



CATEGORY UPGRADE POLICY

Effective Date: December 1st, 2024

Last Revised: December 2nd, 2024

Purpose:

To establish a clear and standardized framework for categorizing and upgrading riders in their respective disciplines, ensuring fair competition and adherence to the rules and regulations set by Cycling BC, Cycling Canada, or UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale). This policy outlines the specific requirements riders must meet to advance to higher categories within the sport.

Policy:

- 1. Introduction:** A race license confirms a rider's official permission to participate in sanctioned cycling races. Holding a race license ensures that participants race according to the rules set by international (UCI) and national (Cycling Canada) organizations.
- 2. Race Grouping:** When entering a Cycling BC-sanctioned race, whether the race is at the provincial, national, or international level, racers may be categorized based on various criteria. Some races group participants by age, while others consider skill levels. In some cases, races may incorporate a combination of both. A rider's age determines their age group and their skill level is determined by past performance and results.

2.1. Age Groups: A rider's age group automatically changes as they get older.

Youth (U13, U15, U17)

Junior (U19)

U23

Elite (23 & up)

Master (35 & up)

- 2.2. Skill Levels:** A rider's skill group is determined by past performance and results, leading to the following categories:

Road / Track / CX	MTB XC / DH	BMX
Cat 5	-	-
Cat 4	-	-
Cat 3	Sport	Novice
Cat 2	Expert	Intermediate
Cat 1	Elite	Expert

3. **Race Category Choice:** In provincial-level races offering both age-based and skill-based categories, riders have a choice. For example, if there's a road race with a "masters" category for people 35 and older, as well as Cat 2, Cat 3, and Cat 4 races, someone with a Masters Cat 3 license can choose to race in the Masters group or the Cat 3 group. In national and internationally sanctioned races, racers are required to compete in the category identified on their license - either masters or elite.

4. General Upgrade Information

- 4.1. **Criteria for Upgrades:** To move up to a higher race category, a rider must meet specific criteria, such as earning enough points or gaining enough experience. Please refer to the discipline-specific criteria below for information about upgrading in a specific discipline.
- 4.2. **Timeframe for Upgrade Consideration:** Cycling BC will consider race results over the previous 12-month (365-day rolling) period to determine if a rider qualifies for an upgrade. Upgrade points are given to Provincial Race and UCI Race license holders competing in races sanctioned at Provincial A and higher.

Results from Cycling BC sanctioned-grassroots and mass-participation (self-seeding) events are NOT eligible for upgrade points, except Road 5 to Road 4 upgrades, whereby a rider needs to demonstrate their ability to finish 3 mass-start events with the peloton.

- 4.3. **Upgrade Request Procedure:** When a rider has accumulated the required points for an OBJECTIVE upgrade, it is their responsibility to submit a category upgrade request to Cycling BC along with documentation of the races in which the upgrade points were earned.

All category upgrade requests must be submitted online at <https://cyclingbc.net/upgrade-request> and only fully completed upgrade request forms from Cycling BC members in good standing will be considered. The processing time for upgrade requests with objective criteria can range from 7-14 days depending on the season. Subjective upgrade processing times can be found under the Subjective Upgrade Clause (see Appendix A).

- 4.4. **Exceptional Cases:** In exceptional cases, if a rider does not meet the discipline-specific criteria or if a youth rider is looking to “race up”, they may request to have their upgrade reviewed by an upgrade committee through the Subjective Upgrade Clause (see Appendix A). The upgrade committee will review the request and may ask for a letter of support from the rider’s NCCP-certified coach. Decisions by the review committee are final and cannot be appealed. Application for consideration under this clause does not guarantee an upgrade.
- 4.5. **Re-entry and Category Re-classification:** Riders who temporarily stop racing and do not renew their race license in any jurisdiction can return to their current category within 24 months after their license expires. Riders returning to racing after an absence of more than

24 months will be moved down one category for every 24 months of absence and must upgrade according to the standard category upgrade procedure.

5. Masters Riders

- 5.1. Riders 35 years old and older must decide whether to race in the "Elite" or "Master" category for the entire season. This choice is made when applying for a race license each year. Members riding for a UCI trade team must choose “Elite” and are therefore not able to ride in “Masters” categories
- 5.2. The choice between Elite and Master determines the rider’s category in national and international events.
- 5.3. Once the Elite or Master category is chosen, a rider must race in that category for the entire season. However, for races that aren't UCI-sanctioned, national championships, or provincial championships, Masters riders can usually choose to ride either Elite or Master. For example, if a rider 35 years old or older wants to race in the Elite category for local events but Master for provincial championships, nationals or international races, they’ll need a Master license.

6. General Objective Criteria

- 6.1. Only races with licensed officials and UCI ability categories count for upgrade points. Results from informal, self-seeded, or mass participation events do not count for upgrades but may be considered in special cases (refer to clause 4.4). Exceptions include Grassroots-sanctioned Road Category 5 events for the purposes of upgrading to Road 4 (refer to clause 8.3).
- 6.2. Riders may not skip a category under any circumstances.
- 6.3. To be approved for an OBJECTIVE upgrade, a rider must collect a minimum number of upgrade points based on their specific cycling discipline and calculated by the number of starters and the athlete’s finish position. View APPENDIX B for points matrix schedules and Section 7 discipline-specific minimum requirements.
- 6.4. Cycling BC reserves the right to upgrade riders who have accumulated double the required minimum points to ensure fair and competitive racing.
- 6.5. When competing in the following sanctioned events, earn DOUBLE points:
 - AA-Sanctioned Events (i.e. Provincial Championships)
 - AA-Sanctioned equivalent races in the USA (i.e. Tour de Bloom, Redlands)
 - AAA-Sanctioned Event (i.e. National Championships)
 - Cycling Canada National Calendar Races (i.e. Tour de Beauce)

- 6.6. When racers are grouped by age, instead of ability, HALF points are earned.
- 6.7. When ability categories are combined for a race (i.e. Category 3 and 4 race together), points are calculated for the finishing position within the COMBINED field.
- 6.8. When gender categories are combined for a race, points are calculated SEPARATELY for each gender category but based on the total combined field size.
- 6.9. When there are less than 15 riders in a race category, only the top half of finishers earn upgrade points.
- 6.10. When a rider moves up a category, they start with zero points in their new category as of the upgrade approval date.
- 6.11. Results from races held in other provinces may be considered for upgrade credit if they have a similar format to sanctioned local/regional BC races, BC Cup or BC Provincial Championship races and have officials overseeing them.

Examples include the NW Cup in Washington State for DOWNHILL MTN BIKE racing, whereby points are honored per the below table:

Cycling BC Ability Category	NW Cup Ability Category
Sport	Cat 3
Expert	Cat 2
Elite	Cat 1

Discipline-Specific Objective Upgrade Criteria

7. BMX

7.1. The BMX 20-inch racing class is categorized by skill level and gender.

Male	
Novice	New riders with less than 10 race wins
Intermediate	Riders with some experience and fewer than 25 race wins
Expert	Highly skilled amateur riders

Female	
Novice	New riders with less than 25 race wins
Expert	Highly skilled amateur riders

7.1.1. To move up an ability category, a rider must achieve one of the following

- Two 1st-place finishes in their current category
- Three top-five placings in their current category

7.2. In BMX racing, amateur riders are further divided into age group categories called the Challenge category which is any age category except for those considered as Championship categories (Junior 17-18, U23, Elite 19+).

Challenge Age Categories	Championship Age Categories
8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17-24 (male/female)	Junior (17-18)
25+ (female only)	U23 (19-22)
25-29, 30-34, 35+ (male)	Elite 19+

7.3. The BMX 24-inch “cruiser” class features different age categories and does NOT include ability categories. Age categories include:

Cruiser (24-inch class) Age Categories	
Female	Male
12 & under, 13-16, 17-29, 30-39 and 40+	12 & under, 13-14, 15-16, 17-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49 and 50+

8. Road

8.1. To be approved for an OBJECTIVE upgrade, a rider must collect a minimum number of upgrade points as per below, according to Appendix B Schedule 1

Road	Minimum
5 to 4	**
4 to 3	25 points
3 to 2	25 points
2 to 1	30 points

8.2. Riders can only earn half of their upgrade points from time trial events.

8.3. For upgrades from Cat 5 to Cat 4, riders need to complete at least three races with the peloton (in the main group) or successfully complete an accredited Cycling BC Learn to Race program or clinic (i.e. Road 54). Event results must be available for review by Cycling BC.

8.4. Riders in Cat 2, Cat 3, or Cat 4 who successfully complete an accredited Cycling BC Learn to Race program or clinic (i.e. Road 43, Road 32, Road 21) can earn 5 upgrade points.

9. CYCLO-CROSS

9.1. To be approved for an OBJECTIVE upgrade, a rider must collect a minimum number of upgrade points as per below, according to Appendix B Schedule 1

Cyclocross	Minimum Requirement
4 to 3	25 points
3 to 2	25 points
2 to 1	30 points

10. MOUNTAIN BIKE CROSS-COUNTRY & DOWNHILL

10.1. To be approved for an OBJECTIVE upgrade, a rider must collect a minimum number of upgrade points as per below, according to Appendix B Schedule 2

Mtn. Bike	Minimum
Sport to Expert	20 points
Expert to Elite	25 points

10.2. For DH and Enduro, riders who earn ability upgrades in one sport, the ability upgrade will be reflected in both DH and Enduro.

11. TRACK

11.1. To be approved for an OBJECTIVE upgrade, a rider must collect a minimum number of upgrade points as per below, according to Appendix B Schedule 2

Track	Minimum
4 to 3	25 points
3 to 2	25 points
2 to 1	30 points

APPENDIX A: Subjective Upgrade Clause - “Racing Up”

The purpose of the Subjective Upgrades Clause is to provide a mechanism for athletes with exceptional circumstances or performances to request category upgrades outside of the objective criteria.

Exceptional cases include:

- SUBJECTIVE ability category upgrade (by Cycling BC)
- TEMPORARY ability category upgrade (by Cycling BC)
- TEMPORARY age category upgrade (by Cycling Canada)

Timelines:

- Subjective-criteria applications are processed on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.
- Temporary-criteria applications require a minimum of 28 days notice.

General Criteria for Subjective Upgrades:

- Cycling BC reserves the right to decline SUBJECTIVE upgrade applications.
- Subjective and Temporary upgrade requests to change ABILITY categories are facilitated and approved by Cycling BC.
- Temporary upgrade requests to change a rider’s AGE category for a specific event is facilitated by Cycling BC but approved by Cycling Canada (28 days’ notice is required).
- All applications are submitted to Cycling BC (cyclingbc.net/upgrade-request). For inquiries, contact ben@cyclingbc.net (as of June 1st, 2024)
- To receive approval for a subjective or temporary upgrade, an athlete must demonstrate:
 - Significant margin of victory or competence within the current age-appropriate or ability category, or
 - Results at three or more sanctioned events (i.e. BC Cup, Canada Cup, Crankworx) within the previous calendar year must be consistent with top-3 results in the category wherein the athlete wishes to compete.

Discipline-Specific Criteria for Subjective Upgrades:

Road & Cyclo-cross

- U17 to Junior temporary age upgrade. Athletes are eligible to compete at Nationals upon approval by Cycling Canada but are ineligible to collect UCI points until their race age matches the category. Applications must take place no later than 4 weeks before the event and include a letter of support from the athlete's NCCP-certified coach.
- Category 3 to Category 2 temporary ability upgrade for Provincial Trade Team athletes. This option is designed specifically for junior and U23 road athletes selected to compete at premier international cycling events (ie: Redlands) but have not yet massed the required points due to the logistical constraints. Applications must take place no later than 4 weeks before the event and include a letter of support from the athlete’s NCCP-certified coach or Provincial Trade Team manager (accredited). This is a one-time exception. Athletes return to

their designated category after the event and pursue a permanent upgrade through the standard policy.

BMX

- N/A

Track

- U17 to Junior temporary age upgrade. Athletes are eligible to compete at Nationals upon approval by Cycling Canada but are ineligible to collect UCI points until their race age matches the category. Applications must take place no later than 4 weeks before the event and include a letter of support from the athlete's NCCP-certified coach.
- Riders in their final year of the U15 category can apply for an upgrade to U17 if they meet the following requirements:
 - 50% of their team at the event is racing in their appropriate age category.
 - Athletes must have posted times (eg. Kilo/500m, IP, etc.) that could potentially be top 5 at National Championships in the upgraded category.
 - Athletes wishing to race in bunch races in an upgraded category must receive the endorsement of both an NCCP-Certified coach and their Provincial Sport Organization (Cycling BC).
 - Since Cycling Canada will ask for verification of the rider's ability to race in a pack, evidence of such should be conveyed in coach recommendation letters included in the upgrade application.

XCO

- U17 to Junior temporary age upgrade. Athletes are eligible to compete at Nationals and Canada Cups upon approval by Cycling Canada but are ineligible to collect UCI points until their race age matches the category. Applications must take place no later than 4 weeks before the event and include a letter of support from the athlete's NCCP-certified coach.
 - Upgrades are event-specific, not seasonal
 - UCI Junior Series events are not eligible for upgrades due to the event sanctioning process

DH

- U17 to Junior temporary age upgrade. Athletes are eligible to compete at Nationals and Canada Cups upon approval by Cycling Canada but are ineligible to collect UCI points until their race age matches the category. Applications must take place no later than 4 weeks before the event and include a letter of support from the athlete's NCCP-certified coach.

APPENDIX B: POINTS MATRIX SCHEDULES

Upgrade points are calculated by the number of race starters (DNS are excluded) and the athlete's finish position.

SCHEDULE 1 for ROAD, CYCLOCROSS			
PLACE	Field Size 41+	Field Size 15-40	Field Size <15
1st	12	10	8
2nd	10	8	6
3rd	8	6	5
4th	7	5	4
5th	6	4	3
6th	5	3	2
7th	4	2	1
8th	3	1	1
9th	2	1	1
10th	1	1	1

SCHEDULE 2 for TRACK, MTN BIKE		
PLACE	Field Size 15+	Field Size <15
1st	12	10
2nd	10	8
3rd	8	6
4th	7	5
5th	6	4
6th	5	3
7th	4	2
8th	3	1

Reminders:

- 6.6. When racers are grouped by age, instead of ability, HALF points are earned.
- 6.5. When competing in AA, AAA, Cycling Canada National Calendar Races, USA Races, DOUBLE points are earned.
- 6.9. When there are less than 15 riders in a race category, only the top half of finishers earn upgrade points.