



ACTIVITIES

MINIBUS HANDBOOK

September 2016

brunelstudents.com



Contents

	Page
Introduction to the Union & Handbook	3
The Union Minibuses & External Hire	3
Who can legally drive Minibuses / Hire Cars	4
Insurance & Non-UK Drivers	4/5
Booking a minibus & testing	5
Costs	6
Collection of keys	6
Checks	7
Driving safely & legally	8
Charges – Parking, Speeding	9
Charges – Congestion, Dartford	9
Driving 'Green'	10
Important General Information	10
In case of accident	11
In case of breakdown	11
Return of keys	11
Vehicle damages	12
Passenger Etiquette	12
Fines	13

Important Contact Numbers

Student Union Reception	01895 269269
Student Activities	01895 266061 or 266900
Student Activities out of hours	07902 992237
University Security	01895 255786



Introduction to the Union and Handbook

The Union of Brunel Students is the main representative body of students here at Brunel University and aims to represent all bodies. We value Excellence, Democracy, Equality, Integrity and Empowerment across all areas of the Union.

About the Handbook

The handbook has been produced as a means of fully communicating all the ins and outs of the Minibus system that currently runs without the Union. We want the guide to serve as information regarding rules, guidelines and policies that need to be followed when hiring either a Union hired vehicle or an external vehicle, as hired through the Union. The Handbook is designed for both students and staff.

The Handbook has been designed after many years of there being not enough information communicated consistently throughout the year and serves as a permanent guide to ensure the safety of both the drivers and vehicles. Through following this guide we hope to ensure that all vehicles are returned as they were hired out and not to run up any unnecessary costs.

This guide is especially important to all Chairs of Clubs & Societies as it sets out all the guidelines for the upcoming year and beyond. Please ensure that all regular drivers are fully aware of everything in the guide, especially important numbers and costs, and that any potential new drivers are fully clued up before they book a minibus.

Current Union Vehicles

The Union currently leases the following vehicles;

4x 14 seater minibuses

1x 9 seater people carrier

The hiring of the vehicles is through the Union finances and therefore costs for damages and fuel are done so centrally. The publication of this Handbook serves as a way of ensuring that not only are the minibuses looked after but that there are no financial issues that occur throughout the year. The insurance on the vehicles are covered by the Union and therefore the set price is for both staff and students. The Union leased vehicles are open to all students who are members of a Sports Club or Society, as long as the hire is solely for the purpose of a fixture or event. The Union holds the right to cancel any bookings which do not run in line with this and will give priority to certain events, such as BUCS Wednesday and SSHH Bus.



Who can legally drive Union Minibuses?

All Union & hired vehicles MUST be driven not for hire or reward e.g. you will never charge your passengers to be in the vehicle whilst you are driving. The vehicle will solely be used as a means to get the passengers to and from the event. The legal guidelines, as laid out on the [government website](#), are as follows (for a 14 – 16 seater minibus);

- 21 years or older
- Have held a CLEAN driving licence for at least 2 years
- The maximum weight allowance is less than 3.5 tonnes

The Union will, where we see fit, ensure that you have completed a compulsory Minibus competency test. The tests last around 45 minutes are designed to ensure that those driving the vehicles understand the size restraints of the minibuses and special awareness. In regards to the 9 seater vehicle, the requirements change slightly and only require the driver to have **held a CLEAN licence for 1 year** and preferably be over the **age of 19**. We also offer competency driving tests for those who feel unsure when driving any of the vehicles.

Non-UK drivers

Non-UK drivers MUST contact Student Activities in advance as our Insurance providers require us to fill out a non-standard driver procedure form. We will ask you to fill out this form a minimum of 10 days before your required use of the vehicle and this will be sent to our Insurance providers who will advise us further. In some cases the Insurance Company will not provide cover and we will do our best to ensure that you are able to reach your destination however we would always advise looking at suitable options alongside this. Please see below for more information regarding what information you will need to supply in order to drive legally.

Insurance

All drivers who use the Union leased vehicles will be covered by the Students Union Endsleigh Insurance, of which details can be found through getting in touch with the Student Activities Team. PLEASE NOTE – only the Student Union leased vehicles are covered 24/7 by the Union and only for staff and students of Brunel University & the Union of Brunel Students. If your driver is not a registered student or member of staff you must make this clear to us at the time of booking as we will have to check with the Insurance company about the legal logistics.

If you are hiring a vehicle and it is not a Union leased one, you will be charged for us to insure the vehicle based on the number of days. The charge per day often changes based on the Insurance Company however 1 day starts from around £19, £28 for 2 days and £38 for 3 days. Where possible we will let you know the exact cost before the start of the hire, especially if you are hiring as a Society or as a University department.



Non Standard Drivers

The Students Union Endsleigh Insurance covers all drivers over the age of 21 with a licence for 2 years however if you do not fit this criteria you may be asked to fill out a referral form. There are exceptions however that does not require referral such as if you are under 21 and/or hold a full licence for 2 years (for full details please see the next page). Please ensure that you inform Student Activities if you do not fulfil the criteria as you will be driving illegally on the Union insurance and therefore could face legal action.

Booking a Minibus

From September 2016 onwards ALL minibus bookings must be done through the booking system on the Union of Brunel Students website. The link can be found at www.brunelstudents.com/activities and can either be filled out by the driver or the organiser however the keys will only be given to those whose names appear on the form. Booking can be done by both staff and students however we will use our system to ensure that the booking is being used for the right department / student group. Please note – from the 1st September 2016 you must complete the minibus booking form prior to booking as we have had issues in the past from emails not being delivered. Once we receive your booking form we will email to confirm this and will send a further email when it is booked in on the system and what the registration of the vehicle is.

Testing

The Student Union policy in regards to student drivers is that they are allowed to drive up to 9 seater vehicles without any testing, so long as they meet the legal guidelines (as seen above). In regards to 14 seater minibuses however the Students Union sees fit to ensure that all student drivers are subject to a competency test that will be used as a decider as to whether or not the Student Union allow that person / club use of the minibus. The test itself should not come as a complete surprise to many drivers as the main areas to be assessed are spatial awareness, confidence in driving and parking. These tests have to be booked through Student Activities team and are compulsory for all students who wish to drive, except those whose names are already on the approved Union list. Any club, society or person found driving a minibus without prior testing can not only face legal action (if doing so illegally) but may also face punishment from the Union should we see fit. Please note – this is not an official government recognised licence and only as a means to track exactly which drivers have been approved by the Union.



Costs

The Union is able to hire out vehicles to any club, society or University department as long as a relevant booking form is filled out within the right period of time. There is however different costings involved based on who is hiring.

Clubs – Clubs have their own grant account dedicated to transport and therefore costs regarding vehicle hire will be automatically deducted out of the account after the completion of hire. If you are part of a club but using the vehicle for personal use, you **MUST** let us know in the original booking. Failure to do so may result in a fine (see page 13).

Societies – As societies only have a function account, you must arrange for money to be paid into the account in order to cover the costs. In special circumstances, Student Activities may fund transport however without written consent this will not be the case for the vast majority of hires.

University departments / staff – University departments need to raise a purchase order with Student Activities in order to use any of the vehicles through the Union. Student Activities will then raise an invoice once the hire has been completed.

Claims for fuel – As a student driver you are allowed to claim the fuel back for any trips made using a Union hired vehicle. To do so you must retain ALL receipts from refuelling – we are able to claim back any VAT expenditure and therefore a customer copy is not sufficient enough and you may not be able to claim back money without one. To claim back you need to fill out the relevant petty cash form (yellow for club, blue for society) and bring this to Student Activities within 1 week of the hire.

Collection of keys

As previously mentioned in this document, only the driver or organiser of the vehicle will have the ability to collect the keys from the Union. The point of collection will be the Student Activities office unless you have been told otherwise. You should aim to collect the keys at least 30 minutes before your departure, especially if you are using them on a BUCS Wednesday as the office gets very busy beforehand. If your hire is not between the hours of 9am – 5pm we will arrange for the keys to be dropped off at a convenient location so that you will be able to collect without any hassle. In these circumstances we may ask for you to collect the day before however the cost of the hire will only be limited to your use on the day and therefore costs such as insurance will only cover the next day and the vehicle should not be used prior to this. If keys need to be collected from the Security office you must show your student or staff ID and identify the nature of your use otherwise you will not be able to collect the keys. Where possible we will ensure that all vehicles are left in the Hamilton car park however if they are not we will let you know beforehand. From September onwards now only will you need to collect a minibus hire form but also a minibus checklist sheet. The hire form needs to be filled out after the journey whereas the checklist needs to be filled out before you leave. Please ensure that both of these are returned without issue when you return the hire keys.



Checks

As noted in the previous paragraph, from September 2016 a number of checks will have to be undertaken before your use of the vehicle. This is to not only ensure that there are no faults or damages to the vehicle beforehand but also to make sure that if there are that we do not wrongly charge the wrong student or staff. The driver of the vehicle must go through this checklist before they set off and notify the Student Activities office immediately should there be any issues whatsoever. You should phone either **01895 266900** or **01895 266061** and we will do our utmost best to make sure one of the Student Activities team can assess the damage beforehand. If we feel that the damage is sufficient enough to warrant keeping the vehicle off the road we will let you know. If you feel that the condition of the vehicle is unsatisfactory and a danger to drive without needing a further check-up, please contact (Check Number). Please ensure that you note every possible bit of detail and alert a member of Union staff or phone Union Reception (**01895 269269**) so that they are able to log this with our finance office.

If your vehicle has been hired externally they will have been checked before Student Activities have signed for and therefore should not have any issues that the office hasn't already been made aware of. IF you do feel the state of the vehicle differs after doing your own pre-checks then please use the same numbers as above to get in contact with Student Activities and we will assess this further. You must ensure with externally hired vehicles that all the elements of safety are within the vehicle (first aid kit, fire extinguisher) as well as important extras such as parking permits.

Please see below for the checks that need to be undertaken – these will be noted on a separate sheet when your hire begins and must be returned when your hire ends;

External Checks	Internal Checks
Windows & Windscreen Intact	Permits & Tax Discs
All Windows Intact	Fire Extinguisher & First Aid Kit
Tyre Tread & Pressure	No Internal Damage
Doors Open & Close Properly	Brakes Work
No Bodywork Damage	
All Lights Working Properly	

If you fail to perform these checks and the vehicle returns in a condition different to what has been previously reported, we will have no choice but to believe that it was your use of the vehicle that resulted in the condition. Where appropriate will we see fit to fine the driver or organiser and this may directly affect future use of the minibus. This will be decided by staff from Student Activities.



Driving safely & legally

Listed below is a series of UK guidelines for driving that must be followed at all times. If you have any queries with any of these please let the Student Activities office know.

Alcohol: Drivers must not consume any alcohol or drugs prior to driving.

Weight limit: It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle does not exceed the maximum weight limit of 3500kg. As a rough guide the vehicles are about 2000kg allowing 100kg per person including their entire luggage.

Driving on Campus: the speed limit on the Campus road is between 5mph and 20mph - if the University Security observe you/catch you on camera breaking this speed limit, you will be fined.

Watch your Speed: Drivers must observe speed limits at all times. The MAXIMUM speed, which vans may travel at, is: **Built-up Area** 30mph **Single carriageway** 50mph **Dual Carriageway** 60mph. From January 2007 all minibuses have been fitted with a speed limiter which will restrict the max speed to 60mph. Speed limited vehicles should not travel in the 3rd lane of a 3 lane motorway.

Passengers: It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the passenger limit is not exceeded (one passenger per seat), and to inform the passengers that they must behave in a responsible manner.

Seat belts: It is the driver's responsibility to inform all passengers that they must wear seat belts. The driver must check that all passengers are wearing these, and should not start the bus until all the passengers have done so. The driver has the right to ask any passenger not complying with this to leave the bus. However, if the police stop a vehicle, and passengers are found not to be wearing seat belts, the passengers will be held individually responsible and will be charged by the police.

Safe loading: Any equipment carried in a minibus must be securely fastened, so that it will not cause any injuries if, for example, the Driver braked suddenly.

Breaks: No Driver should drive stints of - more than 2 hours without a 15 minute break - more than 4 hours without at least a 1 hour break - more than 8 hours in any one day (24 hours). This is reduced to 4 hours if the driver is also working or playing sport as well as driving. Where possible, change to another licensed Driver.

Rough Terrain: Minibuses must not be driven through rough, hazardous and unsuitable terrain (e.g. off-road surfaces, the sea, etc.)

Damage to Buses: If the vehicle is damaged whilst in your possession, you need to be aware that costs of the repairs may be charged to the group hiring the bus (normally internal damage) or to the driver (where it can be shown to be their fault).

Mobile phones: Mobile phones must not be used at all whilst driving union vehicles containing passengers (failure to comply will result in fines and a disciplinary). You will only be contacted using it in an emergency or if you are late returning a vehicle.



Charges

Whilst the vehicles are Union owned, or in some cases an external company, the responsibility for all fines and charges comes down ultimately to either the driver or the organiser. The Union will not pay for any tickets, such as Parking & Speeding, out of our own budget and therefore any tickets will be passed onto the driver and/or organiser to ensure that there are either paid or appealed. Where possible we will arrange for the ticket to be placed into your own name, as opposed to the Union itself.

Parking

Parking tickets ARE your own responsibility and the Union will not be liable for any parking tickets, whether they have been issued on campus or not. Please do your utmost best to check all parking signs where you are parked, especially on campus, as you will often not be able to appeal any tickets where signs are clearly visible. Union vehicles will only have parking permits valid for red dot areas in the University grounds and you should consult the main University reception if there are any issues regarding where to park. Externally hired vehicles will have their own temporary permits and these MUST be displayed at all times in the University grounds. Failure to do will result in not only a parking fine but also an admin fee from the external company, both of which must be paid for by either the driver or the organiser. Failure to do so will lead to further action (please see below).

Speeding

Speeding tickets will once again be the responsibility of the driver or organiser who must arrange for payment to be made. If it is a Union vehicle we will contact the issuer and your details will be passed onto the company, therefore removing all liability from the Union. If it is an externally hired vehicle you will once again be liable to pay for the admin fee that is set by them as well as any further payments. Please note – any speeding tickets issued on your driving licence may impact your ability to drive under the Union insurance. If this is the case then please let Student Activities know ASAP so due action can be undertaken.

Congestion Charge

If your journey takes you in the Congestion Charge zone you must check this beforehand and notify Student Activities. The driver and/or organiser is responsible for paying the correct amount before or after their journey and any penalties that occur from a failure to do must be paid in full by you. The Union is not liable for any of these charges and failure to pay the correct amount could mean losing out on future bookings and recovery of any costs to the Union through a third party.

Dartford Crossing

Similarly to the Congestion Charge, the driver or organiser is liable for all charges if your journey takes you via this route. Please note – you cannot pay at the barriers anymore and therefore must arrange to make payment online. Failure to do so will result in a larger charge, which must be covered by you.



Driving 'Green'

- Easy does it: drive smoothly, accelerate gently and read the road ahead to avoid unnecessary braking.
- Decelerate smoothly: when you have to slow down or to stop, decelerate smoothly by releasing the accelerator in time, leaving the minibus in gear.
- Rolling: if you can keep the minibus moving all the time, so much the better; stopping then starting again uses more fuel than rolling.
- Change up earlier: try changing up at an engine speed of around 2,000 rpm in a diesel minibus or around 2,500 rpm in a petrol minibus.
- Turn it off: electrical loads increase fuel consumption, so turn off your heated rear windscreen, demister blowers and headlights, when you don't need them.
- Stick to speed limits: the faster you go the greater the fuel consumption and pollution. Driving at 70mph uses up to 9% more fuel than at 60mph and up to 15% more than at 50mph. Cruising at 80mph can use up to 25% more fuel than at 70mph.
- Don't be idle: if you do get caught in a queue, avoid wasting fuel – turn the engine off if it looks like you could be waiting for more than three minutes.
- Check tyre pressures: A 2-psi drop in pressure can increase fuel consumption up to 3%.

Important general information

Whilst on campus, you must be aware of the various University rules in regards to driving and parking. Should you be seen as failing to do so, you will be charged by the University and may face further fines by the Union.

Fuel – All Union minibuses are diesel engines and failure to fill up accordingly can result in not only a fine but also further damages to the vehicle. Please ensure you are fully aware if any vehicle you hire through the Union isn't diesel and should you accidentally fill up wrong, please inform Student Activities as soon as possible.

You will be expected to return the minibus to the fuel level given to you, without exception. If you know that you do not have enough money to cover you must visit the Finance Office and arrange for money to be taken from your club / society account in order to fund this. The office will only accept signed proof from Student Activities for this expenditure and it will only cover the cost of the fuel receipt. If you are seen to have not used the full claimed amount you will be liable for further action.



In case of Accident

Please follow the steps below:

1. The law requires you to stop if there is injury or damage to any person, vehicle or property including animals such as dogs and horses.
2. Make sure you and all passengers are safe.
3. **DON'T** accept liability for the accident.
4. Call police if appropriate. Record the name, number and station of attending officers.
5. Take photos of the vehicles/damage to all vehicles.
6. Take witness details and contact details.
7. Take contact details, registration and insurance details of all parties involved. If you believe the driver is uninsured or stolen, please photograph the driver, if safe to do so.
8. Write down details of the accident.
9. If you need towing, seek breakdown details overleaf.
10. Contact Student Activities on **01895 266061** or **07902 992237** if appropriate.
11. **Make sure to hand in your vehicle hire form and any supporting statements no later than 24 hours later to Student Activities.**

In case of Breakdown

- Contact Student Activities on **01895 266061** or **07902 992237**
- Call RAC on **08448 913809** (24 hour hotline) or **0844 800 1980** (Kendall Recovery Service) – please note the registration of the vehicle and our name (Union of Brunel Students)
- Measham's Self Drive Account reference number **BRU001**
Measham's Self Drive Telephone number **0208 578 6858**
They will call out recovery for you
- If you are getting towed, IF possible get the minibus to: **Car Care Service Centre, Chesterfield Way, Hayes, UB3 3NW** where it can be repaired. If out of hours, leave it on their forecourt and put keys through the letter box. If not, return to the minibus bays at Brunel and return keys to the letterbox at the Unions annex.

Return of keys

Once your hire of the vehicle is done, you must return the keys straight away. Failure to do so may result in a fine as keys are often needed in a short space of time e.g. on Wednesdays they MUST be returned as they will be used on the SSHH bus service. If we find that you are using a Union vehicle to run any errands or trips that do not directly link to your hire use then you will face questions and the possible temporary ban on using any vehicles.

Keys need to be returned to the Student Activities office ASAP after your hire has ended. If the office isn't open you have 2 options; either return the keys through the letterbox in the Annexe (next to the Hamilton parking lot) or hand them over to the student staff in Locos bar. You MUST sign your name in at the bar and hand in both sets of sheets for records. Failure to do so may result in any additional damages being charged to you as opposed to the correct group.



Damage to a Vehicle caused by Driver

If the damage caused to the vehicle can be attributed to the driver, they will be held responsible for it by The Union. This also covers putting petrol in diesel vans and damage caused by empty fuel tanks. If you notice damage before the start of hire and do not make Student Activities aware of this we will hold you responsible for any damages upon its next inspection.

Damage caused by passengers

Passengers causing any damage to the Minibuses will be fined and where individual blame can be placed we will do so. If it is impossible to blame just one individual, we will have no choice but to blame the entire group and you will have to cover the costs between the groups if one person does not own up. Costs of the repairs may be charged to the group hiring the bus (normally internal damage) or to the driver (where it can be shown to be their fault). Admin costs may occur from external companies for the charge of valeting and then additional payment would need to be made to cover both this and the valeting charge.

Passenger Etiquette

Irresponsible behaviour: Fines will be issued for passengers found to be behaving irresponsibly (behaviour that may cause distress or danger to other passengers or the driver), and not following instruction of the driver (if it is deemed a punishable offence).

Seat belts: All passengers must wear seat belts. If the police stop a vehicle, and adult passengers are found not to be wearing seat belts, they will be held individually responsible and will be charged by the police.

Smoking: The buses are no smoking zones. Any evidence of such will result in the guilty parties being fined. Where the guilty party is not easily identifiable, the group who has hired out the bus will be fined.

Drinking: No drinking of alcohol is allowed on the bus. Any evidence of such will result in the guilty parties being fined. Where the guilty party is not easily identifiable, the group who has hired out the bus will be fined.



Fines

From September 2016 onwards, fines will be introduced to both organisers and drivers in order to ensure that people do not regularly misuse vehicles and we do not charge the wrong groups. As with all fines you have the ability to argue against it however it may affect your ability to hire vehicles in the future if you are found guilty and have said you are not. Please see below for a list of the most common fines however the list is not exhaustive and fines may be applied for any circumstances that the Union sees fit.

Offence	Fine – First Offence	Fine – Second Offence	Action taken
Accident – resulting in insurance claim (driver’s fault)	Up to £200 plus drivers excess	Up to £200 plus drivers excess	Up to £200 plus drivers excess
Damage to vehicle external or internal through other faults (e.g. leaving vehicle dirty)	Maintenance cost (£25 minimum)	Maintenance cost (£50 minimum)	Club/Society ban after 3 rd offence
Not returning vehicle with the correct amount of fuel	£20	£50	Club/Society ban after 3 rd offence
Failure to use vehicle for correct booking or the return of keys late	£25	£25	Club/Society ban after 3 rd offence
Speeding fines or parking tickets issued	Full payment of ticket & admin fees (if applicable)	Full payment of ticket & admin fees (if applicable)	Club/Society ban after 3 rd offence
Loss of keys or any other minibuss items	Maintenance cost (£20 minimum)	Maintenance cost (£50 minimum)	Club/Society ban after 3 rd offence
Evidence of smoking or drinking in the vehicle	Maintenance cost + £10	Maintenance cost + £20	Club/Society ban after 3 rd offence