

This document provides information about car and motorcycle driver licences issued in Australia. It is provided by Austroads on behalf of the driver licensing authority of each Australian state and territory.

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Section 1: Austroads and Driver Licensing

1. Austroads Contacts

Any further enquiries regarding the information provided on this page should be directed to: [Leonie Pattinson](#), Program Coordinator, Registration and Licensing.

1.1 About Austroads

Austroads is the association of Australasian road transport and traffic agencies. Austroads' purpose is to improve Australasian transport outcomes by:

- providing expert technical input to national road and transport policy development
- improving the practices and capability of road agencies
- promotion of operational consistency by road agencies.

Austroads coordinates a range of national and international activities for its member organisations including the [recognition of overseas driver licences](#) in Australia.

1.2 Assessment and recognition of overseas driving licences in Australia

While the recognition of overseas driver licences in Australia is assessed by Austroads, the individual state and territory licensing authorities of Australia retain responsibility for providing recognition.

1.3 Organisations responsible for driver licensing functions in Australia

- [Roads and Maritime Services New South Wales](#)
 - [VicRoads \(Victoria\)](#)
 - [Department of Transport and Main Roads Queensland](#)
 - [Department of Transport Western Australia](#)
 - [Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure South Australia](#)
 - [Department of State Growth Tasmania](#)
 - [Department of Transport Northern Territory](#)
 - [Road Transport Authority Australian Capital Territory](#)
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Section 2: Australia's National Driver Licensing Scheme

2. General Information

In 1997, Australia implemented a National Driver Licensing Scheme (NDLS), establishing a single driver licence classification structure, eligibility criteria and a uniform set of requirements for key driver licensing transactions including the issue, variation, renewal, suspension and cancellation of licences.

Although Australia operates a federated licensing scheme (administered by the individual states and territories), the NDLS has been adopted by all Australian jurisdictions and, as a result, facilitates the mutual recognition between Australian jurisdictions of driver licences when transferring between jurisdictions.

2.1 Definitions

- **Motor car** is a motor vehicle with a GVM that is not greater than 4.5 tonnes and that is constructed or equipped to seat not more than 12 adults (including the driver).
- **Learner driver** is a person who is just commencing the process of learning to drive. They are not allowed to drive unsupervised. This is the training period prior to assessment that the person is competent to drive without supervision. A person must complete a road rules / safe driving knowledge test to be issued with a learner licence.
- **Novice driver** is a person who has completed a minimum of 50 hours supervised driving recorded in a log book and successfully passed a practical on-road driving test or a competency based skills assessment and has been granted a provisional or a probationary licence to drive. While a novice driver can drive unsupervised as they are still considered to be developing their driving skills they are not permitted to supervise learner drivers. Novice drivers are also subject to extra restrictions such as lower blood alcohol content and late night driving restrictions.
- **Unrestricted or Unconditional licence holder** is a person who has fully developed and practised their driving skills (usually over a two to three year period) and is considered competent to drive with the minimum allowable restrictions and to supervise learner drivers.

2.2 Key elements of Australia's standard graduated licensing system (GLS) for cars

All Australian jurisdictions have introduced a GLS for novice drivers. The fundamental components of Australia's standard GLS policy framework are outlined below. All Australian jurisdictions currently meet or exceed these requirements.

GLS requirements

- Learner permit at 16 years – supervised driving required
- 12 months minimum holding of learner permit
- Requirement to undertake at least 50 hours supervised driving recorded in a log book
- Practical on-road test to achieve solo unsupervised licence
- Hazard Perception Test as part of GLS
- Solo licensing from 17 years
- Zero Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) and no hand held mobiles during entire learner/provisional period
- Lower demerit point threshold for novice drivers
- Community education about risks associated with:
 - Novice drivers and late night driving and carrying multiple passengers
 - Young drivers on a full licence and drink driving
- Support programs to assist disadvantaged drivers to progress.

2.3 Testing regime (elements of a driving test)

All Australian jurisdictions include the following elements in a practical driving test:

- Pre-drive check (mirrors, signalling, indicators, horn, seatbelt etc)
- Lane changes
- Approach
- Position stop
- Judgement
- Turning manoeuvres
- Progress and position on road
- Car control
- Safety margin
- Low speed manoeuvres (reverse parking, angle-park, point to point reverse, three point turn).

2.4 The driving test

The driving test is a practical, on-road test that focuses on a combination of safety and technical manoeuvres and has been designed for learner drivers with extensive driving experience.

The minimum drive test duration is usually 30 minutes. Key performance areas assessed include observation, speed management, road positioning, decision making; recognising and responding to hazards and the operation of vehicle controls.

Major revisions or changes to driving tests are not frequent occurrences and are normally driven by gaining new (research based) road safety insights and/or issues with the test that may arise as a result of audit and evaluation outcomes. The last major revision of the NSW and Victoria car driving test was in 2007 and 2008 respectively. A review of the QLD car practical driving test was completed in 2011/2012.

2.5 Marking the driving test

All Jurisdictions provide instructions consistent with those issued by the NSW Roads and Maritime Services to examiners about how to mark a driving test. Sections of the [NSW Testing Officers Manual](#) have been made available by Roads and Maritime Services.

Pages 36 and 37 of the NSW [A Guide to the driving test](#) provides a sample of the driving test sheet.

Computer based testing and scoring is used to mark and determine pass and fail rates for the theoretical and practical driving tests. Refer to [Table 3](#) for individual Australian jurisdictional requirements including percentage pass marks for theory tests, assessment of a driving test. Sample copies of forms used in the marking of the test are available in some of these publications.

During the practical on-road driving test, the following are deemed automatic fail items:

- Behaviour which is unsafe or dangerous or there is an obvious danger to the public
- The applicant refuses to co-operate with the testing officer and so cannot be given a proper test is deemed an automatic fail item.

2.6 Proof of identity

Under the NDLS, there is a national requirement to establish a person's identity for driver licensing purposes. A [National Administrative Guideline](#) was developed in 2005 which lists the acceptable forms of documentation that must be presented to all Australian state and territory driver licensing agencies at the time of establishing a first time client and renewing or replacing a driver's licence.

2.7 Australia's National Identity Proofing Guidelines

In 2014, the Australian Commonwealth Government issued a new [National Identity Proofing Guideline](#). The purpose of these Guidelines is to strengthen identity proofing processes and increase trust through a standardised and transparent national approach.

The Guidelines provide a set of recommended processes and requirements for identity proofing, the process by which organisations seek to verify a person's identity by collecting information about the person and confirming it with relevant authoritative sources in order to satisfy a pre-determined level of assurance.

Australian road agencies currently satisfy the processes and requirements for identity proofing to a medium level of assurance. This means that driver licence applicants must provide documentary evidence to support the existence and linkage between the identity and the applicant (ie through the use of documents including an Australian Birth Certificate, Citizenship Certificate, Australian driver licence or Australian or Overseas Passport) as well as evidence of the use of the identity in the community (eg utility bill, Centrelink Concession Card, Medicare Card).

2.8 Australia's National Document Verification Service

In 2009, the Australian Government introduced the National Document Verification Service (DVS). The DVS is a national online system that allows organisations to compare a customer's identifying information with a government record.

The DVS is a secure system that operates 24/7 and matches key details contained on Australian-issued identifying credentials, providing a 'yes' or 'no' answer within seconds. All Australian driver licences can be verified on-line by an authorised user of the DVS.

2.9 Driver licence card

Australia does not have a national driver licence card design standard. However, all Australian driver licences contain a photo of the licensed driver, standard data elements including name, address, date of birth and card number and a range of security features.

Further information regarding the features for each Australian driver licence card can be found in the 2015 version of the [International ID Checking Guide](#).

2.10 Driver testing officers

General requirements

- Minimum age is 21 years
- Must have held a current unrestricted driver's licence for the preceding three years and have a satisfactory driving record
- Possess an equivalent licence category for conducting tests
- Must satisfy a criminal record check and a working with children check
- Must pass a driving instructor knowledge test with at least a 95% pass rate
- Must pass a driving instructor practical driving test in a manual transmission vehicle with 95% pass rate.

Formal training requirements

Driver Testing Officers in all Australian states and territories are required to complete a formal training course comprising some or all of the following elements:

- Theory and practical sessions to demonstrate ability to apply scoring principles of a motor vehicle driving test, specify knowledge of the score sheet, course sheet and ready reckoner
- State the scoring criteria for the Driving Test
- List and identify procedures relating to the Class C licence test
- Demonstrate customer service and public relation skills
- Utilise communicating skills
- Identify and be familiar with all aspects of a Driving Test Course
- Demonstrate comprehensive awareness of the Driving Test assessments
- Utilise correct assessment techniques in conducting driving tests
- Demonstrate sound understanding of driver testing procedures
- Recognise and analyse various traffic situations
- Demonstrate proficiency in assessing licence test applicants
- Advise details of performance and deficiencies to licence test applicants
- Conduct Class C driving tests in accordance with the relevant road agency service standards and procedures
- Mandatory refresher training for class C (motor car) assessments
- Correctly assess class C test applicants.

Monitoring and evaluation procedures

Formal training and performance monitoring of driver testing officers is undertaken by each agency to ensure that consistent driver testing practices are maintained to acceptable levels including:

- Completion of written/computer based tests to assess competency during training program
- Completion of written/or computer based performance assessment with ongoing monitoring occurring approximately every six months, or when there are anomalies between testing officers in the same location, or the testing officer has been absent from driver testing for more than six months, and where there are any noted discrepancies
- Regular attendance at Skill Enhancement Workshops or equivalent.

Monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by areas within each agency that are independent of the driver testing officers.

Section 3: Driver Training/Driving Instruction

3.1 General information

Driver training options for learner drivers

Optional practical training is available through accredited driving instructor/driving schools. There is no obligation for a learner driver to undertake training with an accredited driving instructor/driving school.

Australia has a legal requirement that learner drivers must always have a supervising driver beside them when driving. A supervising driver can be a parent, friend or relative but must hold a current unrestricted Australian licence of the same class or higher (not a learner or provisional).

The Australian Government is funding a national driver training program for novice drivers called “[Keys to Drive](#)”. The program provides a free driving lesson for learner drivers and their parents/supervisors and introduces a practical learning approach about how to practice and what to aim for.

3.2 Driving training/driving instruction accreditation requirements

Driver training/driving instruction is offered by licensed/accredited driving instructors or driving schools in the private sector.

To become an accredited driver trainer/driving instructor in Australia, an applicant must first be issued with a Driving Instructors’ licence issued by the state or territory road agency in which they are operating in.

To obtain this licence the applicant must pass a knowledge test of the road rules, pass a driving test, possesses a satisfactory criminal record and working with children check. The applicant must then demonstrate appropriate competencies by successfully completing a Certificate IV course in Training and Logistics (Road Transport-Car Driving) through a Registered Training Organisation.

The requirements for driver training/driving instruction are established by the individual state and territory road agencies in consultation with industry bodies including the [Australian Driver Training Association](#) (refer [Table 1](#)) which is the representative body of professional driving instructors.

Section 4: Licensing Systems for Motorcycles

All Australian states and territories have adopted a graduated licensing scheme for motorcycles comprising the following elements:

- Minimum age
- Motor cycle rider training scheme including pre-learner and pre provisional training
- Knowledge test and motorcycle operator skills test.

Refer to [Table 2](#) for detailed information about the requirements of each state and territory for motorcycle licensing in Australia.

Section 5: Australia's National Guidelines for Assessing Medical Fitness to Drive

Many factors contribute to safety on the road. Driver health is an important consideration and drivers must meet certain national medical standards to ensure that their health status does not increase the risk of a crash in which they or other road users may be killed or injured. The Australian guidelines are published in [Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers](#).

Section 6: State and Territory Road Agency Website Links

Table 1: Jurisdictional driver training/driving instructor requirements

State / Territory	Agency requirements
New South Wales	Roads & Maritime Services > Driving Instructors
Victoria	VicRoads > ADTA How to Become a Driving Instructor
Queensland	Department of Transport & Main Roads > Becoming an accredited driver trainer
Western Australia	Department of Transport > Get a driving instructor's licence
South Australia	Department of Planning Transport & Infrastructure > Motor Driving Instructor's Licence
Tasmania	Department of State Growth > Driving Instructors
Northern Territory	Department of Transport > Requirements to Become a Driving Instructor
Australian Capital Territory	Road Transport Authority > Driving instructor accreditation in the ACT

Table 2: Jurisdictional licensing requirements (cars and motor cycles)

State / Territory	Agency requirements
New South Wales	Roads and Maritime Services > Licence
Victoria	VicRoads > Licences
Queensland	Department of Transport and Main Roads > Licensing
Western Australia	Department of Transport > Licensing
South Australia	Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure>Drivers and Licences Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure>My Licence
Tasmania	Department of State Growth > Licensing
Northern Territory	Department of Transport > Driver Licensing
Australian Capital Territory	Road Transport Authority > Licence

Table 3: Driver testing

State / Territory	Agency guidelines
New South Wales	Guide to the Driving Test [PDF] (p36 and 37 provides a sample driving test form)
Victoria	The Drive Test
Queensland	Driver tests
Western Australia	How to pass your driving assessment... [PDF]
South Australia	Obtaining your learner's permit Vehicle On Road Test (VORT)
Tasmania	Driving assessments and knowledge tests
Northern Territory	The Driver Test
Australian Capital Territory	Road Ready

Table 4: Legislation

State / Territory	Legislation link
New South Wales	NSW Government legislation
Victoria	Road Safety (Drivers) Regulations 2009 [PDF]
Queensland	Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Driver Licensing) Regulation 2010 [PDF]
Western Australia	State Law Publisher
South Australia	Motor Vehicles Regulations 2010
Tasmania	Vehicle and Traffic (Driver Licensing and Vehicle Registration) Regulations 2010
Northern Territory	Traffic Regulations
Australian Capital Territory	Road Transport (Driver Licensing) Regulation 2000 [PDF]

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