



Department for
Transport

least two months before the end of the reduced period of disqualification to allow DVLA time to take account of the reduction. DVLA cannot deal with your application for the return of your licence until the court has advised them of the reduced period of disqualification. The final possible date for completion will be specified in the original referral order issued by the court.

'a reduction of up to a quarter in the period of disqualification if you complete the course'

If you fail to comply with the conditions for completing the course, the course organiser may refuse to issue a Certificate of Completion. In this case, a Notice of Non-Completion will be given to you, although you may appeal to the court if you do not think this is justified. If the court believes you are right, it will issue a declaration which will have the same effect as a Certificate of Completion.

If you are offered a place on a rehabilitation course and have any questions, ask the magistrate or sheriff when you are sentenced or talk to the court administrators or your solicitor.

Further information about drink drive rehabilitation courses may be found on the Department for Transport's website:

www.dft.gov.uk

Summary of the Scheme

- ◆ If convicted of a drink drive offence you may be offered the opportunity to attend a rehabilitation course
- ◆ It is for you to decide whether to accept this offer
- ◆ You will be required to pay for the course
- ◆ If you satisfactorily complete the course your period of disqualification will be reduced by up to a quarter
- ◆ The court will decide whether to offer you a place on a rehabilitation course, and, if so, by how much the period of disqualification will be reduced

Rehabilitation Courses for Drink Drive Offenders



Rehabilitation Courses

‘an alternative sentencing option for drink drive offenders’

Since 1 January 2000, courts throughout England, Wales and Scotland have had an extra sentencing option for drink drive offenders. If you are convicted of an offence involving drinking and driving, the magistrate, or sheriff in Scotland, may offer you the opportunity of attending a rehabilitation course. Completion of a course, each of which is approved by the Government, will entitle you to a reduction of up to a quarter in the period of disqualification. In the case of a one year disqualification, the reduction will be three months. The court will decide the length of reduction for longer disqualifications.

If the magistrate or sheriff believes you may benefit from attending a rehabilitation course, he or she will ask if you are prepared to accept a referral to the local course organiser. It will be for you to decide whether to accept this offer. There will be a charge, payable in addition to the fine. This fee is set by the course organiser and you will be told the course fee by the magistrate or sheriff. Depending on the individual organiser, it may be possible to pay the fee in instalments. Some course organisers also offer a lower fee for those on limited income.

Before making a referral order, the magistrate or sheriff should ensure that you are at least 17 years of age; that a place is available on a local course; that you are fully aware of the effect of the order, including the payment required for attending the course; and that you have agreed that the order should be made. The name of the organisation providing the course should be specified on the order.

If you agree to the referral, you will be informed of the arrangements for the rehabilitation course either at court or by being contacted by the local course organiser. However, you should not book a place on a course until you have received your copy of the referral order or are otherwise satisfied that the course is one provided by the specified organiser. If you are in any doubt about the correct course, want to change to another organiser, or have not been contacted by the correct organiser within one month of your conviction, you should contact the court for advice.

Arrangements for courses vary from area to area. Typically, courses last between 16 and 30 hours in total, made up of a number of separate sessions. Each course should have some 8-20 participants.

‘The rehabilitation course is not intended to punish you further’

The rehabilitation course is not intended to punish you further. You will already have been disqualified and probably fined for your offence. The purpose of the course is to teach you about the effects of alcohol consumption. A range of issues will be covered, including information about alcohol and its effect on the body; the effect of alcohol consumption on performance, particularly driving ability and behaviour; analysis of drink driving offences; alternatives to drinking and driving; future action and sources of advice. The content of courses run by different organisers may vary but is likely to involve short lectures; group discussion; role play; assessment of personal drinking habits and presentations by policemen, lawyers or doctors.

Successful completion of the course depends on regular attendance, payment of the fees in full and compliance with the course organiser’s reasonable requirements.

When you have completed the course you will be given a Certificate of Completion to present to the court (some course organisers will send the Certificate to the court for you and will provide you with a copy). The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) will then be notified of your reduced disqualification period. The course must be completed at

