

ACLS EP Course - Reference Guide for Coordinators & Medical Directors



Irish Heart Foundation

ACLS Training Site Medical Directors and Training Site Coordinators

January 2025

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Approval Date	January 2025	
Revision date	December 2025	To be updated January 2026

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This guide should be used in conjunction with the 'IHF Training Site Administration Manual' along with the '2020 American Heart Association Instructor and Provider Manuals'.

Please note that the details of this document will change over time, so it will be reissued in line with appropriate updates in due course.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Reference Number	Version 1.2 (Annual Update)	Status Final	Sponsor(s) Celine Mc Phillips
Amendments			
Purpose: To outline the policies & guidelines for the administration of ACLS EP courses for ACLS affiliated Irish Heart Foundation Training Sites.			
Scope: This guide contains guidelines and rules for Medical Directors of our ACLS affiliated training sites and ACLS training site coordinators within the Irish Heart Foundation's CPR & ECC Training Programme.			
Approval	Approved		
Date of Issue	01/01/25		
Review Date	01/01/26		
Contact for Review	Brigid Sinnott/IHF Resus Manager/ Celine Mc Phillips ACLS		

Responsible Person	Resus Manager	Page 3	
Name of Policy:	Reference Guide for Training Site Coordinators	Review date:	01/01/2025

Irish Heart Foundation

ACLS for Experienced Providers (EP) Course Outline

The ACLS for Experienced Providers (ACLS EP) Course aims to expand ACLS knowledge beyond the standard primary and secondary survey and to give the learner a systematic approach to identifying and treating the underlying causes of cardiac arrest. Case based scenarios are used to move beyond the algorithms and show learners how to apply critical thinking to quickly reach a differential diagnosis and effectively manage treatment. The course aims to improve outcomes in complex cardiovascular, respiratory and other (e.g. metabolic, toxicology) emergencies by expanding on core ACLS guidelines and encouraging critical thinking and decision-making strategies. Through instruction and active participation in case-based scenarios, learners enhance their skills in the differential diagnosis and treatment of pre-arrest, arrest and post-arrest patients.

Please note that learners are expected to enter the course with solid knowledge of ACLS skills and treatment algorithms.

Course Content:

The course is one day in length and conducted in a classroom based, instructor led environment. Please see *Appendix 1* for the approved course timetable. The course includes standard ACLS assessments which all candidates must successfully complete. These include:

- ACLS written exam
- Airway management test and High Quality BLS test
- High Performing Team (HPT) Megacode test

If the candidate is unsuccessful – they can't proceed to the next level.

Following successful completion of the above assessments, students participate in case based group discussions for four different learning stations which include:

- Cardiovascular
- Clinical pharmacology and toxicology
- Respiratory and metabolic
- Post cardiac arrest care learning stations

Each of these learning stations uses cases selected from 68 scenarios based in either pre-hospital, emergency department or in-hospital settings. This helps ensure the course can be customised to best meet the needs of students. Although participants are not tested on these

four learning lessons, they are required to actively participate during these discussion scenarios.

The ACLS EP Course teaches the following:

- Applying the expanded systematic approach (ACLS EP Survey) to patient assessment, evaluation and management
- Cardiovascular emergencies
- Cerebrovascular emergencies
- Respiratory and metabolic emergencies
- Post-cardiac arrest care
- Clinical pharmacology and toxicology emergencies
- High quality CPR
- Effective team communication within a resuscitation team and recognition of the impact of team dynamics on overall team performance and patient outcome

Target Audience:

The ACLS EP Course is designed for seasoned healthcare providers who are proficient in performing BLS and ACLS skills, reading and interpreting ECGs, understanding ACLS pharmacology and those who regularly lead or participate in emergency assessment and treatment of pre-arrest, arrest or post-arrest patients. As the course covers a number of advanced skills and topics a good level of knowledge and a clinical background involving resuscitation is necessary for students to be able to participate in this course.

The formal skills assessments of the ACLS EP Course include Airway Management, High Quality BLS and HPT Megacode Test along with the ACLS written exam. However, it is useful to note that the learning stations within the course require candidates to participate and contribute during the case based scenarios but there is no formal exam on these lessons.

The course provides an alternative for those wishing to recertify as an ACLS Provider such as Critical Care Nurses, Registrars, Consultants and any individual expected to lead in a cardiac arrest or other life threatening scenario. Those without the appropriate experience may find the standard ACLS Provider Course, Heartcode ACLS or ACLS Recertification Courses more suitable to recertify their skills.

Teaching Faculty:

The ACLS EP Provider Course may only be taught by Instructors who hold current ACLS EP Instructor Certification. Any Training Site Coordinator who wishes to verify an Instructor's certification prior to a course can contact the Irish Heart Foundation directly to check these details.

The maximum Instructor – Student ratio required for the ACLS EP Provider course may vary across the timetable as follows:

- All skills testing stations must have a maximum Instructor – Student ratio of 1-3
- The Learning Stations must have a maximum Instructor – Student ratio of 1-6

The Irish Heart Foundation conducts ACLS EP Instructor Workshops for ACLS Instructors who wish to gain ACLS EP Instructor Certification. Places on these workshops are strictly limited and are by nomination from Training Sites which have committed to conduct ACLS EP Courses.

ACLS EP Course Medical Director:

Each ACLS EP Course must have a course Medical Director (MD) who is present onsite for the duration of the entire course. The presence of the MD is mandatory due to the Instructor – Student ratios used on the ACLS EP Course.

The Medical Director on an ACLS EP Course must meet the criteria for being an ACLS Course MD and also hold current ACLS EP Instructor Certification. Please note that the MD may also act as an instructor while acting as MD for the course.

Course Materials:

The following course materials and resources are available for purchase please contact Irish Heart Foundation – Resus :

- ACLS for Experienced Providers Manual and Resource Text (15-1064)
- ACLS for Experienced Providers DVD Set (Two Disc Set) (15-1063):
 - ACLS EP Course DVD which includes:
 - Systematic Approach for Experienced Providers
 - Waveform Capnography
 - Post Cardiac Arrest Care
 - ACLS EP Instructor Disc which includes:
 - Electronic ACLS EP Instructor Manual
 - Learning Station Case-Based Scenarios
 - Target Audience Case-Based Scenarios
 - Pre-course Materials
 - Course Materials

Pre-Course Self-Assessment:

Candidates should complete the ACLS Precourse MCQ.

The ACLS Provider Exam is a compulsory element of the course to be completed by candidates but can be done in the classroom using the standard ACLS written exam which sites already have.

Pre Course Requisites:

Course participants are expected to have the following skills and qualities:

- Be proficient in performing BLS and ACLS skills (and if they do not hold current ACLS certification they must hold current BLS Provider)
- Be able to read and interpret ECGs
- Have an understanding of ACLS pharmacology
- Regularly lead or participate in emergency assessment and treatment of pre-arrest, arrest, or post arrest patients
- Use key elements of critical thinking in processing information and data in development of the differential diagnosis and decision-making for intervention and care.

Candidates may attend the ACLS EP Provider Course without holding current ACLS Provider Certification however the Irish Heart Foundation would strongly recommend that candidates have done an ACLS Provider Course at some stage, even if they are not currently certified.

Where a candidate does not hold current ACLS Provider Certification they must be currently certified in the BLS Provider Course or equivalent (e.g. CFR Advanced Certification). A copy of their current ACLS Provider or BLS for Provider (or CFR Advanced) Certification should be presented to the Training Site Coordinator prior to the ACLS EP Provider Course.

There is deliberately no skills practice time in the ACLS EP Course as students must come to the course with a solid foundation in ACLS and should come to the ACLS EP Course prepared to be tested in ACLS Skills. These assessments include CPR AED, bag-mask ventilation and megacode along with the ACLS Provider written exam. If the student is unsuccessful they must not proceed to the next stage of EP course.

Students who do not hold current ACLS Provider Certification must pass all necessary skills High Quality BLS Testing , Airway Management bag mask ventilation and HPT Megacode testing and the ACLS written exam **without remediation**. If they do not pass any of the skills assessment or the written test on the first attempt, they should be referred back to the full

ACLS Provider Course and may not proceed further in the ACLS EP Course. **No exceptions to be made.**

Candidates holding current ACLS Provider Certification who attend an ACLS EP Course may be offered remediation.

It is vital that candidates who do not hold current ACLS Provider Certification are informed of this course requirement in regard to remediation in the pre-course letter sent to them prior to attending the ACLS EP Course.

Please remember that the ACLS EP Course is intended for the experienced ACLS Provider so some candidates may be more suited to recertifying their skills on the ACLS Provider, ACLS Recertification or ACLS Heartcode Courses where more skills practice time is provided.

Course Completion Requirements for Students:

In order to successfully complete the ACLS EP Course students must complete all of the following requisites to receive ACLS EP Provider certification:

- Attend the entire course and actively participate in all case based scenarios and must meet all current ACLS course completion requirements including:
 - Pass current ACLS Provider Course exam with a minimum score of 84%
 - Pass the High-Quality BLS skills test
 - Pass Airway Management skills test
 - Pass High Performance Teams Megacode skills test

Students who successfully complete the course will receive an ACLS EP Provider electronic certificate which is valid for two years. The ACLS EP Provider Certification supersedes ACLS Provider Certification.

Course Timetable:

Appendix 1 at the end of this document is the standard timetable to be used for the ACLS EP Provider Course.

Precourse Preparation:

Complete the Precourse ILT course work that you would complete for an ILT provider course

This will contain all the new videos of the 2020 Guidelines , please present your certificate to your Course Co-ordinator prior start of the course

JN-1121	ACLS Precourse Self-Assessment and Precourse Work, International English (IVE)	Blended Learning
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Written Exam

Candidates must complete the standard ACLS Provider Course Written Exam. This should be conducted either:

- Online and results presented to course coordinator prior to starting the ACLS EP Course
- OR**
- In the classroom setting at the very start of the course

If candidates are to do the online version of the ACLS Provider Course Written Exam then the course coordinator will need request Exam from resus@irishheart.ie

JN-1131

IVE ACLS Online Exam for Instructor-led Training

NB: Any candidate that does not successfully complete the ACLS Provider Course Written Exam may not continue with the ACLS EP Provider Course and should be directed to attend and complete a standard ACLS Provider Course.

Modular ACLS EP Training:

The format of the ACLS EP timetable lends itself to being conducted on a modular basis in a hospital setting. In doing so the course may be conducted on a weekly basis with week one being the ACLS assessments and written exam and then each of the following weeks containing a different learning station (cardiovascular, clinical pharmacology and toxicology, etc.). For consistency the **same medical director** should be present for each session and the course must be completed within a maximum 8-week timeframe in order to obtain IHF certification. If you are interested in conducting the ACLS EP Course in a modular way please contact the Irish Heart Foundation before making any plans, as the timetable for the planned modular format must be approved by the Foundation before proceeding.

Post Course Paperwork:

The ACLS EP provider post course paperwork should be submitted to the Irish Heart Foundation within 30 days of the course. This should include the following information:

- Course timetable with faculty noted against each lesson
- Course Roster including signed Faculty
- Course Roster Result Sheet including signed list of candidates with results for each assessment – see *Appendix 2* for an example results sheet
- Course Checklist
- CSV file for Electronic Certificates

Sites Who May Conduct ACLS EP Courses:

Only Training Sites with prior approval to conduct ACLS courses may offer ACLS EP Courses. These Training Sites must give the Irish Heart Foundation at least 4 weeks' notice of any planned ACLS EP course dates. If requested, the course may also be advertised on the Irish Heart Foundation's website at www.irishheart.ie/aclscourses.

ACLS EP Instructor Courses

These courses will be Co-ordinated by the IHF, you become EP instructor you must be an ACLS instructor for at least 2 years or taught on 4 ACLS courses. If this is your first course as an EP instructor you will need to be monitored by faculty or medical director of the course.

Further Queries:

Should you have any further queries in regard to the ACLS EP Course please don't hesitate cmcphillips@irishheart.ie

Appendix 1: Timetable for ACLS EP Provider Course:

The following is the minimum standard timetable to be used for the practice and assessment of students who complete the ACLS EP Provider Course:

Time	Lesson/Description	
8.00am	Welcome & Introductions	
8.05am	Lesson 1: ACLS EP Course Overview/Organisation	
8.10am	Lesson 2: Systematic Approach for Experienced Providers	
<i>Divide class into 2 groups</i>	Lesson 3: Airway Management	Lesson 4: High Quality BLS Testing
8.30am	Group 1	Group 2
9.00am	Group 2	Group 1
	Lesson 5: HPT Megacode Testing Station	
9.30am	Group 1	Group 2
10.30am	Coffee Break	
10.50am	ACLS Provider Written Exam	
	Lesson 6: Cardiovascular Learning Station	Lesson 7: Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology Learning Station
11.30am	Group 1	Group 2
12.30pm	Lunch	
	Lesson 6: Cardiovascular Learning Station	Lesson 7: Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology Learning Station
1.30pm	Group 2	Group 1
	Lesson 8: Respiratory & Metabolic Learning Station	Lesson 9: Post-Cardiac Arrest Care Learning Station
2.30pm	Group 1	Group 2
3.30pm	Coffee Break	
	Lesson 8: Respiratory & Metabolic Learning Station	Lesson 9: Post-Cardiac Arrest Learning Station
3.45pm	Group 2	Group 1
4.45pm	Completion of course evaluation forms and course wrap up	
5.00pm	Course ends	

NB: Attendees who do not hold current ACLS Provider Certification must pass all necessary skills testing (High Quality BLS, Airway Management and HPT Megacode Testing) and the ACLS written exam without remediation. If they fail any such test, they should be referred back to the full ACLS Course and may not proceed further in the ACLS EP Course.

Candidates who hold current ACLS Provider Certification may be offered remediation.

Appendix 2

IRISH HEART FOUNDATION CPR & ECC TRAINING PROGRAMME
ACLS COURSE REGISTRATION FORM 2020



Course Information

<input type="checkbox"/> ACLS Provider Course	IHF Training Site _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Heartcode ACLS Course	County _____
<input type="checkbox"/> ACLS Recertification Course	Medical Director _____
<input type="checkbox"/> ACLS EP Provider Course	MD Instructor Number _____
Course Date(s) _____	MD Certification EXP Date _____

ACLS Instructors

Instructor Name	Instructor Number	Instructor Certification EXP Date	Instructor Signature
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

I verify that this information is accurate and truthful and that it may be confirmed. I also verify that students on this course were made aware of the IHF & Laerdal Learning Platform Fair Processing Notice in order to receive their electronic ACLS course completion certificate. This course was taught in accordance with IHF/AHA guidelines.

Course date(s): _____

Fair Processing Notice - By listing their name and email address below, students agree to the Irish Heart Foundation retaining their details on the secure IHF & Laerdal Learning Platform (<https://ihf.eu/learning/laerdal.com/>) for up to 5 years after the date of course registration. The information will be used to contact students in relation to their electronic IHF/AHA ACLS course completion certificate. Anonymous statistical data in relation to this programme may be shared with our programme partners, American Heart Association and Laerdal Medical, for reporting and analysis purposes. If you have any requests concerning your personal information or any queries with regard to our processing, please contact resus@irishheart.ie or visit <https://irishheart.ie/privacy-policy/>.

Student name, email address & certification information are uploaded by Training Sites to IHF/Laerdal Learning Platform – you will receive your ACLS ecard by email from Laerdal	Pre Course MCQ (Pass %/ R-Pass %/ NYC)	Part 1 Cert (Heartcode ACLS)	BLS (Pass/ R-Pass/ NYC)	Post MCQ (Pass %/ R-Pass %/ NYC)	Megacode (Pass/ R-Pass/ NYC)	Overall Result (Pass/ NYC)
1. Name: 1. Email address to send ecard to:						
2. Name: 2. Email address to send ecard to:						
3. Name: 3. Email address to send ecard to:						
4. Name: 4. Email address to send ecard to:						
5. Name: 5. Email address to send ecard to:						
6. Name: 6. Email address to send ecard to:						