

Factsheet: Changes to overseas driver licences for international students

This factsheet provides information about two important changes to overseas driving licenses in NSW that apply from 1 July 2023.

Who do the new rules apply to?

These changes affect all international students who:

- arrive in NSW on or after 1 July 2023;
- intend to stay in NSW for 6 months or more;
- hold a valid overseas driving license; and
- want or need to drive while they are in NSW.

What are the new rules?

There are two new changes that impact international students using overseas driving licences to drive in NSW.

Firstly, if you are an international student who arrived in NSW **on or after 1 July 2023**, you can drive on your overseas licence (if valid) for 6 months, but after that you must get a NSW licence.

Secondly, the NSW Government can revoke (or remove) your driving privileges on your overseas license if you:

- get 13 demerit points;
- are charged/convicted of a serious driving offence, or drug or alcohol offence; or
- face suspension or disqualification from driving, anywhere in Australia or another country.

If your driving privileges are revoked (or removed), you cannot drive in NSW using your overseas licence. After serving any suspension or disqualification period, you can apply for a NSW driver's licence to drive in NSW.

What happens if I continue to drive using my overseas license after 6 months?

If you don't get a NSW driver licence after 6 months, you will be classified under the law as driving a vehicle while unlicensed. Driving a vehicle while unlicensed is an offence and fines apply.

Currently, the following fines apply:

- a fine of \$603 will apply for a first offence;
- a fine of \$924 will apply for a second or later offence; and
- a maximum penalty of \$2,200 may be imposed by a court.

These fines apply from 1 July 2023.

What if I arrived in NSW before 1 July 2023?

If you **arrived in NSW before 1 July 2023**, you can continue to drive in NSW using your overseas driver licence until that licence expires, or is otherwise suspended or disqualified.

You can, however, convert your overseas driving licence by applying for a NSW license at any time, if you prefer.

If your overseas license expires, you **must** get a NSW driver license to drive in NSW.

How do I get a NSW driver licence?

What you need to do to get a NSW driver licence will depend on which country issued your overseas licence. Some overseas license holders will need to take a knowledge test or driving skills test to get a NSW driver licence. Check the two lists below to see if this applies to you.

If your overseas driver licence was issued by any of the countries in List 1 (below), you will not be required to take and pass a knowledge test or driving skills test to be issued with a NSW licence.

List 1: Not required to take and pass a knowledge or driving skills test

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Croatia
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Guernsey
- Ireland
- Canada
- Italy
- Isle of Man (for licences first issued after 1 April 1991)
- Japan
- Jersey
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Portugal
- Singapore
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Malta (for licences first issued after 2 January 2004)

If you hold an overseas licence from any of the countries in List 2 (below), you will not be required to take and pass a knowledge test or driving skills test to be issued with a NSW licence, unless you are under 25 years old. If you are under 25 years old, and hold an overseas driver licence from a country on List 2, you must take and pass a knowledge test or driving skills test to be issued with a NSW driver licence.

List 2: Not required to take and pass a knowledge or driving skills test, unless you are under 25 years old

- Bulgaria
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Poland
- Republic of Cyprus
- Republic of Korea (South Korea)
- Republic of Serbia
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Africa
- Taiwan
- Hong Kong (if you've held the licence for at least 12 months)

If your driver license was issued by a country that is not in either List 1 or List 2, you will be required to take and pass a knowledge test or driving skills test to be issued with a NSW licence.

How do I apply for a NSW driver licence?

You will need to complete a license application form. You can get this form at a Service NSW centre, or online at the [NSW Government's website](#).

When you have completed a licence application form, you must take it to a Service NSW centre in person. You will also need to take your:

- current overseas driver licence;
- [proof of identity](#); and
- payment for your [licence fees](#).

If your driver license is not written in English, you will need to provide an [official English translation](#) of your licence from:

- [Multicultural NSW](#);
- the Consulate-General of the Republic of Korea; or
- the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Sydney.

What if I need help?

If you are an international student in NSW and you have a problem with your driving license, or a related legal problem, contact Redfern Legal Centre's International Student Legal Service for free, confidential legal advice.

You can contact the International Student Legal Service by phone on 02 9698 7645 or online at www.rlc.org.au/contact.

Published August 2023. Produced by Redfern Legal Centre International Student Legal Service NSW.

This factsheet is not a substitute for legal advice. Australian law and policy are subject to constant change. This factsheet may not reflect all of the most recent changes or developments in law and policy.