

The complaint

Mr L complains that Arval UK Limited (Arval) unfairly charged him for damage to alloy wheels at the end of his hire agreement. He would like this resolved.

What happened

The details of this complaint are well known to both parties so I won't repeat them again here, instead I will focus on giving the reasons for my decision.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so, I have reached the following conclusions

- Mr L doesn't agree that he should be charged for damage to the alloy wheels. He says the vehicle inspector concluded that the damage was due to corrosion. Mr L doesn't dispute this but he feels that corrosion is something that is out of his control and should fall under fair wear and tear for which no charges are made.
- I have seen the inspection report Mr L signed. It clearly notes that two wheels are corroded. Mr L noted on the report that the corrosion was not caused by him but was due to fair wear and tear. So there is no dispute that two wheels are corroded, the issue is whether this should be considered as fair wear and tear or not.
- I have seen Mr L's agreement. This makes it clear that the vehicle needed to be returned in good condition in accordance with British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) guidelines. These guidelines are the ones typically used by businesses to assess the condition of vehicles at the end of hire agreements. So I think Arval used appropriate standards to assess damage.
- In addition Mr L would have been aware from his agreement that the BVRLA guidelines would be used to assess the condition of his car at the end of his agreement.
- The BVRLA guidelines specifically state 'there must be no rust or corrosion on the alloy wheels/wheel hubs. I do appreciate Mr L's frustration. However given the BVRLA guidelines specifically state there should be no rust or corrosion, and there is no dispute that there is some corrosion I can't say that Arval are at fault to charge for this.

My final decision

My final decision is that I don't uphold this complaint

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr L to accept or reject my decision before 26 November 2025.

Bridget Makins
Ombudsman