinted windows, however, the front windscreen must be 75% clear and the front driver and passenger windows must be 70% clear. There will be no restriction on all tinted and anti-glare windows fitted but they must comply with the relevant Road Traffic Act and / or Construction and Use Regulations requirements. Only tinted and anti-glare windows fitted by the vehicle's manufacturer are acceptable. After-market (stick-on type) window tints are not permitted.
24. No fittings other than those approved may be attached to or carried upon the interior or exterior of the taxi. These include tow bars and fittings, roof racks, roof mounted luggage containers, etc (this list is not exhaustive)
25. Should the Operator wish to install an electronic security system capable of recording and storing a record of entry or exit of passengers by way of video images, the camera must be positioned so as not to obstruct the driver's normal view of the swept area of the windscreen.
26. If a non purpose built vehicle is in use as a taxi, the vehicle will display on the roof a sign of a type approved by the Council for the purposes of identifying the vehicle as a taxi. The sign must be capable of being illuminated while the taxi is available for hire. The illuminated roof sign must also be capable of being extinguished while carrying a fare paying passenger or if the taxi has been withdrawn from service.

## **Minibus – Additional requirements**

1. Must be capable of carrying safely up to a maximum of 8 passengers including luggage.
2. Passenger seats must be minimum 425mm wide (measured at the leading edge) and 400mm deep (measured through the centre line of top cushion).
3. All seat belts must be 3-point, lap and diagonal type.
4. If the vehicle is Category M2, the main passenger compartment to be serviced a minimum of four emergency exits (Excluding rear doors) that comply with annex 7 of ECE R 107

## **GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUITABLE VEHICLES**

The Council has the right to specify the number of passengers that any Taxi or Private Hire Car can carry and the seating layout.

The layout of seats within the vehicle will be subject to approval by an authorised council officer at time of initial inspection and no changes will be permitted unless given prior consent.

No vehicles (other than purpose built taxis) that have been the subject of major conversion or modification will be accepted, unless the vehicle is of Category M2, manufactured with a minimum of four factory fitted emergency exits that comply with annex 7 of ECE R 107 namely 1 double service side load door, 2 x emergency break glass windows and a roof escape hatch to be licensed to operate as both taxi and private hire cars. This being subject to the vehicle having been issued with an Individual Vehicle Approval Certificate by the DVSA.

For Purpose Built Taxis a Certificate of Conformity confirming that the vehicle is subject to an EEC M1 Whole Vehicle Type Approval Certificate issued by the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) must be presented at time of inspection of vehicle for the purposes of issuing a Certificate of Compliance.

For vehicles fitted with passenger tail-lifts a valid Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998, (LOLER), Bi-annual certification must be presented at time of inspection of vehicle for the purposes of issuing a Certificate of Compliance.

**Approved by Licensing Panel on 22.11.18**  
**Effective as from 1.1.19**