

Observers Briefing Notes for Associates

This is not something needed on every ride, but all of it is needed on an Initial Assessment. You may like to think about producing your own abbreviated format of this document (or use the format provided during Observer training) so that you have a checklist for briefing the Associate.

Your Associate has made a decision – he/she wants to do this, don't forget that; you have their permission.

It's up to you to make it a pleasure and keep their interest; so be nice! There are a lot of things you need to know, some of which are a bit intrusive, so be sensitive.

- For the Initial Assessment only, make sure you see licence (Group A), current insurance certificate, road fund licence, MOT certificate (if applicable) and complete the eyesight test. The first four you have to ask for; explain that we cannot take anyone out without knowing they're "street legal".
- On all rides the disclaimer (see Summary below) must be read to the associate (adjust as necessary for Initials).
- Engage the Associate in conversation about their bike whilst you discreetly assess the roadworthiness and the Associate's knowledge of a pre-ride safety check. You can tell them about POWDER, chain/suspension maintenance, – but not too much technical stuff at this stage. Also assess their protective kit, is it safe? Not something for heavy comment at this stage but consider how you introduce the topic on debrief.
- Explain the objective of the ride. The first one is "ride as you normally do" with the caveat that we ride up to the speed limits where its safe to do so. For subsequent rides you will have a specific training objective in mind. Tell the Associate; it goes much better if they know what you expect.
- If you are doing a demonstration ride let the Associate know they control the speed: if they drop back you slow down. Never give a demonstration ride to show how clever you are or so far in front of the Associate that they might as well not be there. If you do don't expect them to want to continue with you.

- Explain that when you're Observing you will be in different positions on the road and that you don't want the Associate to mirror your positioning. To start with keep a respectful follow distance; it's safer for you as you don't know how they ride; it's also less intrusive for a new Associate.
- Explain that you will coach and advise on "how to" ride but that the Associate is in sole charge of their motorcycle and so always responsible for their actions on the road.
- Agree the route. Most people like to have some idea of where they're going. How you will give signals for direction and stops. Agree a "follow me" signal (tapping the back of your helmet with your left hand is widely accepted).
- Agree a procedure for separation if, for example, you're stopped by traffic lights. Make sure the Associate knows to stop somewhere safe – next layby, etc. If you really lose each other agree the procedure; "back to last roadside stop"; "wait in a safe place beside the road"; etc. Consider your Associate's ability to comply with each of these options!

Associate De-briefing

The intention of this session is to give a full, honest and encouraging critique of the ride and the opportunities for improvement.

Take care to give the feedback in a positive way – try thinking how you would like someone to advise you of your skills and expertise!

Make sure you:

- Pitch the conversation at the Associate's level. Don't give a fully detailed critique of every fault you've observed to someone on a first Check ride
- Start with a "Positive/Good" feature of the ride
- Encourage a two way dialogue on the "improvement opportunities". "Tell me about that overtake? What's your view on your positioning at that junction now we're sitting here?, etc., etc."

- Check the Associate's understanding – frequently! “Am I making sense? Does that seem right to you?, etc.” Don't ever allow yourself to go “on transmit” and lecture the Associate.
- Relate your observations to The System, Roadcraft principles and the Highway Code
- From the discussion develop one or two learning themes for the Associate to practise.
- Round off the discussion with another Positive/Good feature to leave the Associate with some confidence! Never leave an Associate feeling “everything's rubbish” or that they have no hope of making the grade.

Your objective is that the Associate should go away from a de-brief fired up with the material he/she needs to raise their game. This should include their “homework” – aspects to study/practise before the next session.

SUMMARY

Observer's Brief to Associates – Main Headings

- Introduce yourself
- Find out about Associate
- Bike and documents road legal (Initial Assessment only)
- Eyesight test (Initial Assessment only)
- Disclaimer. (Must be read to Associate)
- Clothing appropriate
- Explain the ride objective
- Explain a demonstration ride – when appropriate
- Explain your positioning
- Explain we coach not teach
- Agree a route
- Agree a procedure for separation
- Ask questions about homework

Observer's de-brief to Associate – Main Headings

- Ask the associate's view of the ride
- What did he learn
- What did he feel improved
- What did he find difficult or did not understand
- Discuss and score the associates guidance record (relate to PYAMT and HC)
- Summarise main points
- Set homework
- Look forward – objective for next session

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ

You are deemed to be in control of your motorbike at all times.

You must hold a current full driving licence and insurance.

The motorbike must be taxed, roadworthy and have an up to date MOT certificate (if applicable).

Directions will be given in good time.

Follow the road ahead unless the traffic signs direct otherwise or unless asked to turn.