

# The Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval Scheme

**A Guide to the Approval of Non  
Type-Approved Motorcycles,  
Three Wheelers and Light  
Four Wheelers**



**GUIDE**

# THE MOTORCYCLE SINGLE VEHICLE APPROVAL (MSVA) SCHEME

## What is the Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval Scheme?

The Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval (MSVA) scheme is a pre-registration inspection for mopeds, motorcycles, three wheelers and quadricycles that have not been type-approved to European standards. The main purpose of the scheme is to ensure that these vehicles have been designed and constructed to modern safety and environmental standards before they can be used on public roads. The scheme entered into force on the 08 August 2003.

## Why do we need MSVA?

MSVA checks that vehicles constructed for non-European Economic Area markets comply with British law. Even vehicles outwardly similar to European-specification models, but intended for other markets, can often be unsuitable for use in Britain without at least some modification. (For further information on importing a vehicle see the Department's leaflet PI5 'How to Import your Vehicle into Great Britain'). MSVA recognises certain non-European technical standards as acceptable alternatives to the MSVA requirements.

MSVA also checks that the construction of amateur-built vehicles, rebuilt vehicles and vehicles using parts from a previously registered vehicle meet modern safety and environmental standards. It also provides an alternative to type approval for vehicles manufactured in very low volume.

## What vehicles are within the scope of MSVA?

- (a) two wheeled mopeds and motorcycles,
- (b) three wheeled vehicles, and;
- (c) light four wheeled vehicles.

## Will MSVA affect you?

**Generally, your vehicle will need to be approved under the MSVA scheme** and issued with a Minister's Approval Certificate (MAC) if it is up to 10 years old and is not covered by EC type approval (or similar national approval from another European Economic Area Member State that is equivalent to the technical requirements of GB Single Vehicle Approval).

**MSVA** will be applied to the following :

- ▶ an amateur built vehicle
- ▶ a vehicle manufactured in very low volume
- ▶ a vehicle manufactured using parts of a registered vehicle
- ▶ a rebuilt vehicle (mandatory if first licensing and registration required)
- ▶ an imported vehicle without type approval.

**The above categories are defined in Appendix 1.**

DVLA may also require radically altered vehicles and rebuilt vehicles to be examined.

## Recognition of Foreign Single Approvals

If your vehicle has been singly approved by another EEA Member State to standards **equivalent to** those of British MSVA, it is eligible for a Ministers Approval Certificate on that basis. You must provide evidence of the **actual standards** to which the vehicle was tested by or on behalf of the authorities in question.

### What is tested?

Most of the items inspected in the MSVA scheme are those that are tested when manufacturers apply for type-approval of mass-produced vehicles. The following table lists the items inspected.

Item	Mopeds	Three wheeled mopeds and light quadricycles	Motorcycles	Tricycles and quadricycles
Radio interference suppression (spark ignition engine)	X	X	X	X
Speedometers	X	X	X	X
Wipers and washers (vehicles with 3 or more wheels with a body and a windscreen)		X		X
Audible warning	X	X	X	X
Defrosting and demisting (vehicles with 3 or more wheels with a body and a windscreen)		X		X
Tyres	X	X	X	X
Glazing in windscreens and other windows (vehicles with 3 or more wheels with a body and a windscreen)		X		X
General vehicle construction	X	X	X	X
Noise and silencers	X	X	X	X
Devices to prevent unauthorised use			X	X
Handholds (two wheeled vehicles only)	X		X	
Stands (two wheeled vehicles only)	X		X	
External projections for bodied vehicles		X		X
External projections for un-bodied vehicles	X	X	X	X
Rear view mirrors for un-bodied vehicles	X	X	X	X
Rear view mirrors for bodied vehicles		X		X

Item	Mopeds	Three wheeled mopeds and light quadricycles	Motorcycles	Tricycles and quadricycles
Lighting and signalling	X	X	X	X
Seat belts for three and four wheeled vehicles		X(*)		X
Seat belt anchorages for three and four wheeled vehicles		X(*)		X
Installation of seat belts in three or four wheeled vehicles		X		X
Registration plate space	X	X	X	X
Masses and dimensions	X	X	X	X
Gaseous exhaust emissions		X	X	X
Smoke emissions	X	X	X	X
Brakes	X	X	X	X
Anti-tampering measures (mopeds and motorcycles less than 125cc and a power not exceeding 11kW).	X		X	
Plate for goods vehicles		X		X

\*Three wheel mopeds and light quadricycles with an unladen mass not more than 250 kg are exempt from this requirement.

## How are the vehicles tested?

### MSVA

For MSVA, all the inspections are undertaken at selected testing stations operated by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA), an executive agency of The Department for Transport. These tests can also be conducted by VOSA Examiners at “designated premises” if certain conditions are met. Please contact VOSA on the **National Number** for further information - **0300123 9000**.

Although virtually all of the items tested are those in European Type Approval they are not tested in the same way. To keep the fee to a level affordable by individuals, the examiner will conduct an engineering assessment. This check will be in the form of either visual inspection or a simple test on the vehicle to ensure that it complies with the regulations.

The examination will be limited to parts of the vehicle which can be readily seen without dismantling. However, the presenter may be asked to open lockable compartments and remove engine covers, inspection/access panels, trims or carpeting. This is to allow access to items subject to examination. Consequently, because vehicles are inspected individually, the tests are not destructive or damaging in any way.

A Minister’s Approval Certificate (MAC) under MSVA is issued when the examiner is satisfied that the vehicle would meet the requirements of the regulations in relation to the design and construction of the vehicle. Unlike the MOT, the examination is not primarily concerned with vehicle condition (although poor condition may make it impossible to assess whether some construction requirements are met).

## MSVA Inspection Manual

Full details of what and how it is tested is described in the Vehicle and Operator Service Agency's [MSVA Inspection Manual](#).

## What does the MSVA test cost?

### MSVA TEST and APPEAL FEES as at 3rd May 2009

Vehicle Type	Normal £	Out of Hours (Supplement) £
Low power moped Retest	55.00 17.00	24.00
Two wheelers Retest	85.00 17.00	24.00
Three and four wheelers Retest	104.00 17.00	24.00
Replacement Certificate	12.00	
Cancelled test application (without giving 3 working days notice)	Full test fee appropriate to the cancelled vehicle	

### How do I apply for a test?

Application forms are available to download from either [www.direct.gov.uk/msva](http://www.direct.gov.uk/msva) or [www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/forms/vehicletestforms/vehicletestforms.htm#P111\\_2723](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/forms/vehicletestforms/vehicletestforms.htm#P111_2723). They can also be obtained from DVLA Local Offices and from Offices of the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. You should send completed applications to the most convenient test station.

**The test stations conducting MSVA are listed at Appendix 2.** (If you are importing large numbers of vehicles, you might wish to arrange for them to be inspected at other Designated Premises. Please contact the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency for information about the equipment needed and other arrangements.)

You will be asked to provide certain technical details in relation to the vehicle e.g. maximum speed and power of the vehicle and certain weights. This may be obtained by reference to the manufacturer's vehicle handbook or from the manufacturer or his agent. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency may check stated design weights against certain criteria to ensure that they are appropriate. Any documentary evidence of the standards to which the vehicle was originally approved will always be helpful.

Once the correctly completed application form has been returned along with the correct fee, you will be sent a notice stating the time and place of the test. The test, where possible, will be held at the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency test station which you have selected.

If your vehicle does not have a manufacturer's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) stamped on the chassis, you will have to apply to your local DVLA Local Office for one to be assigned before the MSVA inspection is conducted. DVLA Local Office officials may wish to inspect the vehicle as a check that it is not stolen.

You will be allowed to travel (within Great Britain) to and from the test station without the vehicle having been registered and licensed, and, if necessary, to and from a garage or other place where modifications are done to enable compliance with the requirements. You are responsible for ensuring that you have insurance cover and that the vehicle complies with the requirements of the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations and the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations when driven to and from the test location. Otherwise, driving or keeping an unregistered vehicle on a public road is an offence.

## **Conditions relating to the presentation of vehicles for test**

The examination of a vehicle may be refused for any of the following reasons :

- ▶ the vehicle is not submitted for examination at the appropriate time and place appointed,
- ▶ the fee has not been paid,
- ▶ the vehicle cannot be driven or has insufficient fuel or oil to enable the test to be completed,
- ▶ the vehicle is presented in a dangerous or such a dirty condition that the test cannot be carried out,
- ▶ a load or items on the vehicle are not secured or removed as required,
- ▶ a proper examination cannot be carried out because any door, tailgate, boot lid, engine cover, fuel cap or other device designed to be readily opened cannot be opened,
- ▶ the condition of the vehicle (in the opinion of the examiner) is such that a proper examination of the vehicle would involve a danger of injury to any person or damage to the vehicle or any other property,
- ▶ the vehicle does not display, permanently, in an accessible position and readily legible, the required vehicle identification number, or
- ▶ the driver does not remain in the vehicle or its vicinity and operate the controls, etc. as requested.

## **Afterwards**

Once your vehicle has successfully passed the MSVA test you will be given a Minister's Approval Certificate (MAC). With a MAC you will be able to apply to DVLA to get your vehicle licensed and registered.

If your vehicle fails the MSVA, you will be allowed to take your vehicle away for repairs and modification. You will then have to re-apply to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency for a retest.

As mentioned earlier, the vehicle user will remain responsible for ensuring that the vehicle continues to comply with all relevant "Construction and Use" Regulations and Lighting Regulation requirements. However, for vehicles which have been issued with a MAC under MSVA, several existing requirements are relaxed. For instance, vehicles will not need to be fitted with European type-approved components such as lamps, mirrors, seat-belts and glazing, if they remain fitted with the same components as when inspected at MSVA - these having been assessed as providing an equivalent level of safety.



## Appeals

If your vehicle fails MSVA and you are aggrieved by the decision, you can appeal for a re-test by an independent assessor. You must make your appeal within 14 days of the original decision. The fee for the re-test will be the same as that paid for the original test.

## Further Information

If you need any advice on the policy of the MSVA scheme please contact :

### Department for Transport

Transport Technology and Standards 6  
Zone 2/06  
Great Minster House  
76 Marsham St  
LONDON  
SW1P 4DR

☎ Tel: 020 7944 2078

✉ Email: [TTS.enquiries@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:TTS.enquiries@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

☎ Fax: 020 7944 2069

💻 Website: [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

For general enquiries and information on the test procedure and technical standards, please contact :

### The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

Ellipse  
Padley Road  
Swansea  
SA1 8AN

☎ Tel: 0300 123 9000

✉ Email: [enquiries@vosa.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@vosa.gov.uk)

☎ Fax: 01792 454313

💻 Website: [www.dft.gov.uk/vosa](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa)

To apply to get your vehicle licensed and registered or to make an application for a Vehicle Identification Number (if one is not presently stamped on the chassis) you will have to contact your local DVLA Local Office.

### DVLA

Local Office Network Enquiry Service

☎ Tel: 0870 850 0007

✉ Email: [vehicles.dvla@gtinet.gov.uk](mailto:vehicles.dvla@gtinet.gov.uk)

☎ Fax: 0870 850 1285

💻 Website: [www.dft.gov.uk/dvla](http://www.dft.gov.uk/dvla)

# APPENDIX 1

## Vehicle Definitions

**Note :** *The Motor Cycles Etc. (Single Vehicle Approval) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1959) should be consulted for precise legal definitions.*

**Amateur-built vehicle** is one constructed or assembled for your own personal use, where:

- ▶ the construction or assembly or a substantial part of it has been carried out by you or other persons acting on your behalf; and,
- ▶ a substantial part of the construction or assembly was carried out by you or other persons not involved in a business in the course of which motor vehicles are normally constructed or assembled.

**Vehicle manufactured using parts of a registered vehicle** is where:

- ▶ it is constructed or assembled by a person carrying on a business in the course of which motor vehicles are normally constructed or assembled;
- ▶ it is equipped with an engine which has previously been used as the engine of another vehicle which had been registered under the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994 or any earlier Act relating to the registration of mechanically propelled vehicles; and,
- ▶ it is equipped with one or more of the following components taken from the same vehicle as the engine: - chassis; body; suspension; an axle; transmission; or steering assembly.

**Rebuilt vehicle** is a vehicle to which the Secretary of State is required to assign a Vehicle Identification Number and which has been rebuilt using a replacement chassis or body of the same design and construction as that of the original vehicle and which -

- ▶ was supplied for the purpose without having been previously used, or
- ▶ previously formed part of a registered vehicle.

**Low powered moped** is a 2 or 3 wheeled vehicle with pedals, auxiliary propulsion not exceeding 1kW and a maximum design speed of not more than 25 km/h.

**Moped** is a 2 or 3 wheeled vehicle with a maximum design speed of not more than 45 km/h.

**Motorcycle** is a 2-wheeled vehicle with or without a sidecar, fitted with an engine having a cylinder capacity of more than 50 cm<sup>3</sup> if of the internal combustion type, and/or having a maximum design speed of more than 45 km/h.

**Motor tricycle** is a vehicle with 3 symmetrically arranged wheels fitted with an engine having a cylinder capacity of more than 50 cm<sup>3</sup> if of the internal combustion type and/or a maximum design speed of more than 45 km/h.

**Quadricycle** is a 4 wheeled vehicle of which there are two classes:

(i) light quadricycles whose unladen mass is not more than 350kg, not including the mass of the batteries in case of electric vehicles, whose maximum design speed is not more than 45km/h. These vehicles shall be considered to be mopeds and shall fulfil the technical requirements applicable to 3 wheeled mopeds; and,

(ii) quadricycles other than those in (i), whose unladen mass is not more than 400kg (550kg for vehicles intended for carrying goods), not including the mass of batteries in the case of electric vehicles, and whose maximum net engine power does not exceed 15kW. These vehicles shall be considered to be motor tricycles and must fulfil the technical requirements applicable to motor tricycles.



# APPENDIX 2

## THE MSVA SCHEME IS BEING RUN AT THE FOLLOWING MOTORCYCLE SINGLE VEHICLE APPROVAL TEST STATIONS :

### SCOTLAND

**Aberdeen:** Cloverhill Road, Bridge of Don Industrial Estate, AB23 8FE (2 wheeled vehicles only)

**Glasgow:** Crosshill Road, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, G64 2QA

### NORTHERN ENGLAND

**Beverley:** Oldbeck Road, Off Grovehill Road, East Yorkshire, HU17 0JW

**Carlisle:** Brunthill Road, Kingstown Industrial Estate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0EH

**Liverpool:** Stopgate Lane, Simonswood, Liverpool, L33 4YA (2-wheeled vehicles only)

**Manchester North (Chadderton):** Broadway Business Park, Broadgate, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 9XA

**Newcastle-Upon-Tyne:** Sandy Lane, Gosforth, NE3 5HB

### MIDLANDS

**Birmingham:** Unit 10, Elmdon Trading Estate, Birmingham, B37 7HE (2-wheeled vehicles only)

**Derby:** Belmore Way, Alvaston, Derby, DE21 7AY

### LONDON

**Watford:** Unit B, Caxton Court, Caxton Way, Watford, WD18 8RH (2-wheeled vehicles only)

**Yeading:** Cygnet Way, Willow Tree Lane, Yeading, Hayes, Middlesex, UB4 9BS (3-4 wheeled vehicles only)

### EASTERN ENGLAND

**Norwich:** Jupiter Road, Hellesden, Norwich, NR6 6SS

**Leighton Buzzard:** Stanbridge Road, Bedfordshire, LU7 8QG

### SOUTHERN ENGLAND

**Chelmsford:** Widford Industrial Estate, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3AE (2 and 4 wheeled vehicles only)

**Gillingham:** Ambley Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0SJ

**Southampton (Northam):** Centurion Industrial Estate, Bitterne Road West, Southampton, SO18 1UB.

### SOUTH WEST ENGLAND

**Bristol (Avonmouth):** Merebank Road, Avonmouth, Bristol, BS11 8AQ

**Exeter:** Grace Road, Marsh Barton Trading Estate, Devon, EX2 8PU

### WALES

**Cardiff:** School Road, Miskin, Pontyclun, Mid Glamorgan, CF72 8YR

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for corporate information

**[www.dft.gov.uk/vosa](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa)**

## Contact us:

E-mail

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National Number

**0300 123 9000\***

Monday to Friday - 7.30am until 6.00pm  
(normal working hours)

