

FAQs on Down-rating or Up-rating a Vehicle

RSA

What is down-rating? Down-rating, down-weighting or down-plating a vehicle is when an owner wants to lower a vehicle's original design gross vehicle weight (DGWW) or maximum authorised mass (MAM). This is the weight of a vehicle or trailer including the maximum load it can carry as designed by the manufacturer. Motor tax rates and driver licence categories go by a vehicle's weight so down-rating a vehicle can result in reduced motor tax fees and lesser licencing requirements.

What is up-rating? Up-rating , up-weighting or up-plating a vehicle is when an owner wants to increase a vehicle's original DGWW. Doing this will also increase the load carrying capacity of the vehicle. In most cases a physical modification is required because carrying a heavier load requires stronger brakes, better suspension etc. Up-rating a vehicle may result in additional legal obligations such as a higher [licence category](#), a [tachograph](#), a [speed limiter](#) etc. which can be viewed under embedded links. Up-rating a vehicle must not be carried out without manufacturer's approval.

What if the original manufacturer or authorised distributor is no longer in operation? If this is the case you can try contacting a UK or European branch if in existence to obtain written approval. If this is not possible, a suitably qualified individual (SQI) may be willing to certify the vehicle and complete the modifications report. However you will need to contact [DVCSD](#) or email them at motortax@dtas.ie **before** doing so to confirm whether they will accept this type of certification.

What are the steps to down-rating or up-rating a vehicle?

Whether up-rating or down-rating any vehicle the following steps apply:

Step 1: Contact your vehicle's original manufacturer or authorised distributor. A vehicle's DGVW should never be changed without the original manufacturer's approval.

Step 2: If the original manufacturer agrees to your vehicle being down-rated or up-rated, they will advise you what physical modifications are required, if any. If your vehicle needs to be physically modified, a [Modifications Report](#) will also need to be completed by a suitably qualified individual e.g. mechanical engineer and presented at its next roadworthiness test.

Step 3: A new weights and dimensions plate or statutory plate will need to be fitted to your vehicle outlining the lower or higher DGVW. This can only be done by the original manufacturer or authorised distributor. The new plate is required regardless of whether any physical modification takes place.

Step 4: Declare the revised weights to the driver and vehicle computer services division ([DVCSD](#)) or email Motortax@dttas.ie who can advise what documentation is required to change the information on your vehicle's file and vehicle registration certificate.

Step 5: Contact [Revenue](#) to find out if any vehicle registration tax (VRT) changes apply to your vehicle's new weight. You should also notify your insurance company of any changes.

I need to add or retro-fit an axle to my truck to uprate it. What are the steps?

Follow steps 1 to 5 above but only the original manufacturer or authorised distributor can certify this. Click [here](#) for a list of Irish HCV Distributors.

Can I drive a vehicle if I have not declared the new weight to

DVCSD? By law the information on your vehicle's plate should match its file or record so if this differs and you are stopped by a member of An Garda Síochána you could be liable for prosecution.