

The National Standard for cycle training - level two

The National Standard for cycle training was reviewed and updated in 2012. This introduction sets the revised National Standard into context and presents the primary principles for the delivery of Bikeability cycle training. After this introduction, the level two outcomes are presented.

The purpose of the National Standard

The primary purpose of the National Standard is to get more people cycling, more often and with less risk. It helps break down some of the biggest barriers to cycling, opening up opportunities for people to get on their bikes and enabling cycling to become a normal everyday activity.

The National Standard for cycling is designed to encourage and empower people of all ages to make independent cycle journeys in a wide range of road conditions. Launched in 2005, it was developed by over 20 organisations and is maintained by the Department for Transport (DfT). There are three levels and a series of progressive outcomes within each level which can be used in training to take the complete beginner all the way to being able to ride on any road where cycling is permitted.

In 2012, following consultation with stakeholders, the National Standard was revised and re-launched alongside a new quality assurance framework.

The National Standard is promoted through Bikeability in England. Bikeability involves organisations registering with the DfT to become schemes that deliver National Standard training using registered NSI/NSIAs trained and assessed by NSITs and registered with Instructor Training Organisations recognised by the DfT. Only registered schemes and instructors are permitted to award Bikeability materials and awards. Scheme registration, instructor training and on-going internal and external monitoring, are part of a quality assurance framework designed to ensure good practice cycle training is delivered to the National Standard.

What is the National Standard?

The National Standard comprises a set of outcomes which competent and confident cyclists should be able to demonstrate, accompanied by detailed guidance for training providers on the rationale for each outcome and how it should be demonstrated and assessed. National Standard outcomes are presented progressively at three levels:

Level 1 involves mastery and control of the bicycle in off-road settings and prepares the trainees for on-road cycling

Level 2 involves cycling on quieter roads and simple junctions and covers effective road positioning, communication with other road users and rights of way

Level 3 involves cycling on busier roads and more complex junctions, including hazard awareness and risk management on all roads where cycling is permitted.

Additional sets of outcomes have also been developed for National Standard Instructors and Assistant Instructors (NSI/NSAIs) and National Standard Instructor Trainers (NSITs).

What is Bikeability?

The National Standard is promoted through Bikeability in England and Scotland. Bikeability was launched in 2007 and refers to schemes registered with the DfT delivering National Standard training using NSI/NSIAs trained and assessed by NSITs and registered with Instructor Training Organisations accredited by the DfT. Only registered schemes and instructors are permitted to award Bikeability materials and awards. Scheme registration, instructor training and on-going internal and external monitoring, are part of a quality assurance framework designed to ensure good practice cycle training is delivered to the National Standard.

Good practice principles for training to the National Standard

In order to reach the aim of getting more people cycling, more often with less risk, the delivery of all training to the National Standard should adhere to the following principles, and be:

Realistic

Training at Levels 2 and 3 must be delivered in real road environments where trainees encounter other road users and use the variety of local road infrastructure available. In these environments, they are able to demonstrate skills of observation and communication with other people, and become confident in sharing space with other road users.

Training can take place without needing specialised equipment or clothing as this encourages cycling as a normal activity.

Empowering

Training must empower trainees to make independent decisions in order to build their competence and confidence in a wide range of cycling environments.

Positive

Instructors should make the training a positive experience, helping make cycling practical and possible; the aim is to empower trainees to cycle to their full potential.

Progressive

Training must allow trainees to progress to more challenging environments and help them find practical techniques to master these.

Trainee led

Training must address individual trainees' development needs and aspirations, starting with a baseline assessment of their current areas of strength and priority areas for development against the National Standard.

Outcome orientated

The National Standard is outcome-orientated. That means the trainees are assessed on their achievement of the set outcomes. The amount of time required to achieve these outcomes may vary from person to person.

Continuous assessment

Training should progress through continual ongoing observation of the trainee outcomes using ongoing feedback to input into the development of the trainees riding. Trainees should not be expected to undergo a test at the end of training as instructors would have assessed their riding skills continuously.

The National Standard for cycle training is broken down into a series of outcomes:

- i) Trainee Level 1 outcomes
- ii) Trainee Level 2 outcomes
- iii) Trainee level 3 outcomes
- iv) Instructor outcomes
- v) Assistant instructor outcomes
- vi) Instructor Trainer outcomes

National Standard for Cycle Training

Level 2

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
1 All Level 1 outcomes	1.1 Trainees must demonstrate all compulsory Level 1 outcomes.	Level 1 is a precursor to Level 2.
2 Start an on road journey	<p>2.1 Trainees should start from the kerb (or from the outside of parked vehicles where such vehicles would obscure visibility at the kerb).</p> <p>2.2 They must observe behind for traffic approaching from the rear. Then, if a suitable gap is available behind and if no vehicle(s), pedestrian(s) and/or other blockages are in their path in front, they should set off into the stream of traffic.</p>	<p>When cycling on the road trainees should always set off from a position where they can see and be seen. It is important that the trainee sets off in a clear and assertive manner.</p> <p>Trainees should be aware of traffic approaching from behind, approaching traffic that may turn across their path and pedestrians that may step off the kerb in front of them.</p>
3 Finish an on road journey	<p>3.1 While riding along the trainee must look behind for close following traffic that may be about to overtake or undertake, before pulling in to the left to stop.</p> <p>3.2 Where the road is very narrow and overtaking is difficult they should slow down gradually, where possible having first made eye contact with any close following driver/rider and signal if appropriate.</p> <p>3.3 Trainees should perform a final check over the left shoulder before coming to a stop.</p>	<p>Checking behind before stopping is essential as it gives the message to road users behind that the cyclist is about to do something. The choice of which shoulder the cyclist checks will depend on the circumstances. The key outcome is that they should be able to see who is behind and, where possible, establish eye contact if there is a close following driver or rider. Eye contact is particularly important on narrow streets where there is not enough space for a following driver to overtake.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
4 Understand where to ride on roads being used	<p>4.1 Trainees must understand the primary and secondary positions.</p> <p>4.2 Trainees must position themselves where they can be seen and should not cycle in the gutter.</p> <p>4.3 Where there is little other traffic and/or there is plenty of room to be overtaken they may ride in the secondary position.</p> <p>4.4 Where the road is narrow and two-way traffic would make it hazardous for the trainee to be overtaken by a following vehicle they must be observed to ride in the primary position.</p> <p>4.5 If the trainee is riding at the speed of other traffic then they should do so in the primary position.</p>	<p>Trainees may be wary of cycling in the primary position as this will put them in the stream of traffic when their natural instinct might be to keep away from it. However, where appropriate, it will actually offer them more protection as they will be able to see more, be seen more easily by other road users and most importantly it will prevent drivers from attempting to overtake them where the road is too narrow.</p>
5 Be aware of potential hazards	<p>5.1 The trainee must be aware of other road users at all times, both in front and behind, as they ride along.</p> <p>5.2 They should be looking for hazards.</p> <p>5.3 They must also be aware of pedestrians and others on the pavement ahead of them who might step into their path and of driveways and other entrances from which vehicles might emerge into their path.</p>	<p>Good observation improves hazard perception allowing for good forward planning. By preparing for hazards in advance the trainee reduces their risk.</p> <p>Regular rear observation also ensures that following drivers know that the trainee is aware of the driver. This may prevent drivers passing close and at high speed.</p> <p>Good observation and listening will alert trainees to any hazards. Therefore the trainee should be seen to make continuous observations as they cycle. If stopped and questioned they should be able to explain what they have seen or heard.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
6 Make a U-turn	<p>6.1 Approaching the point where they intend to turn, the trainee must look behind over their right shoulder and, if there is a safe gap behind and in front, complete the turn, slowing down if necessary to do so and taking up the correct cycling position on the opposite carriageway.</p> <p>6.2 They should be covering their brakes as they make the turn. They must not leave the carriageway while performing the u-turn.</p>	<p>Children, particularly, and adults will often carry out u-turns and should be taught how. They are also very useful in Level 2 training as they can be used to increase the frequency with which trainees can practice manoeuvres and to enable trainees to ride complete circuits in a training area. As a tool, the u-turn is extremely useful in speeding up the rate at which trainees can achieve the compulsory outcomes.</p>
7 Pass parked or slower moving vehicles	<p>7.1 On approach to the vehicle the trainee must observe behind. They may also check if there is anyone in the vehicles, if the motor is running and if the vehicle is about to set off (indicating) so that they can take appropriate avoiding action.</p> <p>7.2 They should move out smoothly into a gap in the traffic (they should not be so close as to need to swerve) a car door's length from the vehicle they intend to overtake.</p> <p>7.3 Trainees must not cycle close to vehicles where they could be hit by an opening door.</p> <p>7.4 Once past, they should perform a final check over their left shoulder before moving smoothly back into the secondary position. If there are other vehicles to overtake ahead, they should stay in the primary position until they have passed all of these.</p> <p>7.5 Trainees should not pass to the left of slower moving vehicles.</p>	<p>It is a great temptation for inexperienced cyclists to weave in and out between parked cars. They should rather stay where they can see and be clearly seen by other drivers and riders even if this means that vehicles behind are prevented from overtaking them.</p> <p>It is important that the trainee cycles a car door's length away from parked vehicles. Where this is not possible slowing down and observation into the parked cars they are overtaking is essential.</p> <p>For Level 2 training, trainees should not pass to the left of queuing traffic and if this situation occurs they should be taught about the risks of traffic turning across their path.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
8 Pass side roads	<p>8.1 On approaching a side road trainees should look over their shoulder then move into the primary position . They must look into the side road as they approach for any vehicles that may be about to turn out and pedestrians who may be about to cross the major road. They must also be looking out for oncoming vehicles that may turn right into the side road.</p> <p>8.2 At a crossroads junction they must also check for traffic emerging from the minor road on their right.</p> <p>8.3 After passing the side road, trainees should perform a final check over their left shoulder before moving back into their normal riding position</p>	<p>Riding in the primary position when passing a side road makes trainees more visible to drivers wishing to exit the side road and avoids the need to swerve protruding vehicles. Trainees will also be less likely to be cut up by vehicles turning into or emerging from the side road, this is particularly important for following traffic that may turn left across their path.</p> <p>A final check before moving back into the secondary position is important as there may be following cyclists who have passed the side road in the secondary position.</p>
9 Understand how and when to signal intentions to other road users	<p>9.1 Where trainees are seen to signal this should always be following a rear observation. However, this does not mean that the signal is solely for those behind. Trainees must look for other road users in front and to the side.</p> <p>9.2 If they choose to make a signal it must be a clear signal with the arm extended as far from the body as possible, pointing in the direction they intend to turn, with the palm facing.</p> <p>9.3 There should also be instances where trainees choose not to signal following good observation. If questioned immediately afterwards they must be able to explain, justifiably, that there was nobody they needed to signal to.</p>	<p>It is important that the trainee demonstrates that they can signal at some point during the course for this outcome to be properly signed off.</p> <p>Signalling should always be combined with observation. This enables the trainee to judge whether a signal is necessary and in some cases whether the driver/rider has seen their signal.</p> <p>With all turns trainees should understand that signalling is not just for the benefit of those behind. Pedestrians and oncoming drivers should warrant a signal.</p> <p>Where there are particular hazards controlling the cycle is more important than signalling.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
10 Turn left into a minor road	<p>10.1 In advance of the junction, trainees must look behind and then should move into the primary position.</p> <p>10.2 As they approach the junction the trainee must check for hazards in the minor road they are turning into and for pedestrians who might be about to cross at the head of the junction.</p> <p>10.3 The trainee should signal if necessary.</p> <p>10.4 Just before turning, trainees should perform a final check over their left shoulder for anyone trying to undertake them.</p> <p>10.5 Where the trainee is turning left at a crossroads they must also check for traffic emerging from the minor road on their right.</p> <p>10.6 Trainees should complete the turn in the primary position.</p>	<p>The technique of moving out into the primary position prior to turning is to prevent following vehicles overtaking and cutting up the cyclist when turning into the side road. It is appropriate in busier traffic where this is more likely to occur but does increase the potential for the cyclist to be undertaken, hence the final check over the left shoulder.</p>
11 Turn left into a major road	<p>11.1 In advance of the junction, the trainee must observe behind, move into the primary position and, if necessary, signal their intention to turn left.</p> <p>11.2 As they approach the head of the junction they should start checking for traffic on the major road, particularly from their right, adjusting their speed appropriately as they do so.</p> <p>11.3 They should stop or give way as appropriate and once there is a gap in traffic from their right, the trainee should perform a final check and set off and complete their turn.</p> <p>11.4 Where the trainee is turning left at a crossroads they must also check for traffic emerging and turning right from the minor road ahead of them.</p>	<p>Maintaining the primary position away from the kerb at a junction will keep drivers behind the trainee as they are setting off and most likely to be unsteady. This will therefore offer them greater protection when they are most vulnerable. However, this does increase the small risk of being undertaken by cyclists and motorcyclists in the secondary position as they will have the space to get past. This is why a left shoulder final check is appropriate just before turning.</p> <p>Should there be any queuing traffic at the junction this should be used to teach the importance of not passing to the left of vehicles when turning left (this is a Level 3 outcome).</p> <p>Trainees should only stop at the junction if it is necessary to do so.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
12 Turn right into a major road	<p>12.1 In advance of the junction, the trainee must observe behind, identify a suitable gap in following traffic then move into the appropriate position. They should approach the junction in this position and must observe for traffic from both sides on the major road.</p> <p>12.2 If signalling is necessary they should also continue to signal while pulling out and approaching the junction. The trainee should return both hands to the handlebars in time to brake or manoeuvre.</p> <p>12.3 They should stop or give way as appropriate and once there is a gap in the traffic, the trainee should perform a final check and complete their turn.</p> <p>12.4 Where the trainee is turning right at a crossroads they must also check for traffic emerging from the minor road ahead of them.</p>	<p>Getting into the primary position to turn in advance of the junction enables the trainee to then start concentrating on conditions and traffic on the major road. Riding to the junction in this position can prevent drivers from passing them on either side as they approach the junction. Taking a position that will prevent vehicles overtaking from behind will also make completion of the turn safer as drivers will not be able set off alongside them when the trainee is at their slowest and least stable.</p> <p>Seeing a trainee choose not to signal or stop at a give way, after appropriate observation, should be evidence that the trainee understands what they are doing. If questioned, the trainee should be able to explain their actions. Trainees who stop at every give way, regardless of traffic on the main road, have not demonstrated that they understand and could be putting themselves at greater risk as following vehicles may not stop.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
13 Turn right from a major to minor road	<p>13.1 Approaching the junction, the trainee must observe behind before moving into an appropriate position.</p> <p>13.2 They should signal if necessary prior to and while moving out.</p> <p>13.3 If there is oncoming traffic they should stop (in the appropriate position) and once the traffic has passed, complete their turn. While waiting they may also choose to signal.</p> <p>13.4 Before turning, they should also carry out a right shoulder final check for any drivers attempting to overtake on their right as they turn.</p> <p>13.5 If they have not had to stop for oncoming traffic at the junction they should carry out a right shoulder final check just before completing the turn.</p>	<p>The appropriate position to wait for oncoming traffic to pass is dependent on the width of the road and the confidence of the trainee. Trainees may prefer to hold a primary position which prevents traffic undertaking to the left.</p> <p>If trainees are comfortable with traffic passing them on both sides while waiting, they may take up a position about an arm's length to the left of the centre line.</p> <p>Whichever position is chosen, the trainee should make themselves visible and communicate with drivers going in both directions.</p> <p>The right shoulder final check before completing a turn is for vehicles that may be attempting to overtake the trainee on their outside. It may not be necessary if the trainee has just allowed oncoming motor vehicles to pass.</p> <p>Signalling while waiting to turn right will make the trainee more visible to oncoming drivers.</p> <p>Where the trainee is turning right at a crossroads they must also check for traffic emerging from the minor road on their left.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
<p>14 Demonstrate decision-making and understanding of safe riding strategy</p>	<p>14.1 Trainees must be able to explain why they have decided to carry out a manoeuvre in the manner observed. It should be clear from this that they have a good understanding of safe cycling strategy, namely good observation, positioning and communication.</p> <p>14.2 They should demonstrate a basic knowledge of the types of clothing they could wear to make themselves more visible.</p>	<p>Understanding and being able to demonstrate safe riding strategy is a key outcome for trainees on a Level 2 course.</p> <p>A trainee may be observed to carry out a manoeuvre safely but unless it can be determined they did so using an effective strategy it is not possible to be confident that when faced with the same manoeuvre again and/or different circumstances that they will be able to repeat or adapt their handling of it to be consistently safe.</p> <p>Correct demonstration of the give way and the choice of when not to signal can be good examples of an understanding of safe riding strategy. During a course trainees should therefore be expected to demonstrate manoeuvres where they correctly choose not to stop at a give way and not to signal.</p> <p>While riding in a manner that makes the trainee more visible is the most effective way of making other road users aware of their presence, trainees should also understand how appropriate clothing may enhance their conspicuousness. Scheme organisers and instructors must understand how the use of high visibility clothing can change the parameters of driving behaviour in the presence of a training course.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
<p>15 Demonstrate a basic understanding of the Highway Code.</p>	<p>15.1 Trainees must understand who goes first in a variety of situations and should continually demonstrate this as they go through the outcomes.</p> <p>15.2 The main areas that the trainees need to understand are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) where to ride ii) when to give way and when to stop iii) the relevant road signs and markings that are present in the training area. <p>15.3 Trainees should be able to interpret road signs and lines if questioned.</p>	<p>Relevant parts of the Highway Code should be dealt with during the course. On the way to and at training sites the trainees are likely to see signs and behaviour that can raise Highway Code issues and instructors should take advantage of these wherever possible.</p> <p>It is also advisable that other Highway Code material is taught prior to the course, in breaks, or is part of information handed out.</p>
<p>The following outcomes are not compulsory.</p>		
<p>16 Decide where cycle infrastructure can help a journey and demonstrate correct use</p>	<p>16.1 The trainee should decide whether or not to use cycle infrastructure and explain their decisions whether they are for reasons of safety or convenience.</p> <p>16.2 When using cycle infrastructure they should take up a position that makes them visible to other road users.</p>	<p>The quality of design of cycle lanes and facilities varies greatly. For example, where lanes are wide, (1.5 metres or more) these should be adequate for use when riding ahead. Riding on the right edge of a cycle lane will make the trainee more visible. Where lanes are narrow, they will undoubtedly be safer riding in the primary position outside the cycle lane. Trainees should also avoid cycling in lanes where the surface is poor. Cycle lanes can often be blocked by parked vehicles and other obstructions or be so short and/or narrow that their use would be unreasonable and getting in and out of them expose the cyclist to more risk.</p>

Outcome	Observed Demonstration	Reasoning
<p>17 Go straight on from minor road to minor road at a crossroads</p>	<p>17.1 As they approach the junction the trainee must check behind and, when safe to do so, move into the primary position.</p> <p>17.2 As soon as possible on the approach to the head of the junction, they must start checking for traffic from the right and left on the major road. They must also check for traffic that may emerge from the minor road ahead that they intend to ride into.</p> <p>17.3 They must give way or stop as appropriate. When safe to do so, they should cycle ahead into the other minor road and then resume their normal riding position.</p>	<p>This manoeuvre should be included in a course if possible. Many housing estates are designed with crossroads and therefore trainees should ideally have an opportunity to practise using them.</p> <p>At a crossroads the cyclist has to take account of three different lanes of traffic that may present a hazard to them. Using the primary position should eliminate a fourth by preventing vehicles behind attempting to overtake them as they negotiate the junction.</p> <p>Trainees should seek eye contact with drivers of vehicles that may emerge from the side road ahead that they intend to ride into. The Highway Code does not contain clear guidance on who has priority so the trainee must communicate effectively so the driver knows who is going first.</p> <p>If a crossroads junction is available, the full range of left and right turns could also be practised on it.</p>
<p>18 Use mini-roundabouts and single lane roundabouts</p>	<p>18.1 As the trainee approaches the roundabout they must check behind and move into the primary position when safe to do so, signalling if necessary.</p> <p>18.2 They should stop at the give way line if it is necessary to give way to traffic on the roundabout.</p> <p>18.3 They should carry out a final check behind before setting off. They should maintain the primary position while on the roundabout.</p> <p>18.4 Before exiting the roundabout, they must check to the left and behind and signal left, if necessary.</p>	<p>The primary position should be used on mini-roundabouts as it makes the trainee more visible and prevents vehicles from overtaking.</p> <p>Trainees should be aware that some drivers may drive over the central island of a mini-roundabout to pass them. Good observation is essential to protect the trainee and enable them to be ready to take evasive action if necessary.</p>