

**Delivering the Responsible Service of Alcohol course in a Correctional Centre****Greetings**

This paper may be of interest to some of you, only because of the words ‘alcohol’ and ‘responsible’ in its title, and both these words used in relation to inmates. I am sure many at Mannus think the word alcohol is why the inmates are so keen to participate in it too. However, after conducting the course for over a year now, I am more than aware of the benefits such a course is to the inmates, than I was when I started.

I will tell you a little about Mannus Correctional Centre, the relevancy of the course to our pre-release inmates, the positives of the course, the hidden curriculum, the delivery of the module, the integration prospects for other programs, and the implementation process of getting the course off the ground. I will also regale you with some inmate feedback from course evaluations. I may even ask you to participate with a portion of the assessment task.

**Mannus Correctional Centre**

Mannus Correctional Centre is a well-hidden piece of heaven, in southwest NSW, which I am sure many of you have not even heard about. We are a minimum security, pre-release centre housing approximately 160 inmates. The main employment emphasis is on rural activities such as cattle, sheep, orchard, vineyard and contracted pine pruning. We have no fences and have wonderful 360-degree views of rolling hills, green paddocks and snow capped mountains. The rapport we as IDS staff, have with custodial staff and, in particular, CSI, is excellent and has been built up over a number of years.

**Delivering the Responsible Service of Alcohol course in a Correctional Centre****Relevancy of course to inmates**

We aim to run programs which will have some bearing on the Centre's needs and which give employment opportunities to the inmates we release back to their communities and families. We do this by attempting to equip inmates with worthwhile vocational skills and improving their basic educational skills. As an example, Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture based in Yanco, have provided a staff member for two days a week, to facilitate Rural Traineeships and Viticulture Traineeships. These traineeships cover modules that are aimed at providing useful qualifications for employment once inmates are released and skills that are required for everyday work around the Mannus farm. The Viticulture course forms part of Certificate II in Food processing (Wine) and the training packages have been developed by WINETAC. Safe food handling and Responsible Service of Alcohol are two of the modules from this package that have proven to be not only popular with inmates, but also very useful qualifications to have on the outside.

**Implementation**

The Responsible Service of Alcohol module of Certificate II in Food Processing (Wine) came about from discussions with MCA, and the increase in costs associated with offering Responsible Service of Alcohol through OTEN. These costs increased to approximately \$100 per student. As the permanent teacher at Mannus, I had completed the course whilst working in the hospitality industry. It was decided to offer the course in conjunction with MCA, who have an excellent understanding of Mannus and inmate requirements. I would teach the course and MCA would voucher DCS for my time teaching their module. MCA would get the student enrolments and prevocational funding from DET. We could run the course with 10-12 inmates every two months without the huge costs incurred from OTEN. Everybody wins!

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**The Training Package**

The course was developed following guidelines from MCA and the prescribed outcomes as stated in Certificate II curriculum. The nominal duration is set at approximately 6-8 hours. The focus is on providing responsible service of alcohol and meets national competency standards. This fits in with other training by MCA such as pruning grapes by hand, tractor operation and rural skills.

It is interesting to note that some of the outcomes can only be discussed, rather than undertaken, due to the security policy of the Correctional centre. These restrictions include the use of alcohol, some occupational health and safety issues relating to the use of workplace equipment and the actual workplace environment. These are overcome by the use of discussion, a video focussing on the workplace and case studies.

The Responsible Service of Alcohol module is offered once every two months with Safe Food Handling offered in the alternate month. This is an excellent pairing of qualifications and many inmates have recognised this by applying to do both courses. The course is limited to 12 participants and is always full. It is conducted over two days from 9.30 – 3.00pm with each day following a set plan of activities.

The Responsible Service of Alcohol module is competency based and consists of learning outcomes that are relevant to the industry. These include strategies for wine tastings:

- Identify customers to whom service may be refused and the principles of responsible serving of alcohol

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- Prepare and serve tasting samples
- Assist customers to taste within appropriate limits
- Assist alcohol affected customers and what the law says
- Definitions of a standard drink and the relationship to drink driving laws
- Minors and alcohol

These are all issues that the inmates have had experience of one way or another and it is very interesting to read their feedback on the course and their answers to the question 'What is the most important issue that this course made you aware of?' I always stress that this course is very much a commonsense one, but have learnt that generally speaking, most inmates do not have an abundance of commonsense. This course shows them another way of viewing alcohol consumption and in its own way it is an eye-opener to many.

**The 'Hidden' curriculum**

The hidden curriculum is also relevant in this case as it addresses alcohol-related issues that are not defined as learning outcomes.

- These issues include alcohol-related pregnancies, transmission of sexual diseases, changes in behaviour and criminal activity because of alcohol dependency or abuse. These issues are very relevant to inmates, as they have rarely had to deal with some of them in a 'responsible' manner before.
- The use of positively reinforced discussion is also an important issue. Most students have dreadful stories to tell about their abuse of alcohol and are keen to share these experiences. I try to encourage a positive view and discourage this sharing of stories and make students aware of the responsible attitude required by all alcohol servers. I also inform them that after doing the course,

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they may decide that they don't want to be responsible for others and that they are not cut-out to be in this position. This is an important step for them to reach.

- The increased knowledge of the legal issues involved in serving alcohol is important. Understanding the requirements of the Liquor Act and Registered Club Act gives inmates an idea of the penalties and relevant offences.
- The offence and penalties for serving minors are always a talking point during the course and many students have indicated they were totally unaware of the seriousness of such actions.
- The information on alcohol as a drug and the cost to society is always well discussed. Most have never fully understood why alcohol affects them in such a way and are interested to explore the blood-alcohol consumption levels and relevant behaviour changes.
- The increases in dangerous behaviour and loss of inhibitions and binge drinking are good sessions showing inmates that the results of such abuse can be widespread. Many are in gaol for alcohol related crimes and can relate to this section very well. They are keen to understand the connection between crime and alcohol. It is an excellent course for examining past behaviour and, hopefully, deciding to change it, once released.
- This course is an excellent pre-release course, as the qualification gained is relevant and necessary for most employment in the hospitality field. I also do a brainstorming session on the attributes required for anyone working in the hospitality industry. This covers things like appearance, personality, hygiene, honesty and people skills. It is worthwhile mentioning these skills, as

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although they are sensible ideas, they are often not given a great deal of consideration.

- This course is also effective in helping inmates to address their offending behaviour and can be used in conjunction with AOD workers. The other course we now offer through TAFE, is Responsible Conduct of Gambling, which is a requirement for anyone working where there are gambling machines. Once again, the AOD worker can be involved in these sessions.

**Delivery within a correctional centre**

This point is probably the one that raises the most discussion. Yes, it is unusual to deliver something like this, relating so directly as it does to alcohol, within a centre. We are fortunate that we are a minimum-security centre, and I have built up a good rapport with security staff, who no longer wonder what I am doing bringing empty wine bottles into the centre.

I have developed a two-day program, which covers all the basic learning outcomes and allows plenty of time for open discussion on issues. I use a variety of teaching strategies, such as discussion, brainstorming, lecture/discussion, case studies and practical activities. I use the OHP, whiteboard, video, empty wine bottles, measuring jug, various types of wine and beer glasses and the learners' guide. I attempt to cater for all types of learners. There is a fair amount of reading involved but this can be altered to cater for anyone not capable. If the group agrees, we also undertake a role-play activity on the second day after the group has relaxed and has some knowledge of the subject. This is always interesting and fun to observe and the inmates seem to enjoy the experience too.

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**Day 1**

Session 1:

Introduction to Responsible Service of Alcohol

- My background and experience
- Students' experiences/reasons for doing course, expectations?
- Student's involvement and participation essential – structure of course & assessment procedures
- Learning outcomes discussed – OHP and copy
- Definition of Responsible Service of Alcohol
- Government concerns & benefits of Responsible Service of Alcohol
- Who are regulatory/enforcement agencies – OHP

Session 2:

Legal provisions

- Types of licences – OHP
- Harm minimisation
- Duty of care
- Basic requirements
- Mandatory signs
- Minors and patron types – responsible adult & intoxicated patrons
- Video – activity sheet

Session 3:

Offences & penalties

- Question sheets of video – discussion on each
- Article on penalties
- List of offences & penalties

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- Fail to leave
- Anti discrimination
- No more it's the law

Session 4:

Strengths of alcoholic beverages

- Display empty wine bottles, various glasses (of water) to demonstrate standard drinks, measure out liquid, discussion
- Blood alcohol concentration levels
- Revise learning outcomes and check progress quiz

**Day 2**

Session 5:

Alcohol

- Revision of day before
- Strengths of alcohol
- Five styles
- Serving methods, measurement
- Standard drinks & labelling
- Blood alcohol concentration, responsible drinking/safe driving, reducing alcohol content
- Minimising risk

Session 6:

Effects of alcohol

- Relationship of BAC to behaviour – OHP
- Harmful levels

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- Combining drugs and alcohol, warning signs
- Binge drinking – OHP
- Levels of intoxication
- Progress check quiz

Session 7:

Practical session

- Serving drinks
- Role-play

Session 8:

- Customer satisfaction
- House policy
- Cellar door policy
- Offer alternatives to alcohol
- Designated driver program, courtesy bus, taxi
- Conflict resolution – strategies for avoiding problems
- Attributes of hospitality worker
- Assessment and evaluation

Assessment:

- Demonstration of consistently pouring different standard drinks according to legislation.
- Observation of student throughout course.
- Participation in all activities.
- Satisfactory completion of questionnaire.

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**Sample questions from assessment instrument:**

1. Under what circumstances can a minor be supplied liquor on licensed premises?

*None*

2. List three key elements of responsible serving.

- *Not serving anyone who is intoxicated,*
- *Not serving minors,*
- *Not allowing anyone already intoxicated onto licensed premises*

3. Can a licensee be prosecuted if a patron enters the premises intoxicated and remains on the premises, even if the licensee did not supply liquor to the person?

*Yes*

4. What are the standard drink measurements?

- *285 ml beer*
- *100 ml table wine*
- *60ml fortified wine*
- *30 ml spirits*

5. Is a patron/customer liable to prosecution under the Liquor Act or Registered Club Act for being intoxicated on licensed premises?

*No*

6. Briefly describe what you consider to be unacceptable liquor promotions. List at least two.

- *Anything that encourages excessive drinking – two drinks for the price of one, women drink free all night*

7. How many hours does it take to metabolise two standard drinks?

**Delivering the Responsible Service of Alcohol course in a Correctional Centre***Two*

8. List three alternatives to full strength alcoholic drinks.
  - *Half nips of spirits*
  - *Lite beer*
  - *Mock cocktails*
9. List two safe transport options for drink/drive customers.
  - *Courtesy bus*
  - *Free taxi phone in foyer*
10. A standard drink contains close to:
  - a) 4 grams of alcohol
  - b) 6 grams of alcohol
  - c) 10 grams of alcohol**
  - d) 30 grams of alcohol

As you can see, there are many issues covered in just this small sample of the questionnaire. Students can use their notes and I often have to clarify questions, leading the student to the correct way of thinking without him realising it. If a student has difficulty reading or writing, I conduct the assessment orally on a one-to-one basis. I emphasise that spelling is not the issue and that as long as I can understand their answer, however they write it is fine with me. The biggest problem with this type of assessment is that they do not read the question properly. If I ask for three examples, I may only get two. I try to emphasis this point before they start and to re-read through their answers before handing it in to me.

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Everyone enjoys the pouring of drinks, even if it is only water, and measuring them out as a group activity. I use this time to discuss types of wine, emphasise that even if they do not drink wine, they may be asked about it, and need to have some basic knowledge. I explain the concept of cold climate wines as that is the local area and the gaol's own vineyard is in that classification. We examine wine labels, the blurb about the wine, the intended audience, and the alcoholic content labelling. We have a group activity of pouring a standard drink each from a bottle, which should give us 7.5 standard drinks, and seeing how many we actually get from the bottle. This usually points out that someone is either heavy handed and light handed with their pouring and an official measurer is appointed to find the culprit.

As you can see, the subject lends itself to many areas and incorporates numeracy, literacy, AOD issues, working in teams, and various life skills. It is this ability that makes it a great program for integration with other areas to facilitate insight into offending behaviours.

**Feedback from inmates**

I have been running this course since March 2000. Overall, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from all participants. The post course evaluations make rewarding reading.

The most interesting responses came from the question:

‘What is the most important thing you gained/learned from this course?’

- 72% of answers were about the legal responsibilities of bar staff
- 8% said that all the issues were important
- 3% answered the effects of alcohol

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- 4% answered that the issues of minors were most important
- 4% said learning about standard drinks
- 6% said learning that you can't serve intoxicated people
- 2% said learning that you aren't allowed to get drunk on premises
- 1% said responsible drinking is dependent on responsible service

Approximately 99% of all participants answered **Yes** to the question 'Will this course help you when you are released?' and 100% answered **Yes** to the question 'Did you enjoy learning something new?'

Some suggestions were made on how the course could be changed, the use of real alcohol, the teacher's use of language should be modified to suit the audience, and more hands on experience.

I am extremely satisfied with what we have achieved at Mannus Correctional Centre and I believe this course is suitable for inclusion in many other centres for the reasons I have discussed. It is a relevant, recognisable and worthwhile qualification for inmates to attain before leaving our centre. It can be used as an example of integrating programs to facilitate insight into offending behaviour and above all else, it demonstrates a responsibility for others.

I hope you have enjoyed hearing about one of our most rewarding programs at Mannus Correctional Centre. I am constantly amazed at the enthusiasm our inmates show when doing the course and their very real delight when they receive their Responsible Service of Alcohol award.

This is an excellent example of our conference theme:

***' Learning for new life – not just doing time '.***