

Motorcycle Licences

At present there are three possible stages to getting a licence for the largest most powerful motorcycle. Broadly, this covers mopeds, motorbikes up to 125cc and motorcycles greater than 125cc. On getting a full licence for the most powerful bike the rider must ride a bike with restricted power for a period of two years.

There are significant changes from 19 January 2013 covering:

- the number of stages
- the way a rider moves from one stage to the next (known as progressive access);
- the ability to ride the most powerful bike without having ridden other bikes (known as direct access).

The Table below describes the changes.

Table 2- Motorcycle Licence Changes from 19 January 2013

Licence Category	What type of Motorcycle	Rules for Getting a Licence
AM	Mopeds and three wheeled vehicles with a maximum design speed of 45km/h as well as light quadricycles	Minimum age 16, pass a theory test, get a learner permit, take modules 1,2,3 & 4 of Initial Basic Training (IBT) and pass a driving test on an AM type of motorcycle.
A1	Motorcycle up to 125cc, power rating not more than 11kW with a power to weight ratio no greater than 0.1kW/kg	Direct access at minimum age 16 , pass a theory test, get a learner permit, take Initial Basic Training (IBT) modules 1,2,3 & 4 if not already completed under category AM and pass a practical driving test on an A1 type motorcycle (the representative vehicle for this category is a cylinder capacity of at least 120cm ³ and not exceeding 125cm ³ , capable of a speed of at least 90km/h, with a power output not exceeding 11kW.
A2	Motorcycle less than 35kW, a power/weight ratio not greater than 0.2kW/kg and not derived from a vehicle more than double its power.	Two routes- (a) Direct access at minimum age 18, pass a theory test, get a learner permit, take Initial Basic Training (IBT) modules 1,3,5 on an A2 type motorcycle and pass a practical driving test from six months after the start date of the A2 learner permit. (b) If rider has an A1 licence for a period of 2 years then this licence can be achieved by taking a prescribed training course (IBT Module 5) on an A2 motorcycle with an ADI, and

		completing a practical driving test on the A2 vehicle; or if the rider has an A1 licence for a period of 2 years they can alternatively complete a prescribed training course on the A2 vehicle.
A	All motorcycles including those greater than 35kW. The minimum age at which this licence can be held is age 20.	Two routes- (a) Direct access at age 24, pass a theory test, get a learner permit take Initial Basic Training (IBT modules 1,3 and 5) and pass a driving test after waiting six months. (b) Progressive access at minimum age 20 where the rider has held an A2 licence for 2 years, then this licence can be achieved by taking Initial Basic Training (IBT) module 5 on an A motorcycle with an ADI or by passing a driving test (no requirement to wait six months).

[Click here for an overview on motorcycles and the manner in which you can access the different categories](#)

Motorcycles: What happens between now and 19th January 2013?

The new rules apply from January 19 2013 and a person with a full motorcycle licence in the A categories for a motorcycle will be unaffected. If you are under age 24, you currently hold a learner permit for Cat A before the 19th January, and you pass your test before that date, you will need to exchange your cert of competency at your local Motor Taxation Office before the 19th January to get your full A licence. The restriction of 25kW will remain on your full licence for the period of two years.¹

If you are under age 24 and you do not exchange your certificate of competency until after the 19th January, you will be unable to be issued with a full A licence as the new minimum age for that category, 24, will now apply. However, if you are in this situation, you will be issued with an A2 full licence which will be issued by your Motor Taxation Office when you exchange your certificate of competency. An A2 is a new category of motorcycle which is lower powered than the current A licence, and it covers vehicles which are above 395 cm³ and below 35kW.

If you are aged under 24, and you currently hold a learner permit for Category A before the 19th January 2013, but do not plan on sitting your practical driving test until after that date, you will not be able to take the Category A test after that date due to the new minimum age of 24. You will have the following options however:

- (a) You can sit your driving test for Category A2 and present your current Category A learner permit at the test. The representative vehicle which you must bring to an A2

¹ This comment was revised following consultation with the EU Commission.

test must be a minimum of 395cc and be between 25 and 35kW. However, as your current Category A learner permit restricts you to riding a motorcycle of 25kW, you will be required to present to the driving test with a motorcycle of 25kW exactly. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Category A2 certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category A2 full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office.

- (b) You can apply for the Category A2 learner permit if this suits you, which allows you to ride a motorcycle of 25 to 35kW. You will be required to present to the driving test with a motorcycle of between 25 and 35kW. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Category A2 certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category A2 full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office.

If you are aged over 24 and you currently hold a learner permit for Category A before the 19th January 2013, but do not plan on sitting your driving test until after that date, you will have the following options:

- (a) You can sit your driving test for Category A2 and present your current Category A learner permit at the test. The representative vehicle which you must bring to an A2 test is between 25 and 35kW. However, as your current Category A learner permit restricts you to riding a motorcycle of 25kW, you will be required to present to the driving test with a motorcycle of 25kW exactly. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Category A2 certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category A2 full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office.
- (b) You can apply after the 19th January 2013 for a Category A learner permit which allows you to ride a motorcycle of unrestricted power output. You can then take your driving test by presenting to the test in the representative vehicle which is a minimum of 595cm³ and an engine power of at least 40kW. If you pass the driving test, you will be issued with a Category A certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category A full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office, and which is unrestricted.
- (c) You can apply for the Category A2 learner permit if this suits you, which allows you to ride a motorcycle of 25 to 35kW. You will be required to present to the driving test with a motorcycle with a minimum of 395cc and be between 25 and 35kW. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Category A2 certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category A2 full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office.

If you are aged over 24 and you currently hold a learner permit for Category 'A' issued after 6th December 2010 and before the 19th January 2013, have not completed any Initial basic Training (IBT) but do not plan on sitting your driving test until after that date, you will have the following options:

- (a) You must complete IBT Modules 1,2,3,& 4. You can then sit your driving test for Category A2 and present your current Category 'A' learner permit at the test. The representative vehicle which you must bring to an 'A2' test is between 25 and 35kW. However, as your current Category 'A' learner permit restricts you to riding a motorcycle of 25kW, you will be required to present to the driving test with a motorcycle of 25kW

exactly. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Category 'A2' certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category 'A2' full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office.

If you have previously completed IBT for an 'A1' type motorcycle, you only need to complete the Progression Module (Module 5) of the IBT programme on an A type motorcycle.

- (b) You must complete IBT Modules 1,3,&5. You can apply after the 19th January 2013 for a new Category 'A' learner permit (which allows you to ride a motorcycle of unrestricted power output). You can then take your driving test by presenting to the test in the representative vehicle which is a minimum of 595cm³ and an engine power of at least 40kW. If you pass the driving test, you will be issued with a Category 'A' certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category 'A' full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office, and which is unrestricted.

If you have previously completed IBT for an 'A1' type motorcycle, you only need to complete the Progression Module (Module 5) of the IBT programme on an 'A' type motorcycle.

- (c) You can apply for the Category 'A2' learners permit (if this suits you) which allows you to ride a motorcycle of 25 to 35kW. You must complete IBT Modules 1,2,3,& 4. You will then be required to present to the driving test with a motorcycle with a minimum of 395cc and be between 25 and 35kW. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Category 'A2' certificate of competency which you can exchange for a Category 'A2' full licence in your local Motor Taxation Office.

If you have previously completed IBT for an 'A1' type motorcycle, you only need to complete the Progression Module (Module 5) of the IBT programme on an A type motorcycle.

If you held a category 'A' **learner permit** or **full driving licence** prior to 19th January 2013 and want to remove the power output restriction the following options are open to you

Type	Previous IBT	No Previous IBT	Training only option
Learner Permit	Progression Module (Module 5) on a Motorcycle exceeding 40 K/w	Modules 1,3 & 5	No
Full licence	Progression Module (Module 5) on a Motorcycle exceeding 40 K/w	Modules 1,3 & 5	Yes

For more information on how these changes may affect you, please see our FAQ's which have been designed to help you understand the changes as they may apply to you.