

# APLS COURSE REGULATIONS

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## 1. Pre-course process

### 1.1 Administration

1.1.1 Prior to course approval: the following should be considered prior to applying for approval:

**Course Venue:** the course should be conducted in a venue deemed suitable by the Course Director. The venue should have a lecture room large enough to accommodate all candidates and faculty, a faculty room large enough to accommodate all faculty and enough break-out rooms to accommodate the small group teaching sessions. Please refer to the course programme to determine the required number of break-out rooms – generally speaking one will be required for each group of candidates.

**Equipment:** the Course Director should ensure that the equipment specified in the current standard equipment list, provided on the ALSG website, can be made available at the course venue.

1.1.2 Approvals: 2 months before course. All courses must be approved by ALSG. The standard course application e-form should be submitted electronically to ALSG at least 2 months before the course. The link for this can be found on the centre and instructor resources page on the website.

1.1.3 Course Centre Assessment: each course centre should be assessed every 4 years. There is no official external assessors list. The external assessor must be a consultant who has a minimum of 4 years active teaching experience on APLS or a Course Director or working group member and must not be employed by the trust that is organising the course. The external assessor should be supernumerary so that they can observe and support or role-model where necessary. They can also be the focus for discussions sharing expertise and edition updates, but their principal role is to improve governance and maintain standards across course centres. The external assessor should be added to the course page with the role of external assessor. The external assessor form is located in the course centre

materials, in the generic courses and policies folder on the ALSG website, please print and give a copy to the external assessor, this should be returned to ALSG post course. It can also be completed online [here](#).

- 1.1.4 Faculty list: all faculty teaching on the course must be recognised instructors or instructor candidates. You will not be asked to detail specific faculty members on your approval and therefore it is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct number and ratio of instructors on the course and to ensure they are enrolled onto the course on the VLE.
- 1.1.5 Course programme: only the standard programme should be used. Break times may be moved to accommodate local requirements, but the order of teaching should remain the same. Session and break times may be extended but may not be reduced.
- 1.1.6 Orders: only despatched when a course is approved. The order and approval are submitted at the same time using the ALSG course approval e-form. You will receive an invoice via our automated system. Please send payment under separate cover, ensuring that you quote your course centre name and invoice number. Orders will not be despatched until payment has been received in full.
- 1.1.7 Administration Fees: a course administration fee is payable for each candidate on the course. The current fee is detailed on the electronic course order form/price list.

## 1.2 Course materials

- 1.2.1 Recognised teaching materials only: all teaching materials are available on the website course pages. Instructors may supplement the standard teaching materials, but the recognised set should provide the core for the course.

APLS teaching materials are for use on the course but may be used outside the course by recognised APLS instructors but should retain the ALSG branding on them. Course centres should not loan teaching materials to non-instructors.

- 1.2.2 Provider manual: at least 4 weeks prior to the course date, all candidates should be issued with the provider manual: Advanced Paediatric Life Support: The Practical Approach to Emergencies (7th edition).

Pre-course instructions: the standard pre-course instructions provided on the ALSG website should be amended for local use and sent to all candidates.

All candidates should receive access to the Paediatric e-library for 4-years as part of their APLS core package.

## 1.3 Faculty selection

- 1.3.1 Course Director: all APLS courses will need to be directed by approved Course Directors only. The approved Course Director list is available on the Centre and Instructor Resources page of the website. The same Course Director should be present in person for the entire course and should be additional to your minimum faculty number.
- 1.3.2 Potential new medical Course Directors will need to apply to be added to the approved list, they will need to be consultant level or above or equivalent and have been actively teaching on the provider course, for at least 3 years. Before applying, potential new Course Directors

should arrange to shadow an existing approved Course Director on a provider course, so that they know what the role entails. Then they will need to complete an on-line application form, which is housed on the Centre and Instructor Resources page of the website. Once their application has been approved by the Course Director and ALSG, they will be added to the approved Course Director list.

- 1.3.3 APLS courses can be directed by a non-medical director, as long as they have assigned a specific member of the faculty who is medical and present in person throughout the course. This is to support the non-medical director with any medical queries. The assigned member of the faculty should be a consultant who has a minimum of 3 years active teaching experience as an APLS instructor.
- 1.3.4 Potential new non-medical Course Directors will need to apply to be added to the approved list, they will need to be actively working clinically in a paediatric environment in a leadership role and have been actively teaching on the provider course, for at least 3 years. Before applying, potential new non-medical Course Directors should arrange to shadow an existing approved Course Director on a provider course, so that they know what the role entails. Then they will need to complete an on-line application form, which is housed on the Centre and Instructor Resources page of the website. Once their application has been approved by ALSG, they will be added to the approved non-medical Course Director list.
- 1.3.5 It is recommended that all APLS Course Directors *consider* becoming GIC instructors. The process for this can be found on the GIC site: [www.gic-online.org/vle](http://www.gic-online.org/vle).

1.3.6 Instructors:

The instructor number will vary according to the number of candidates on the course. The ratio is as follows: for each group of candidates you must have minimum of 2 full instructors but ALSG would recommend 3 faculty per group. The 3<sup>rd</sup> member could be another full instructor, an instructor candidate or a re-certifying instructor. Each room must have in it **at least one full instructor who is not recertifying or an instructor candidate**.

The faculty should be multi-disciplinary. There must be a minimum of 50% instructors who are either a doctor or advanced care practitioner (ACP) in clinical practice, with at least one in each teaching room.

The faculty should include a minimum of 1 experienced clinician in each of the following specialty areas: paediatric medicine, anaesthetics/critical care and emergency medicine /trauma/surgery. This can include the course director. Any centre that cannot achieve this faculty mix should contact ALSG before the course for support and to discuss how to proceed. You should aim to have 100% of the faculty consistent for both days. If this is not possible then there should be a minimum of 60% available for all days.

**2 months before the course:** if a centre is unable to find a course director or enough faculty or the correct faculty mix then they should contact ALSG for support and advice.

**Last minute faculty dropouts** can lead to difficulties fulfilling the correct ratio of faculty to candidates and the correct faculty mix. Before running a course with a reduced number of faculty the course director should contact ALSG for advice about how to proceed even if this is on the day of/during the course.

If a course runs with insufficient faculty or incorrect faculty mix, we may have to withhold candidates' certificates until we can be assured by the centre, course director and faculty

that the educational value of the course was that the educational substance of the course was sufficient to maintain credibility.

| Course size | Min candidate numbers | Max candidate numbers | Minimum full instructors | Minimum number of non-IC medical faculty | Plus                         |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| 2 groups    | 10                    | 12                    | 4                        | 3 (see mix of specialties)               | plus course director and ICs |
| 3 groups    | 15                    | 18                    | 6                        | 3  | plus course director and ICs |
| 4 groups    | 20                    | 24                    | 8                        | 4  | plus course director and ICs |
| 5 groups    | 25                    | 30                    | 10                       | 5  | plus course director and ICs |

On courses where there are fewer than 6 candidates per group, the full programme of all 24 simulations must still be delivered and some candidates will have the opportunity to lead more than 1 simulation per session.

All demos should be delivered by experienced instructors (not ICs).

The minimum number of instructors required for the illness demo is four, comprising two to act as faculty helper and lead instructor plus a minimum of two instructors to play the roles of team lead and a candidate helper.

The minimum number of instructors required for the cardiac and trauma demos is five, comprising two to act as faculty helper and lead instructor plus a minimum of three instructors to play the roles of team leader and two candidate helpers.

All lectures should be delivered by an experienced instructor. The simulation demonstrations should be delivered by full instructors, not ICs, and the faculty helper and lead instructor should be experienced instructors ideally from a relevant specialism.

It is recommended that there are 3 instructors per simulation room:

- one to act as faculty lead, run the manikin and lead the learning conversation;
- one as embedded faculty helper;
- one to troubleshoot any technical issues, act as specialist helper for the simulation if required and fill in the paperwork.

See appendix 1 for overseas centre exemptions.

#### 1.3.7 EPALS to APLS instructor conversion:

EPALS instructors can apply to teach on APLS by completing a conversion form [EPALS-APLS/PLS Conversion Form](#). They must then complete the APLS instructor e-modules and two APLS ICs.

#### 1.3.8 Instructor Candidates:

No more than 33% of the full faculty should be instructor candidates. Instructor candidates should be supervised by a full instructor throughout the course. Instructor candidates should be assigned a mentor. We recommend that this is a group mentor for all of the instructor candidates who can meet with all of them online before the course and during the reflective session on Day 2. ICs should be assessed and given feedback on the following:

- Facilitating an embedded skill
- Embedded faculty helper within a simulation
- Facilitating a simulation and learning conversation as the lead instructor
- Overall assessment - the form should be completed by the Course Director at the end of the course.

1.3.9 Number of instructor candidate courses: all instructor candidates are expected to carry out 2 instructor candidate courses. If an instructor candidate is not deemed ready to become a full instructor after their 2<sup>nd</sup> instructor candidate course their case should be referred immediately to ALSG. Instructor candidates should carry out at least one part of the process in a different centre i.e. either provider or GIC or one IC course. ICs who have been allotted designated centre(s) for their IC assessments, at the end of their GIC, must attend courses at these centres. Provider course centres cannot overturn this ruling.

## 1.4 Candidate selection

1.4.1 Eligibility: all candidates MUST have completed the APLS pre-course on-line preparation component (e-modules and skills videos) BEFORE the F2F element of the course.

Any F2F candidates who have not completed the e-modules/video component will not be allowed to obtain a F2F completion certificate even if they subsequently complete the VLE component at a later date; they will only be eligible to receive an observer certificate.

Candidates should be from a medical, nursing, ECP, ACP, ODP or RTO background for whom APLS is relevant to their working practice and should be currently working or employed in a relevant role. There is no minimum requirement for medical candidates. However, it is recommended that candidates have already acquired basic paediatric life support skills on a course such as PLS (or local equivalent) before attending an APLS course. Course directors and co-ordinators are advised to check whether junior nurses, ODPs and foundation doctors have done so and if necessary suggest this before accepting them on an APLS course. International graduates may also benefit from undertaking PLS prior to APLS to become familiar with simulation. Critical Care Practitioners (CCPs) who work in (or are involved in the transfer of patients to and from) PICU or CCU are eligible. Physicians Associates are eligible. RTOs from any background who work in a paediatric hospital are eligible. RTOs who work in a non-paediatric hospital, with any other background to those already listed, can send an application to the Working Group detailing their paediatric practice and each of these cases will be considered individually. The Working Group recommend that nurses are senior staff nurses (band 6) and above. Experienced band 5 staff nurses may undertake the course but would benefit from attending PLS first. Other health professionals for whom APLS is relevant to their working practice can apply to ALSG for permission to attend an APLS course. If you are unsure about the eligibility of a particular candidate, please contact the ALSG office to discuss it further.

1.4.2 Candidate numbers: a total of 24 or 30 candidates from varying backgrounds. A full course is 4 groups of 6 candidates but a course of 5 groups of 6 may be run in a large venue with enough faculty to meet the rule in section 1.3.5. You may choose to run a smaller course with fewer groups and fewer candidates; however, each group should contain no more than 6 candidates. The minimum APLS course size is 10 candidates in 2 groups; however it should be noted that it is easier to ensure the correct faculty mix if you run a course of three groups or more.

- 1.4.3 Candidates attending missed sessions: candidates who are attending missed stations do not have to be counted within the candidate numbers.
- 1.4.4 Observers: observers can be taken on the course at the Course Director's discretion providing their participation is not to the detriment of the candidates.

## 2. In-course process

### 2.1 Administration

- 2.1.1 Attendance issues: if a candidate misses any part of any session, arrangements should be made with an instructor to complete the teaching they have missed in spare time during the course, if time permits.

#### 2.1.2

If this is not undertaken then the candidate will not have completed the course. Arrangements will have to be made to complete the missed sessions at another course. Details of this should be clearly indicated on the end of course results link and a "candidate incomplete attendance" form should be filled in and given to the candidate at the end of the course. This form should be handed in to the Course Director when they attend the incomplete sessions and their completion confirmed by using the e-form in the 'After the course' section of the course page. The paper incomplete attendance forms should be retained at the course centre with the course results for 4 years.

Special circumstances: if a candidate refuses to take part in a station because of health or religious grounds, this should be brought to the attention of the Course Director. If the Course Director feels able to resolve the issue to their satisfaction then they should. If this is not possible, it is suggested that the candidate completes the remainder of the course and that details of the incident are forwarded to ALSG using the e-form in the 'Following your course' section of the course page. This will then be forwarded for consideration by the Working Group. The candidate should be informed that a decision on their provider status will be sent to them in writing by ALSG.

- 2.1.3 Mentoring: all candidates should be allocated a faculty mentor. It is advisable that this person is either at the same grade or of a senior grade.
- 2.1.4 Faculty Meetings: these should be held as indicated on the programme and chaired by the Course Director, this includes the precourse virtual meeting. The Course Director should use the Course Director Checklist at the meetings.
- 2.1.5 Course Evaluation: all candidates should be directed to complete the course evaluation after the course. A link to this can be found on the course page. Candidates will not be able to download their provider certificate if they do not complete the feedback.
- 2.1.6 Teaching Stations: all candidates should be graded on the progress log during the course using the guidance documents provided. See the APLS 7e assessment document for full guidance on handling remedial teaching during the course.
- 2.1.7 Patient monitoring: ALSG recommends that APLS centres use technology to aid realism by the use of a system for displaying patient observations that includes SpO<sub>2</sub>/ETCO<sub>2</sub>/BP as well as ECG e.g. using tablets with simulation monitoring such as Sim Mon.

2.1.8 Selection of Potential Instructors: the standard IP selection process, available in the centre materials folder on the Centre and Instructor Resources page, should be followed. IPs can still be selected even if they have to re-sit practical assessments, in order to successfully complete the course.

ST1 and ST2 doctors can be recommended for instructor training and undertake the Generic Instructor Course, but may not teach on an APLS course until they achieve ST3 grade. They may however assist on PLS courses in the meantime. Physician's Associates and Paramedics with relevant experience can be recommended for IP status, however, they will need to submit their CV to the Working Group, via ALSG, for ratification; before their IP status can be confirmed. Nurses band 6 and above may be recommended for instructor training.

Any candidates, who are recommended already having completed a relevant instructor course, should complete their APLS instructor candidacies before their provider status expires.

2.1.9 End of course outcomes: see the APLS 7e assessment document for full guidance on end of course outcomes and the management of resits.

## 2.2 Status

2.2.1 Provider Status: candidates who achieve all of the above criteria can print a provider certificate, which is valid for 4 years. After this time they should re-certify as detailed under Re-certification below.

2.2.2 Instructor Status:

Instructors earn 1 x ALSG teaching credit for each course day they instruct on and are allowed to teach on single days of courses, as long as they teach on the minimum requirement for their provider course type (see below). Instructors can also earn 1 x ALSG teaching credit for attending an ALSG conference/instructor day or webinar day.

**Credibility:** instructors are required to teach on one course each year, for each ALSG provider course type they teach on. APLS-R and APLS both count towards APLS teaching credits.

There is no annual teaching requirement for the GIC, 1-day provider courses or recertification courses, but instructors will still earn ALSG teaching credits by teaching on these courses.

**Commitment:** instructors are required to earn 5 x ALSG teaching credits every 2 years. This is the minimum commitment for maintaining instructor status. It is acknowledged that many instructors may benefit their own CPD by teaching on more courses and also by supporting allied courses such as the GIC, PLS etc.

**Currency:** for ALSG VLE format courses instructors will be required to complete the e-module topics every 2 years. Instructors will earn 1 x ALSG teaching credit for completing all the e-modules.

Instructor status is valid for 4 years from the time full instructor status is achieved.

All course directors have to recertify every 4 years as an instructor. This cannot be on a course they are directing.

## 2.3 Re-certification

2.3.1 Provider: recertification must take place within six months of the previous provider certificate expiring. All recertifying candidates must undertake the VLE component in full.

For the F2F element of the course, the candidate has 2 options:

- Attend the full 2 day APLS course
- Attend an APLS Recertification course

2.3.2 Instructor: re-certification involves assessment by a full instructor during a standard provider course on the following:

- Embedded faculty helper within a simulation
- Facilitating a simulation and learning conversation as the lead instructor
- Overall assessment - the form should be completed by the Course Director at the end of the course.

Instructors may not re-certify on a course on which they are directing or acting as an external assessor.

After successful re-certification, provider and instructor status is then valid for a further 4 years.

## 3. Post-course process

### 3.1 Administration

3.1.1 Post course results: these should be completed as soon as possible following the course, definitely within 3 weeks. Results should be completed on the course page on the website either during the course or after the course. Centres should send candidates the standard email, which can be found in the Centre Materials folder on the Centre and Instructor Resources page on the website, directing them to complete the course evaluation and download their certificate. ALSG will download the results from the course page 3 weeks after the course. Help is available via the centre FAQs on the website.

A full copy of any results sheets should be retained on file by the course centre for a period of 4 years.

3.1.2 Candidates: certificates will be available to successful candidates directly on the course page of the website, once they have completed the course evaluation.

3.1.3 Instructors: any outstanding expenses should be settled as soon as possible after the course. When paying expenses to faculty members we advise you cover "out of pocket" expenses for travel (maximum mileage rate quoted by HMRC is currently 45p per mile), subsistence and accommodation only. If a faculty member is paid in excess of reimbursement for costs incurred, then the additional payment made may be liable to income tax and national insurance contributions. ALSG does not support the use of honorarium payments for faculty. Centres should also consider the amount spent on faculty dinners and hospitality, as similar issues may arise if, upon scrutiny, the amount spent is not felt to be of a reasonable level.