

RAC Approved Garages Customer Charter and Code of Conduct



RAC Quality Guaranteed

Your vehicle is in safe hands

RAC have been serving motorists since 1897 and as the motorist's champion, we aim to provide you with a network of garages you can trust.

We know that it's not easy to find a trustworthy garage that provides quality work. How can you be sure you've got a good deal, with quality work at a fair price?

RAC Approved Garages is a national network of service and repair garages that adhere to the RAC Customer Charter and Code of Conduct. We inspect our garages every year to make sure you get the very best service. We also make certain that RAC Approved Garages are demonstrating compliance with this code and are running their business in a professional manner.

The RAC Customer Charter ensures that you will receive....

- **Honest pricing**
All work will be explained clearly and the costs will be transparent
- **Quality work**
Work carried out will meet the high standard set by the RAC
- **Exceptional customer service**
You'll always find the service friendly, straightforward and jargon free

When you use an RAC Approved Garage we expect you to receive the same great service that our patrols deliver to our members. Through our network of garages you can be confident that:

- All repairs will be agreed between you and the garage at the outset
- All RAC Approved Garages will undergo a formal compliance check on a yearly basis
- No requests will be made for deposits or pre-payment for any work
- The work is carried out in accordance with your manufacturer's warranty
- All repairs are carried out to a high standard
- Any additional work required will be explained and agreed with you prior to commencement of work

This is underpinned through a code of conduct that all garages sign up to and are contractually bound to follow.

Customer Code of Conduct

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Your Booking

1. The garage will provide you with a choice of times so that you can choose a time that is convenient to you, within the garages normal opening times. The garage will collect contact details to enable them to contact you to discuss any changes to your booking or agreed work.
2. The garage will be available to take phone calls or discuss your vehicle service and repair requirements in person, and will take into account any personal circumstances and difficulties that you may have.
3. The garage will advise if they need time to assess your vehicle further to be able to detail how long a service or repair may take. They will then be able to offer a quotation for the work to be carried out. There are some circumstances where only an estimate can be given, as further diagnosis work may be required to identify an underlying problem with the vehicle.
4. If diagnosis is required, the garage will make you aware of any initial costs and not go above this without prior notification. If you do not wish for any other work to be carried out then you can cancel and only pay for the work carried out up to this point. If parts originally agreed have been fitted then you will be liable for these.
5. The garage will use a recognised industry garage management system to quote how long it will take to service or repair your vehicle.
6. Once the garage has confirmed how long the service or repair will take, the garage will offer a repair time and date convenient for you. If necessary, the garage will agree a 'drop off time' of the vehicle by you so that delivery of parts or specialist services can be completed prior to the agreed repair time slot.
7. If you have a warranty or insurance product for your vehicle that may cover your repair, and you inform the garage, supplying them with the necessary details, the garage will ensure it follows the terms and conditions of such policy. The garage may need to ask for further details from you to support the claim. The garage will not tell you to pay any excess and claim unless the policy allows this and the garage has ensured the repair is covered.
8. The garage will notify you at least 24 hours before your booking if they are unable to fulfil the agreed booking, and offer a new time and date that's convenient for you.

9. The garage will ensure any marketing or advertising campaigns are not misleading and will comply with guidance laid out by any law abiding codes of practice covering these subjects.
10. The garage will help explain any offers in place and ensure you understand any conditions that apply to any offers or marketing.
11. No customer details will be shared or passed on to any third party company without your prior permission.
12. The garage should not recommend the services of any third party agent that is involved with claims farming, or financial companies that are not regulated.

Work undertaken on your vehicle

1. The garage will ensure they look after your vehicle to the best of their ability during the period of time it is with them. The garage will carry out a prior inspection of your vehicle to check for any previous damage and will keep detailed records of their findings.
2. If a delivery or collection service is provided, the garage will record the mileage at the time the vehicle is handed over.
3. The garage reception and/or waiting areas (including MOT viewing) should be clean, safe and tidy.
4. The garage will keep your vehicle locked at all times when outside the workshop and will ensure it is kept clean by using seat covers and floor mats.
5. Your vehicle will only be taken on a test drive by qualified personnel and will not be used for any other purpose.
6. The garage will start to carry out the agreed service or repair at the agreed time. They will make every effort to ensure your vehicle is ready for collection as agreed, however from time to time issues may arise such as seized parts or failed delivery from the supplier, resulting in the service or repair being delayed. In this case, the garage will inform you as soon as possible.
7. Work will be carried out by trained personnel and a quality check must take place to ensure all work has been carried out as requested. Work carried out by a trainee/apprentice will be monitored and then must be approved by a qualified member of staff.

8. Replacement parts used will be of a high quality and will be at least an OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) Standard. This means the part will be of at least the specification of what was originally fitted by the manufacturer. This also ensures garages comply with Block Exemption Regulation European Economic Community Commission Regulation 461/2010, which means any warranty on a vehicle will not be invalidated.
 9. If requested, replaced parts will be retained for your inspection on collection of your vehicle. The garage will make you aware of the warranty period on any parts and labour.
 10. Servicing will be carried out to manufacturer's standard for all vehicles still within the warranty period and will be correctly documented in your service book, as long as you inform the garage of such cover.
 11. All servicing or repairs carried out will be covered with 12 months guarantee or 12,000 miles (whichever comes soonest) unless explicitly explained and documented by the garage, for which you will receive a copy. Where required the garage must also explain why the guarantee period is different to an Original Equipment Manufacturer Standard part.
 12. The garage will ensure the workshop area is adequately equipped for the types of work they accept to carry out. The workshop will also be suitably maintained and free of risk to staff and customers alike.
 13. The garage shall operate a professional business in an environmentally friendly manner.
4. The garage will confirm the payment methods available and when payment is expected.
 5. The garage will not ask you to pay for work up front.
 6. On collection/delivery of the vehicle, the garage will provide a concise invoice, detailing the following:
 - a. The elements of the repair or service carried out *
 - b. The time charged to carry out repairs or service *
 - c. The hourly labour rates (this should not exceed the hourly rate on display at the garage) *
 - d. Parts used
 - e. Cost of parts *
 - f. Advisory notes of any issues found with the vehicle whilst carrying out the repair or service.

* Unless published menu pricing is offered by the garage

Garage Staff

1. All garage staff will be trained in the RAC Customer Charter and Code of Conduct.
2. All garage staff will make the RAC Customer Charter and Code of Conduct available to you at any time you request this.
3. All garage staff are to treat you and your vehicle with respect and professionalism at all times.
4. All garage staff will communicate free of jargon, and in a way that is clear and non-technical.
5. All garage staff will be competent to carry out the work required or be supervised during any training periods. They are required to:
 - a. Have relevant motor mechanical qualifications, such as City & Guilds, NVQ; or
 - b. Have motor dealership training with experience; or
 - c. Have at least 4 years mechanical experience in general service and repair garages;
 - d. The garage must be able to demonstrate that the mechanics have the relevant capabilities.

Cost & Charges

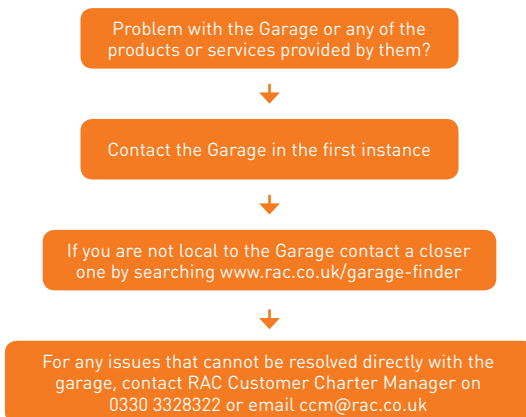
1. The garage will make you aware of any specialist services and charges that may be required on your vehicle.
2. The garage will clearly explain an estimate or quotation of the charges you should expect, detailing labour, parts and consumables inclusive of VAT.
3. The garage will notify you of any changes to the original estimate (the estimated cost of work) or quotation (the actual cost of work) as soon as the garage is aware. The garage will delay the work and will not undergo any work that requires additional costs unless you have given your full consent.

- e. Any new employees must be assessed and signed-off as competent, and until this is done all work completed by a new employee is to be signed-off by a suitable person who represents the garage.
6. Where apprentices are employed they must be supervised by a suitably qualified mechanic and all work carried out must be checked and signed-off by a suitable person who represents the garage, prior to the vehicle being released to the customer. If garage staff notice a problem when working on your vehicle they will make you aware as soon as possible.
7. Garage staff will not make you feel obliged to agree to work other than what was agreed at the time of the booking. However, they will point out any defects that could compromise the safety to you or anybody else, including advising you not to drive the vehicle.
3. The garage will identify if you can drive the vehicle safely to them, so that they can investigate the problem.
4. If you are not local to the original repairing garage, they may ask you to attend another RAC Approved Garage to support the rectification of the problem. Your nearest RAC Approved Garage can be found on www.rac.co.uk/garage-finder.
5. The original repairing garage will support the liaison between you and the supporting garage.
6. If the initial repair or service is not found to be at fault, the garage will inform you if any diagnosis time will be required and whether this is chargeable.
7. The garage will not charge you the diagnosis fee if a service or repair is at fault.
8. If your problem is not with the vehicle but you feel you have received bad service, please contact the garage and ask to speak to the nominated customer service manager.

How to solve a problem

1. If you believe that a service has not been completed correctly or a repair is faulty, you must contact the garage in the first instance, detailing your concerns.
2. The garage will ensure that their customer facing staff are given sufficient authority to resolve any complaint promptly and courteously before it escalates. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the garage is also obliged to have someone suitable to act as a customer service manager, who will manage complaints that have been escalated.
9. If you request someone else to deal with a complaint on your behalf, you are required to give the garage permission to liaise with your nominated person; the garage will treat this person in the same way as they would deal with you directly.
10. If you feel your complaint and/or issues have not been resolved then RAC will offer a "conciliation service", which means RAC will appoint a customer charter manager to listen to your concerns. If required they will work with the garage to understand if the service you have received was within our standards.

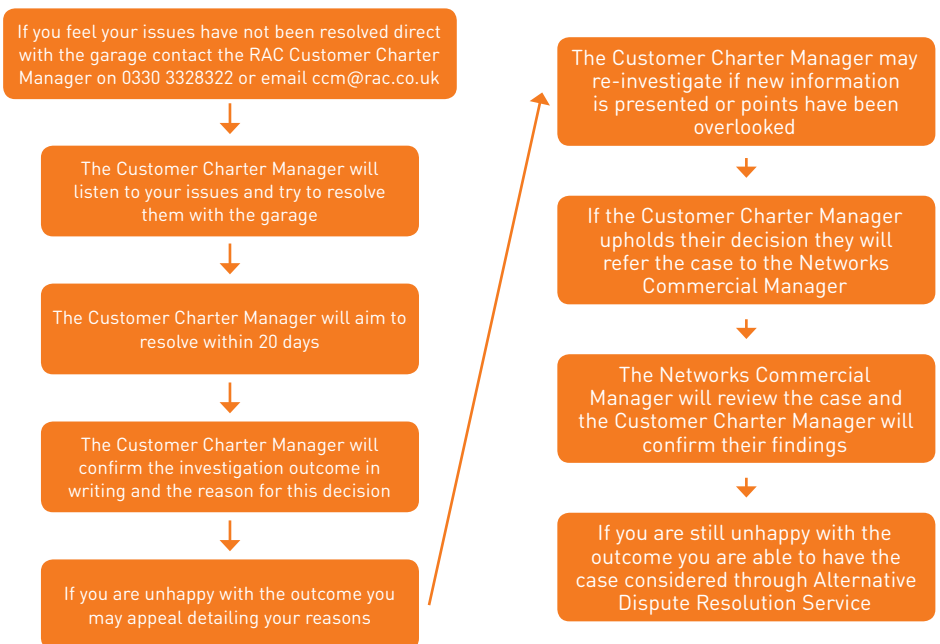
How to solve a problem - put simply



Conciliation Service

1. If you still feel the garage has not resolved the issue, you should contact RAC Approved Garages on 0330 3328322 who will assign a customer charter manager to support the resolution of the issue as quickly and efficiently as possible.
2. The customer charter manager will listen to your issue, understand what you believe has gone wrong and ask what you expect to see as a satisfactory outcome.
3. The customer charter manager will record all the information and carry out an investigation with the appointed Senior Representative at the RAC Approved Garage within 20 working days.
4. All RAC Approved Garages are required to co-operate fully and promptly with any investigation carried out by the RAC into a complaint, and provide all supporting documentation upon request within five working days.
5. Once our customer charter manager has investigated an issue they will inform you of their findings and outcome. This will be formally documented in writing.
6. If you disagree with the outcome you may appeal, detailing the reasons for the appeal.
7. The customer charter manager will raise the appeal with the RAC Approved Garages Manager who will review the complaint within seven working days of the appeal.
8. Once the appeal has been reviewed and, if appropriate, further investigations have been completed, the customer charter manager will inform you of the outcome detailing the reasons of its findings.
9. If you disagree with the outcome of the appeal, you can apply to use our "Alternative Dispute Resolution" service (ADR), as long as 56 days or more has elapsed since the issue was first made. ADR is an alternative for you- it can be less costly and quicker than taking a case to court.
10. If 56 days has elapsed since the issue was first made you can choose to go straight to "ADR".

Conciliation Service - put simply



Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

1. If you still feel your issue has not been resolved after you have been through our conciliation service then you can apply for the case to be heard under our Alternative Dispute Resolution service (ADR). The charge for this will be no more than £35.
2. The ADR scheme can be an alternative to legal action through the courts. We will appoint an independent ADR certified company to hear the dispute. Their decision may be legally binding, however you will be made aware of the terms prior to the appeal.
3. The ADR service is run by a third party who is Chartered Trading Standards Institute approved.
4. You need to provide details to the customer charter manager of the reasons why you wish to submit your appeal.
5. The customer charter manager will collate the necessary evidence from both yourself and the RAC Approved Garage, then submit the case to ADR.

Full terms and conditions for the ADR service can be sent to you on request.

For further information about Alternative Dispute Resolution please visit;
<http://www.tradingstandards.uk/advice/AlternativeDisputeResolution.cfm>

Maintaining Quality

We expect RAC Garages to maintain their standards and to operate consistently at all times. We monitor the quality of our garages through initial appraisal from RAC managers, annual inspections, customer feedback and reviews. If you do find our garages fall short of your expectations we will provide support and training to the garage. However, if an RAC Approved Garage continues to fall short of these standards we may commence disciplinary action against them, which could result in their removal from the network.

Key Contacts

To find your nearest RAC Approved Garage please visit: <http://www.rac.co.uk/advice/garage-finder>

If you have an issue or complaint about an RAC Approved Garage please email ccm@rac.co.uk or alternatively call 0330 332 8322

RAC Products & Services: <http://www.rac.co.uk>

For general RAC Approved Garages queries email racapprovedgarages@rac.co.uk