

Advanced Life Support Level 2 Course



ALS2 Course

The Australian Resuscitation Council Advanced Life Support Level 2 (ALS2) course is a standardised national course for healthcare professionals. The ALS2 course teaches evidence-based resuscitation guidelines and skills to healthcare professionals in every state and territory in Australia. ALS2 courses are held at centres throughout Australia and are approved and certified by the Australian Resuscitation Council. This ensures a uniformity of content and standard regardless of the location. Faculty members for the courses consist of instructors registered with the Australian Resuscitation Council.

The ALS2 course credentials are recognised internationally by those including the Resuscitation Council (UK), New Zealand Resuscitation Council (NZRC) and European Resuscitation Council (ERC). Many professional colleges also credential the course and grant educational development points for completion. Healthcare organisations in Australia also use the course credentials to demonstrate compliance with the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHS), Standard 8: Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration.

Learning outcomes

The ALS course teaches the knowledge and skills required to:

- Recognise and treat the deteriorating patient using a structured ABCDE approach
- Demonstrate management of a patient using the standardised approach of the Australian Resuscitation Council cardiac arrest algorithm
 - Treat cardiac and/or respiratory arrest, including starting CPR, manual defibrillation, life-threatening arrhythmias, and post resuscitation care
- Care for the deteriorating patient or patient in cardiac and/or respiratory arrest and in special circumstances, lead a team, work as a team member, and use structured communication skills including giving an effective handover.

Who should attend?

All applicants must hold a professional healthcare qualification and current clinical or healthcare educational appointment or be in training for an Australian professional healthcare qualification. The course is very intense and prior clinical knowledge and experience of critically ill patients is essential.

Appropriate participants include doctors, and nurses working in critical care areas (e.g. ED, CCU, ICU, HDU, acute medical/surgical admissions units/after-hours' and 'outreach' team members) or in the resuscitation / medical emergency team, and professional paramedics. Others include healthcare professionals who expect to use skills and knowledge from the ALS2 as part of their clinical duties on a regular basis, or where part/all of their professional role includes the delivery of ALS education.

Medical students, nurses, many IMG's (may include limited registration/standard pathway) and other healthcare providers not covered in the groups above should be encouraged to complete the Advanced Life Support Level 1 Life Support (ALS1/ILS) course. Those with a particular interest in resuscitation should consider attending an ALS2 provider course, where appropriate. Medical students in their final year of university in some states attend ALS1 as candidates as part of the university curriculum.

Prior competence in CPR is an essential prerequisite to attending the course.

Assessment and certification

The course is very intensive and candidates are sent the ARC ALS2 manual four weeks prior to the course. Candidates are required to complete a pre-course multiple choice question paper to guide preparation. The course must be attended in its entirety, and successfully achieve in all assessments in order to attain ALS Provider status.

Continuous assessment occurs throughout the ALS2 course, which is based on workshops and clinical simulations that allow candidates to demonstrate the core competencies that have been taught on the course. These include airway management, initial assessment and resuscitation and cardiac arrest management. Candidates are allocated mentors to deliver feedback throughout the course to apprise them of their ongoing assessed performance. A final summative assessment of candidates at the end of the course takes the form of management of a cardiac arrest simulation and a multiple-choice questionnaire.

Successful candidates receive an Australian Resuscitation Council ALS2 Provider certificate, which is valid for 4 years. Organisations and candidates should check with their respective professional bodies for the latest requirements.

Curriculum

ALS2 courses have a high ratio of instructors to candidates. The courses include core lectures, interactive workshops including simulation teaching (low/medium fidelity). The face-to-face teaching is mainly delivered in small groups of up to 6 candidates with hands-on practical skill stations and clinically based simulations. These simulations are designed to develop technical, team and communication skills using the resuscitation skills and knowledge acquired during the course. The course is most frequently delivered over two consecutive days but is able to be delivered in a modular format over (up to) four weeks.

Lectures

- ALS in perspective
- Causes and prevention of cardiac arrest
- Acute coronary syndromes
- ALS algorithm
- Post resuscitation care

Open Discussion / Demonstration

- Decisions relating to resuscitation
- Cardiac Arrest Simulation Demonstration
- All individual skills demonstrated in workshops

Workshops

- Airway management
- Initial assessment and resuscitation
- Cardiac arrest management (simulations)
- Manual mode defibrillation and basic life support
- Cardiac arrest management – increased complexity
- Intra-osseous access workshop – (optional workshop)

- Monitoring, rhythm recognition and 12-lead ECG
- Tachyarrhythmia, cardioversion and drugs
- Bradycardia, pacing and drugs
- Special circumstances (including: asthma, anaphylaxis pregnancy, hypothermia, electrolyte abnormality)
- Arterial blood gas analysis

ALS instructors

Those who perform outstandingly well on an ALS2 course and, in the view of the course faculty, show potential as future instructors, may be offered the opportunity of attending an Instructor Course. This may be at either ALS2 or ALS1 level. ARC Instructors remain current by educating on ARC ALS Courses.

How to apply

ALS courses are held throughout the year at centres in every state and territory. To apply, candidates should access the current ALS lists on the Australian Resuscitation Council website www.resus.org.au and contact individual course centres for application details. The course centre to encompass all costs associated with the course decides candidate fees locally therefore these will vary between centres. Applications close one month prior to the face-to-face component to allow for pre-course preparation consequently early application is essential. Many centres will restrict external applications from their organisations due to internal demands.

For further information on any aspect of the course, or establishing a course centre, please contact the Australian Resuscitation Council via email on info@resus.org.au