

Here are some of the questions others have asked.
If we haven't answered yours, please call us or e-mail.

Q: Will the course be full of 'scare tactics', 'horror videos' or being 'lectured at'? - and what on earth do you find to do for 16 hours?

A: Research over the years has shown that scare tactics have a short-term effect only. We want you to consider your use of alcohol when you drive for the rest of your life, so we approach it differently. We offer comfortable surroundings, in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. We have lots of interesting and fun exercises, videos, quizzes and discussion.

The DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) dictates the length of the course, and the cost, but you will be surprised how the time flies! We aim to give you good, reliable information about alcohol and its effects: dispelling myths, with time and space to discuss it, understand it, allowing it to adjust your attitudes and therefore, in the long term, your behaviour. We will also look at the role drugs play in our driving ability.

Doing a course like this, even if it will get you back on the road early, is probably the last thing you want to do right now, especially if the process so far has been harrowing.

The other 14 to 20 people on the course have been through the same thing, so will no doubt share your feelings. The tutors will make you very welcome and take you through the course with care and sensitivity. We steer thousands of people safely through the course each year.

We will **not** –

- Routinely require you to take a breath test
- Play scary videos at you
- Assume you have a drink problem
- Make doing a course in any way unpleasant for you.



We offer an interesting and interactive course aimed at helping you consider your alcohol use in relation to driving. The primary aim of the course is to reduce the likelihood of re-offending by separating driving from drinking. The course is **not** part of the punishment, anti-alcohol or for problem drinkers.

The course includes: how we measure alcohol in units: pub measures, draft & bottled beer, lager, cider, wine: by bottle and glass, pouring drinks at home, home brew, calculating strength x volume. We will also consider 'over-the-counter' drugs as well as illegal ones.

How we absorb, process and expel alcohol, how long before we are alcohol free, including the morning after! How little it takes to get to the drink-drive limit and how you can be charged below! How long it takes to return to 'zero' and what speeds or slows that process.

We will consider how alcohol affects driving ability and performance in general. We will look at 'safe, sensible and legal' limits, the 'High Risk Offender' scheme and sect42(1) applications. We aim to dispel alcohol myths, look at why we drink and at managing peer pressure. We will share the experience, how and why it happened, consequences to you and those around you and strategies to avoid re-offending.

We will look at enhancing driving skill, at risk taking behaviour and consider insurance quotes (not as bad as it is said to be!).

Short tutor inputs for key information are mixed with quizzes, games, demonstrations; small group-work exercises, video and week-to-week self-observation assignments like drink diaries.

Group discussion is a cornerstone to the course together with a beginning and end alcohol knowledge questionnaire to evaluate learning and assimilation. It all happens in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

We supply all the paperwork needed to re-apply for your licence together with a Certificate of attendance, which will prompt the agreed reduction in the length of your disqualification.

The course aims to dispel myths, to educate, inform and entertain. We are convinced you will enjoy the course and feel more confident to face the future alcohol free when driving.

If you have decided to avoid alcohol, for a while or permanently, please let us know when you book, likewise if you have any particular needs: access, hearing, language etc, please tell us.

Q: Will the courses be held in places in which I'd rather not be seen, like Police Stations, Probation Offices, Hospitals, Alcohol Clinics or Rehabs? Will everyone know I'm on a drink-drive course?

A: No. Courses will be in comfortable, neutral places, all very near the train/bus station. Any signs to help you find your way will say 'dde' or 'Driving Course'.

Q: Will I have to speak in front of the group?

A: Some people are more at ease working in groups than others. The groups are small, between 8 and 20 people. Everyone feels anxious to begin with, but you will be surprised how quickly the group gels. The group tutors are very skilled and experienced and want you to have a positive learning experience in the group. It may be the first time you are able to talk to others, who know just how you feel about what happened, without being judged. Most people say the group discussions are the best part of the whole course.

Q: So, will I have to share information with other people?

A: Yes, but **you** are responsible for the **detail** of what you disclose. You will be asked to keep a record of your alcohol consumption while on the course and to share this with the group and we will discuss the circumstances surrounding your offence. It may be that some people want to discuss their drinking/driving behaviour in more detail, so you, and everyone else, will be asked to respect each other's confidences.

Q: Why can't I do this course in private, on my own?

A: There are many benefits to learning in a group. Whilst the tutors are experts in their field, you too bring experience and knowledge from your life. Research has shown that people gain much more from the discussion and exchange of ideas in groups like these, than they would on their own.

Q: Will you tell me to stop drinking completely?

A: Definitely **not**. These courses are NOT anti-drink. They ARE about helping you **separate** your driving from your drinking.

That said there are always people in the group who may, for whatever reason, be refraining from alcohol at the moment. If you have decided to avoid alcohol, for a while or permanently, please let us know when you book, likewise if you have any particular needs: access, hearing, language etc. please tell us.

Q: I have heard that my insurance will be ridiculously expensive when I return to the road. How will doing the course with dde help?

A: Many insurers are now seeing the value of courses like this; we have a number of contacts through whom you may be able to gain more advantageous quotes. Many people have saved more than their course fee compared with what they were paying before they were banned! All insurance is going up in price, vehicles especially, but on average your insurance should not increase more than 10%. [see 'insurance' info sheet]

Q: Being banned has caused me financial difficulties - can I have time to pay the course fee?

A: To secure a place on your chosen course you need pay a small deposit only. You can then pay the balance in full a month before your course starts. You can pay by cheque or postal order and we also accept most credit/debit cards over the phone or using our secure on-line booking system.

Q: I have heard that if my ban is more than 2 years, I can get my licence back even earlier. Is that true?

A: You may be able to apply for a further reduction in your ban under sect.42(1) of the Act. You will learn more on the course, or see information sheet 's42'.

Q: I don't read English very well - will this be a problem?

A: The course will be delivered in English, so you will need a reasonable level of understanding though there is a 'tick box' quiz and a little writing between sessions one and two, which someone at home may be able to help you with, but nothing complicated. **Please let us know when you book** if you have any special needs: literacy, access or hearing etc (it is sometimes possible for you to bring (at no extra charge by us) an interpreter or other person necessary to enable you to complete the course, but we cannot arrange or pay for this).

Q: I have just received my ban, which course should I attend?

A: It depends on a number of things. When you are first sentenced you may feel very angry, with the system, the Courts, the Police and with yourself. This is not a good time to do the course it's best to let a little time pass and the 'dust settle'. People vary in how long this takes.

The Court will decide the latest date by which you must complete the course; this is your '**date for completion of course**'. It is normally 2 months before the date you are due to drive again with the reduction for completing a course. It allows the Court and DVLA time to process the early return of your licence. **You must complete your course by that date.**

The course usually runs over three days, one per week. You should allow time to complete one week of the course on the subsequent course in case you have to miss a session for some unavoidable reason, but you **must do week one first** and complete the sessions in order.

Q: What if I am a 'High Risk Offender'? (more than 2½ times over the limit, second offence in 10 years, or failure to give a specimen).

A: Regaining your licence is not automatic. You have to show you are fit to drive and have a medical before you can drive again, so you need to allow even more time for the 'paperwork'. We will explain everything on the course, or see the Information sheet 'HRO'.

If you are unsure please call us.

Q: What would happen if I didn't attend the course after agreeing to do so in court?

A: Completing a course will entitle you to drive earlier as well as enable you to consider your alcohol use in relation to driving. You agreed to the making of a court order which has legal status and if you fail to complete the course the court needs to be informed, a '*Notice of Non-Completion*' may be issued under sect. 34B(5) of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

Without the course you are TWICE as likely to re-offend in the future and this would make you a 'High Risk Offender'. (If you are one already it would be even more serious).

Yes! I know **you** won't do it again! - but did you mean to last time?

Intent requires knowledge and understanding to be applied!

If you were to re-offend it is reasonable to assume that the court would take a more severe view next time, having offered you the option of the course, which you accepted but did not complete. The implications are even greater if you are already a 'High Risk Offender'.

Q: Who are dde (drink driver education)?

A: dde is a not-for-profit road safety organisation, limited by guarantee, no. 4109250. We are an independent training agency who provides courses, approved by the **Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency** (DVSA), for those convicted of excess alcohol offences under the Road Traffic Act 1991. We work with a team of experienced health and social care professionals to provide you with courses that you will not only find stimulating and interesting, but also enjoyable.

We also have a charity **DDE+** (Drink Driver Education Plus) which provides preventative measures for fleet operators, professional drivers, schools/colleges and other groups - stopping the problem before it happens! (see link on Home page). We provide training and education to drivers, and soon-to-be drivers, before they are convicted.

Q: What do people who have done the course say?

A: We will ask you to give us feedback on the course, here's what others have said -

"everyone should have the chance to do this course"

"it's OK and not as bad as it sounds"

"go for it"

"I learnt so much and (I never thought I'd say this!) even enjoyed it, thank-you"

"I can't tell you how much I was not looking forward to this! But the other people were great, so were the tutors, I'm really pleased I did it now, I feel better about me! I can leave this experience behind me and move on! Thank you"

"Courses are run in a comfortable venue, in a friendly, informative and non-judgmental way, I'm really pleased I did the course, it was well worth the money"

"Lose some of your ban and learn something"

"informal + caring + sincere"

"life changing!"

"everybody in the group was so helpful, do it"

"take it, it's well worth the time and effort"

"the course was extremely beneficial in that it built up a logical process/procedure to alcohol awareness rather than being dictatorial or patronising. This course should be available to fleet drivers and companies prior to convictions"

If we haven't answered your question here please call us or e-mail

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