

# Is it time to enhance your riding skills?

*The Enhanced Rider Scheme (ERS) was launched by the DSA (now the DVSA) in 2008. ERS is intended to enhance road safety and riding skills for newly qualified riders, those returning to riding after a long period away, plus riders moving up to larger capacity/more powerful machines.*



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## THIS ARTICLE'S AUTHOR

Paul Barrett was one of the first motorcycle instructors to join the Register of Post-test Motorcycle Trainers (RPMT), a position still held for delivery and certification of the Enhanced Rider Scheme. Paul is a strong supporter of ERS and advocate for its essential place within motorcycle training and rider safety.

Paul ran his own successful motorcycle training school for many years and is now a partner at RMT Motorcycle Training in the West Midlands, plus he's a motorcycle training advisor for VideoBiker. Paul's favourite steed is his trusty Honda Super Blackbird.

Unlike Module One, Module Two and certain aspects of advanced riding courses, ERS does not involve a formal test. Instead, candidates are assessed in the various key skills that are required to remain as safe as possible while riding a motorcycle.

Prior to the Enhanced Rider Scheme, there was an obvious void between the basic learner test syllabus and advanced levels of motorcycle instruction. While many riders were motivated to pursue further training, in too many instances, just the word 'advanced' was and still is a barrier for some motorcyclists. Too many riders wrongly believe that passing their 'basic' motorcycle test is enough, with a common mindset being - 'I can ride safely, and I've passed my test to prove it'.

### The most vulnerable motorcyclists

More accurately, these newly qualified riders have only reached a minimum skill set and are among the most vulnerable of motorcyclists, with one-in-five at risk of being involved in a road traffic accident within two years of passing their test.

Prior to ERS, there was already a similar scheme for car drivers called

Pass Plus. This also targeted a post-test skills gap - proving both popular and effective for significant numbers of new drivers and insurance companies. Pass Plus was (and still is) associated with more responsible novice drivers and is known to be effective at improving skills and road safety awareness.

ERS was instigated by the Department for Transport, who tasked the DSA (DVSA) to produce a structured motorcycle specific scheme, mirroring the objectives and ethos of

Pass Plus. The aim was to help improve rider safety for new and returning bikers alike, offering much needed further motorcycle training, without the pressure of being called 'advanced' training with the expected outcome being a reduction in serious or fatal road traffic collisions. ERS also serves as an ideal stepping stone to higher levels of advanced training with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and IAM RoadSmart.



### Take responsibility and get an ERS assessment

Regardless of how long you have been riding, if you are a fully licensed motorcycle rider and have yet to invest in advanced motorcycle training, it is highly recommended that you take a first step towards this by investing in the Enhanced Rider Scheme. ERS usually begins with a full riding assessment that is facilitated by an ERS certified instructor. You will be taken on a road ride (usually two hours), during which your riding skills will be assessed under a variety of different road and traffic conditions.

Following this road ride, if an ERS candidate has demonstrated sufficient skill, they will be issued with a 'DVSA certificate of competency' straight away. However, there is nearly always room for improvement and in most cases, what follows is a highly personalised

programme of bespoke rider training.

Encompassing this initial assessment, ERS training is usually structured over one, two or three days - which will likely encompass the importance of adopting a structured approach to riding, along with defensive riding skills, hazard awareness and effective braking techniques. The ERS syllabus also covers effective use of speed, overtaking skills, cornering, slow control, and effective/safe filtering.

To find out more about the Enhanced Rider Scheme and how it can enhance your riding skills, safety and enjoyment - talk with your local motorcycle training school or visit: [www.gov.uk/enhanced-rider-scheme-trainer](http://www.gov.uk/enhanced-rider-scheme-trainer) to locate your nearest ERS certified trainer.

Article written by Paul Barrett on behalf of VideoBiker.co.uk  
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