

Driving Standards Agency Consultation on 'Guide for DDRS Course Providers, HM Courts and Tribunal Service', 6 March 2012

Comments from Brake, the road safety charity

Brake welcomes the detailed structure and content of the syllabus, which is grounded in evidenced educational methods which Brake uses in its own driver education scheme. Brake agrees the course syllabus is well balanced to meet the needs of drink-drive offenders and reduce recidivism.

However, Brake recommends the inclusion of an additional assessment criterion in the Drink Drive Rehabilitation Syllabus. In Unit One, learning outcome four, Brake recommends the inclusion of:

'Explain the increased crash risk from 20mg, 50mg, 80mg (current limit) and 160mg alcohol in 100ml blood from a base point of zero alcohol in the blood.'

This additional criterion will ensure that offenders can put other learning outcomes into context and understand the greatly increased risk from drinking even small amounts of alcohol and driving. It will also complement the other criteria outlined in this section.

Brake would encourage the inclusion of experiences of victims of road crashes, to help drivers think about the consequences of drink driving to enable 'anticipated regret'¹ which will reinforce a decision to not drink and drive.

Brake would also support the inclusion of an element allowing drivers to make a commitment in front of other course participants to never drink drive again. This should be done alongside creating personal strategies to keep to this commitment, as already described in the syllabus.

Brake is concerned that removing the lower limit for course fees could reduce competition among providers by pricing out smaller providers in the market. Reduced competition could erode standards of provision in courses, which would impact on the integrity of the scheme. Brake would urge the DSA to reconsider removal of the lower course fee limit.

For more information contact Ellen Booth, senior campaigns officer, on 01484 550067 or ebooth@brake.org.uk.

¹ Anticipated regret, expected feedback and behavioral decision making, Tilburg University, 1999