

Acute Psychiatric Emergencies Course (APEX 2e)

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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:

The Advanced Life Support Group 2-day APEX course can only be run by accredited course centres, Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts, Universities that train healthcare professionals and private hospitals.

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.

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](#).

- 1.1.3 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.
- 1.1.4 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.
- 1.1.5 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.
- 1.1.6 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. Refunds or credits are not provided on unused or cancelled course fees; however, we allow the reschedule of a full course to an alternative date, please see the rescheduling form on the centre materials page.

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.

APEX course teaching materials are for use on the course but may be used outside the course by recognised APEX course instructors, provided that there is no financial gain. Course centres must 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 “Acute Psychiatric Emergencies the Practical Approach, 2nd 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 be given access to the pre course e modules via the ALSG web site 4-6 weeks before the course date.

1.3 Faculty selection

1.3.1 Course Director: APEX courses should be directed by approved APEX course Directors only. The Course Director must be present throughout the entire course. Potential new Course Directors will need to apply to be added to the approved list. Applicants should be full APEX course instructors. Before applying, potential new Course Directors should arrange to shadow an existing approved Course Director on an APEX 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 instructor page on the VLE. Once their application has been approved by ALSG, they will need to be shadowed by an existing Course Director. ALSG will need to receive an email affirming that this existing Course Director is happy to recommend they become a Course Director, and they will then be added to the approved Course Director list.

1.3.2 Instructors: candidate ratio: There must be a ratio of 2 instructors (one of whom can be an IC) to 6 candidates.

There are six candidates in each group and **ideally** each individual station should have an instructor from a psychiatry background, and one from an emergency medicine/AHP background.

As a minimum each course must have one instructor (or the course director) from a psychiatric background for quality control of the psychiatric aspects of the programme. Where there is only one psychiatric instructor available, they should work with all of the groups or be supernumerary or be the course director.

The course director should be supernumerary. Therefore, the number of instructors will be dictated by the number of groups on the course.

For example, on a full course with 24 candidates, the minimum number of instructors is 8+1: 4 psychiatry, 4 emergency medicine/AHP plus the course director.

1.3.3 Instructor Candidates: No more than 50% of the full faculty should be instructor candidates. Instructor candidates should be allocated a mentor. They should be assessed and given feedback on the following:

- Simulation teaching x 1
- Learning conversation x 1
- Facilitated group workshop x1
- Overall assessment – the form should be completed by the Course Director at the end of the course.

1.4 Candidate selection

1.4.1 Eligibility: The acute psychiatric emergencies course is suitable for practitioners involved in acute mental health care, such as emergency medicine doctors and psychiatrists (including those in training), as well as nursing and other allied health professionals including paramedics that are involved in crisis care for mental health.

- 1.4.2 Pre-course VLE: If a candidate arrives for the Face-to-Face element without having completed the APEX course pre-course on-line preparation topics on the VLE, they will only be eligible to receive an observer certificate.

A total of 24 candidates can be accommodated on the course. Smaller courses can run, but it is advisable to recruit according to your group size.

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 pre course 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 given a score based on the progress sheets as given in the organisation package. If a candidate obtains a score of ‘serious concern’, it is the Course Director’s responsibility to ensure they receive additional teaching during the course, time permitting, to attempt to remediate this. All candidates should successfully complete the teaching stations. Any remedial candidates should be seen by an instructor during the course

to satisfactorily demonstrate the element which they did not successfully complete. The Course Director has the discretion to decide upon the method used as this might vary depending on the remediation required.

- 2.1.7 Selection of potential instructors: The standard IP selection process (see VLE-based course organisation package) should be followed. IPs can still be selected even if they have to re-sit elements of the course. They should not be processed until these elements are complete and they have successfully completed the course.

Candidates can be recommended for instructor potential if they are of the following level: Doctors ST4 or above and Nurses band 6 or above. Those who are not currently at this grade can be recommended, but they will need to wait to achieve the entry grades before proceeding with the Facilitation course.

If any other professionals are recommended, they will need to submit their CV to the Working Group, for ratification, before their IP status can be confirmed.

All candidates who are recommended must complete the Facilitation Course followed by two ICs. They must do so before their provider status expires.

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.

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.
- 2.3.2 Instructor: Re-certification involves completing the VLE topics and being assessed by a full instructor during a standard provider course on the following:
- Simulation teaching x 1
 - Learning conversation x 1
 - Facilitated group workshop x1
 - 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.