Aberdeen City Council - Taxi Testing Manual





Introduction

The purpose of the taxi or private hire car (PHC) test is to ensure that the relevant vehicle is suitable in type, size and design and is safe for use as a taxi in terms of Section 10(2) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 ("the 1982 Act"). The Licensing Authority is entitled to have regard to the convenience and travelling needs of the general public, as well as to public safety. Vehicles will therefore be required to meet a higher standard than that set down in terms of the entirely separate MOT test. In that regard the Licensing Authority has approved conditions of licence and policies in relation to vehicle standards, over and above those contained in the MOT. In addition, any deficiencies in the condition of the vehicle may be matters that the Licensing Authority can take into account in deciding whether or not an application can be granted or if a vehicle is fit to remain in public service.

It is possible that a vehicle could pass its MOT test and then fail the Taxi/PHC Test. This ordinarily would be due to the specific taxi/PHC requirements of the test. Although if during the test a serious defect is discovered, which was not detected during the MOT test or developed afterwards, the examiner must suspend the licence, as the vehicle is not safe for public carriage. They would also recommend that the vehicle should not be driven on the road until the fault is remedied.

Please note that a Taxi/PHC Test is entirely separate to the MOT test. Vehicles must complete and hold a valid MOT separate to the Taxi/PHC Test. This manual refers **ONLY** to the additional criteria as required by the conditions and policies of the licensing authority for taxis and PHCs, which are tested in terms of the above licensing legislation with reference to the taxi or PHC licence. The <u>vehicle will not be re-tested for standard MOT requirements</u>, which is a <u>distinct legal requirement on all road traffic vehicles</u>, under the Road Traffic Act 1988. Where the vehicle is unsafe for public carriage the Licensing Authority cannot permit it to be used as a taxi or PHC.

Should any dispute arise in connection with the test, the Supervisor will be on site to resolve any issues. There is no right of appeal immediately following a test decision. For the avoidance of doubt, a right of appeal exists in respect of vehicular defect, only if a licence application has been refused on that basis or once a vehicle is deemed to be suspended by the Licensing Authority due to its unsuitability in terms of Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 of the 1982 Act.

NOTE- THE REQUIREMENTS LAID OUT IN THIS MANUAL APPLY TO BOTH LICENSED TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE CARS WITH TWO EXCEPTIONS-

SECTION 2.3 TAXI METER- DOES NOT APPLY TO PRIVATE HIRE CARS NOT FITTED WITH A TAXI METER

SECTION 2.5 ROOF SIGNS- DOES NOT APPLY TO PRIVATE HIRE CARS

Where a vehicle has failed a Taxi/PHC Test or a licence has been suspended the rear taxi/private hire car plates will be removed and retained at the Taxi Inspection Centre (TIC) until the vehicle has passed its Taxi/PHC Test, or any fault is verified by the TIC as repaired. The vehicle cannot be used as Taxi or Private Hire Car whilst the rear plate is removed.

2.1 Vehicle Type

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
The vehicle must be of a body type permitted under current Licensing Authority policy.	Confirm the body type of the vehicle is a Saloon, Estate (derived from a Saloon), MPV (people carrier), Mini-	Vehicle is any body type other than those permitted such as a 4x4 type vehicle, SUV, Hatchback or Estate derived from a Hatchback.	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Substituted
By 6 June 2023 all taxis must be accessible vehicles.	Bus (8 passengers or less) or Accessible Vehicle.	Vehicle does not have seating accommodation for not less than 4 and not more than 8 passengers, excluding the driver, and suitable accommodation for the conveyance of a reasonable amount of luggage. The seating does not afford adequate head and leg room and width to accommodate all passengers in reasonable comfort. The vehicle does not have at least 4 doors, excluding any doors at the rear of the vehicle (excluding Mini-Buses).	

2.2 Performance

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
Road test (only to be undertaken if	Carry out a road test over a marked	1) If a vehicle has been road tested but the tester knows more	Failed Test-
the Examiner is satisfied that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition	and measured 1 mile distance at one of various locations and check	efficient operation is normally obtained for the type of vehicle	Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
and has a current MOT)	performance and noise levels	2)Noise levels are in excess of what the tester knows are normally obtainable for the type of vehicle	
		3)The speedometer is not working correctly on road test Vehicle not road tested as examiner is not satisfied that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition, warning lights on dashboard or in a condition suitable for road conditions at the time.	
Gear box, drive shafts & bearings	 Check noise levels	Abnormal noises from the engine,	 Failed Test-
		transmission, drive shafts or	Vehicle Off Road Until
		bearings	Requirement Met

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
The taxi meter will be checked for security and accuracy. The time reading on the meter clock must be accurate to +/- 2 minutes.	Check that a taxi meter is correctly fitted in an approved position (a position where it can be readily seen by passengers and is not subject to be knocked whilst in use) and is complete	Fitted in a position not approved by the Licensing Authority, is insecure or obscures the forward vision of the driver	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
	Test for accuracy with respect to distance and time over known distance. Over 4 passenger fare calibration to be done by meter suppliers at meter calibration event	Found to be inaccurate with regard to distance and time +/- 2 minutes or 2 car lengths	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
	Check for the presence of taxi meter seals that they are in satisfactory condition and of the correct type	Seals missing or have been tampered with	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
All required taxi plates must be fixed	Check that all required taxi plates	Required taxi plates missing or not affixed securely to an	Failed Test-
securely in an approved position	are securely fitted to an external	external surface in an approved position (not on a tow bar or	Vehicle Off Road Until
(centre or offside of the bumper or offside of the boot lid or rear door).	surface in an approved position	tow eye/hook)	Requirement Met
		Vehicle registration plates do not conform to the standard	
In addition the vehicle number		required-	
plates (vehicle registration number)		Characters must be 79mm tall	
must conform to the requirements		Characters (except the number 1 or letter I) must be	
set out in the Road		50mm wide	
Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations.		The character stroke (the thickness of the black print) must be 14mm	
		The space between characters must be 11mm	
		The space between the age identifier and the random	
		letters must be 33mm	
		The margins at the top, bottom and side of the plate must be 11mm	
		Vertical space between the age identifier and the	
		random numbers must be 19mm	
The taxi plate must be in good			
The taxi plate must be in good condition, legible, visible and not defaced or altered	Check condition of all plates fitted	Taxi plate insecure, letter(s) or figure(s) missing or incomplete. Plate faded, dirty, deteriorated or obscured (fully or in part)	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
Roof sign shall be of size and type as approved by the Licensing Authority (Non Accessible Taxis- large city sign only, Accessible Taxis- inbuilt, pod or small city sign if roof curved, Airport Taxis- Small airport sign only)	Check that the sign is the correct size and meets the licensing requirement (roof sign may be affixed on any safe & secure position on the roof or be securely fixed to a roof bar which must also be safely & securely fixed to the vehicle). Where zone variation carried out	s Sign is incorrect size or otherwise contravenes licensing meets the requirement (no licence numbers displayed on large sign, Airport sign with no green background, anything other than phone number on rear of sign) or be securely hich must also fixed to the	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
	free replacement sign will be issued provided original sign returned in good condition		
Roof sign must have connected wiring, be wired safely and illuminate	Check for tidy installation i.e. no loose wires, protruding screws etc.	Untidy installation i.e. loose wires, protruding screws etc.	14 Day Re-Test Notice
	Check roof sign wiring is connected, is safe and that it illuminates (either by switch or ignition)	Roof sign is not connected, the connection is unsafe, and/or it cannot be illuminated (50% or more of roof signs bulbs do not illuminate)	Failed Test – Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

2.6 Engine Cooling System

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
The engine cooling system should be	Examine the condition of the whole	1)A cooling system component which is insecure, deteriorated,	Failed Test-
in good condition and fully	cooling system including the	missing or inoperative	Vehicle Off Road Until
operational	radiator, coolant pump, drive belts		Repaired
	(including pulleys for security),	2)Coolant leak which deposits any coolant on the ground during	
	deterioration and completeness	the test forming a pool of more than 10mm in diameter	

2.7 Bodywork

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
When possible the vehicle should be	Examine bodywork for sharp or	1)Any bodywork with sharp or protruding edges likely to cause	Failed Test-
inspected under natural light and	protruding edges or body panel of	injury to a pedestrian or other road user.	Vehicle Off Road Until
not under fluorescent light	different colour to vehicles original		Repaired
Bodywork should be clean and free	colour	2)Any body panel not matching the vehicle's original colour e.g. blue door on a red car (only base colour to be checked- where	
from dents and scratches		body wrap or advertising has been removed vehicles original	
from dents and scrateries		colour is acceptable)	
All panels & trim should be secure	Check for minor Bodywork issues such as scratches, dents or dirty bodywork	Scratches, dents or other irregularities or repair which is not properly painted and finished or the vehicle exterior is not clean	14 Day Re-Test Notice
	Check for insecure panels or Trim	Insecure panels or trim	14 Day Re-Test Notice

2.8 External Lights

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
Reverse lamps should be fitted as per manufacturer's specification	Check that a reverse lamp is working and that lamps are illuminated when vehicle is in reverse gear	 Reverse lamp is missing, does not emit a steady white light or emit a light other than white whilst in reverse gear. Is incomplete, not in good working order or not visible from a reasonable distance. Is insecure, obscured or not facing to the rear. 	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Repaired
All other lamps must be fitted, operational and free from damage	 Check it does not flicker when tapped lightly	 Flickers when tapped lightly by hand or is adversely affected by the operation of any other lamp	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Repaired
	All other fitted lamps must work correctly as per manufacturer's specification	A fitted lamp not working correctly	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Repaired

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
Engine and transmission should be clean and free from leaks	Check the engine and transmission for leakage of any type of oil	Any oil leak which deposits oil on the ground during the test which forms a pool greater than 10mm diameter in a five minute period or a number of leaks which collectively would deposit oil at the same rate.	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Repaired
	Check without operating any equipment other than the engine which may be run at tick-over speed	Any leak which when the vehicle is in motion could compromise the Health and Safety of its passengers.	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Repaired
	Check there are no temporary repairs for oil leakage	A temporary means of preventing leaked oil reaching the ground is not acceptable	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Repaired

2.10 Mirrors

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
There must be at least one exterior rear view mirror on offside, one	Check the presence, security, condition and visibility of-	1)Any of the required mirrors not present or securely fixed	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until
exterior rear view mirror on nearside	An exterior mirror fitted to the	2)Deteriorated or cracked mirror lens	Requirement Met
and an interior rear view mirror all securely fitted in the correct position	offside An exterior mirror fitted to the		
and in suitable condition	nearside An interior rear view mirror fitted		
	securely in appropriate position		

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
All road wheels and tyres must be of the same type, size and width. Tyres (including spare where present) should have not less than 2mm tread depth.	Check the tread pattern over the complete circumference of the tyre and that the tread depth meets the requirement using, as necessary, a depth gauge for testing around the entire outer circumference of the tyre	The grooves of the tread pattern are not at least 2mm throughout a continuous band comprising the central three- quarters of the breadth of tread	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
All tyres must be fitted as per the manufacturer's instructions If a licence holder chooses to fit directional tyres they must be fitted as per the tyre markings, "inside" & "outside" markings must be observed.	Check the tyres are fitted as per manufacturer's instructions (either from handbook or check online)	Incorrectly fitted tyres	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
A spare wheel or breakdown kit must be carried in all vehicles except those fitted with run-flat tyres. Where run-flat tyres fitted and the tyre pressure warning light is illuminated the vehicle must not be used to carry passengers.	Check spare wheel or breakdown kit carried. If vehicle has run-flat tyres check no tyre pressure warning light illuminated.	No spare wheel or breakdown kit carried (if vehicle does not have run-flat tyres) or tyre pressure warning light illuminated where vehicle has run-flat tyres.	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement met
Where present spare wheel & tyre must be stored securely in the correct location. Spare tyre MUST be Bi-Directional. Space saver wheels are allowable but may only be used when no passengers are carried.	Check security and serviceability to the same standards as fitted tyres, check size & specification and ensure bi-directional fitting	Spare wheel & tyre not secure or of insufficient standard, specification differs, of different size to fitted tyre (unless Space Saver) or not Bi-Directional	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Where Breakdown Kit carried instead of spare wheel it must include sealant liquid and an air compressor (may only be used when no passengers carried).	Check Breakdown Kit has the required sealant and air compressor	No sealant or compressor or sealant has been used and not replaced	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

2.12 Interiors

Requirement	Method of Inspection	Reason(s) for Failure	Test Result
The vehicle should be submitted for the Taxi Inspection clean and free from damage and in a condition which would be acceptable to be	Check trim for excessive wear and correctly fitted items	Lights not extinguishing correctly, not working or missing, gauges inoperative or missing, controls ineffective or damaged or incorrectly fitted or missing trim or accessories	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
hired by members of the public.	Check passenger controls for correct operation & damage and for security, tidiness & safe wiring	Inoperative or damaged passenger controls including sharp edges, insecure accessories or fittings, loose, dangerous or untidy wiring	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
<u>Seats</u>	 Check the condition, security and cleanliness of seats	A seat which is insecure, damaged or weakened so that the damaged seat structure or covering could endanger passengers or damage their clothes Seats with covering(s) in such a condition that they are likely to soil passengers clothing or headrests insecure or missing	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
<u>Seatbelts</u>	Check that all seats have correct seatbelts fitted (driver & all passenger) and that all are secure and in working order (in good condition and working correctly)	 Driver and specified front passenger seat (outside seat if more than 1) do not have 3 point belt. Any other front passenger seat does not have a 3 point belt or a lap belt or a disabled persons belt. A 3 point belt is not on 1 outboard seat (nearest a door) and a 3 point belt, lap belt or disabled persons belt are not on all other passenger seats Seatbelt not securely fixed, cut, damaged or worn or seatbelt 	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Interior Lights	Check the interior lights are in	attachment damaged or deteriorated. Any interior light not in working order	14 Day Re-Test Notice
	working order		TH Day Ne-Test Notice

Interior Surface	Check interior surfaces including roof linings, side panel covering and carpets for cleanliness, condition and security	Insecure or damaged so that they are likely to injure passengers or contaminated so that they are likely to soil passenger's clothing	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Opening windows	Check all opening windows can be opened from the relevant controls	A driver's or any passengers window cannot be opened from the relevant controls	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Internal Signage No Smoking & Seatbelts Must Be Worn signs required in passenger compartment	Check for No Smoking & Seatbelt Must Be Worn signs in passenger compartment.	The required No Smoking and/or Seatbelts Must Be Worn sign not present.	5 Day Re-Test Notice
Heating and Demisting	Examine presence, condition and operation of heating and demisting Equipment. A system with variable speed control must be operable in all speeds as designed	Missing, inoperative or ineffective demisting, heating or cooling equipment	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Accessible Requirements This vehicle type shall be checked against the approved specification for accessible taxis. The following wheelchair and ambulatory accessibility requirements in particular, shall be tested. Breach of any safety element of the accessibility vehicle specification will lead to a failed test, until the requirement is met.	All passenger loading devices e.g. fixed, sliding or non-fixed steps, ramps, winches and swivel seats etc. must be kept in the vehicle and kept good and efficient working order.	Damaged, unsecure storage and inoperable or unsafe passenger loading device	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Wheelchair Securing Devices	All Wheelchair Securing Devices must be kept in good and efficient working order, kept in the vehicle and stored in a suitable box/bag or compartment	Damaged, unsecure storage, and inoperable or unsafe wheelchair securing device	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

Handrails/handholds	Handrails / handholds must be provided for disabled passengers entering / exiting the vehicle and when manoeuvring inside the vehicle to a seat.	Manufacturer fitted handrails/handholds have been removed	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Floor	Any surface over which a passenger is required to walk shall have a slip resistant finish.	Manufacturer slip resistant finish removed, or covered with mats or other materials	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Lighting	Lighting shall be fitted to illuminate the interior and exterior of the vehicle sufficient to allow both wheelchair users and other passengers to board and alight the vehicle in safety. Any lighting fitted in accordance with this requirement shall have a means of preventing its operation when the vehicle is in motion if its use is likely to affect adversely the driver's vision.	Manufacturer lighting removed or inoperable.	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Steps	1st step from the ground shall not exceed 250mm. Subsequent steps 100mm - 200mm. Width 400mm + Depth 190mm + Design features Steps shall be designed to be slip resistant, minimise tripping risk and have a contrasting band along the front edge of 45mm - 55mm.	Manufacturer steps removed, no steps present or any steps without contrasting band along edge , contrasting band is more than 55mm wide and/or is located anywhere on the step other than the front edge (the contrasting band does not require to be slip resistant at this width or less).	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

Priority Seat	At least one priority seat must be provided which may be either : a) a multi-axial moving seat which can be easily used by a passenger boarding from the kerb or ground or ; b) a fixed seat design ; i) providing the cushion is no more than 200mm measured inwards from the entrance or ; ii) providing the cushion is as near as practicable to the entrance and the internal floor to roof height exceeds 1500mm.	No priority seat available for passengers with a disability or medical condition, e.g. mobility restricted persons	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
First Aid Kit The required First Aid kit and Fire Extinguisher are present and securely stored/fastened in an approved place as notified by location sticker fixed to the inside of the vehicle (where the Kit or Extinguisher are not in plain view)	First aid kits should contain the minimum as recommended by HSE for taxi or private hire car- BS8599-2:2014 compliant.	A kit which does not contain the minimum HSE recommended vehicle kit of: •1 Adherent Dressing •1 Burn Dressings •10 Cleansing Wipes •2 Gloves (Pair) •1 Guidance Leaflet •1 HSE Dressing, Medium •1 Trauma Dressing, Medium •1 Triangular Bandage • •10 Washproof Plasters (will not fail if more than 50% present)	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
	Check that the first aid kit is not contaminated or the contents obviously deteriorated and that the receptacle which contains the first aid kit is prominently marked.	Missing, inaccessible or in poor or contaminated condition or receptacle not marked	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
	If the receptacle is in a sealed compartment or closed glove box the compartment or glove box should be clearly marked to indicate the position of the first aid kit	No notice of position is present or incorrect location given	5 Day Re-Test Notice

Fire Extinguisher	Check that the fire extinguisher is of the correct type and is securely fitted in a position easily accessible by the driver	Missing, inaccessible, discharged, incorrect type, in an obviously poor condition	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
	If the extinguisher is hidden from view the position must be clearly marked in view of the driver and passengers	No notice of position is present (where hidden from view), Insecure	5 Day Re-Test Notice
	They must contain foam or powder and be marked BS 5423 or above or EN 3 and not be expired.	A Halon filled extinguisher present, not BS 5423 or above or EN3 or expired	 Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
<u>CCTV</u>	Only systems which meet the specification imposed by the Licensing Authority & which have been approved by the Licensing Authority are allowable	System does not meet specification or has not been approved	Failed Test- Vehicle off road until system removed or approved
	Any system must have been inspected & the relevant documentation provided to the licensing authority prior to approval		
	Any system installed must be used and maintained as per the licensing conditions and policy (maintenance logs must be available)	No maintenance logs available or evidence of system being incorrectly used	Failed Test- Vehicle off road until system removed New application for CCTV approval required
	Any vehicle with a CCTV system must have sign (adhesive label) in yellow with black wording & graphics and which is clearly visible to any passenger stating "CCTV in operation"	Sign not present or not visible to any passenger	Failed Test- Vehicle off road until correct sign in place

Tariff Card Current taxi Tariff Card must present and clearly available for viewing by passengers	Tariff card should be carried in vehicle be current and clearly available to passengers	Not in vehicle or not clearly available to passengers	Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met
Insurance Disc Interior Insurance disc should be fixed in the correct position within the interior of the vehicle	Check that the insurance disc is valid and is fitted in the correct position facing inwards- passenger side, lower left of windscreen or upper left of windscreen and must not be within the arc of the window wipers	 1)The insurance disc is not valid, is defaced or illegible 2)The insurance disc is fitted in the wrong position or is within the arc of the window wipers 	 14 Day Re-Test Notice Failed Test- Vehicle Off Road Until Requirement Met

NOTE: The above is intended to provide a clear but concise list of the additional aspects of the taxi test which shall be inspected and require compliance. It is not an exhaustive list and any additional faults which would lead to an MOT failure or are of concern to the tester, may also result in the vehicle failing the Taxi/PHC test on public safety grounds or for the breach of a licensing condition