

Cleaning Specification

The schedule of work this contract is measured against. Attach it to the agreement rather than restating it inside one, so it can be revised without reopening the contract.

SITE / PREMISES

CLIENT

CONTRACT REFERENCE

SPECIFICATION VERSION

EFFECTIVE FROM

AGREED BY, FOR THE CLIENT

AGREED BY, FOR THE COMPANY

NEXT REVIEW DATE

What the specification has to settle before it is signed

Each of these has been the subject of an argument that a sentence here would have prevented.

- ☐ Every area to be cleaned, named the way the building names it
- ☐ Every area explicitly out of scope, including the ones people assume
- ☐ The frequency of each task, as a number of times rather than "regularly"
- ☐ The standard each task is finished to, in terms somebody can check
- ☐ The hours the work happens in, and whether that is fixed or a window
- ☐ Who has access, how, and what happens when the way in changes
- ☐ What is periodic rather than routine, and whether it is included
- ☐ Who supplies consumables, machinery, chemicals and bin liners
- ☐ How the work is checked, how often, and by whom
- ☐ What happens when an audit fails, and how long there is to put it right
- ☐ How the specification is changed, and who has to agree

Who supplies what

The commonest gap in a cleaning contract. Tick a column for each line, or write the answer beside it.

- ☐ Toilet roll, hand towel and soap
- ☐ Bin liners and sanitary waste sacks
- ☐ Cleaning chemicals and the safety data sheets for them
- ☐ Mops, cloths, colour-coded equipment and consumable heads
- ☐ Vacuum cleaners, scrubbers and any powered machinery
- ☐ Storage: a lockable cupboard, and whether it is on site
- ☐ Water and power, and access to a sink that is not a client washroom

- ☐ PPE for the work as risk-assessed
- ☐ Removal of the waste collected, and the duty of care paperwork with it

How the standard is checked

- ☐ Who audits, from which side, and how often
- ☐ Whether the audit is scored, and what score is a pass
- ☐ Which areas are audited every time and which are sampled
- ☐ How a failure is recorded and told to the other side
- ☐ How long there is to put a failure right before it counts against the contract
- ☐ What evidence is kept, and for how long

Schedule of work by area

One row per task per area. Write the frequency as a number of times ("5 x weekly"), never as "regularly" or "as required".

AREA	TASK	FREQUENCY	STANDARD TO BE MET	MATERIALS SUPPLIED BY
Reception	Hard floor, mop	5 x weekly	No visible soiling, marks or streaking at the end of the visit	Contractor
Washrooms	Replenish consumables	5 x weekly	Every dispenser full at the end of the visit; none empty during the day	Client

Periodic and additional work

The work that is not weekly. Price it here or it becomes an argument the first time it is asked for.

TASK	FREQUENCY	NOTICE NEEDED	INCLUDED OR CHARGEABLE	RATE IF CHARGEABLE
<i>Carpet extraction, all offices</i>	<i>2 x yearly</i>	<i>10 working days</i>	<i>Included</i>	
<i>Internal window glass above reach</i>	<i>4 x yearly</i>	<i>10 working days</i>	<i>Chargeable</i>	

Audit record

Kept by whoever audits, and shown to the other side. An audit nobody can produce is an audit that did not happen.

DATE	AREAS AUDITED	RESULT	WHAT FAILED	PUT RIGHT BY	SIGNED
	<i>Reception, washrooms, stairs</i>				

A specification that says work will be done "to a high standard" is worth nothing to either side. It cannot be enforced by the client and it cannot be defended by the contractor, and every dispute about it becomes a contest of adjectives. Write the standard as a state somebody standing in the room can agree or disagree with.

Where a cleaning contract changes hands, the incoming contractor may inherit the outgoing one's staff under the TUPE regulations, which apply to a service provision change and not only to the sale of a business. The specification is one of the documents the incoming side needs in order to work out what it is taking on, so keep it current and keep the version history.

Frequencies are a specification of input; standards are a specification of output. Most UK cleaning contracts use both, and the two can contradict each other: a washroom cleaned five times a week to the letter can still be unacceptable at four in the afternoon. Where they conflict, say in the contract which one wins.