



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

TECHNICAL GUIDANCE FOR VEHICLE INSPECTIONS

This guidance provides the standards required for licensed vehicles and should be referred to in conjunction with the Taxi Licensing Policy

Simon Cooper
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Mechanical Inspection Guidance

Contents

Mechanical Inspection Guidance	1
1. Registration plates.....	3
2. Vehicle identification number (VIN)	4
3. Brakes.....	5
Service brake pedal or hand lever condition and travel	5
Parking brake lever or control	5
Brake servo units and master cylinder (hydraulic systems)	5
Rigid brake pipes.....	6
Flexible brake hoses.....	6
Brake linings and pads	6
Brake discs and drums	6
Load sensing valve	6
4. Steering.....	6
Steering gear condition	7
Steering gear security.....	7
Steering linkage condition	7
Steering linkage operation	8
Power steering.....	8
5. Steering wheel and column	8
Steering wheel.....	8
Steering column.....	9
Steering play.....	9
Electronic power steering (EPS)	9
6. Visibility	9
Condition of glass	10
View to rear	11
Windscreen wipers	11
Windscreen washers	11
7. Lamps, reflectors and electrical equipment.....	11
Switching	11
Compliance with requirements.....	12
Levelling devices	12
Headlamp cleaning devices	12
Front and rear position lamps, daytime running lamps and end-outline marker lamps,	12
Switching	13
Direction indicators and hazard warning lamp.....	13
Front and rear fog lamps.....	14
Rear registration plate lamps	14

Rear reflectors	15
8. Electrical wiring	15
Battery(ies)	15
9. Axles, wheels, tyres and suspension	15
Axles,.....	16
Stub axles.....	16
Wheel bearings.....	16
Wheels	16
Tyres	16
10. Suspension	18
Springs	18
Shock absorbers.....	18
Suspension arms, rods, struts, sub-frames, anti-roll bars etc.....	18
Suspension joints, pins and bushes	19
11. Body, structure and attachments	19
Structure and attachments.....	19
Exhaust system	20
Fuel system	20
Bumpers	20
Spare wheel.....	20
Transmission	21
Engine mountings.....	21
Body condition	21
Doors and door catches.....	21
Interior	21
Floor	22
Driver's seat.....	22
Passenger seats.....	22
Driving controls.....	22
12. Other equipment.....	22
Seat belt security	22
Seat belt pre-tensioners.....	23
Airbags	23
Audible warning (horn).....	23
Speedometer,	24
Electronic stability control (ESC).....	24
13. Nuisance	24
Noise suppression system	24
14. Other environmental items	24
Fluid leaks	24
NO SMOKING / VAPING SIGN	24
15. Fire Extinguisher	25

16. Taxi meter	25
17. Road test.....	25
18. Roof Sign (Hackney Carriage).....	25

1. Registration plates.

Registration plates must not:

- be obscured, excessively damaged, deteriorated or delaminated
- have background overprinting
- have any feature or fixing that has the effect of changing the appearance or legibility of any of the characters including the use of tints or films
- have a honeycomb or similar effect background - back lit registration plates may have a honeycomb type construction which should not be confused with a honeycomb effect background

Ensure that the location of any fixing screws or bolts, as well as any delamination of the number plate do not prevent identification of the vehicle by automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, which 'see' any non-reflective material as being black.

Registration plates may:

- have an optional non-reflective border displayed within the margin which must be:
 - no wider than 6mm and not within 5mm of the characters on vehicles first used before 1 September 2021
 - no wider than 5mm and not within 10mm of the characters on vehicles first used on or after 1 September 2021

Registration plate characters:

- may contain grey, possibly to achieve a 3D or highlighting effect (only on vehicles first used before 1 September 2021)
- may be raised or 3D
- must be the correct size, stroke width and spacing
- must not be italic, sloping or formed using broken or multiple strokes
- must be laid out in the correct format for the age of vehicle
- must be formed using the prescribed font or be substantially similar to the prescribed font - as shown below

They will only be rejected if the font is obviously incorrect.

I234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ

Registration plates fitted to vehicles must:

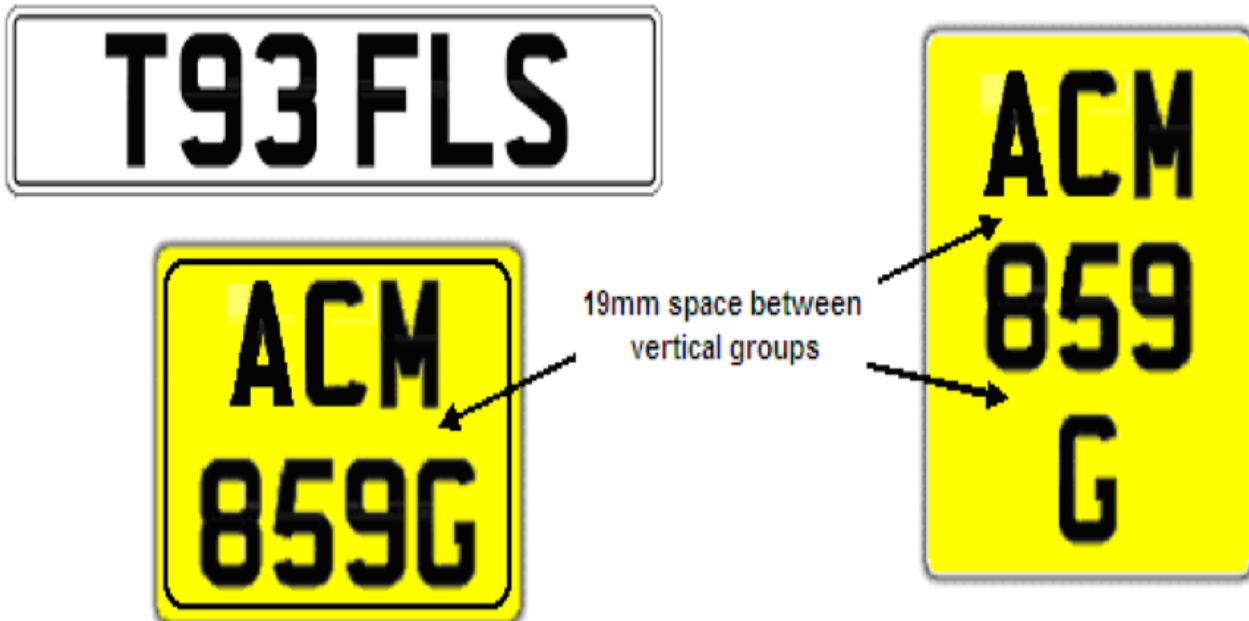
- have black characters on a white background when fitted to the front
- have black characters on a yellow background when fitted to the rear
- be fitted vertically, or as close to vertical as is reasonably practicable

Registration plates fitted to vehicles first registered on or after 1 September 2021:

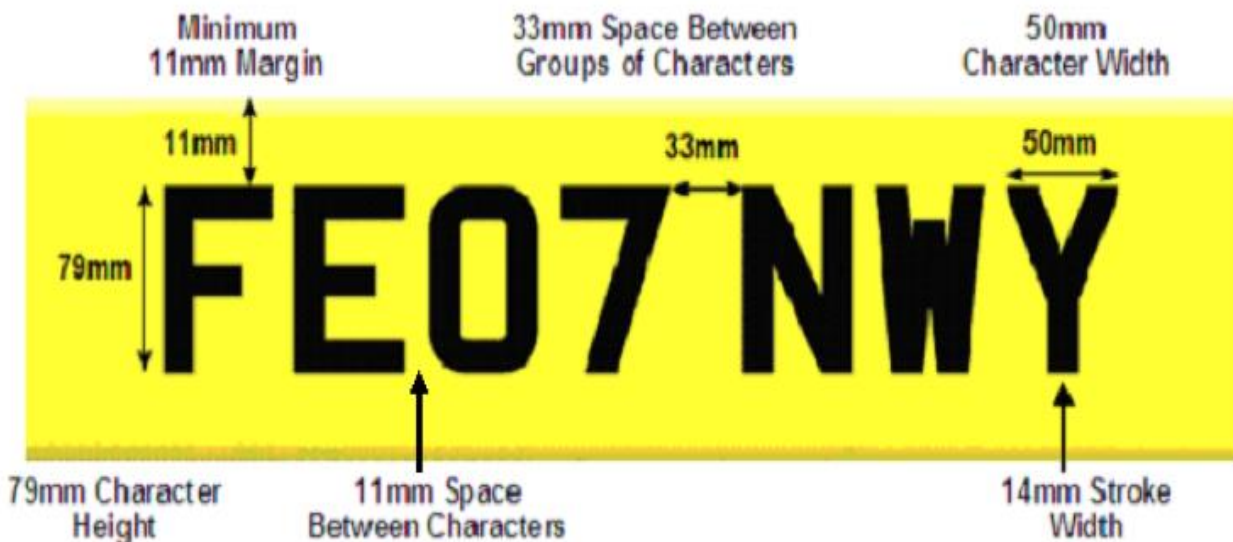
- must be a single shade of black
- may be raised, but the entire surface of the characters, including the sides, must be a single shade of black

- may have an integral raised or depressed border around the number plate periphery, not more than 5mm wide and 2mm high

Any optional non-reflective border must be at least 5mm from the characters



Registration plates must meet the dimensional requirements shown in the example below. However, the space between a number '1' or a letter 'l' and another character is permitted to be proportionately greater. Vehicles with non-date related plates, such as those issued before 1963 and Northern Ireland plates must still meet the separation requirement between groups of characters where relevant.



It is a failure if the:

- Number plate missing or so insecure that it is likely to fall off
- Number plate showing an incorrect registration
- Number plate does not conform to the specified requirements

2. Vehicle identification number (VIN)

The vehicle must display a legible vehicle identification number.

Vehicles may have the VIN displayed in more than one location, but only one VIN is required to be complete and legible.

It is a failure if the:

- VIN is missing or cannot be found
- VIN incomplete, illegible or obviously falsified
- More than one different VIN displayed

3. Brakes

Brake condition and operation, service brakes, secondary brakes, parking brakes, anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic braking system (EBS) and brake fluid rules and inspection.

Service brake pedal or hand lever condition and travel

A brake pedal – rubber pad, grooved or with raised grip section should not be worn smooth. It is a failure to have a worn smooth brake pedal.

However, if a brake pedal was manufactured with one that does not have grooves or anti-slip material, it is not a failure. Often a vehicle is fitted with an aftermarket brake pedal rubber.

A vehicle will be failed for insufficient reserve if the pedal is touching the floor.

It is a failure if:

- There is insufficient reserve travel
- It is not releasing correctly
- functionality of the brakes are affected
- the anti-slip provision is missing, loose or worn smooth

Parking brake lever or control

A parking brake lever will be failed if it has obvious excessive travel.

Electronic parking brakes must be maintained in operation by direct mechanical means, even though they are applied electronically.

It is a failure if the:

- Ratchet is not holding correctly
- Parking brake lever pivot or ratchet mechanism is obviously worn to the extent that the brake may inadvertently release
- Parking brake lever has excessive movement
- Parking brake control is missing, defective or inoperative
- Electronic parking brake indicates a malfunction

Brake servo units and master cylinder (hydraulic systems)

Hydraulic brake fluid level checks are confined to transparent reservoirs or where an indicator is fitted.

It is a failure if the:

- Brake servo is:
 - (i) defective or ineffective
 - (ii) inoperative
- Master cylinder:
 - (i) defective but brake still operating
 - (ii) leaking
- Master cylinder is insecure
- Brake fluid is below minimum mark
- Brake fluid level warning device is incorrectly functioning

Rigid brake pipes

The tester will check the condition of the metal brake pipes. Chafing, corrosion or damage to a rigid brake pipe, resulting in its wall thickness is reduced by 1/3 (approximately 0.25mm for typical hydraulic brake pipes) will be failed.

Repairs to the pressure lines of hydraulic brake systems are unacceptable unless suitable connectors are used. Compression joints of a type using separate ferrules are not suitable. Unacceptable repairs to brake lines will be failed.

It is a failure if:

- The brake pipe is at imminent risk of failure or fracture
- A brake pipe or connection is leaking
- The brake pipe is damaged or excessively corroded
- The brake pipe is:
 - (i) inadequately clipped or supported
 - (ii) likely to become detached or damaged

Flexible brake hoses

A hose, which is excessively damaged or chafed, exposing the reinforcement will be failed.

It is a failure if the:

- Brake hose damaged and likely to fail
- Flexible brake hose is excessively damaged, deteriorated, chafed, twisted or stretched
- Brake hoses or connections are leaking
- Brake hose is bulging under pressure
- Brake hose is porous
- Brake hose ferrules are excessively corroded and likely to fail

Brake linings and pads

It is a failure if the:

- Brake lining or pad is:
 - (i) worn down to the wear indicator
 - (ii) worn below 1.5mm
- Brake lining or pad is contaminated with oil, grease etc.

Brake discs and drums

If the brake disc or drum is significantly worn it will be failed. Brake judder felt from inside the vehicle from the steering wheel or foot pedal will also be a failure.

It is a failure if the Brake disc or drum is:

- Significantly and obviously worn
- Insecure, fractured or otherwise likely to fail
- Judder or vibration from inside

Load sensing valve

It is a failure if the:

- Load sensing valve linkage defective or seized

4. Steering

Mechanical condition, steering wheel and column, steering play and electronic power steering (EPS).

Steering gear condition

To check the condition of the steering gear:

It is a failure if:

- There is excessive roughness in operation of steering
- The sector shaft is:
 - (i) twisted or splines excessively worn
 - (ii) twisted or splines worn to the extent that functionality is affected
- The sector shaft is:
 - (i) excessively worn
 - (ii) worn to the extent that functionality is affected
- The Sector shaft:
 - (i) has excessive movement
 - (ii) has movement so excessive that functionality is affected
- The steering box is:
 - (i) leaking oil
 - (ii) leaking to the extent that oil is dripping

Steering gear security

'Steering gear' refers to any steering rack, box, idler, relay or intermediate drop arm pivot housing.

It is a failure if the:

- Steering gear casing:
 - (i) not properly attached
 - (ii) retaining devices dangerously loose or relative movement to chassis/bodywork visible
- Steering gear casing fixing holes in chassis are:
 - (i) elongated
 - (ii) elongated to the extent that attachment is seriously affected
- Steering gear fixing bolts are:
 - (i) missing or ineffective
 - (ii) missing or ineffective to the extent that attachment is seriously affected
- Strength or continuity of the load bearing structure within 30cm of any steering component mounting (a 'prescribed area'):
 - (i) is significantly reduced or inadequately repaired
 - (ii) is so weakened that control of the vehicle is likely to be adversely affected

Steering linkage condition

Movement due to excessive wear will be a failure.

Unsafe modifications include:

- welded repairs
- the use of excessive heat to highly stressed components
- modifications likely to affect the roadworthiness of the vehicle

It is a failure if:

- A steering linkage component with:
 - (i) relative movement between components which should be fixed
 - (ii) excessive movement between components or likely to become detached
- A steering ball joint:
 - (i) with excessive wear or free play
 - (ii) worn to the extent there is a serious risk of detachment
- A steering linkage component is:
 - (i) fractured or deformed
 - (ii) fractured or deformed to the extent that steering is affected
- A steering linkage retaining or locking device is missing or ineffective
- A track rod or drag link ends are seriously misaligned
- A steering rack gaiter or ball joint dust cover is:
 - (i) damaged or deteriorated
 - (ii) missing or no longer prevents the ingress of dirt etc.

Steering linkage operation

A missing steering lock stop will only be failed if it was fitted as standard.

It is a failure if the:

- Steering linkage fouling any part of the vehicle
- Steering lock-stop missing or incorrectly adjusted

Power steering

It is a failure if the:

- Power steering fluid is leaking or the system is malfunctioning
- Power steering fluid:
 - (i) level is below minimum mark
 - (ii) reservoir is empty
- Power steering:
 - (i) is inoperative
 - (ii) is inoperative and steering adversely affected
- Power steering pipe, hose or wiring:
 - (i) is excessively damaged or corroded
 - (ii) is damaged or corroded and steering adversely affected

5. Steering wheel and column

Steering wheel

Must be properly secured.

It is a failure if the:

- Relative movement between steering wheel and column:
 - (i) indicates looseness
 - (ii) is such that there is a serious risk of detachment

- Steering wheel:
 - (i) retaining device is missing
 - (ii) likely to become detached

Steering column

There should be no unsafe modifications. These include:

- welded repairs
- the use of excessive heat to highly stressed components
- modifications likely to affect the roadworthiness of the vehicle

It is a failure if there is:

- Excessive movement of centre of steering wheel up or down
- Excessive radial movement between the top of the steering column and the shaft indicating an excessively worn top bearing
- Excessive wear or play in a universal joint or a flexible coupling excessively deteriorated
- Steering head bearings have excessive wear or play

Steering play

Steering wheel free play should not be more than:

- 13mm for rack and pinion steering, or 48mm if there are several joints between the steering wheel and the rack
- 75mm for non-rack and pinion

It is a failure if the:

- Free play in the steering, measured at the rim of the steering wheel is:
 - (i) excessive
 - (ii) excessive to the extent that safe steering is affected

Electronic power steering (EPS)

For the purpose of an inspection, electronic power steering includes any steering system that incorporates an electric motor to control or assist the steering.

It is a failure if the:

- EPS indicates a system malfunction
- Electronic power assistance not working

6. Visibility

This refers to the field of vision, bonnet catches, condition of the glass, the view to the rear, windscreen wipers and windscreen washers.

The following are considered a failure if they seriously restrict the driver's view:

- Taxi signs to indicate when the vehicle is 'for hire'
- 'Official' stickers, such as parking and disabled permits
- Sun visor on the driver's side that cannot be stowed in the 'off screen' position

- Windscreen wipers that automatically stop in a position obscuring the view

It is a failure if:

- An obstruction:
 - (i) within the driver's field of view that significantly affects his view in front or to the sides outside the swept area of windscreen
 - (ii) significantly affecting the driver's view of the road through the swept area of the windscreen or an obligatory external mirror not visible
- A bonnet:
 - (i) which cannot be safely secured in the closed position
 - (ii) seriously at risk of opening inadvertently

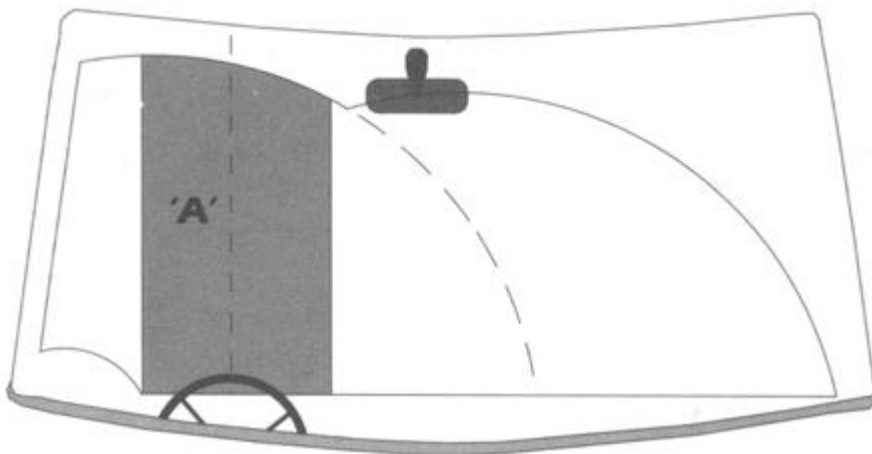
Condition of glass

The tester will check for:

- damage in windscreen zone A more than 10mm in diameter
- damage in the remainder of the windscreen's swept area more than 40mm in diameter
- damage to windows on either side of the driver's seat
- Any cracks to the windscreen
- Additional tinting to drivers view windows

Zone A is:

- in the swept area of the windscreen
- 290mm wide
- centred on the steering wheel



Repaired windscreens are judged on whether the repair interferes with vision. An 'invisible' or barely detectable repair, finished flush with the surrounding glass, does not count as damage.

It is a failure if the:

- Windscreen or window damaged or seriously discoloured affecting the driver's view of the road or of an obligatory external mirror
- Windscreen or window is excessively tinted. resulting in poor visibility through swept area of windscreen or of an obligatory external mirror seriously affected
- Windscreen or window:
 - (i) in an unacceptable condition e.g., due to excessive scratching
 - (ii) in such a condition that visibility through swept area is seriously affected

- (iii) in such condition that the windscreen has a crack

View to rear

Rear view mirrors and indirect vision devices can be any of the following positions:

1. a. an exterior mirror or device that provides a view along the offside of the vehicle
2. b. an exterior mirror or device that provides a view along the nearside of the vehicle
3. c. an interior mirror or device which provides a view to the rear of the vehicle

It is a failure if:

- A mirror is missing
- There is damage to the mirror or is likely to come loose

Windscreen wipers

If the windscreen or rear wiper is clearly damaged or worn it will fail.

It is a failure if the:

- Wiper is not operating or missing
- Wiper blade is:
 - (i) defective
 - (ii) missing or obviously not clearing the windscreen

Windscreen washers

Washers must provide enough fluid for the wipers to clear the windscreen effectively. Fluid must hit the windscreen above the wipers at the parked position.

It is a failure if the:

- Windscreen washers not working or not providing sufficient fluid to clear the windscreen
- Not providing fluid to both zone A and B

7. Lamps, reflectors and electrical equipment

This section refers to headlamp, position lamps, daytime running lamps, stop lamps, indicators, hazard warning lamps, fog lamps, reversing lamps, lighting 'tell-tales', electrical wiring and battery. Headlamps.

A 'light source' means any bulb, LED or other means of emitting light.

It is a failure if the:

- A headlamp:
 - (i) with up to ½ light sources not functioning in the case of LED
 - (ii) missing, inoperative or more than ½ not functioning in the case of LED
- Headlamp reflector or lens:
 - (i) seriously defective or missing
- Lamp not securely attached
- Obviously distorted or cloudy

Switching

Dipped or main beam headlamps must immediately light up when they're switched on (depending on the position of the dip switch).

Headlamps must switch immediately between main beam and dipped beam when the dip switch is moved. Moving the dip switch must do one of the following:

- extinguish all main beam headlamps and leave on at least one pair of dipped-beam headlamps
- deflect the main beams to make them dipped beams

Dipped beam headlamps can remain on or switch off when main beam is selected.

It is a failure if the:

- Headlamp 'on' switch does not operate in accordance with the requirements

Compliance with requirements

Mandatory headlamps consist of a matched pair of main beam headlamps and a matched pair of dipped-beam headlamps. These can be separate or a single pair of headlamps.

Lamps are matched if they:

- emit light of substantially the same colour and intensity
- are the same size and shape that they are symmetrical to each other

The colour of the light headlamps emit must be one of the following:

- white
- predominantly white with blue tinge
- yellow

The tester will assess damaged or repaired lamps for security, colour, light output and durability.

It is a failure if the:

- Headlamp emitted colour, position or intensity not in accordance with the requirements
- Product on the lens or light source which obviously reduces light intensity or changes emitted colour to other than white or yellow
- Light source and lamp not compatible
- Mandatory headlamps, intended to be a matched pair, are not the same shape, size or colour

Levelling devices

It is a failure if the:

- Headlamp levelling device inoperative
- Manual levelling device cannot be operated from the driver's seat

Headlamp cleaning devices

The tester will inspect vehicles first used on or after 1 September 2009 equipped with headlamp washers.

It is a failure if the:

- Headlamp cleaning device is :
 - (i) inoperative
 - (ii) inoperative in the case of LED or gas discharge systems (HID)

Front and rear position lamps, daytime running lamps and end-outline marker lamps,

This inspection is for:

- mandatory position lamps
- mandatory end-outline marker lamps
- daytime running lamps (DRLs) fitted to M1 vehicles first used on or after 1 March 2018

It is a failure if the:

- Lamp: missing, inoperative or in the case of a multiple light source more than a half not functioning
- defective lens
- Lamp:
 - (i) not securely attached
 - (ii) likely to become detached

Switching**It is a failure if the:**

- Switch does not operate in accordance with the requirements or the rear position lamps can be switched off when the headlamps are on
- Function of the switch impaired

Stop Lamps**It is a failure if the:**

- Stop lamp(s) are:
 - (i) with a multiple light source
 - (ii) missing, inoperative
 - (iii) all missing or inoperative

Switching

All stop lamps must light up immediately when the brake is applied and switch off immediately when the brake is released.

Vehicles first used on or after 1 January 1971 must have 2 stop lamps, one on each side.

It is a failure if the:

- Stop lamp(s):
 - (i) switch does not operate in accordance with the requirements
 - (ii) switch with a delay in operation
 - (iii) remain on when the brakes are released
- A stop lamp adversely affected by the operation of any other lamp

Direction indicators and hazard warning lamp

All direction indicators and hazard warning lamps must be amber.

- The side repeater can be part of the front direction indicator if it has one of the following:
- a wraparound lens marked either with an 'E' mark in a circle or an 'e' mark in a rectangle with a number 5 above it
- an amber light coming through the front lens when viewed from 1m to the side of the rear bumper

It is a failure if a:

- lens is defective, such that the emitted light is adversely affected
- lamp is:
 - (i) not securely attached
 - (ii) likely to become detached
- Mandatory hazard warning device inoperative

Switching

Hazard warning lamps must operate using only one switch

It is a failure if the:

- Indicator or hazard warning switch:
 - (i) does not operate in accordance with the requirements
 - (ii) inoperative

Flashing frequency

Indicators must flash at between 60 and 120 times per minute. Semaphore type direction indicators do not need to flash.

It is a failure if the:

- Rate of flashing not between 60 and 120 times per minute

Front and rear fog lamps

Fog lamps must produce a steady light which is:

- white - for front fog lamps
- red - for rear fog lamps

Rear fog lamps may be combined with the rear position lamps.

It is a failure if a:

- Lens is defective, such that emitted light is adversely affected

Switching

Front and rear fog lamp switches may be combined or independent switches.

The switch or switches must:

- be secure
- be able to be operated from the normal driving position
- operate the fog lamps as intended

It is a failure if the:

- front or rear fog lamp switch inoperative or not operating in accordance with the requirements

Reversing Lamps

Reversing lamps must show a white light to the rear. At least one reversing lamp must be fitted.

It is a failure if a:

- front or rear fog lamp switch inoperative or not operating in accordance with the requirements
- reversing lamp inoperative
- reversing lamp lens defective

Rear registration plate lamps

Registration plate lamps must light up the rear registration plate. Some vehicles may have these lamps fitted behind the number plate.

A 'light source' means any bulb, LED or other means of emitting light.

It is a failure if a:

- rear registration plate lamp throwing direct white light to the rear
- rear registration plate lamp or light source missing or inoperative:

Rear reflectors

Reflective tape is not an acceptable substitute for a rear reflector.

It is a failure if the:

- Reflector defective or damaged:
 - (i) by up to 50% of the reflecting surface
 - (ii) by more than 50% of the reflecting surface
- Reflector:
 - (i) not securely attached
 - (ii) likely to become detached

8. Electrical wiring

The tester will carry out a visual inspection of the electrical equipment

It is a failure if the:

- Electrical wiring is:
 - (i) insecure or inadequately secured
 - (ii) insecure and in contact with sharp edges or connectors likely to become disconnected
 - (iii) likely to touch hot or rotating parts, drag on the ground or the connectors for braking or steering disconnected
- Electrical wiring is:
 - (i) slightly deteriorated
 - (ii) so damaged or deteriorated it is likely to cause a short-circuit
 - (iii) for braking or steering components extremely deteriorated
- Electrical wiring insulation is:
 - (i) damaged or deteriorated
 - (ii) heavily deteriorated
 - (iii) in such a condition there is an imminent risk of fire or formation of sparks

Battery(ies)

If the batteries are leaking, the tester will refuse to test the vehicle.

It is a failure if the:

- battery is insecure and is likely to fall from carrier or cause a short circuit
- battery is leaking

9. Axles, wheels, tyres and suspension

Axle, wheel bearing, wheel and tyres, tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS), and suspension (including springs, shock absorbers, and suspension arms and joints)

Axles,

It is a failure if the:

- An axle fractured or deformed
- (b) An axle:
 - (i) insecure or with loose fixing bolts
 - (ii) insecure such that stability is impaired, or functionality affected
- An axle:
 - (i) with an unsafe modification
 - (ii) modified so that vehicle stability is impaired, or axle functionality affected

Stub axles

It is a failure if the:

- stub axle is fractured
- stub axle swivel pin and/or bush:
 - (i) is excessively worn
 - (ii) is so excessive the stub axle is likely to become insecure or directional stability is impaired
- Movement between the stub axle and axle beam:
 - (i) is excessive
 - (ii) is insecure or directional stability is impaired

Wheel bearings

It is a failure if the:

- wheel bearing has:
 - (i) excessive play
 - (ii) play so excessive it is likely to break up or directional control impaired
- wheel bearing is:
 - (i) excessively rough
 - (ii) likely to collapse
- bearing is noisy when rotated

Wheels

Road wheel and hub

It is a failure if the:

- wheel:
 - (i) has a loose or missing wheel nut, bolt or stud
 - (ii) has more than one loose or missing wheel nut, bolt or stud
- spigot mounted wheel hub has been:
 - (i) excessively worn or damaged
 - (ii) worn or damaged to the extent that wheel security is adversely affected

Tyres

The tester will assess a cut in a tyre:

- any ply or cord that can be seen without touching the tyre - fail
- if by folding back rubber or opening a cut with a blunt instrument, so as not to cause further damage, exposed ply or cord can be seen irrespective of the size of the cut - fail
- if a cut which is more than 25mm or 10% of the section width whichever is the greater, is opened with a blunt instrument and cords can be felt but not seen - fail

Tread depth

In simple terms, grooves containing tread wear indicators (TWI), or grooves cut as deep as those containing the wear indicators when new, are considered to be primary grooves, when assessing tread depth.

The 'breadth of tread' is the part of the tyre which can contact the road under normal conditions of use measured at 90 degrees to the peripheral line of the tread.

The primary grooves of the tread pattern must be at least 2mm deep around the entire outer circumference of the tyre.

The tread pattern must be visible over the whole tread area

Tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS)

The inspection of the tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS) is for M1 vehicles first used on or after 1 January 2012.

The TPMS warning lamp (see diagram 1) can operate in many ways depending on the vehicle type. If it is clear that the lamp indicates a system malfunction it is a fail. If it indicates that one or more of the tyre pressures is low it is not a fail.

Diagram 1. Example of a TPMS warning lamp



Tyre age

Tyre age is determined by the date code on the sidewall and will be a three or four-digit code.

Tyres with a three-digit code will be more than 10 years old.

The code is usually located in a 'window' on the sidewall and may or may not be located at the end of the DOT number (see image below).



The first two digits of the code represent the week of manufacture of the tyre and the second two digits represent the year of manufacture. In the example above, the tyre was manufactured in week 35 of 2016.

Tyres over 6 years old at the time of test are failed if they are on any axle
Tyres not displaying a date code must also a fail

It is a failure if the:

- tyres on the same axle are different sizes
- tyre:
 - (i) with a cut in excess of the requirements deep enough to reach the ply or cords
 - (ii) with a lump, bulge or tear caused by separation or partial failure of its structure, including any lifting of the tread rubber or with cords exposed or damaged
- Tyre tread depth not in accordance with the requirements
- A tyre fouling a part of the vehicle
- Tyre pressure monitoring system malfunctioning or obviously not working
- A tyre valve seriously damaged or misaligned likely to cause sudden deflation of the tyre
- Tyres obviously under inflated

10. Suspension

Springs

The tester will check the security of a coil spring to the chassis or axle when jacking and lowering the vehicle. If the spring does not correctly locate when the suspension is returned to its normal running position, then it will fail for being insecurely attached.

Unsafe modifications include:

- welded repairs
- the use of excessive heat to highly stressed components
- modifications likely to affect the roadworthiness of the vehicle

It is a failure if the:

- fixings loose to the extent that relative movement is visible
- spring component fractured or seriously weakened

Shock absorbers

A shock absorber will fail if negligible damping effect becomes evident at any point during the inspection.

It is a failure if the:

- shock absorber is:
 - (i) insecurely attached to chassis or axle
 - (ii) missing or likely to become detached
- shock absorber damaged to the extent that it does not function or showing signs of severe leakage
- shock absorber bush excessively worn
- shock absorber which has negligible damping effect
-

Suspension arms, rods, struts, sub-frames, anti-roll bars etc.

Unsafe modifications include:

- welded repairs
- the use of excessive heat to highly stressed components
- modifications likely to affect the roadworthiness of the vehicle

It is a failure if the:

- suspension component is:
 - (i) insecurely attached to chassis or axle
 - (ii) missing, likely to become detached or directional stability impaired
- (iii) excessively damaged or corroded
- (iv) fractured or likely to fail

Suspension joints, pins and bushes

The tester will assess wear or play in spring pins and bushes using

- a small pinch bar

Wear is excessive if play is more than:

- 2mm for a 12mm diameter pin
- 3mm for a 25mm diameter pin
- 10% of the pin diameter for pins over 25mm diameter

Rear axles

It is a failure if the:

- suspension pin, bush, joint or bearing is:
 - (i) excessively worn
 - (ii) likely to become detached
- suspension joint dust cover is:
 - (i) severely deteriorated
 - (ii) missing or no longer prevents the ingress of dirt etc.

11. Body, structure and attachments

Structure and attachments (including exhaust system and bumpers), and body and interior (including doors and catches, seats and floor)

Structure and attachments

General condition

It is a failure if the:

- A main load-bearing structural member is:
 - (i) fractured or deformed such that structural rigidity is significantly reduced
 - (ii) fractured or deformed such that steering, or braking is likely to be adversely affected
- Strengthening plates or fastenings are:
 - (i) insecure
 - (ii) so insecure that structural rigidity is seriously reduced

- Vehicle structure corroded to the extent that:
 - (i) the rigidity of the assembly is significantly reduced
 - (ii) steering or braking is likely to be adversely affected

Exhaust system

It is a failure if the:

- Exhaust system has a major leak or is insecure
- Exhaust fumes:
 - (i) entering cabin
 - (ii) causing a danger to health of persons on board

Fuel system

It is a failure if the:

- Fuel tank, pipe or hose is:
 - (i) insecure
 - (ii) insecure such that there is a risk of fire
- Fuel system is:
 - (i) leaking, or missing or ineffective filler cap
 - (ii) leaking excessively or a risk of fire
- Fuel pipe or hose is:
 - (i) chafing
 - (ii) damaged

Bumpers

It is a failure if the:

- Bumper is:
 - (i) insecure or with damage likely to cause injury when grazed or contacted
 - (ii) likely to become detached
- Bumper is insecure or with damage likely to cause injury when grazed or contacted
- likely to become detached
- Unsightly damage

Spare wheel

The spare wheel should be present, have a minimum of 2mm across the tyre and be correctly inflated. You must also have the correct tools to change the wheel E.G. Jack, wheel brace, locking wheel nut. If a spare wheel cannot be present an approved inflation kit is required and must be in date.

It is a failure if the:

- Tyre below 2mm
- Cut to cords
- Under inflated
- No spare or inflation kit
- Inflation kit out of date or used
- No jack
- No wheel brace or incorrect size for wheel nuts
- Missing locking wheel nut if fitted

- Aerosol type inflation

Transmission

It is a failure if the:

- transmission shaft:
 - (i) securing bolts loose or missing
 - (ii) likely to become detached
- transmission shaft bearing:
 - (i) excessively worn
 - (ii) likely to break up
- transmission shaft constant velocity joint boot:
 - (i) severely deteriorated
 - (ii) missing, split or insecure so that it no longer prevents the ingress of dirt

Engine mountings

Body and interior

Body condition

This inspection is for all vehicles and includes:

- all body panels
- undertrays
- spoilers
- mirror housings

It is a failure if:

- A body panel or body component:
 - (i) damaged or corroded and likely to cause injury when grazed or contacted, or insecure
 - (ii) likely to become detached
- A boot lid, tailgate, dropside, loading door or access panel cannot be secured in the closed position
- Accident damage, deep scratches, or untidy looking vehicle
- Anything that can foul the wheels

Doors and door catches

It is a failure if the:

- A door will not open using the relevant control or close properly
- A door likely to open inadvertently or not remain closed:
 - (i) in the case of a sliding door
- A door hinge, catch or pillar:
 - (i) excessively deteriorated
 - (ii) missing or insecure
 - (iii) Hinge drops when open

Interior

Interior must be clean with no foul odours, torn seats or carpet. Must have no loose or missing trim. Glass must be polished

Floor

It is a failure if the:

- Dirty or holed carpet

Driver's seat

All seats should be in a good condition and clean

There should be adequate leg room for rear seat passengers with the front seats back into a comfortable driving position of an average sized man (6ft)?

It is a failure if the:

- A driver's seat:
 - (i) with a defective structure
 - (ii) insecure
- A driver's seat:
 - (i) fore and aft adjustment mechanism not working as intended
 - (ii) seat moving inadvertently or backrest cannot be retained in the upright position
- Too close to rear seat leaving inadequate leg room

Passenger seats

It is a failure if the:

- A passenger seat:
 - (i) with a defective structure or the backrest cannot be retained in the upright position
 - (ii) insecure
- Seats torn
- Un clean condition

Driving controls

It is a failure if the:

- A driving control necessary for the safe operation of the vehicle:
 - (i) not functioning correctly
 - (ii) not working or functioning such that safe operation of the vehicle is affected

12. Other equipment

Seat belts and restraint systems, airbags, anti-theft devices, horn, speedometer, speed limiter and electronic stability control (ESC) rules and inspection.

Seat belts and supplementary restraint systems (SRS)

Seat belt security

It is a failure if the:

- The strength or continuity of the load bearing structure within 30cm of any seat belt anchorage (a 'prescribed area'):
 - (i) is significantly reduced or inadequately repaired
 - (ii) anchorage likely to become detached in the event of a collision
- Seat belt anchorage loose

Seat belt fitment and condition

It is a failure if the:

- A statutory seat belt missing
- A seat belt:
 - (i) or flexible stalk damaged
 - (ii) webbing or flexible stalk significantly stretched or weakened
- Seat belt not functioning as intended or of an incorrect type
- Seat belt buckle missing, damaged or not functioning as intended
- Seat belt retractor not functioning as intended

Seat belt pre-tensioners

It is a failure if:

- A seat belt pre-tensioner fitted as original equipment obviously missing or deployed

Airbags

This inspection is for all airbags fitted as original equipment.

It is a failure if the:

- An airbag fitted as original equipment obviously missing
- An airbag obviously inoperative

Supplementary restraint system (SRS)

It is a failure if the:

- Steering lock missing or not functioning
- Steering lock inadvertently engaging

Audible warning (horn)

An audible warning must be loud enough to be heard by other road users. For vehicles first used on or after 1 August 1973, the sound emitted must be continuous or uniform. It cannot be harsh or grating.

It is a failure if the:

- Audible warning not working
- Audible warning control insecure
- Audible warning not in accordance with requirements

Speedometer,

It is a failure if the:

- Speedometer not fitted where one is required
- Speedometer:
 - (i) operation impaired
 - (ii) not working
- Speedometer:
 - (i) not sufficiently illuminated
 - (ii) not illuminated

Electronic stability control (ESC)

It is a failure if the:

- Wheel speed sensors missing or damaged
- ESC wiring damaged
- Other ESC component missing or damaged
- ESC switch damaged or not functioning correctly
- ESC MIL indicates a system malfunction

13. Nuisance

Noise, exhaust emissions, engine malfunction indicator lamp (MIL) (sometimes called an engine management light or 'EML'), and fluid leak

Noise suppression system

It is a failure if the:

- Exhaust noise levels in excess of those permitted
- Any part of the noise suppression system:
 - (i) insecure
 - (ii) likely to become detached

14. Other environmental items

Fluid leaks

It is a failure if the:

- Fluid is:
 - (i) leaking and/or likely to harm the environment or to pose a safety risk to other road users
 - (ii) leaking continuously and likely to pose a serious risk to road safety
- Below minimum mark in any fluid level

NO SMOKING / VAPING SIGN

It is a failure if the:

- Sign missing

15. Fire Extinguisher

Fire extinguishers must be at least 1kg and have a readable gauge. They also have a manufacture date, this can be found on the cylinder, neck of the bottle or on a sticker. All extinguishers should be securely fixed inside the vehicle and be of a powder type. Extinguishers need to be refilled after 5 years of manufacture, this will be resealed and re stamped. BS5306 recommends that fire extinguishers are tested by discharge every five years (water foam and powder) and refilled or replaced, and every ten years (CO2).

It is a failure if the:

- Insecure
- Under 1kg in weight
- Under or over charged on the gauge
- Not a powder type
- 5 years after manufacture date without refill seal

16. Taxi meter

The meter should accurately record the time and distance covered. It should be set to charge at the prevailing rate, and this should be accurately reflected by way of charges. The meter should be sealed. Vehicles fitted with a meter will undergo a road test on a marked road.

It is a failure if the:

- Inoperative
- Over charging on marked road
- Not set to correct rate
- Not sealed

17. Road test

On road test you must check for any unfamiliar noises e.g., crunching into gears while driving, whining gearbox, final drive or suspension knock. You must also check for control e.g., steering feels tight and responsive, brakes do not judder or pull to one side. Clutch does not slip on pulling away. You will also check excessive smoke from the exhaust

It is a failure if the:

- Noises when changing gears / crunching or jumping out
- Gearbox / Differential noise
- Suspension knocking
- Excessive steering free play
- Brakes that judder / pull to one side
- Slipping clutch
- Excessive exhaust smoke
- Gearbox that cannot select all gears

18. Roof Sign (Hackney Carriage)

It is a failure if the:

- Not fitted with an illuminated roof sign of a size and design approved by NFDC Council Licensing Office.
- The front of the sign has not a white background and in black letters and is not a minimum of height of 62.5mm and a maximum of 75mm displaying the word 'TAXI'.