



Advanced Paediatric
Life Support

Course Directors Guidelines

August 2015
Edited February 2025

Contents

1 Table of Contents

1	Table of Contents	2
2	Planning a Specific Course	3
2.1	Course Dates	3
2.2	Venue	3
2.3	Catering, Course and Faculty Dinners.....	3
2.4	Regional and workplace Candidates	3
2.5	Allocating Sessions	4
3	Directing a Course	6
3.1	Faculty	6
3.2	Course Coach	6
3.3	Supporting a Course Director Instructor Candidate	6
3.4	Daily Breakdown of Director Activities	7
3.4.1	<i>PRE-COURSE PREPARATION.....</i>	<i>7</i>
3.4.2	<i>COURSE DAY 1.....</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>Course Day 1 Continued</i>	<i>9</i>
	<i>Course Day 1 Continued</i>	<i>10</i>
3.4.3	<i>COURSE DAY 2.....</i>	<i>11</i>
3.4.4	<i>COURSE DAY 3.....</i>	<i>12</i>
3.5	Guidelines for Candidate Incomplete attendance on face to face course	13
4	Conducting Examinations	13
4.1	Retests.....	13
5	Course Debrief	14
6	Post Course	14
7	Appendix 1	15
7.1	APLS course coaching guidelines	15
7.2	Instructor Potential Attributes.....	16
7.3	Course Director Peer Review Tool –(Draft May 2021)	17

This guideline is designed to assist you in your role as Course Director. Please also check the [Directors and Co-ordinators section of the APLS website](#), located in the Instructor's Area under Course Materials and Resources.



2 Planning a Specific Course

2.1 Course Dates

APLS course dates are generally set midway through the previous year. There may be occasions where an extra course is run due to local demand. If you would like an APLS course to be scheduled in your region, please contact the office.

Should there be difficulty in filling faculty or not enough registrations, APLS will contact you to discuss options for recruitment before making the difficult decision to cancel a course.

2.2 Venue

The course venue is determined at the time of developing the course calendar for the year. Venue selection is based on having sufficient space and generally fulfilling the requirements of running a successful and comfortable APLS course.

2.3 Catering, Course and Faculty Dinners

Catering and dinners are pre-booked by the administration team and payment arrangements are confirmed with the venue/restaurant. If you would like to suggest a specific restaurant, please contact head office and where possible we will try to accommodate your request. The maximum price is set as a guide. Depending on the venue, the wine list may be set or alternatively, faculty may choose wine within a reasonable price range.

2.4 Regional and workplace Candidates

Previously, Course Directors were entitled to have up to six places reserved on a course for preferred candidates. This was particularly helpful for courses being run in regional areas.

Due to the very high demand for APLS courses and the new APLS course management platform it is no longer possible to hold candidate places in this way. The new platform also has an automated waitlist management system.

If you are directing a course in a regional area, or if you believe there are a number of potential candidates in your workplace who you would like to encourage to attend an APLS course, please contact the office aplscourses@apls.org.au to discuss.

2.5 Allocating Sessions

The Course Director allocates sessions to faculty members, in accordance with the course program. This should be completed and forwarded to Head Office at 3-4 weeks prior to the course.

Attempts should be made to vary the pairing of faculty members throughout the course. Instructor Candidates are to be paired with a (full) Instructor so they can receive ongoing support and feedback.

An allocation grid has been created by Cathy McAdam and is available to use as a guideline. This is an xls. document and is available on the www.apls.org.au under Director resources.

Please find some useful tips for allocating faculty in the face-to-face program, below. These reflect what current Course Directors have found helpful-

- Email faculty and ask
 - If they have any preferences for plenary sessions/workshops/skill stations/scenarios.
 - If they have any limitations to attending the whole course (always better to know early). There is the possibility to organise a later start for some faculty on Day 2 and Day 3 and some time off on Day 2.
 - There is an expectation that Instructor Candidates will attend the whole 3-day program. If they are not specifically allocated to facilitate a session, then they are expected to observe or assist.

- Allocate a main facilitator and an assistant for each of the plenary sessions.
 - The **First plenary** has candidates grouped according to their allocated colour. Two instructors can sit with these groups during this session. The aim of this is to promote the culture of peer learning that will occur throughout the course. The instructors' role is only to contribute if the group needs support to complete the tasks or if they identify any knowledge gaps. (There is an expectation that following the 8-10 hours of pre-course preparation that the groups will need very little verbal input from instructors). Ideally the instructors are allocated according to the skill stations they will run immediately after this first plenary session.

Pink Group – Airway A instructors, Yellow Group – Airway B, Orange Group - BLS and Green Group - Defibrillation.

- Plenary Sessions on Day 2 (Serious Illness and Serious Injury) do not need to have instructors working with the small groups. There are resources provided to run these as smaller groups (6 groups of 4 candidates) to promote involvement. The candidate can select their own peers to work with as this is the only opportunity for them to learn from those outside their colour group.
- There is a summary key for the scenarios, which can be found in the Directors and Coordinators folder. On Day 2, you may wish to allocate certain illness scenarios to build on preceding workshops (i.e. instructors facilitating fluid & electrolytes with Illness Scenarios F No. 11 & No. 12). Instructors are able to access the specific scenarios prior to the course via the APLS website.
- Scenario demonstrations follow directly after workshops on Day 1 and Day 2. If possible allocate instructors not involved in the workshops so they can prepare and commence on time. **Note:** Scenario demonstrations are a powerful teaching mode and candidates will role model behaviour demonstrated (i.e. use of ABCD on whiteboard, behaviour of assistants). Lead instructor to clarify expectations of 'candidate' regarding scenario process and maintaining accountability for 'capable without initiative' assistant actions.

3 Directing a Course

3.1 Faculty

The Course Coordinator will be present throughout the course. It is usual for the coordinator to have an orientation of the venue prior to the course.

The Course Director will meet with the faculty at the commencement of the course. Faculty members will be introduced at the faculty meeting and numbers confirmed for both Course and Faculty dinners. The Course Director will remind the faculty of issues important to the smooth running of the course (e.g. prompt attendance, keeping to time etc).

The Course Director will revise issues that may have required clarification on previous courses (e.g. new course content or resources to run workshops).

3.2 Course Coach

If your course has a coach, please make contact before the course to discuss how the role can be maximised to support you and faculty. Coaches have been allocated the role because they are recognised to have the following attributes -

- Openness to learning
- Genuine curiosity/respect for peers who have a passion to support others develop
- Experience of APLS courses with an appreciation of variability in styles/approaches balanced with common behaviours/skills that support learner-centred teaching
- Emotional intelligence /build rapport- ability to recognise and manage own and others emotions. Recognise how emotions influence behaviour and adapt to a range of environments
- Demonstration of competence with learning conversations

[APLS course coaching guidelines are in Appendix 1 of this manual.](#)

3.3 Supporting a Course Director Instructor Candidate

APLS office will ask your permission before allocating a faculty member to either Course Director I/C (1) or (2) role to your course. The Course Director Referee form will be shared with you.

- For **Course Director I/C (1)** - allocate to lead plenary session and a scenario demonstration. Ideally allocate CD I/C (1) to co-facilitate sessions which they may not have done previously.
- Share course leadership tips/tricks - clarify purpose of each meeting and expected outcomes.
- Involve in decision making /support for candidates and faculty who need more support.

- Review APLS Directors Responsibilities and Role document in Appendix 1
- Reflect and use Course Director Peer Review tool together

For **Course Director I/C (2)** – discuss expectations of each other 4-6 weeks prior to course. CD I/C (2) to prepare program and liaise with office and or faculty pre-course.

- CD I/C (2) fulfills Course Director role with support from Course Director.
- Complete Course Director Peer Review tool for CD I/C (2).
- Course Director to completed Course Report with evaluation of CD I/C (2).

[APLS Draft Course Director Peer Review Tool is in Appendix 1 of this manual.](#)

3.4 Daily Breakdown of Director Activities

3.4.1 PRE-COURSE PREPARATION

3-4 weeks prior	Finalise course programme & email to faculty	Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign ALS / BLS/Airway teaching & assessments to same people to improve consistency • Day 2: Split faculty into early start / finish & late start / finish • Consider Director allocations, so that Director can work with or observe IC's, and provide support • Allocate experienced faculty with IC's
1 day prior	Liaise with Course Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm arrival rendezvous • Confirm venue access details & issues • Print faculty list with mobile phone numbers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In case of unexpected instructor absence, the Course Director should plan to be present for ALL course sessions. 		

NEW OR CHANGED VENUE NOTES

Afternoon or evening prior, if possible	Check venue with Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk around - confirm rooms are adequate • Agree on room designations: • Faculty room + lecture room + 4 break-out rooms • Check room equipment: e.g. white boards, flip charts (e.g. the transport workshop works best with two whiteboards)
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3.4.2 COURSE DAY 1

08:45	Arrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure venue open • Prepare for faculty meeting • Check projector & powerpoint are working for Director's Welcome & Plenary Session • Clarify with coordinator how you like to be supported – i.e. prompts for timing suggestions for managing course updates
0900-1000 –	FACULTY MEETING (30 mins max) & 30 mins for faculty preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start on time • Lead faculty introductions • Confirm Mentees (Assign pre-course for Mentor/mentee support during Repeated Skills Practice (RSP) at end of Day 1) • Identify I/C's & provide with I/C feedback tool. Allocate Mentors (may be Director) • Identify online learning issues which may arise from candidates • Discuss schedule changes / adjustments • Clarify BLS/ACLS issues to ensure consistency of teaching & assessment. • Role of extra assistants in scenario teaching • Note any course / format changes - Check for updates on APLS website - Give formulae to candidates - Monash PEM drug book:>20 kg in 2kg brackets, >30kg in 5kg brackets – round up. • Re-enforce time management & punctuality • Day 1. When skills completed @ 1400, prepare rooms for scenario teaching @ 1430 - if not involved in cardiac demonstration • Confirm Attendance at dinners - coordinator to confirm with restaurant
09:55 – 10:00	Walk around if necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If venue unfamiliar, walk around with all faculty and move to lecture room

<p>1000 - 1030</p>	<p>Welcome and Aims</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Faculty & identify mentees (If faculty introduce themselves first (brief), they establish 'peer-peer ' learning culture of APLS) • Introduction: Who are you? What are you? Where from? • Something else about them?(other career choice/life outside of work etc) • Discuss expectations of the candidates • Set the tone of professionalism and learning for the 3 days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce the SAFE learning culture and environment • Time management • Clinical professionals who are punctual and respectful • Assessment requirements • Feedback forms – ask to fill in continuously • Mobile phones, toilets, closest evacuation exit & any other venue issues
<p>10:30- 11:15</p>	<p>Plenary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of BLS & ALS • Set the tone: learning from each other/assume pre-course preparation and clinical experience. • Faculty (support role only) with the coloured group they will be teaching on first skill station
<p>11:15 – 12:15</p>	<p>BLS & ALS skill stations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe IC's & feedback opportunistically
<p>12:15 – 13:00</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors to make connection with mentees • Remind candidates of course dinner • Formative feedback to IC's opportunistically
<p>13:00 – 14:00</p>	<p>BLS & ALS skill stations cont</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe IC's & feedback opportunistically <p>Prepare for Cardiac Demonstration if instructors in skill teaching session</p>
<p>14:00 - 1430</p>	<p>Cardiac Demonstration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead instructor to clarify expectations of 'candidate' regarding APLS scenario process and maintaining accountability for 'capable without initiative' assistant actions.

1430 – 16:30	Cardiac scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe IC's & feedback opportunistically
1630- 1640		Tea/Coffee mentor meetings
16:40 – 17:00	FACULTY MEETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator to have photos of groups via dataprojector • Brief review of candidates experiencing difficulty (photos to assist faculty identify candidates) • Discuss testing issues & resit criteria if required • Affirm procedure for re-tests/practice on Day 2 • Discuss acceptability (or otherwise) of immediate re-starts • Who will test what & where? • Repeated Skills Practice (RSP) reinforces a fundamental skill. If a candidate does not demonstrate safe practice (as per RSP guideline) - Plan for further practice at breaks on Day 2/3. The aim is to continue practice until safe Airway/ BLS/ALS is demonstrated.
17:00– 17:40	Repeated Skills Practice. Mentors allocated to associated colour group	<p>Brief all candidates of process for Repeated Skills Practice- include aims of repeating practice and coaching on APLS program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind them of course dinner and start time in the morning. • Be available for re-tests & issues • Ensure mentors will meet candidates who have did not demonstrate safe practice and plan for practice on Day 2 • Candidates leave when all members of the group have rotated through roles (if going to restaurant early - save places for faculty to avoid candidate and faculty separation)
17:45 - 18:00 –	FACULTY MEETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ those with difficulty & those showing instructor qualities • Confirm Plenary & workshop sessions for next morning • Plan for extra teaching if BLS/ALS required • Any teaching points for tomorrow? Eg: changes to clinical Mx • Remind faculty who finish early on Day 2 to meet mentees prior to departure Day 2 • Confirm course dinner and transport arrangements for instructors

3.4.3 COURSE DAY 2

07:45	Arrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure venue open • Address candidates, prior to plenary, if required
08:00 – 08:45	Plenary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start on time • Anticipate needs of those arriving late – integrating into a new group of 2-3 already working on first case.
08:45 - 11:00	Workshops	<p>Preparation of Serious Illness demonstration if instructors involved in workshops</p> <p>At the end of workshops, prepare room for illness scenarios @ 11:00</p>
11:20 – 12:40	Illness Scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe IC's & feedback opportunistically
12:40 – 13:20	Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee any Skills practice required • Mentee meetings as required • Formative feedback to IC's opportunistically
13:20 – 16:10	Illness Scenarios cont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe IC's & feedback opportunistically
16:10 – 16:30	(some directors choose to have a FACULTY MEETING)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider short 15min meeting for earlier finish today • Brief review of candidates experiencing difficulty • Plan use of suitable areas for simultaneous spinal skills • Discuss any teaching points re: trauma skills/scenarios • Identify & plan for any faculty needing to depart early tomorrow • Those involved prepare for trauma scenario immediately after plenary session
1630 - 1720	Trauma Plenary	<p>Faculty not in plenary/demonstration can set-up trauma workshops</p> <p>- Remind candidates regarding next day's schedule and punctuality</p> <p>Any special points to clarify or remind candidates.</p>
1730	FACULTY MEETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually not needed.

3.4.4 COURSE DAY 3

07:45	Arrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure venue open <p>Anticipate late arrivals will need to be directed to their coloured group skill station</p>
08:00 – 11:00	Trauma Skill Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start on time • Observe IC's & feedback opportunistically <p>Morning tea 1000 1020 Meet with mentees – Faculty to anticipate quick exit if in Trauma scenario demonstration</p>
1100-1120	Trauma Scenario	Allocate with consideration of who has been in morning sessions and subsequent scenarios
11:25-13:25	Trauma Scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative feedback to IC's opportunistically
13:25 – 14:10	Lunch & Faculty meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss testing issues – Pairs of faculty to review KTPs to support consistent decisions across faculty • Affirm procedure for on-course re-tests; post-course re-sits; or course failure • Who will test what & where? • Brief review of candidates experiencing difficulty • Identify & plan for any faculty needing to depart early
14:10 – 15:30	TESTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be available to support • Do re-tests with a senior faculty member
15:30 – 16:00	FACULTY MEETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify candidates who have not passed ○ Plan: re-do course ? post-course resit?
16:00	COURSE CLOSURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirm the learning • Advise that certificates will be provided electronically after 100% online learning completed • Mentor/Mentees meet
	FACULTY MEETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review candidate feedback forms • Complete Course report for APLS head office ○ Candidate results & resits / failures ○ Venue, catering, accommodation ○ Course issues

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback to IC's • Identify potential instructors and candidates that faculty would not support if they self-nominated as an instructor • Identify potential directors & GIC instructors (see guidelines & complete referee forms)
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3.5 Guidelines for Candidate Incomplete attendance on face to face course

- Notify the APLS administration team
- Review guidelines and document your recommended outcome in the Course Report

[Guidelines for Incomplete Attendance on APLS Courses](#)

4 Conducting Examinations

The Course Director will allocate examining roles to the faculty. Generally, Instructor Candidates should not examine re-test scenarios. Instructor Candidates will only be paired with (full) instructors for the purpose of examinations.

Faculty meetings will occur prior to the examinations on day 3. The Course Director will remind faculty of the specific pass/fail points in the examinations. An examiner may seek clarification from the Course Director at any stage during the examination. If an examining pair of Instructors is unable to reach a consensus then they are to seek clarification from the Course Director. The decision made by the Course Director is final.

4.1 Retests

If a candidate is unsuccessful in the practical skills testing on Day 1 (basic life support, defibrillation & airway management) they are offered a retest by different examiners. If the retest is unsuccessful candidates will be offered support from mentor and a further retest on day 2 and/or 3 of the course.

A candidate who does not pass the scenario test will be offered an immediate retest with a different scenario of the same scenario type (Illness or Trauma). Retest examiners will be nominated by the Course Director and will not be part of the original examining team.

If a candidate fails a final retest of one of the basic life support, defibrillation, airway management or scenario components they have not satisfied the requirements for successful completion of the course. In these circumstances arrangements may be made for another retest to occur at a subsequent APLS course or under examination conditions at another venue/time approved by the course administrator.

If a candidate is unsuccessful in 2 or more components of the examination they will not have passed the course and will be required to repeat the full 3-day course.

When the APLS course administrator has received the course paperwork, candidates who have failed a component will be contacted by email. The email will provide the candidates with advice regarding the options available to organise a retest.

5 Course Debrief

At the final faculty meeting, all candidate results will be reviewed and decisions are to be made regarding those candidates who have been identified as possessing the potential to become APLS instructors.

Please refer to [Attributes Desirable for APLS instructors](#) to assist with discussion. The Course Director will determine how results are provided to the candidates; either individually by their mentor or by announcement to the group. Generally, if not all candidates have passed the course then results will be provided individually. At the completion of the course, the course will be closed by the Course Director, and mentors will meet with their mentees. Candidate evaluation forms will be emailed to candidates at approximately 3 pm on the last day of the course. Please encourage completion.

A course report, using the appropriate form, is to be completed by the Course Director and forwarded to Head Office by the Course Coordinator with post-course paperwork_documentation. Important issues identified during the course, which may impact on future courses, may be noted on the report.

6 Post Course

APLS Office will use course report to mark attendance and arrange certificates for candidates who have successfully completed all components of the course.

Retests, if required will be arranged directly with candidates by the office staff.

7 Appendix 1

7.1 APLS course coaching guidelines

APLS Course Coaching Guidelines

- Pre-course preparation:
 - Director and Coach to discuss role and practical aspects prior to course commencing. This may include clarifying the shared model of scenario teaching where one facilitator leads the scenario while the other leads the learning conversation
 - email to faculty notifying that coach will be on the course.
 - Please contact Jane Stanford jane.stanford@apls.org.au if you would like to see sample pre-course emails or would like other resource to support you in this role.
- Introduction at 1st faculty meeting:
 - role is for support and development.
 - Coaching philosophy is that change/improvement occurs with learner active participation in their own learning and deliberate practice. This includes; motivation to improve, behavioural descriptors of quality facilitation (end goals), self-assessment in response to observed behaviours and testing of strategies.
 - aim is for a culture of faculty supporting each other. The focus is for developing skills in teaching behaviours that focus on learner's needs within multidisciplinary and varied experienced groups.
 - if notes are taken they are as memory prompts for specific feedback to those involved & not part of course report.
 - faculty are invited to request feedback from their sessions. Ideally faculty nominate areas of their teaching that they would like to receive feedback. This helps with the coach watching for specific behaviours during a session and provides a guide for post session conversations to be on the area of concern relevant for the instructor
 - 2 main types of feedback support – 1-2 mins quick and targeted suggestions between groups and private learning conversations scheduled in breaks in teaching.
- During the course:
 - coach is responsive to needs of the faculty. This may include facilitating sessions or providing mini tutorials as requested
- After the course
 - faculty will be given the opportunity to give feedback about having a course coach on APLS courses
 - Feedback to be provided in the course report
 - Coach and Director identify faculty who may be suitable as coaches on future courses. Please note on course report faculty with coaching attributes/skills

Those identified for coaching roles will be offered to join GIC faculty, if not already a GIC instructor and attend the ESDC program

[Return to Directing a course/ Course Coach section of manual](#)

7.2 Instructor Potential Attributes

Criteria	Description of what is required to fulfil these criteria	Hints on where to look for these
Openness to learning	A person who has this capability believes that there is a constant need and possibility for gaining new knowledge, insights and skills	During the course this person will: be curious , frequently asking 'why' questions. They will demonstrate active listening by paraphrasing to confirm shared understanding. They will admit to not knowing or being able to do certain things. They will engage with new skills and thinking by persisting with new tasks or concepts . They will acknowledge and act on feedback.
Communication Skills	During the course has demonstrated an ability to communicate with fellow candidates and instructors alike.	Questions asked and answered during the plenaries, participation during workshops, skill stations and scenarios. Manner of participation during learning conversations
Credible	Demonstrates a depth of understanding of course knowledge . Has the opportunity to frequently apply the course skills.	Present job, level of training and also questions asked/answered and participation during the course
Team Member	During the course has demonstrated an ability to work well within a team	Particularly during skill stations, scenarios and in workshops .
Supportive	During the course has been supportive to fellow candidates and to the faculty	Questions asked and answered by the candidate relative to other candidates. Awareness of their role and the potential impact they have in the group . Participation during debriefs

Adapted from pg. 4. ALSG 6e Assessment_Jul16.docx

[Return to Course Debrief section of manual](#)

7.3 Course Director Peer Review Tool –(Draft May 2021)

Course Director _____
COURSE VENUE: _____ COURSE DATE: _____
REVIEWER/S _____

This evaluation uses APLS Course Director Attributes as a basis for reflection & discussion by peer reviewer. The aim is for personal and peer development.

A Course Director leads a high quality course by being efficient, effective & allowing a safe environment for learning. They are mindful of the candidates, faculty, the course co-ordinator and themselves. They manage a high quality course being respectful of individuals and aware of course content. The Director must have capacity to be Assertive, Flexible and Reflective, as well as showing Insight, be Collaborative but with sound Leadership.

Please reflect and discuss the following skills/attributes of the Course Director	
1. Professionalism & Advocacy for APLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with faculty and promotes interdisciplinary approach • Relationships with candidates • Encouraging, supportive etc. • Commitment to and accountability for course program (including pre-course allocation and communication with faculty) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with IC candidates • Able to negotiate strengths and weaknesses of APLS content • Attention to organisational logistics of course
Comments – Strengths/areas for development	
2. Communication & Collaboration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident, coherent speaker • Promotes curiosity – seeks and is receptive to information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models advanced listening skills • Model team skills/behaviours
Comments – Strengths/areas for development	

Please reflect and discuss the following skills/attributes of the Course Director

3. Leadership

- Assesses capabilities and confirms roles and responsibilities of team
- Exchanges information and takes into consideration views of others
- Assertive communication that states case and justification for decision
- Ability to have respectful conversations regarding the impact of behaviours that are affecting others and or the APLS program

Comments – Strengths/areas for development

4. Development of others - this includes situational awareness as shown by:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking information about faculty prior to finalising program • Allocation of faculty to program sessions that both support candidate learning needs and faculty development • Builds trust and community of practice • Responds to questions, links to candidate teaching and learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking and responding to information from other members of faculty regarding candidates • Anticipating potential problems and taking accountability for contingency plans. • Respect for prior knowledge and experience |
|--|--|

Comments – Strengths/areas for development

5. Reflective Cycle

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects on performance and modifies actions • Contributes to Joint reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of development opportunities (self and others) • Participates in Problem solving. |
|---|--|

Comments – Strengths/areas for development

Reviewer's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Course Director's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

[Return to Supporting Course Director Instructor Candidate](#)