



# Minibus Driver Guidelines & Information

(Updated August 2013)

## **Introduction**

It is important that, as a driver, you read and understand these guidelines and use them in conjunction with the Highway Code before driving for GCU Students Association. Remember a driver is directly responsible for all passengers. Be sensible, be safe and don't put anyone at risk by poor driving behaviour.

## **The Driver**

As a minibus driver it is imperative that you ensure you are legally entitled to drive and just as importantly, that you are aware of the responsibility that this places on you.

Before you can drive a minibus on GCU Students' Association activities you must:

- Be over 21 years old
- Be a volunteer
- Have held a UK driving licence for a minimum of 2 years
- Register as a Minibus Driver by completing a driver registration form
- Provide a copy of both parts of your licence
- Agree to notify us of any changes
- Undertake Minibus Driver Training

It is your responsibility to notify the Students' Association if:

- You have an accident
- Receive points on your licence / commit a traffic offence
- Have changes in physical health or start taking medication that could affect your ability to drive
- Your contact details change
- Failure to report any of the above may invalidate insurance cover.

## **Driver Responsibilities**

The responsibility a driver takes on should not be taken lightly. You will be directly responsible for the passengers whilst driving the minibus. As the driver you are also responsible to adhere to regulations regarding minibus driving.

It is the drivers' responsibility to ensure:

- the vehicle is safe and legal
- the safety and comfort of the passengers
- the Highway Code and all associated Road Traffic Acts and licensing regulations are obeyed at all times
- the good treatment of the vehicle
- the completion of the pre journey driver check list
- a valid Section 19 Permit is on display at all times
- that there is a maximum of one passenger per seat
- all doors are unlocked while the vehicle is occupied
- all aisles & exits remain free from obstructions
- no alcohol is consumed in the vehicle
- all passengers are wearing seat belts
- when left, the bus is secured, all windows closed & doors locked and any contents is hidden from sight
- that all vehicle faults or damage are reported to the Students' Association

Drivers have a responsibility for any road traffic offences whilst the vehicle is in their charge, including parking fines and endorsements. If an accident results in injury, or damage to property, this must be reported to police within 24hrs.

Drivers should also be aware that:

- No smoking is allowed on any vehicle
- Minibuses can be overloaded; it's the driver's responsibility that this does not happen.
- When passengers carry luggage this will increase weight and may reduce capacity for seating. All luggage should be stowed out of the way of the access and exit paths.
- Vehicles must only be parked in safe legal and convenient manner
- Vehicles must have all rubbish removed and be in an acceptable condition
- Personal or club/society belongings are not insured when left in vehicles

As a driver you have a duty of care to passengers, pedestrians and other road users in which you must take reasonable steps to prevent or avoid foreseeable harm.

***REMEMBER: The Highway Code states that "every driver is responsible for the vehicle they are driving".***

## Driving a Minibus - Advice

It is often a misconception that driving a minibus is comparable to driving a large car. This is not the case. Driving a minibus is completely different. This section is intended to highlight some basic advice to assist you in being a safe minibus driver.

### Safety

The Driver is ultimately responsible for what happens in a minibus, and for the safety of all passengers.

- Do not allow yourself to be distracted
- You should feel confident and able to make appropriate decisions without being pressured from passengers
- Fatigue is responsible for many road accidents
- Be aware of your limitations
- For longer journeys it is good practice to share the driving
- Take a break 15 minutes for every two hours driving, more if you feel it's necessary

### Space and Speed

- *Defensive Driving Saves Lives* - Keep you and your passengers safe. When you see a hazard developing then hold back. You must be aware of other driver's faults and anticipate the actions of other road users.
- Remember the "Two Second Rule". "Only a fool breaks the two second rule" double in rain, ten times in icy conditions.
- Brake gently; brake early and under full control.
- Speed limits are not targets: Always drive at a speed appropriate to the road and traffic conditions.
- Stop a good distance behind the vehicle in front.
- The extra weight can increase over all stopping distance it's good to anticipate and start easing off the accelerator well before you need to brake
- The centre of gravity will have an effect on the vehicle when cornering and could lead to a loss of control. Slow down before going into a bend "read the road".

## Speed Limits

	Built up area	Single Carriageway	Dual Carriageway	Motorway
Car	30	60	70	70
Van	30	50	60	70
<b>Minibus</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>

All minibuses are fitted with a speed limiter and are not permitted to enter the fast lane of a motorway with three or more lanes.

## Steering

Don't spin the wheel back; feed it through your hands. Try not to change gear at the same time as trying to steer. Holding the speed steady will allow you to change gear and steer under full control. On slippery surfaces, use only slow and gentle manoeuvres.

## Observation and Anticipation

Observation, concentration and anticipation are important skills when driving. With forward observation you can anticipate the actions of others. Done early enough this will enable you to brake under control and therefore safely. Use engine braking when you can.

## The Vehicle Size

- Know the height and width of the vehicle, keep clear of kerbs, street furniture etc. Foliage could be far more substantial than it looks.
- Get acquainted with the use of the mirrors. You will find yourself relying on them far more than when driving a car. Remember convex mirrors make things look further away than they are.
- Give cyclists and pedestrians plenty of room when passing, more than you would give in a car.
- Because a minibus is longer, it is necessary to be more careful with positioning.
- When turning left, don't take it too tight. Check your near side mirror for cyclists, and the kerb. You may need to adjust your position on approach.
- If you are unfamiliar with a vehicle and controls ask for some familiarisation before journey

## **Mirrors and Blind Spots**

- The view from the rear of a minibus, which is full of passengers, can be very limited
- Side mirrors should be used to ensure adequate vision at all time
- Beware of vehicles (and objects when reversing) concealed within the large blind spot directly behind a minibus
- Ask a responsible passenger to guide you backwards from outside the vehicle if it is safe for them to do so

## **The Journey**

- Allow plenty of time for your journey. It is better to arrive earlier than expected after a leisurely drive. Do not be rushed, if it looks as though you will arrive late, then arrive late.
- Work out your route before you start, included stops for yourself and your passengers.
- Make yourself aware of emergency contact numbers (in the vehicle folder).
- Agree suitable departure and arrival locations and always stop to pick up/ set down on the correct side of the road. Make sure the handbrake is on and the gear lever in neutral, when passengers are entering or exiting vehicle. If anything goes wrong it is your responsibility

## **Section 19 Small Bus Permits**

GCU Students' Association minibuses are operated under Section 19 Small Bus Permits. The Permits allow a non-profit making organisation to charge for transport services, e.g. if a club / society charges members for a trip which will include transport.

Your driving licence does not enable you to drive a minibus unless you display a Section 19 Permit in the windscreen.

The permits are given to you by the Students' Association for every journey, kept in a clear folder and should always be displayed on the windscreen.

## **Bus Lanes**

Bus lanes may be used by vehicles with more than 8 seats (excluding the driver), unless the word 'local' appears on the bus symbol, sign or road, in which case only the local bus service can use the lane.

## **Mobile Phones**

As the driver you must NOT use a mobile phone whilst driving at any time. To use your mobile phone: pull over and stop in a safe location and turn off the engine of the vehicle.

## **Seat Belts**

Seat belts must be worn by all passengers were fitted, drivers are held responsible for passengers aged 14 and under

## **Vehicle Cleanliness**

It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the vehicle is left in an acceptable condition after use. Failure to adhere to this may result in future minibus use being withdrawn.

## **Vehicle Roadworthiness**

Before you drive the vehicle you should ensure the vehicle is roadworthy. Remember, the driver can be held personally responsible for the vehicle they are driving.

Outside the vehicle check the tyres look to be inflated correctly and that there is ample tread over the whole of the visible area of the tyre. Lift the bonnet and check the oil and fluids.

Inside the vehicle check the wipers, lights and horn work correctly. Check that you have a fire extinguisher and first aid kit. Check that the mirrors are fully functional, correctly set and clean enough to see easily through. All dashboard-warning lights should be checked and the spare tyre should be in its stowage at the back of the vehicle together with the tools.

## **Accident Procedure**

- In the event of an accident drivers must always stop. Passengers are more important than property and a driver's first priority is to the safety of passengers. If required arrange for the emergency services to be contacted immediately. If appropriate move uninjured passengers away from the vehicle and away from traffic and await arrival of emergency services.

- Drivers involved in an incident must exchange details, if someone is injured, or property damaged and particulars cannot be exchanged, driver must report to the Police within 24 hours.
- Do not admit liability as this may affect insurance cover.
- If a driver is using a hire drive vehicle and it is not roadworthy after an accident use the emergency vehicle recovery number listed below and the vehicle and passengers should be uplifted and taken to your destination or returned to Glasgow.
- In the event of a serious emergency, contact the university on 0141 331 3787 to report the incident.
- After an accident contact GCU Students' Association as soon as possible on 0141 331 3886 or call into reception to make a report.

### **Breakdown Procedure**

- Passengers are more important than property and a driver's first priority is to the safety of passengers. On motorways: passengers should leave the vehicle *unless* at more danger outside. Other roads: passengers should stay inside vehicle - seat belts on - *unless* there is a safer place nearby.
- Contact the Breakdown Recovery Service, phone no listed below. Should the vehicle not be repairable at the roadside then the vehicle and passengers should be uplifted and taken to your destination or returned to Glasgow.
- After a breakdown or accident contact GCU Students' Association as soon as possible on 0141 331 3886 or call into reception to report the incident.

### **Breakdown & Accident Assistance**

**Vehicle Emergency Number:  
0800 389 1708**

**Policy Number:  
M0000108MBPZ**

Glasgow Caledonian University  
Students' Association  
70 Cowcaddens Road  
Glasgow  
G4 OBA

**0141 331 3886**  
(9am-5pm, Mon-Fri)