



Making Roads Safer

Nottingham Trent University *Mindfulness*

Road Safety Trust
Funding Showcase



The Road Safety Trust awarded a grant of £98k to Nottingham Trent University in 2017 to assess the potential of driver awareness and emotional regulation training in improving road safety.

Mindfulness is a meditative mental state that is achieved through focusing attention on the current moment, coupled with a non-judgmental approach to current experiences. It is recognised by the NHS as a method of improving mental wellbeing.

Drivers who are naturally more mindful, generally have lower engagement with:

- distracting tasks while driving
- reduced driving anger
- lower risk, and
- increased safety behaviours

The project by Nottingham Trent University conducted three research studies into the link between training drivers in mindfulness to increase road safety.

The first study saw 71 attendees recruited for a 12-hour course completed over four weeks. Participants were randomly assigned to either a mindfulness or car maintenance course. Before and after the courses, participants undertook tests in the laboratory including a virtual drive on a simulator, and tests of hazard prediction, mind wandering and road rage. Three of the four tests demonstrated benefits of mindfulness training. **It was concluded that the generic 12-hour mindfulness course had a positive effect on safety-relevant driving behaviours.**



The second study with 62 attendees replicated the first with two key changes. First, the training course was reduced to four hours to emulate existing driver training courses such as the national speed awareness course. Secondly, the hazard prediction test was replaced

with a more-traditional hazard perception test. **The results found two of the four tests to show positive improvement following mindfulness training.**



Thirty participants took part in the **third study** that was the same 4-hour course (and a comparable car-maintenance course) but with the addition of online-resources supporting and encouraging meditative practice. Participants were also given a dashcam to record their driving for two weeks before and after the course. Participants who had undertaken mindfulness training were less likely to travel above 70 mph,



and to have fewer instances of harsh acceleration. **The results of the third study demonstrated that a 4-hour training course, supplemented by online resources to promote meditative practice, can have an influence on the way people drive on the roads.**

Mindfulness training has been found to have positive effects on a range of safety-related behaviours. Nottingham Trent University are now looking at options to include mindfulness training as part of driving courses. To see a copy of the full report [click here](#)

The Road Safety Trust is dedicated to making the UK's roads the safest in the world. As an independent grant-giving charity, the Road Safety Trust funds vital research and practical interventions committed to reducing the number of people killed or injured on our roads.





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The Road Safety Trust

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Registered Office: Colwyn Chambers, York Street, Manchester, M2 3BA

www.roadsafetytrust.org.uk

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