

3rd European Driving Licence Directive (3DLD)



The 3rd European Driving Licence Directive was agreed by the EU in all but minor technical aspects in late 2006. This is likely to be implemented early in 2013. We now know what the major aspects will be and how these will affect novice riders from 2013 onwards.

'3DLD', as it is known, sets out some major changes to the training and testing procedures and in simple terms will require motorcyclists under the age of 24 years to go through more stages to reach a full Category A licence, which allows them to ride unlimited power motorcycles on the road. We expect that Direct Access will remain, but the age will increase from 21 to 24 years.

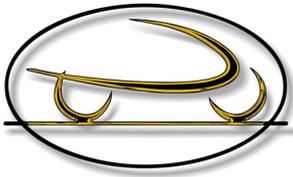
In principle every stage of learning will require a rider to complete training and pass both off road and on road tests at each step towards the full A category Licence.

The main details of the new licensing regime will be as follows:

- Mopeds will remain accessible for 16 year olds
- Bikes up to 125cc will remain accessible for 17 year olds (though the specification of these bikes may alter slightly). This will be known as the A1 licence motorcycle
- There will be a new category of motorcycle licence added to the Progressive route to a full license. This will be known as the A2 licence
- Riders can only progress from A1 to A2 by gaining two years experience, followed by training and a test. This means that the minimum age for riding a motorcycle of more than 125cc will increase from 17 years to 19 years
- An unlimited A Licence can only be gained once the rider has gained two years experience after taking the A2 licence test and have taken either training or training and a further test (this further test element is still undecided).

The UK Motorcycle Industry View

The current proposals are final, though there is a debate over the 'testing or training' clause for candidate riders taking the category A test, given that they will have already passed the A2 test. A worse case scenario is that there would be a requirement for riders to take both on and off-road tests between each category, with a minimum of 7 hours training between categories.



This may mean that an individual who has been riding regularly over a period of up to 2 years on a machine of up to 50bhp (35kW) (A2 licence category) may have to take 7 hours of training and then complete on and off road tests to progress to an unrestricted category A licence.

It is difficult to see what skills could be taught at this stage that the rider has not already gained riding on a this type of machine for two years. We believe that at this stage of the process there should be an element of assessment but excess training and 2 rigorous tests seem to be excessive.

Positives

The fact that the new A2 motorcycle licence specification is broader and allows for a more powerful machine to be ridden means that this category of bike will be more attractive to those not wanting to use the powerful motorcycles, or are simply looking for a motorcycle for practical or utility purposes.

The route to A2 will not be hugely different to the current progressive route to a full licence.

Those who want a smaller motorcycle or scooter for commuting or urban transport will not notice any real difference to the current licensing regime, though the test will become more comprehensive.

What is the Industry Doing?

MCI is currently working with Government Agencies to see if we can find incentives for riders coming through the progressive approach to a full A licence, possibly utilising the UK's Provisional licensing structure, for example an A1 Test Pass giving the rider provisional entitlement to A2 motorcycles.

New Licence Structure

Category	Today Age	2011
A1 <125 <15bhp/11kw	17	17
A2 (up from 33bhp/25kw to 47bhp/35kw)	17	19
A (progressive)	19	21
A (Direct Access)	21	24

In Summary

1. 3DLD will create further complications and expense for riders wishing to follow the progressive route to a full A category licence. It will be confusing to understand.
2. Direct Access will be available, but the minimum age for this will rise to 24 years.
3. The route to a medium powered practical motorcycle will not be significantly different to today's regime.
4. The route to a small commuter motorcycle or scooter remains essentially unchanged.

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