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MEET THE STANDARDS

AN INSTRUCTORS GUIDE TO THE STANDARDS CHECK
& CLIENT CENTRED LEARNING

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RISK MANAGEMENT

LEE JOWETT

Risk Management

Risk Management is a vital component of Client Centred learning since we, as instructors, are delivering training, in and around, a safety critical environment. It is essential that we both take responsibility for the safety of ourselves, our clients and all other road users whilst also helping our learners develop their own understanding of risk and strategies to cope.

The DVSA ADI 1 states:-

'It is vital that all parties in any on-road training situation understand, and are clear about, where the responsibility lies for the safety of themselves, others in the vehicle and other road users.

From a training point of view, the ADI is also responsible for developing the pupil's awareness of and ability to manage risk (as the driver, the pupil also has responsibilities). This is the objective that is being assessed in this section

If the ADI fails in this basic responsibility, at any time, they will fail the standards check'

This last line highlights the overall importance of delivering lessons where the safety of all parties is paramount. It's true that this is the only criteria within the SC1 that has its own individual pass mark (**8 or above**).

The guidance notes on the DVSA SC1 report form state:-

'If you score 7 or less in the Risk Management section the standards check will be deemed substandard and a Fail. Also, if the examiner believes your behaviour is placing you, the pupil or any third party in immediate danger they may stop the lesson and record an immediate Fail'

This chapter breaks down Risk Management into its five competencies, addresses the importance of each to the learning process and road safety and provides workable examples of how Client Centred Approaches can improve the understanding and management of risk within the learner.

Did The Trainer Ensure That The Pupil Fully Understood How The Responsibility For Risk Would Be Shared?

The first competence under Risk Management is to ensure that the learner is able to focus on achieving the goal and developing their needs, whilst being fully aware of how and when they will be supported:-

In order to develop their needs, in achieving the goal and in keeping the car safe.

Learning to drive is an incredibly complex task and it's testament to the flexibility and efficiency of the human brain that we are able to perform such a task. There are however numerous human factors that we must overcome, or simply survive, whilst developing our skills from the unconscious incompetence stage of learning to the unconscious competence stage.

Breaking down the task, and dividing the responsibilities ensures that the learner can focus on their learning objective, however the act of focus itself places greater demands on a person. This increased attention on the task is manifested by an attentional bottleneck, in terms of the amount of data the brain can process....visually, for example, each second less than 1% of the visual intake enters the bottleneck, often leading to in-attentive blindness, how many times have you asked your pupil on a lesson "Did you not see that....?" Perhaps they were too focussed, to process it.

Ensuring that your pupil isn't overloaded with too many different tasks, whilst learning, enables learning and development to take place. Multi-tasking is not a particular strength for human beings in any case, let alone a scenario where one is attempting to learn to control and manoeuvre a complex machine at high speeds whilst interacting with other road users and hazards. Multitasking is where a human being is attempting to perform two or more tasks simultaneously. However, research shows that when multitasking, people make more mistakes or perform their tasks more slowly. Perhaps explaining one of the reasons our pupils often fail to take that gap on the roundabout, or get their parallel park wrong on multiple occasions. Of course it could be a lack of confidence or anxieties that contribute to these issues.

Another human factor potentially blocking the route to success is the affects our feelings have on our behaviour. As an example, Auditory exclusion happens as a physiological side effect of increased heart rate. When the heart rate approaches roughly 175 beats per minute, the sympathetic nervous system is activated enough that the brain reduces the amount of attention it pays to hearing in order to focus on sight. We've probably all wondered at times 'why aren't they listening to me?' Or asked 'how many times have we talked about that left door mirror?' Perhaps they weren't listening at those moments, but not because they weren't interested or that they didn't care, perhaps they simply weren't able to because their feelings overtook their ability to listen.

By dividing the responsibilities for risk, we are not only performing the essential task of keeping the car safe, we are enabling our clients, as best as possible, to learn and develop complex, multi-sensory, and highly demanding skills whilst dealing with their own risk increasing factors. Indeed the learning should not be restricted to the skills and the knowledge, it should be expanded upon to include developing their own understanding of the importance of dividing tasks beyond the driving test, how much will they be able to cope with as the driver on a late night journey with friends perhaps or when navigating unknown roads in busy traffic conditions, and to understand the importance of recognising and reducing risks, such as drink driving or mobile phone use, as well as on the road risks.

How much will they be able to deal with, what is important at that time, and what sacrifices will they have to make in order to focus on keeping themselves safe.

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Not only is dividing the responsibilities for risks essential to road safety and for learning to take place, it is also a fundamental skill which they need to be familiar with and compliant in doing for themselves to ensure they stay safe on the road as a full license holder.

The DVSA NSDRT states we must:-

6.3.1.3 Explain how you expect to work with the learner and how you expect them to work with you

6.4.1.3. Make sure the learner fully understands how you will share with them the responsibility for:-

Their safety, your safety, the safety of other road users.

What do I need to do to do well here:—

RISK MANAGEMENT				
Did the trainer ensure that the pupil fully understood how the responsibility for risk would be shared?				3
Were directions and instructions given to the pupil clear and given in good time?				
Was the trainer aware of the surroundings and the pupil's actions?				
Was any verbal or physical intervention by the trainer timely and appropriate?				
Was sufficient feedback given to help the pupil understand any potential safety critical incidents?				
Score for risk management				

1. Consider the human factors of your pupil.

How well do they normally manage themselves whilst learning? How do they cope with human factors such as focus on task, overload and perhaps anxiety. Remember this is a different situation for them too. When dividing up responsibilities discuss with them how their thoughts and feelings could be impacted by having a driving examiner in the back. How might those thoughts and feelings impact on their driving today? Listen to their responses and help them come up with strategies to cope. It's quite common for the driver on the Standards Check to be affected by nerves and pressure, ensure that they are aware that they are not being assessed, but don't undermine or overlook their feelings in doing so. We don't chose to be emotional and our emotional responses don't necessarily switch off because we are told 'the examiner is here to asses me, not you'. So will they need any extra help to cope with their feelings or to help keep the car safe whilst focussed on the task, and are there any issues around the goal of the session where anxieties or multi-tasking could impact on their abilities. Are there any junctions or carriageways along the route where they might need additional support?

The DVSA NSDRT Unit 6.4 states:-

Manage risk to instructor, learner and third parties

It assumes that learners will always be expected to take their share of responsibility for the management of risk, while recognising that their competence to take that responsibility will change over the period of their training. It also recognises that correctly understanding the nature of the risks that arise during a training session is central to a learner's ability to assess and respond to risk when they drive/ride independently.

2. Divide responsibilities for risk within the learning goals and needs.

When dividing the responsibilities for risk on the drive consider the criteria to be split into two areas:- the risk **inside the goal** and the risk **outside of the goal**, since its highly likely your pupil will need differing levels of support at different points along the route, but especially when focussed on achieving the goal. Once you've reached the practise area, initially the learner may set their focus intently on the needs they want to develop, as they approach any platforms (traffic light junctions/roundabouts/right turns etc.) that give them the opportunity to practise. As previously stated this focus could have a detrimental impact on their ability to take in as much of what's happening around them as their brain shuts down non-essential processes tunnelling vision, they may be more prone to getting things wrong and are more likely to feel anxious and less likely to hear you!

Ensure your pupil is aware that they may need more support as they practise around the goal and develop their needs. Discuss the potential effects so that they are aware of human factors that increase risk, as well as any on-road areas of risk. Agree with them a plan that you BOTH (*Client Centred Learning*) believe will allow them to achieve the goal whilst also keeping the car safe. Reassure them that you will step in with any additional support that they need, in the event that things aren't going to plan and outline what they can expect when the car moves (examples are outlined below).

Ensure that during periods of reflection, any changes to the planned responsibilities are agreed, and again outline what they can expect before moving off for more practise.

3. Divide responsibilities for risk outside of the learning goals and needs.

Probably the most sensible way to look at this is to consider the level of support you would normally deliver to your client on a similar route, considering their general competence but again get them to consider their thoughts and feelings given the context of the journey they are taking today, where possible relate this to drives they might make post-test, perhaps driving a parent for the first time, or the difference having friends in the car might make to their thoughts, feelings and behaviour. You shouldn't generally offer too much more support through this part of the drive than you would normally offer as this can be detrimental to their development. Discuss the route to the training area and divide responsibilities for any particularly hazardous or complex junctions or perhaps platforms you haven't encountered yet. Perhaps there's a multi-lane roundabout they will need talking through, or meeting situations that will need to be managed. Breaking down the learning into manageable chunks and giving them as much responsibility as they are capable of, allows them to focus on achieving their goals.

Discuss and agree a level of support for the general drive, decide how they will let you know if they are struggling to cope with any detrimental feelings, and how you will help. Agree the levels of support for risk managing difficult situations en-route to the practise area and reassure your client that you are there to support them whenever necessary to keep the car safe. Outline exactly what they can expect when the car moves.

Ensure that during periods of reflection, any changes to the planned responsibilities are agreed, and again outline what they can expect before moving off for more practise or when heading back to the test centre at the end of the session.

Whilst the car is moving your client should be aware of when and how you will support them, and what methods of support they can expect you to use (verbal support and instruction, emotional support, physical support via dual controls) as a result of the conversations you have had prior to moving away. You will discuss them as part of a

conversation, so it's always a good idea to reiterate clearly and concisely what you have agreed before moving off.

So for example if you are teaching a beginner to move off under control, drive a little down the road and change gears before stopping, and have agreed that they want to have a go without instruction you might say:-

"So when the car moves I'm going to leave you to control the car in every way, you can just focus on the controls as we agreed and practise with getting the car moving, changing into second gear and stopping in a suitable area that I will point out to you. I will keep the car safe in every other respect, including all the observations before moving off, before changing gears and before stopping. I will tell you if it is unsafe to move off and if I do so I'd like you to keep your feet where they are, and keep the handbrake applied until I tell you it is now safe, I will also step in to help you while the car is moving, if necessary to keep the car safe. I might talk you through something if it's safe to do so, I might use the dual controls or perhaps shift the gear or apply an indicator but only if I need to, to keep the car safe or to help you. Otherwise I will leave these things to you. If I do intervene we will discuss it once we've pulled up in a suitable location."

Another scenario might be with a part trained learner who wants to develop their ability to position the car when turning right in busy traffic light junctions:-

"When the car moves I'm going to leave you to take responsibility for most of the things along the route to the practise area, as you normally would. I am going to talk you through your positioning as we approach the spiral roundabout that we discussed and talk you through keeping in lane, I may even adjust your position if I need to by taking control of the steering wheel, please allow me to take control if I take the wheel, and you can take over again when I let go. Once we get to the practise area, we've discussed that you are happy to take responsibility for the approach into the junction but that you'd like me to talk you through where to position the car inside the junction, if we have to wait to turn. As we are entering the junction, I will give you a reference for where to stop, if we have to stop. Otherwise I will let you deal with the junction independently, unless I need to intervene to help you or to keep the car safe."

"We have discussed how you might feel regarding the situation today, so if at any point you do feel stressed or anxious along the route let me know and I will increase the level of support by giving you more guided instruction as we agreed. If I've intervened in any way, we will pull up for reflection and decide if we need to adjust the plan or the level of responsibility at all before we move off for more practise"

In agreeing the division of the responsibilities for risk, we are enabling the client in these scenarios to focus down on their own individual needs and goals, safe in the knowledge that they will get the support they think they need, as well as any additional help they may be unaware that they need. By including the learner in the conversation and giving them some responsibility for dividing the responsibilities for risk, they are already forming strategies for risk management and becoming self-aware of their own abilities and limitations as well as having them consider how thoughts, feelings and human factors can increase risk. If we use periods of reflection to help them plan new strategies to reduce risk and consider how any human factors they experience in the drive could manifest in their driving beyond the driving test, we give them context for safer driving

post-test. Helping them plan coping strategies they can use in similar situations to stay safe as a driver.

The DVSA ADI 1 Outlines its competencies as follows:-

<p>Indications that all the elements of competence are in place could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking the pupil what is meant by risk • asking the pupil what sorts of issues create risk, such as the use of alcohol or drugs • explaining clearly what is expected of the pupil and what the pupil can reasonably expect of the ADI • checking that the pupil understands what is required of them when there is a change of plan or they are asked to repeat an exercise 	<p>Indications of lack of competence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failing to address the issue of risk management • giving incorrect guidance about where responsibility lies for management of risk • failing to explain how dual controls will be used • undermining the pupil's commitment to being safe and responsible, e.g. by agreeing with risky attitudes to alcohol use • asking the pupil to repeat a manoeuvre or carry out a particular exercise without making sure that they understand what role the ADI is going to play
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Below is a model for Goal setting and risk management devised by Sue McCormack at Tri-Coaching partnership:-

Goal Setting Risk Management Model

What level of input do I need to help the pupil achieve the goal (S M A R T)
What do I need to say or do to help?

Specific and Timed most important, Measurable and Achievable might come after an attempt at the goal.

What Level of Instruction is required?

Other elements of drive go into Risk Management

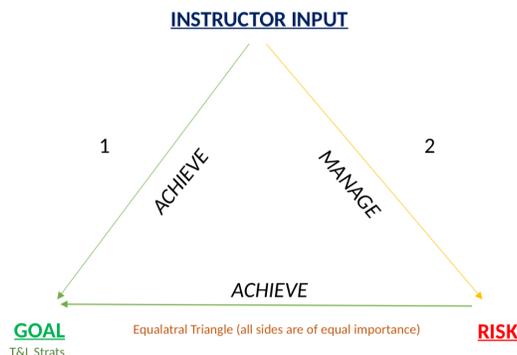
Break down goal into manageable chunks

Time is important, How much time and how many goals. What is achievable within the session.

Short repeatable routes

Re-assess after each block (instructor input and risk management around GOAL)

Left side addresses 4 criteria of lesson planning on SC/Part 3 report



What input do I need to manage risk around goal, in order that the pupil can achieve the goal. Gain agreement

Purpose of managing risk is to help client achieve goal

What input do I need outside of goal, to keep the car safe and manage risk in order that the pupil can achieve goal.

What do I need to say or do to manage the risk within the goal and outside of the goal.

What practise area do I need to ensure the pupil can achieve the goal.

Core Comps ID/Analyse/Remedy help client achieve goal.

Fault within goal, stick to level of support agreed. Only step in if risk too high. If safe allow fault and go onto reflection...What were you thinking, how were you feeling?

Fault outside of goal, manage risk with appropriate level of support. Leading or command q's. Guided instruction etc. Second time around go straight in with prompt, remember this...When will you...(Sufficient feedback) DON'T let it happen again.

Verbal interventions, flag (remember this...) Discuss goal FIRST then go back to flagged risk. Keep on track with goal. What went well within the goal? What needs improving...Then remember that situation we flagged...

Don't ignore safety critical situations outside of goal, MUST be dealt with. Sufficient feedback to ensure client understands importance of the fault. Safety Critical is any fault leading to MSPSL routine being required. Learning MUST take place. Repeat block.

Lee Jowett

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Were Directions And Instructions Given In Good Time

The second competence under risk management ensures that your pupil can practise safely and work on developing their needs, and achieve the goal efficiently. It takes into account the need for the instructors input to be limited, considering human factors such as overload, whilst also being sufficient to help the pupil manage any potentially safety critical situations, timely enough so that wherever possible the pupil can remain in charge of the decision making process, and concise enough on the move so that your client doesn't turn right into a petrol station, when you wanted them to take the next road on the left!

“Right now turn left”



The DVSA ADI 1 states:-

Any input from the ADI must be sufficient, timely and appropriate. It is important that ADIs take account of the ability of their pupils when giving directions. Directions given late, or in a confusing or misleading way, do not allow the pupil to respond and can make weaknesses worse. Too many unnecessary instructions from the ADI can both demotivate the pupil and create a real hazard.

What do I need to do to do well here:-

RISK MANAGEMENT			
Did the trainer ensure that the pupil fully understood how the responsibility for risk would be shared?			
Were directions and instructions given to the pupil clear and given in good time?			3
Was the trainer aware of the surroundings and the pupil's actions?			
Was any verbal or physical intervention by the trainer timely and appropriate?			
Was sufficient feedback given to help the pupil understand any potential safety critical incidents?			
Score for risk management			

1. Give directions that are clear and timely.

If you are directing your client along the route, then ensure you give them well timed and clear directions. For example “take the next road on the left” may leave the client asking “So not this left? The next one?” A better approach would be to change the wording from ‘next’ to ‘first’ (or second) and wherever possible add a reference point. For example “take the first road on the left, it’s just after the blue parked car.” In this way your pupil has a clear instruction and a visual focal point. Make sure you give the direction timely, so that once they have processed the direction they have time to manage their approach, a late direction can be detrimental to your clients development as it could lead to a safety critical situation, since your pupil won’t have time to process the manoeuvre.

Consider the human factors of your particular client, left-right confusion as an example, where it’s common for a person to confuse lefts and rights whilst performing other tasks, affects around 20% of the population and is believed to be more common in left handed people and in females. I’m sure we’ve all had those moments where we’ve given the direction and the learner has turned the exact opposite way! Remedies include, your pupil writing ‘L’ and ‘R’ on their hands or making ‘L’ shapes with their left hand, rephrasing the direction to perhaps ‘take the first road on my side/your side’ or giving visual direction with your hands, using stickers in the car etc. There’s also an extremely effective technique to remedy reversal, involving your client tapping pressure points on their hands and under their nose, which has derived from Thought Field Therapy (TFT). This remedy is strangely, extremely successful!

In the link below, Diane Hall of ‘L of a way to pass’ explains the technique in a little more detail and gives a simple demonstration of how your pupils can perform it:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIRs-YgI9H0>

Lee Jowett

While you can find more information on techniques to help both you and your pupils combat nerves here:-

<http://www.Lofaway2pass.com>

Depending on the ability of your pupil you may not give any directions at all. Allowing your pupil to plot their own route is an extremely important lesson which ventures from the lower levels of the GDE Matrix into the higher levels, particularly level 3:-Goals and context of driving (the journey). In this way your client is not only having to focus on the control element of the drive, they are also having to learn to cope with making timely decisions for themselves as a driver. In this case your level of support would be important to ensure the safety of the car and your client. It might be timely instructions that benefit your client in this scenario.

The DVSA NSDRT states we must:-

6.4.1.4 give clear and timely instructions (such as when and where to start, stop or turn), make sure that the learner understands your instructions and, if they do not, modify your instructions accordingly

2. Silence.

A 2013 **study** found that two hours of **silence** could create new cells in the hippocampus region, a brain area linked to **learning**, remembering, and emotions. Decrease stress by lowering blood cortisol levels and adrenaline.

Silence is a tool which can be hugely beneficial, to both the instructor and the learner. Think about how you learn and reflect best, is it with a clutter of external distractions or in situations where the only focal point is the task at hand? Where conversation and questioning can cause the brain to overload and lead the learner into making mistakes, becoming extremely detrimental to the learning process....Silence can be *Golden!* Depending on the competency of your pupil, their knowledge and learning style, it's extremely likely that they will perform the task better in silence, since their focus will not be divided between achieving the goal and listening to their instructor.

In this way the brain can concentrate on performing the task, using existing knowledge and transfer that knowledge more efficiently from working memory to long term memory, accelerating the learning process.

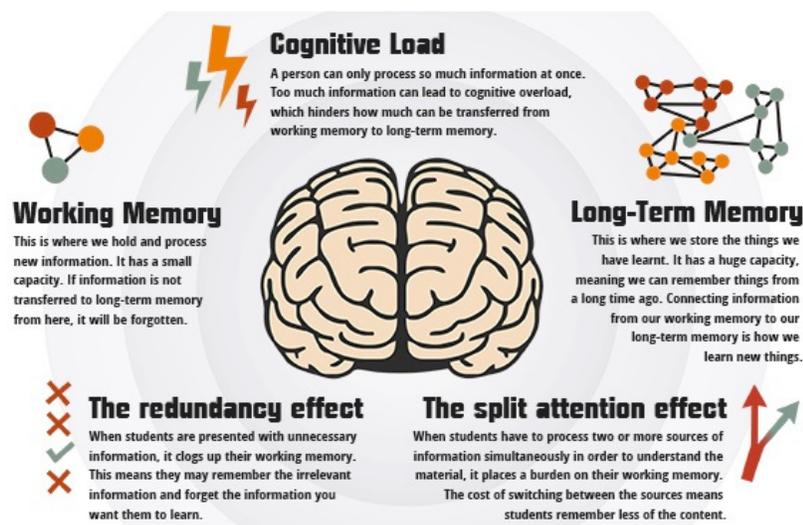
The added benefit is that it encourages more responsibility in your client, empowering them to take charge of the task, as they will do so as a driver beyond the driving test. In this way they become more aware of the strengths they possess and learn about their limitations. They discover where they excel and where they need more focus to manage situations independently. Of course we must again manage the risk and intervene if necessary to keep the car safe, which requires us to be aware of both our pupil's actions and of the surrounding areas, the next competency under risk management.

Silence is also a key factor during times of reflection, silence allows the learner to think more deeply and explore their thoughts and feelings around the experiences they have encountered.

One of the easiest things to do as an instructor is to step in too early with a solution, while your pupil is reflecting for themselves, diminishing the strength of their learning by

providing a solution we think will be effective while denying our client an opportunity to consider for themselves and form their own strategies. Whilst we often have effective remedies to help our clients to develop skills, we will never know exactly what our pupils thought or how they felt at a particular moment in time, whilst we know that its these thoughts and feelings that motivate their behaviour....So if you feel the urge to step in, try staying silent a little while longer, it might just surprise you to find that they have the answer, or that the root cause of the behaviour was actually very different to what you might have thought, and so to the remedy.

Your pupils will have their own thoughts and feelings to motivate them beyond the driving test, so stay silent where it will benefit them, so that they can explore and develop strategies for safe driving.



3. Aside from directions, limit any other input to the goal of the session, or to manage risk.

Before asking any questions on the move, consider two things:-

Is this question going to benefit my pupils learning around the goal of the session?

Is the purpose of this question to keep the car safe?

If the answer to both of those questions is 'No' then don't ask the question. It's better for you to let your pupil focus on the goal of the session and their responsibilities for managing risk, than diverting their focus to non-essential factors. Remember the DVSA ask us to limit our input and remind us of the dangers of mobile phone use while driving, in comparison to continual questioning on the move.

Of course there will be an agreed level of support around the goal of the session, which you must provide. This could include prompts or instruction on the approach to or throughout the manoeuvre. There may also be opportunities to provide context around

the learning goal of the session along the route. For example if the goal of the session is to improve your pupils understanding of the importance of checking the left door mirror when exiting a roundabout, then use any opportunity along the route where it's necessary to check the mirrors for changing direction to enhance your clients learning around the goal. If it's not safe to discuss on the move then flag the opportunities they've taken and discuss them in areas of reflection, ask them to consider the benefits and potential consequences of checking against not checking and add context by linking the mirror check to the goal of the session.

Use verbal instructions, such as leading questions, to keep the car safe. By being aware of your surrounding areas and your pupil's actions, it's possible to keep your learner in control of the decision making process using questions which disguise instruction. A well timed question on the approach to a traffic light junction, for example, such as "Do you think you need to be in the right hand lane here?" Helps your pupil make the decision to move lanes, whilst also managing the potential risk closer to the junction.

Time your directions to ensure your pupil has adequate time to perform the manoeuvre, keep your directions clear and concise and consider giving the responsibility for the route to the learner. Limit any additional input to learning around the goal of the session, if it doesn't benefit the learning goal, it's not important to the session, unless its purpose is to manage safety critical situations, in which case, wherever possible use leading questions to keep the responsibilities for decisions with the pupil. As often as possible help your pupil to develop by staying silent therefore limiting the amount of channels the brain is using to process information and accelerate learning from short term memory to long term memory. Particularly whilst they practise or reflect.

The [DVSA ADI 1](#) outlines its competencies as follows:-

<p>Indications that all the elements of competence are in place could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>clear, concise directions</i> • <i>ensuring the pupil understands what they plan to do and agrees with that plan</i> • <i>directions given at a suitable time so that the pupil can respond</i> 	<p>Indications of lack of competence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>giving confused directions</i> • <i>giving directions too late</i> • <i>giving unnecessary directions</i> • <i>failing to recognise when the ADI's input is causing overload or confusion</i>
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Was The Trainer Aware Of The Surroundings and The Pupils Actions

The third competence under risk management is essential to both the safety of the vehicle in the moment and also the long term safety of your client beyond the driving test. Being aware of the surroundings allows you to keep the responsibility with the pupil wherever possible, being aware of the pupil's actions helps you to support your pupil and share the responsibility for keeping the car safe. Being aware of both ensures the learner develops and achieves their learning goal.

Raising the learners awareness of the surrounding areas, or bringing to their attention their lack of awareness at a particular moment, and having them reflect on their actions or emotions, where were their thoughts, feelings, or focus at that particular time, whilst considering the potential consequences of that piece of driving can be a powerful learning experience for any new driver.

What do I need to do to do well here?

RISK MANAGEMENT				
Did the trainer ensure that the pupil fully understood how the responsibility for risk would be shared?				
Were directions and instructions given to the pupil clear and given in good time?				
Was the trainer aware of the surroundings and the pupil's actions?				3
Was any verbal or physical intervention by the trainer timely and appropriate?				
Was sufficient feedback given to help the pupil understand any potential safety critical incidents?				
Score for risk management				

1. Be aware of your surroundings and raise your pupils awareness of theirs.

It is essential that the instructor is constantly scanning for hazards both ahead, along the route and also for any upcoming hazards to the rear. As well as having a focus on the pupil to help you to determine whether their focus is on any potential safety critical situations, or whether it is elsewhere. Wherever possible remain silent to allow your pupil the responsibility for, and to focus attention on managing the risk, providing they are competent enough and that it is what you have agreed. However if it's necessary to intervene, perhaps your pupil hasn't seen the pedestrian approaching the Zebra crossing or maybe they just aren't responding as is required to a meeting situation, use leading questions, time permitting, to refocus your client to the importance of the danger ahead, or behind.

Leading questions are a call to action, with the purpose of raising the clients awareness, thus allowing them to then take the responsibility for managing the risk, by acting appropriately to the hazard:-

"Have you noticed the cyclist up ahead?"

"When will you slow down for the upcoming bend?"

Use areas of reflection along the route to discuss any potential safety critical situations they may have managed or where you may have intervened verbally or physically. In this case, at the side of the road, open questions are an effective method to help raise awareness in your clients of their response to, or lack of response to, any risks and help them to consider where their thoughts were or how they were feeling in that moment.

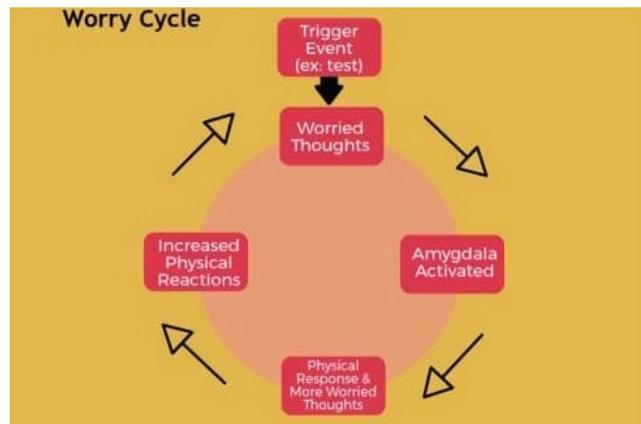
Commentary driving can not only be an effective method of raising your pupils awareness of their surroundings, as discussed in the first chapter of this book 'Lesson Planning', research has shown it has the ability to raise awareness in new drivers to that similar to an experienced driver, it can also help them to remedy human factors such as stress and anxiety. Often where pupils suffer with anxieties, the physical act of driving and its complexities and pressures can lead them into a Phobic cycle. Commentary driving can be an effective remedy for some driver's in this regard, distracting the inner thoughts of the human brain, as it focusses the learner to switch of from its negative emotional response cycle, and concentrate on the reality of what is actually happening.

Lee Jowett

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Gain agreement from the pupil that they feel this strategy might be helpful and set levels of support that allow them to practise in a safe environment, don't expect the learner to be of a similar standard to you when practising commentary, in fact it's quite possible that they won't want to verbalise what they are focussing on, and that's fine, they can focus on the road ahead and it's furthest point or the next hazard and still feel and see the benefits to their thoughts, feelings and driving behaviour.

Therefore you must pay close attention to your pupil's actions as well as the surroundings and look for clues that they might be distracted, overloaded or struggling with their feelings or emotions...



2. Be aware of your pupils actions and raise their own awareness to any risk increasing factors in their behaviour.

In addition to the external risks when teaching learners, we must also be aware of the risks inside the car and we must raise our pupil's awareness of not only the external risks of the outer world but also their internal risks through their inner thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Look for clues in your client's body language, listen for negative or positive comments, and look for signs of stress, overload and distraction. Being aware of your client's normal behaviour and the ability to spot differences in their tone, posture or actions enables you to understand when your pupil needs help and when silence is the best option.

When encountering hazards along the route observe your pupil and look for responses, if they are responding well to the hazard stay silent, remain focussed on the surroundings and your pupils actions and be prepared to step in, only if they need support, thus keeping the responsibility with your client, however if they fail to respond to both the upcoming hazard and any leading questions you provide, then the next strategy, providing the situation allows for this, should be a question with an embedded command. Again this disguises an instruction, allowing the pupil to respond by way of thought and decision.

"When will you **STEER AROUND** the cyclist?"

"Are you going to **BRAKE** before the bend?"

Use areas of reflection along the route to discuss any behavioural issues that may have led them into potential safety critical situations. Once again pulled in at the side of the road, open questions are an effective method to help raise awareness in your clients of their internal motivations or distractions. What caused them to act or react in the way they did? Whilst helping them to explore the potential consequences of their actions and then weighing up the potential consequences of their actions, against any perceived benefits, should help them to make decisions around where best to act on their impulses, and when it might be better to adopt a more cautious approach.

The DVSA NSDRT states we must know how to:-

6.4.1.8. Continue to scan the environment and assess hazards while observing the learner and providing training inputs

3. Build awareness and responsibility in your clients

The Hermes Project (2007-2010) states:-

Building awareness and responsibility is the essence of good coaching (Whitmore, 2002). A high state of awareness is required for driving, both in terms of awareness of the outside world (what is happening around me?) and in terms of self-awareness (how do I feel, and what do I feel?). To be in control and therefore to be able to drive safely, you have to be aware of these inner and outer worlds. It follows therefore that anything you are unaware of controls you. "Building -awareness and responsibility is the essence of good coaching". John Whitmore.

Effective open questions focus on the thoughts and feelings of our clients and help both instructor and learner understand their strengths, limitations and barriers, what motivated that piece of driving at that time, was it their focus that enabled them to deal with the safety critical situation independently or was it perhaps their feelings of anxiety that prevented them from taking action?

"What were your thoughts once you'd noticed the cyclist?"

"How were you feeling as we approached that last bend?"

"What is it about speed that excites you?"

"Are there any risks involved?"

Using these open questions allows your client to explore their own strengths and weaknesses, their motivations and personality traits that will form the basis of their driving style, since the person that they are, and the beliefs that they hold about themselves and their views on the world won't disappear when they sit in the driver's seat of their own car. In fact research suggests that we express our personality traits more readily inside the protective shell of a car, than we would perhaps in a queue at our

local shops. These open questions provide the answers that only they have, since we have no way of knowing our clients inner beliefs, thoughts and feelings, our role is in helping them to assess any risk increasing factors they might have in their personality (eg. excitement, fatigue, focus) and to allow them to figure out strategies that they can use as a driver to stay safe, once they become aware of any changes to their normal behaviour or emotional state.

Effective questions to help your client form strategies could include:-

“How will you recognise the next time you feel this way?”

“How will you cope with these feelings as a driver?”

“What impact could those beliefs have on your driving?”

“Is there anything you could do to make it safer?”

“What are the benefits to you of staying safe?”

More questions that you could use to raise awareness in your clients and to raise your own awareness of your client, could be as follows:-

what do you see, what can you hear, how do you feel, what do you feel?

These questions allow you to receive a broad field of feedback from your pupil around the environment, from the body, your pupils actions and from the car they are driving.

It's essential as an ADI that we are constantly switching focus from the external risks, to the internal risks, both inside the car and also the thoughts and feelings of the person who's controlling it. Being aware of both the surroundings and your pupil's actions helps you to understand the focus of your learner and be more aware of when your input is necessary and when remaining silent will help them to achieve the goal as well as being responsible for their own safety, building their own sense of responsibility and achievement.

It also enables you to take appropriate and timely intervention in the event that your pupil fails to recognise or respond to an upcoming hazard.

It is essential that we raise awareness in our pupils of the needs to focus on the external hazards they will face as a driver and the internal risks they face as a person.

The DVSA ADI 1 States:-

This question lies at the heart of the ADI's professional skill. They should be able to:

- *take in the outside world*
- *observe the actions of the pupil, including comments and body language*
- *judge whether those actions are suitable in any given situation*
- *respond accordingly*

Any serious lapses in this area are likely to lead to a 0 marking

Was Any Verbal Or Physical Intervention Timely and Appropriate

The fourth competence under Risk management assesses the trainer's ability to use appropriate interventions to manage risk. Whilst the overall approach to the session should be goal focussed and client centred, this criteria falls under the competence of risk management, and as such the focus here is on the ADIs input during any potentially safety critical situations.

An ADI's ability to deliver well timed interventions can keep the learner in control of the learning goals and provide them with a balance of responsibility, whilst inappropriate intervention could lead to an extremely demotivated learner or serious risk.

It is important for the pupil to feel like they are capable and worthy of taking responsibility for their own safety in as much as they are capable of, as often as possible, since responsibility leads to a greater sense of self-worth, which in turn leads to increased feelings of control over both internal motivations and external situations as all three elements are intrinsically linked. In a situation where the learner feels that the instructor is always in control, they are less likely to develop a sense of self-worth or responsibility around driving, and are also less likely to understand how to control their internal motivations or how to control external situations of risk. These issues, if left undeveloped, could lead to risk increasing behaviour in the client post-test, since they would not have built up the understanding of the importance of managing risk, and may have built up feelings of low self-worth around their capabilities, and as such could be less likely to take on board the responsibility for safety for themselves post-test.



The primary objective however has to be the safety of the vehicle. We must manage the risk in the training, by supporting the learner where necessary, with an appropriate method of intervention, verbally or physically to keep the car safe, therefore allowing the pupil to continue towards the learning objectives and preventing the creation of barriers to progression. It is our role as trainers to

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manage the risk appropriately, by breaking down the task and dividing up the responsibilities into manageable chunks, providing support methods that meet the needs of the client and using our ability to observe both the pupil and our surroundings so that we understand when our learners are capable of managing situations and where they need additional support. Therefore our clients can focus on achieving their goals and building their own ability to take responsibility, in a safe environment.

The DVSA ADI 1 states:-

Clearly the most important 'interventions' are those that manage risk in a moving car. We would expect an ADI to point out situations in which a risk or hazard might arise to their pupil. However direct intervention by the ADI, to prevent a situation escalating, may be needed. This criterion is primarily about the ADI's response in those situations.

What do I need to do to do well here?

1. Provide timely and appropriate verbal intervention.

When considering how to deliver timely and appropriate interventions, the amount of time you have from recognising the developing hazard to dealing with the hazard, will determine how much responsibility you can allow the pupil, within their capabilities. The more time you have to support your pupil, the more responsibility you can give them, again within their capabilities to manage risk. The less time you have the more appropriate it might be for you to take more responsibility for risk by way of guided instruction or by way of physical intervention.

Generally speaking when dealing with potentially safety critical situations it is important to consider both the goal of the session and the area of risk. If the pupil is dealing with the risk appropriately and the risk situation is not relevant to the learning goal, then the most appropriate intervention would be for you to remain silent, allowing the pupil the responsibility for their actions and the focus to control the physical act of controlling the vehicle. Any diversion of their focus would be inappropriate in the moment since it could distract the learner from the task and the risk.

If the pupil initially failed to notice or respond to the hazard, then it would be appropriate for you to raise their awareness using a leading question such as "have you noticed the pedestrian at the crossing?" Once again, providing the learner reacted to the prompt and acted appropriately, and that pedestrian crossings or building an ability to spot hazards or manage risk whilst driving, were not part of the learning goal of the session, then it would be appropriate for you to remain silent, allowing the pupil to focus and take responsibility for the

task. Perhaps raising the situation as part of the conversation around the goal, during a reflective period on the route, if you felt it would benefit your clients learning and progression, as an example you could use the situation of the pedestrian at the crossing to highlight the importance of good all round observations when doing a parallel park, if parallel parking was perhaps part of the goal of the session.

It would also be appropriate to deliver any levels of support, which were agreed between the instructor and the pupil, when dividing up the responsibilities for risk. In fact failure to do so could have a serious detrimental impact on the learner's ability to progress. A pupil left to flounder independently, through a situation in which they were expecting a level of support from their instructor that never arrived, could be left confused about their understanding of their own ability to manage risk, and in their confidence around their capabilities as a driver, or perhaps the capability of their instructor.

At the other end of the spectrum, it would be inappropriate to provide more support than had been agreed, in a situation where the learner was clearly managing the risk and coping independently as this intervention could be as unexpected and distracting for your client, as it is unnecessary. It could create a cognitive overload and prevent your pupil from performing as well as they would have, without your input, and would likely be demotivating and confusing, creating barriers to their learning.

If your pupil is showing no signs of being able to manage the risk, has failed to respond to leading or command questions, or is out of their depth because the situation is too complex for them to manage, then you will need to step in with either guided instruction, to deal with the immediate risk and to keep the car safe....or alternatively you may need to provide support by way of physical intervention...

2. Provide timely and appropriate physical intervention.

Physical intervention, generally speaking, should be used as a last resort. If the pupil has failed to respond to leading questions and command questions, or to the agreed level of support you have provided, and the situation is now one where it is unsafe to continue in this course, you must intervene by way of taking physical control over the safety of the vehicle, using the most appropriate method. Where possible gently steering away from the danger or if necessary by using dual controls.

Physical intervention should, generally, only be used as a first resort to manage risk, where the situation doesn't allow time for any verbal intervention. For example the car rolling back on a hill, with vehicles close behind, or a situation where an immediate impact has to be avoided, which couldn't have been anticipated in advance.

It must be remembered that we are talking here about managing risk, not achieving a goal, where perhaps an agreed physical demonstration of the skill could enhance your clients learning. The use of physical intervention as a first resort, on a regular basis, throughout the drive can undermine the pupil's confidence and reinforce the ADI as the person who is in sole control of the lesson. Thus weakening your client's ability to take control over internal and external hazards as a driver.

The issue of control is discussed here in [The Hermes Project \(2007-2010\)](#):-

If the learner feels the instructor is in control of the training, he will be encouraged to take a passive role in the training process. This feeling implies a hierarchy, with the instructor as 'boss' and the learner as obedient servant. Such a hierarchy can also create anxiety in the learner because he feels he is constantly being judged. This anxiety can lead to defensiveness and other forms of resistance to learning. If the instructor presents himself as an equal, and someone with whom the training can be tackled in partnership, the learner is likely to be more relaxed and more inclined to share his concerns and views with the instructor, This transition from a hierarchy to an equal relationship is recognised to be an important challenge for the HERMES project. Both are of the same value although the competencies of the coach and the coachee will vary. The attraction of telling (i.e. imposing a hierarchy) is that, besides being quick and easy, it provides the instructor with the feeling of being in control. And being in control can be one of the most attractive aspects of the role of a driving instructor.

Use the agreed division of responsibility for risk, to help guide you as to when it may be necessary to intervene. Wherever possible use verbal interventions such as leading questions, to keep the responsibility with the learner for managing risk, or embedded commands if the leading questions fail to illicit an appropriate response. As a last resort intervene physically because either the pupil didn't respond appropriately or because time does not permit the safety of verbal intervention.

Whenever you intervene verbally or physically, then ensure you give sufficient feedback to your client so that they both understand the risks and the reason for your intervention, whilst also helping them to consider any internal motivations that may have led to their actions and also the potential consequences of repeating this behaviour...

The DVSA ADI1 outlines its competencies as follows:-

<p>Indications that all the elements of competence are in place could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>intervening in a way that actively supports the pupil's learning process and safety during the session.</i>• <i>allowing the pupil to deal with situations appropriately</i>• <i>taking control of situation where the pupil is clearly out of their depth</i>	<p>Indications of lack of competence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>ignoring a developing situation and leaving the pupil to flounder</i>• <i>taking control of a situation the pupil is clearly dealing with appropriately</i>• <i>constantly intervening when unnecessary</i>• <i>intervening inappropriately and creating distractions</i>• <i>undermining the pupil's confidence</i>• <i>reinforcing the ADI as the person who is in sole control of the lesson</i>
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Was Sufficient Feedback Given To Help The Pupil Understand Any Potential Safety Critical Situations

The final competence under risk management, allows the pupil time to reflect on their driving, with the support of the instructor, to understand the potential consequences of safety critical situations, and consider how their own motivations may have led them to greater risk, therefore raising self-awareness, in order that they form coping strategies for the future, around not only the skills and knowledge that are necessary for safe driving, but also the senses and emotions that proceed rational thought and impact on road safety.

In the event of a potentially safety critical situation, or a situation where you have intervened to keep the car safe, it is imperative that you check the learner is feeling ok to carry on for a short while, if necessary, until you can find an area that is suitable to pull in and reflect. You may need to provide more support than is normal depending on the emotional state of your client for this period. Once you have found an area that is suitable, sufficient feedback must be given between both instructor and pupil, ensuring the pupil continues to develop their understanding of risk, the potential consequences of their actions, and what motivations they themselves carry, which may lead them away from risk or further expose them to danger.

The DVSA ADI 1 states:-

If a safety critical, or potentially critical, incident does occur it is vital that the pupil fully understands what happened and how they could have avoided or dealt with it better. Ideally the pupil should be supported to analyse the situation for themselves. However, it may be necessary for the ADI to provide feedback if, for example, the pupil simply did not see a problem. That feedback should be given as soon as is practical after the incident.

What do I need to do to do well here?

RISK MANAGEMENT				
Did the trainer ensure that the pupil fully understood how the responsibility for risk would be shared?				
Were directions and instructions given to the pupil clear and given in good time?				
Was the trainer aware of the surroundings and the pupil's actions?				
Was any verbal or physical intervention by the trainer timely and appropriate?				
Was sufficient feedback given to help the pupil understand any potential safety critical incidents?				3
Score for risk management				

1. Support your client to understand the risk and form strategies to manage similar situations better in the future.

Once you have pulled in to a safe, legal and convenient area to reflect on the safety critical situation, it is important to remember that we learn through a cycle of practise, reflection, forming strategies, putting the new strategies into practice (repeat cycle). This is client centred learning, not instructor led learning, particularly since we are now in a safe environment, pulled in at the side of the road. It is therefore essential that you involve your client in the discussion, in a non-judgemental manner:-

“Talk to me about the situation back there”

“Is there anything you could do to make it safer next time?”

The aim here is to ensure that your client feels comfortable enough to be open and honest about the reasoning behind their actions, rather than providing the answer that they feel the instructor is looking for, which is most likely to be the outcome of an instructor led approach. Or worse, in the case of the instructor providing all the input into the discussion, then it is highly likely that the learner would miss the opportunity to reflect on their own understanding of the event, any areas where they may lack

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knowledge or would benefit from improving skills, and any emotions that might have triggered their response, thereby learning very little about what motivated them to act in the way that they did, or in how to form strategies for safer driving in the future for themselves. Instead the behaviour would be controlled by the instructor in the moment and the pupil might once again be left with feelings of low self-worth, then once the instructor's control is removed post-test the driver is left poorly equipped and lacking in self-awareness to manage situations for themselves.

As often as possible, illicit feedback from the pupil around what they understand about the safety critical situation, what led them to take the actions that they took and what potentially could be the full consequences of continuing to take these actions, in similar situations, in the future.

Your role therefore is to check knowledge and understanding around the answers your client provides, perhaps requesting that your pupil delves deeper into the cause or possible consequences, within the boundaries of which they are comfortable to explore. You should add input of your own if there are any gaps in the learner's knowledge about the area of risk or potential consequences, especially where the client is unaware of any risk to their actions. Help the learner to form an effective strategy, that they can use the next time around, again adding input that prevents risk and helps to develop understanding where necessary, and form a new plan for practise. You must ensure that the client agrees to the new plan and that the levels of support are sufficient to help them gain a more positive outcome next time around, adding context to their learning.

The DVSA NSDRT says we must understand how to:-

6.4.1.10. Use 'client-centred' techniques to make sure the learner is better equipped to deal with such hazards in the future

2. Support your client to understand any motivating factors and emotional responses that may have led to increased risk.

In order to develop new drivers who are more wholly equipped to manage their behaviour for themselves post-test, we must also raise their awareness of how their emotions can lead to increased risk, and build strategies for future driving to help them recognise when their emotional state might precede rational thought.

Our Emotional responses are milliseconds faster than cognitive (thinking) responses; the lightning-fast reactions that bypass the rational brain centres were often survival responses for our distant ancestors. The limbic brain sends us an emotional response to situations before the rational brain can even process the incoming signal. Human beings are hard wired for emotional response. We are ignoring human nature, or expecting our clients to defy human nature, if we only educate learner drivers around general car control and manoeuvring the vehicle through traffic conditions and junctions, however essential these two factors might be to safe driving. Bringing emotions into the discussion as early as possible in the learning process is essential to your client developing an understanding that their emotions will form the basis of their behaviour as a driver. Helping them to understand how they feel when they are driving at their best and considering any emotions that may have a detrimental impact on their performance,

can help them to rationalise the role of emotions and the need to recognise and adapt their feelings in situations of risk.

“How were you feeling in that moment?”

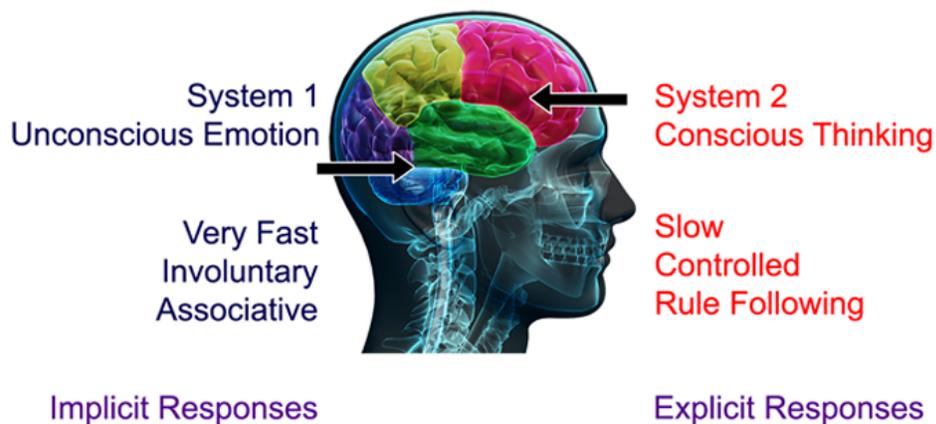
“What emotions will help you to drive at your best?”

Since our brains store our experiences from an emotional response, a driver with a high level of self-awareness is able to draw on that experience and decide whether to react emotionally or pause for thought and act rationally, the next time around. Hence the importance of enabling your client to process learning after an event by focussing on their emotions and feelings around what had occurred and what motivated the behaviour, creating strategies in rational thought processes to help combat the brains natural emotional responses.

We only need to look to ourselves as drivers to understand the impact our own emotional responses can have on our driving. As driving instructors it's not unusual for our own sense of pride in our professionalism to generally motivate our behaviour behind the wheel of a car, such internal motivations can be extremely effective in promoting safe driving practices. These emotions have a positive impact on our behaviour and keep us in-line with our own vision of safe driving. However if we consider a scenario where a loved one had been rushed to hospital, perhaps an elderly relative in their final moments or the birth of a child or grandchild that you desperately want to witness, and your only effective method of transportation was to get in the car and drive there. Ask yourself would it be rational thought or the emotional response that motivated your behaviour through that drive?

Raise your client's self-awareness by asking effective open questions around feelings throughout the learning process, starting as early as possible. Bring these questions into the discussion around safety critical situations to help your client to understand how their actions might have been influenced by their feelings, so that they recognise the differing emotions that they will encounter as a driver and the impact they will have over their ability to drive safely. Give your pupil time to explore the event and process the emotional impact and help them to develop strategies for themselves, where they recognise changes to their emotions and act rationally rather than reacting emotionally.

Two Decision Making Routes



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The Hermes Project (2007-2010) states:-

A limitation of driver training today is that there is too much focus on rational thinking and not enough on the senses and emotions.

Self-awareness, as recognised by the third column of the GDE matrix, is an important characteristic of a good driver. Self-awareness can only be developed if the learner recognises physical sensations and emotions which often precede rational thought. Knowledge and rational processing of information is not enough to produce awareness. Awareness can only be achieved if the learner emotionally processes an experience.

Support your pupil through the safety critical situation, and up until you find a safe area for reflection. Illicit feedback from your pupil around their knowledge and understanding of the risk, add input of your own to fill in any blanks or to add value to the learning, bring emotions into the discussion and allow your pupil time to reflect, before considering potential consequences and plan new strategies and support levels to help your client develop their knowledge and understanding of their ability to manage risk and of their own risk increasing emotional responses.

The DVSA ADI 1 outlines its competencies as follows:-

Indications that all the elements of competence are in place could include:	Indications of lack of competence include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• finding a safe place to stop and examine the critical incident• allowing the pupil time to express any fears or concerns the incident might have caused• supporting the pupil to reflect clearly about what happened• providing input to clarify aspects of the incident that the pupil does not understand• support the pupil to identify strategies for future situations• providing input where the pupil does not understand what they should do differently• checking that the pupil feels able to put the strategy in place• agreeing ways of developing that competence if the pupil feels the need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• failing to examine the incident• taking too long to address issues generated by an incident• not allowing the pupil to explore their own understanding• telling the pupil what the solution is and not checking their understanding• failing to check the pupil's ability to put in place the agreed strategy

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