

Preparation for the test

An associate will consider improving his or her riding skills and taking the advanced test, this is not compulsory but is one of the aims of SAPAR.

Should you wish to do this, talk to our training officer Stuart McMillan and the necessary arrangements can be made. This will involve being allocated a tutor, depending on your location, and meeting certain criteria. Basically, that you have the necessary legal documents to cover the machine that you will be riding. The tutor will check for valid insurance, driving licence, MOT and road tax before starting the tutoring sessions. They will also carry out the standard eyesight test. Once allocated a tutor, he/she will make contact and arrange a convenient date and time for the first tutoring session. After checking the documentation and getting general information from you regarding your previous riding experience the tutor will check 'POWDDERSS'.

Petrol: Do you have enough fuel for the trip?

Oil: Are your oil levels correct? Engine oil, brake and clutch fluids.

Water: Do you have sufficient coolant in the bike?

Damage/Drive: Visual examination of the machine for damaged or insecure panels etc. Visual examination of the drive mechanism – chains oiled and correctly adjusted. Sprockets not hooked or damaged. Shafts gaiters not cracked, no oil leaks.

Electrics: Have you checked that all lights and indicators work?

Rubber: Are your tyres legal and in good condition? Are your pressures correct?

Steering/Suspension: Free handlebar movement without trapping cables etc, no visible oil leaks from forks.

More info can be obtained from the Motorcycle Roadcraft book page 264.

It is a good idea to know how to check these and be able to quote your tyre pressures correctly.

The tutor will run through a pre-ride chat, this will include:

- POWDDERSS – as above
- Purpose of the session
- Remind you that it is your responsibility to keep the tutor in view (pointless if the tutor cannot see you)
- Make rear observations obvious (no good if the tutor or examiner cannot see them)
- Ride normally but legally
- Directions will be given in good time
- Follow the road ahead (or the discussed route) unless diversions indicate otherwise
- Keep to the speed limits at all times

- Ignore the tutor's road position, (they will be observing you so may need to take up an unusual position)
- Always sacrifice road position for safety
- Stopping procedure (if the tutor needs to chat with you he/she will overtake and signal or use some other prearranged method)
- Procedure in the event of being separated

Many Tutors' bikes are equipped with video cameras. Your riding will be recorded and the footage can be used to help during the debrief after the ride. It is a good idea to purchase and bring with you your own memory card that the video footage can be saved to. This way you will have a permanent record of your rides. N.B. most cameras are HD quality so you need a fairly substantial size to store all of the film. A minimum of around 8Gb will be needed if you want to store all of the files on the same card (32gb is recommended).

At the end of the session the tutor will discuss with you the aspects of your riding. Where necessary he/she will suggest areas that you need to concentrate on in readiness for the next session. They may well refer you to a particular section of the Motorcycle Roadcraft book and could well ask questions during the next session. You can ask questions of the tutor as well. This is not a one-way exercise, the purpose is to improve your riding and help you pass the Advanced Test with a good grade. If you feel that you have a weak area discuss this with the tutor he/she will be able to help.

Occasionally the tutor will be accompanied by a senior tutor. The purpose of this is twofold, the senior tutors need to know that tutors are correctly assessing the associate's ability and are offering good, constructive advice. Secondly, they are able to judge how ready the associate is for taking the test.

When you are ready for the test read the 'Test Guidelines' document which can be found on the SAPAR website 'Tutoring/Test' drop down menu. There is also a 'Drivers and Riders Initial Test' form that can be completed on-line. The test fee is currently £68 or £63 if you are lucky enough to be under 26 year old.

Whilst the tutors provide their time and expertise freely we ask that the associate make a contribution to them to cover their fuel costs plus wear and tear. Currently a contribution of £10 per session is considered to be appropriate.

Should you have any issues with the tutor the first thing to do is to discuss them with him/her. If the issues fail to be resolved then contact Stuart and he will help.

Good luck and safe and happy riding.