

Results of consultation:

Motorcycle licensing discussion paper

Improving road safety for motorcycle riders in Queensland

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	2
Motorcycle Licensing Discussion Paper Feedback Summary	2
Requirements to Get a Motorcycle Learner Licence	3
Requirements to Progress from a Learner to an RE Licence	4
Requirements to Progress from an RE to an R Licence	6
Requirements of a Q-Ride Course	8
Respondent Details	9
Appendix	10

Executive Summary

Motorcycle riding continues to increase in popularity in Queensland with more people using motorcycles for commuting and recreational purposes. The popularity of motorcycles is influenced by them being cheaper to run than larger vehicles, taking up less parking space and helping riders avoid traffic congestion.

Motorcycle riders are however one of the most vulnerable road user groups and are continually over-represented in the Queensland road toll. In 2014, motorcycle rider and passenger fatalities accounted for 16.6 percent of the road toll, despite motorcycles comprising less than 5 percent of registered vehicles in Queensland. Novice motorcycle riders are especially at risk due to their lack of riding experience; crash data shows that riders in their first years of riding are involved in more crashes than riders with more years of experience.

The most direct way to try and improve safety outcomes for motorcycle riders is to ensure new riders have appropriate skills and experience to ride a motorcycle on the road.

On 27 July 2015 the *Motorcycle licensing discussion paper: Improving road safety for motorcycle riders in Queensland* was released on the *Get Involved* website. An online survey accompanied the discussion paper to seek the views of Queenslanders about how to improve the safety of motorcycle riders. In particular, feedback was sought about the testing and licensing requirements for obtaining a motorcycle learner licence, how riders progress through the system to an unrestricted motorcycle licence and if the current training and assessment arrangements adequately prepare novice motorcycle riders for riding on our roads.

Consultation was undertaken for a six week period from 27 July 2015 to 6 September 2015 during which time 1740 responses were received. The majority of responses supported changes to the motorcycle licensing system:

- Over 65 percent of respondents support the introduction of an off-road pre-learner practical training and assessment course as a pre-requisite to obtaining a motorcycle learner licence.
- Over 60 percent of respondents considered a minimum learner licence period for all motorcycle learner licence holders before progressing to an RE licence to be important.
- Over 80 percent of respondents considered new riders holding an RE licence for at least one year before progressing to an R licence to be important.
- Over 85 percent of respondents considered a standardised Q-Ride course curriculum to be important and were supportive of the course incorporating a stronger focus on behavioural factors and higher order skills.

This report summarises the results and recommendations from the community consultation. The responses were evaluated in detail to inform decisions about future reforms to Queensland's motorcycle licensing system.

Introduction

The *Motorcycle licensing discussion paper: Improving road safety for motorcycle riders in Queensland* and accompanying online survey were released on 27 July 2015 seeking community feedback on potential changes to the motorcycle licensing system.

Feedback was sought on four areas of the motorcycle licensing system, namely:

1. The requirements to obtain a motorcycle learner licence.
2. The requirements to progress from a motorcycle learner licence.
3. The requirements to progress from a restricted (RE) to an unrestricted (R) motorcycle licence.
4. Whether the Q-Ride training and assessment course competency standards are appropriately focussed and if there is a benefit in standardising the course and the number of hours spent training.

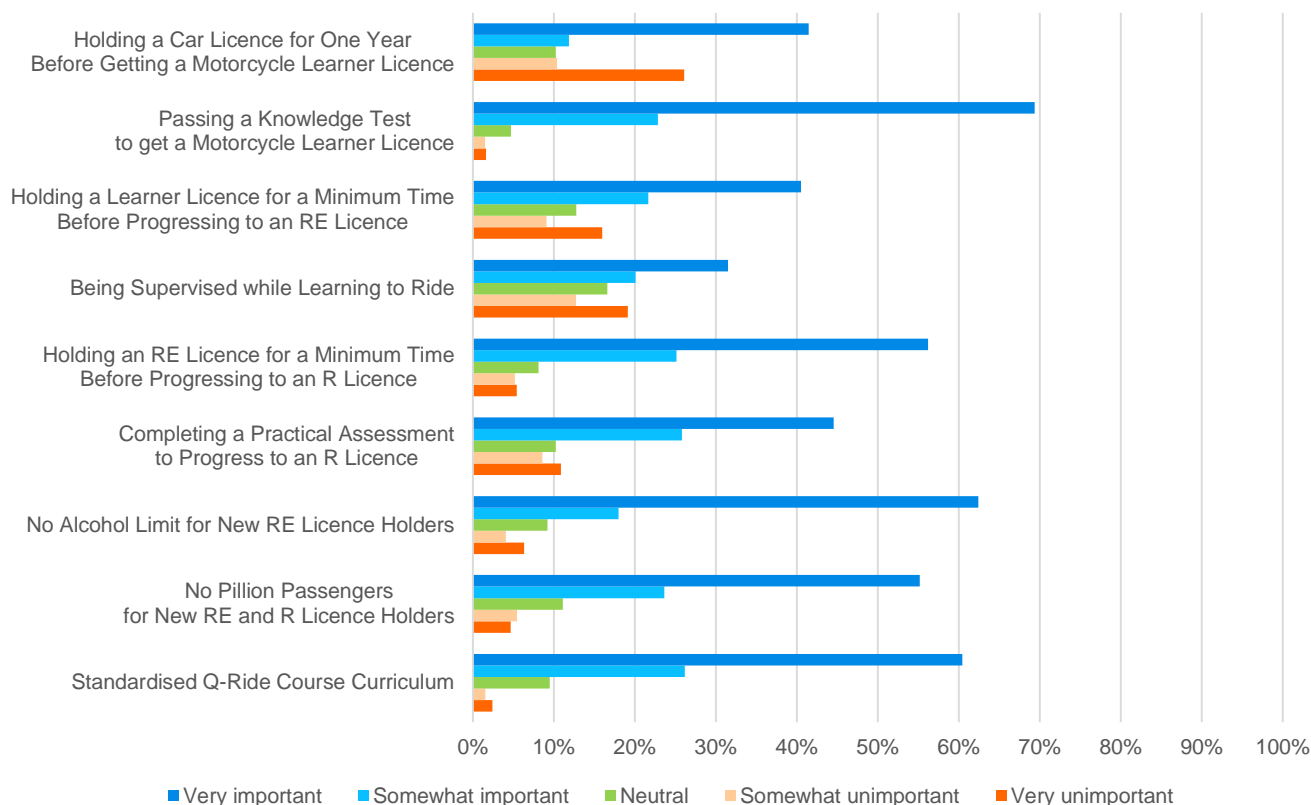
The general public were invited to review the discussion paper and complete an online survey to indicate their views on the four areas of the motorcycle licensing system, with an option of providing additional comments throughout. No demographic information was collected, however respondents were asked to indicate whether they held a motorcycle licence. If they did hold a motorcycle licence they were asked to indicate the class and type of licence and how long they have held it. If they did not hold a motorcycle licence, they were asked to indicate if they intended to apply for one in the future. A copy of the survey is included in the Appendix.

This report summarises the survey results and major themes raised throughout the comments.

Motorcycle Licensing Discussion Paper Feedback Summary

A total of 1740 responses were received regarding the *Motorcycle licensing discussion paper: Improving road safety for motorcycle riders in Queensland* during the consultation period. The feedback with the results and major themes for each question are outlined below.

The figure below gives a summary of whether respondents believed various elements of the motorcycle licensing are were important or unimportant.



Requirements to Get a Motorcycle Learner Licence

Question 1. How important is it that new riders hold a car licence for one year to develop their road craft and hazard perception skills before getting a motorcycle learner licence?

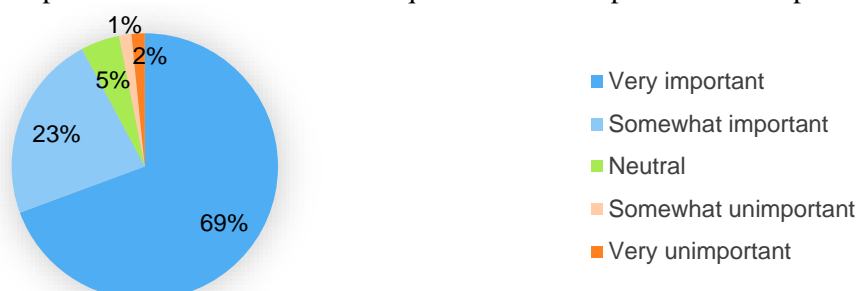
Over half of respondents, 54 percent, believe it is important or very important that new riders be required to hold a car licence for at least one year prior to being eligible for a motorcycle learner licence. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments in support of holding a car licence indicated that it provides new riders with an opportunity to learn and apply the road rules, and develop their awareness of traffic and vulnerable road users. Comments not in support of the requirement suggest that driving skills are very different to those to operate a motorcycle.

Question 2. How important is it that new riders pass a motorcycle knowledge test to show basic knowledge of the rules and requirements for riding before learning to ride?

Requiring new riders to pass a knowledge test before learning to ride was viewed as important for safe riding, with 92 percent of respondents indicating they believe this requirement is important or very important. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments about the requirement to pass a knowledge test before learning to ride noted the importance of riders being aware of the specific skills and road rules applying to motorcycles before learning to ride.

Question 3. Do you support new riders completing an off-road practical pre-learner training and assessment course before getting a learner licence and learning to ride on a road?

Introducing an off-road practical pre-learner training and assessment course as a pre-requisite to obtaining a motorcycle learner licence was very strongly supported, with 70 percent of respondents being either supportive of very supportive of the initiative. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who did and did not support the introduction of an off-road practical pre-learner training and assessment course.



Comments about the introduction of an off-road practical pre-learner training and assessment course indicated that it is important for new riders to demonstrate their ability to operate a motorcycle before being allowed to ride on a road. A number of respondents also highlighted the importance of learning good riding habits from the beginning, rather than trying to unlearn bad habits later.

Question 4. Further suggestions for improving the requirements to get a motorcycle learner licence.

One quarter of respondents provided suggestions about the requirements to get a learner licence, including:

- Ensuring new riders have the appropriate level of skills and experience by requiring learner licence applicants to undertake defensive rider training, and improving hazard perception skills and testing for motorcycle riders. It was noted that the financial impact of any changes should be minimised.
- Enhancing licence testing and education for car drivers to include motorcycle riding content and more content regarding interacting with motorcycles. Respondents also suggested mandating that drivers spend time as a passenger on a motorcycle to better understand what it is like to be on the road on a motorcycle.
- Conducting education campaigns to educate novice riders about the risks of riding motorcycles.
- Reviewing the learner approved motorcycle scheme list to ensure approved motorcycles are appropriate to the new rider’s skill set; comments indicated some motorcycles are too powerful for new riders.

Requirements to Progress from a Learner to an RE Licence

Question 5. How important is it that riders hold their learner licence for a minimum period to develop their riding skills before progressing to an RE licence?

A minimum tenure period for learner licence holders was viewed as important for safe riding, with 62 percent of respondents indicating they believe this requirement is important or very important. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments about a minimum learner licence tenure period indicated support for the requirements as it would allow riders to develop skills and knowledge about riding a motorcycle. However, some comments raised a concern that it would not necessarily translate to riding experience and other measures, such as evidence of on-road riding experience, could be considered to strengthen skill development for learner riders.

Question 6. Do you support riders holding their learner licence for different minimum periods depending on whether they complete a Q-Ride course or Q-SAFE practical riding test?

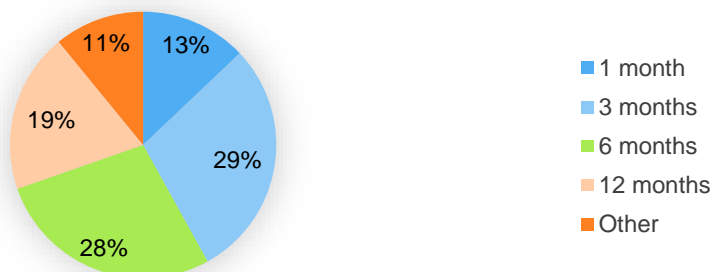
Different learner licence tenure periods, depending on the type of practical assessment, received moderate support, with 60 percent of respondents being either supportive or very supportive. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who did and did not support different minimum tenure periods.



Comments in support of different minimum learner licence tenure periods indicated a preference for a shorter tenure period for those who complete a Q-Ride course, given the requirement to undertake training.

Question 7. If there was a minimum learner licence period for all learner riders, how long should it be?

A minimum learner licence tenure period of three months was the preferred period of 29 percent of respondents, with a minimum period of six months preferred by 28 percent of respondents. The figure below shows the breakdown of the preferred minimum learner licence tenure periods.



Comments about the minimum learner licence tenure period indicated support for a three or six month minimum learner licence period. However, comments again raised a concern that a minimum learner licence period would not necessarily translate to riding experience and measures such as evidence of on-road riding experience or compulsory rider training were suggested.

Question 8. If there was a minimum learner licence period, how important is it that the requirement to have a supervisor remain?

Just over half of respondents, 51 percent, believe it is important or very important for learner riders to be supervised if a minimum learner licence tenure period. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments in support of the requirement for learner riders to be supervised indicated that supervision ensures safer riding and avoids learner riders adopting incorrect riding techniques. Comments not in support of the requirement suggested that the need for a supervisor may discourage practice, due to the lack of a suitable supervisor.

Question 9. Further suggestions for improving the requirements to progress to an RE licence.

Only 16 percent of respondents provided further suggestions regarding the requirements to progress from a learner licence to an RE licence, including:

- Highlighting the importance of learner riders gaining on-road experience before progressing to an RE licence. This included suggestions that learner riders be required to complete a minimum number of hours of on-road riding experience, or that the requirement for learner riders to be supervised be removed to allow learners to practice their riding skills when they are unable to find a suitable supervisor.
- Strengthening rider skills by requiring riders to undertake defensive or advanced rider training. However, it was noted that the financial impact of any changes should be minimised to ensure cost is not a barrier for skill and competency development.

Requirements to Progress from an RE to an R Licence

Question 10. How important is it that riders hold an RE licence for at least one year, to develop their skills on a lower powered motorcycle, before progressing to an R licence?

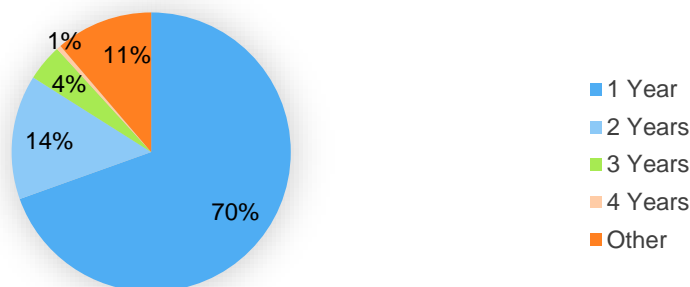
The majority of respondents, 81 percent, believe it is important or very important for riders to hold an RE licence for at least one year before progressing to an R licence. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments were largely supportive of the one year minimum period for holding an RE licence, noting that it provides newly licensed riders with an opportunity to gain experience and confidence before progressing to a more powerful motorcycle.

Question 11. How long should a rider hold an RE licence before progressing to an R licence?

The majority of respondents (70 percent) preferred retaining the current one year minimum period for holding an RE licence, with an extended minimum period of two years preferred by 14 percent of respondents. The figure below shows the breakdown of the preferred minimum RE licence tenure periods.



Comments about how long an RE licence should be held for were very much in favour of a minimum tenure period of one year or longer, however there were also some suggestions that progression should be based on competency alone, with no minimum tenure periods.

Question 12. How important is it that RE licence holders complete a practical assessment before progressing to an R licence?

Completing a practical assessment to progress to an R licence was viewed as important by the majority of respondents, with 70 percent indicating they believe this requirement is important or very important. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments about practical assessments to progress to an R licence were overwhelmingly in favour of riders being required to complete an assessment to demonstrate their ability to handle a more powerful motorcycle.

Question 13. If the minimum period for holding an RE licence was extended to encourage riders to gain more experience on a lower powered motorcycle, would you support the removal of the requirement to complete a practical assessment to progress to an R licence?

Removing the requirement to complete a practical assessment to progress to an R licence, if the minimum RE licence tenure was extended, was supported by 44 percent of respondents and not supported by 41 percent of respondents. The figure below show the proportion of respondents who did and did not support removing the requirement to complete a practical assessment.



Comments about removing the requirement to complete a practical assessment to progress to an R licence were generally not supportive of a change. Comments suggested that tenure progression would result in less skilled riders, and that an assessment of competency to handle a bigger motorcycle was more beneficial.

Question 14. How important is it that RE licence holders minimise risk exposure by having a zero alcohol limit for a period of time while developing their riding skills and experience?

The majority of respondents, 81 percent, believe it is important or very important for RE licence holders to minimise risk exposure by having a zero alcohol limit for a period. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments about the zero alcohol limit noted the dangers of riding a motorcycle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs and the importance of riders maintaining their focus and not impairing their judgement while riding. Riders with many years of riding experience noted a preference not to drink and ride. Some comments indicated that it was inequitable to have one rule for motorcycles riders and another rule for other vehicle drivers however, the majority of respondents identified the increased risk of riding compared to driving.

Question 15. How important is it that RE licence holders minimise risk exposure by not carrying a pillion passenger for a period of time while developing their riding skills and experience

Minimising RE licence holders' exposure to risk by prohibiting them from carrying pillion passengers for a period of time was also viewed as important, with 79 percent of respondents indicating they believe this requirement is important or very important. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated this requirement was important or unimportant.



Comments about pillion passenger restrictions were very much in favour of ensuring riders gain the necessary experience before riding with a pillion passenger. Comments noted the dangers of inexperienced riders riding with a pillion passenger due to the effect a pillion passenger has on how a motorcycle handles, and noted that inexperienced pillion passengers can increase crash risk.

Question 16. Further suggestions for improving the requirements to progress from an RE to R licence.

Only 12 percent of survey respondents provided further comments regarding the requirements to progress from an RE to R licence, including:

- Improving practical riding assessments to ensure that riders have adequate skills and experience prior to progressing to ride more powerful motorcycles.
- Increasing on-road experience by requiring RE licence holders to complete a minimum number of hours of on-road riding experience.
- Strengthening rider skills by requiring riders to undertake defensive or advanced rider training, and providing off-road training facilities for riders to practice their skills. However, it was noted that the financial impact of any changes should be minimised.
- Removing the pillion passenger restriction applicable for the first year of holding an RE licence to allow riders to gain experience carrying pillion riding on a lower powered motorcycle, during the minimum class RE tenure period.

Requirements of a Q-Ride Course

Question 17. The Q-Ride course competencies focus on motorcycle control. How supportive would you be of the course including a stronger focus on behaviours and higher order skills such as hazard perception and attitudes to risk taking?

Emphasising behaviours and higher order skills, such as hazard perception and attitudes to risk taking, in the Q-Ride course competencies was very strongly supported, with 86 percent of respondents being either supportive or very supportive. The figure below show the proportion of respondents who did and did not support emphasising behaviours and higher order skills in the Q-Ride course.



Comments in support of the Q-Ride course including a stronger focus on behaviours and higher order skills indicated that these topics should be mandatory.

Question 18. The Q-Ride course takes on average six hours to complete. If the course duration is reviewed, do you think it should be longer, shorter or the same length?

Retaining the six hour Q-Ride course was the preference of 44 percent of respondents, with a longer course the preference of 40 percent of respondents. The figure below shows the breakdown of the preferred course duration.



Comments about Q-Ride course duration emphasised rider competency as the critical factor, regardless of course duration, with some respondents highlighting the variability of people’s ability to learn and Q-Ride trainer’s teaching styles as important factors influencing course duration.

Question 19. How important is it to have a standardised Q-Ride course curriculum mandating the way the course is delivered?

Standardising the Q-Ride course curriculum was viewed as important for safe riding, with 86 percent of respondents indicating they believe it is important or very important. The figure below shows the proportion of respondents who indicated that a standardised Q-Ride course curriculum was important or unimportant.



Comments about a standardised Q-Ride course curriculum noted the importance of consistent training and assessment to ensure all participants achieve the same level of competency. Some respondents suggested that flexibility in tailoring courses to suit their region, and students’ abilities and learning styles was important.

Respondent Details

Question 20. Do you currently hold a motorcycle licence?

The majority of respondents, 94 percent, indicated they hold a motorcycle licence. Of the respondents who indicated they hold a motorcycle licence:

- The majority hold an R licence; 73 percent hold an R licence, 24 percent hold an RE licence and 3 percent hold a learner licence.
- The majority have held a motorcycle licence for more than ten years; 49 percent of have held a motorcycle licence for more than 10 years, 13 percent for five to ten years, 15 percent for two to five years and 23 percent for less than two years.

Of the respondents who indicated they did not hold a motorcycle licence, 63 percent indicated that they intended to apply for a motorcycle licence in the future.

Appendix

Motorcycle Licensing Survey

The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, depending on how much feedback you wish to provide. Please read the motorcycle licensing discussion paper before responding. Fields marked with an * must be completed.

Requirements to get a motorcycle learner licence

1. **How important do you think it is that new riders hold a car licence for 1 year to develop their road craft and hazard perception skills in a safer environment before getting a motorcycle learner licence?***

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

2. **How important do you think it is that new riders pass a motorcycle knowledge test to show basic knowledge of the rules and requirements for riding before learning to ride a motorcycle?***

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

3. **Do you support new riders completing an off-road practical pre-learner training and assessment course before getting a motorcycle learner licence and learning to ride on a road?***

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat unsupportive
- Very unsupportive

Additional comments:

4. **Please provide any further suggestions you have for improving the requirements to get a motorcycle learner licence.**
-

Requirements to progress from a learner licence to an RE licence

5. **How important do you think it is that riders hold their learner licence for a minimum period to develop their riding skills before progressing to an RE licence?***

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

6. Do you support riders holding their learner licence for different minimum periods depending on whether they complete a Q-Ride course or a Q-SAFE practical riding test?*

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat unsupportive
- Very unsupportive

Additional comments:

7. If there was a minimum learner licence period for all learner riders, how long do you think it should be?*

- 1 month
- 3 months
- 6 months
- 12months
- other

Additional comments:

8. If there was a minimum learner licence period, how important do you think it is that the requirement to have a supervisor remain?*

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

9. Please provide any further suggestions you have for improving the requirements to progress from a motorcycle learner licence to an RE licence.

Requirements to progress from an RE to an R licence

10. How important do you think it is that riders hold an RE licence for at least 1 year, to develop their skills on a lower powered motorcycle, before progressing to an R licence?*

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

11. How long do you think a rider should hold an RE licence for before progressing to ride R motorcycles?*

- 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- Other

Additional comments:

12. How important do you think it is that RE licence holders complete a practical assessment before progressing to an R licence?*

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

13. If the minimum period for holding an RE licence was extended to encourage riders to gain more experience on a lower powered motorcycle, would you support the removal of the requirement to complete a practical assessment to progress to an R licence?*

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat unsupportive
- Very unsupportive

Additional comments:

14. How important do you think it is that RE licence holders minimise risk exposure by having a zero alcohol limit for a period of time while they develop their riding skills and experience?*

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

15. How important do you think it is that RE licence holders minimise risk exposure by not carrying pillion passengers for a period of time while they develop their riding skills and experience?*

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

16. Please provide any further suggestions you have for improving the requirements to progress from an RE to an R motorcycle licence.

Requirements of a Q-Ride course

17. The Q-Ride course competencies focus on motorcycle control. How supportive would you be of the course including a stronger focus on behaviours and higher order skills such as hazard perception and attitudes to risk taking?*

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat unsupportive
- Very unsupportive

Additional comments:

18. The Q-Ride course takes on average six hours to complete. If the course duration is reviewed, do you think it should be longer, shorter or the same length as the current course?*

- Longer than the current course
- Shorter than the current course
- The same length as the current course
- Unsure

Additional comments:

19. How important do you think it is to have a standardised Q-Ride course curriculum mandating the way the course is delivered?*

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

Additional comments:

General

20. Do you currently hold a motorcycle licence?*

- Yes

Which motorcycle licence do you hold?* (Conditional question)

- Learner
- RE (Provisional)
- RE (Open)
- R (Provisional)
- R (Open)

How long have you held your motorcycle licence?* (Conditional question)

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10 years

- No

Do you intend to get a motorcycle licence in the future?* (Conditional question)

- Yes
- No