

Hygiene guidelines for AO Alliance educational events (second version, validity extended till June 30, 2021)

The measures outlined in the following document are based on the WHO document [“Overview of public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19, Interim guidance 18 May 2020](#), and [COVID-19: Good Practice for Surgeons and Surgical Teams, Royal College of Surgeons of England, updated 3rd April 2020”](#).

Validity

This document will expire on **June 30, 2021**. Please ensure to be always working with the most recent version this document and AO Alliance's hygiene guidelines for educational events.

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1. General

Base your decision on "safety first" criteria: faculty safety, participant safety, staff safety comes first, and this should guide your decision-making in supporting an AO Alliance event. Therefore, face-to-face events should be considered selectively and prioritized based on geographical readiness.

- All local regulations apply
Please ensure all local regulations are respected. This document must only be applied where its rules are stricter than the local regulations. In general, local regulations take precedence.
- Size of the event
Local government policies must be respected, regarding both of the following:
 - Size of the event (i.e., total number of attendees)
 - Number of attendees per room
- Responsible person
A person must be named responsible for ensuring that hygiene guidelines are respected (Local Event Organizer / Event Owner)
- General protective measures must be observed throughout the event
 - Routine cleaning and disinfection
 - Face masks must be worn throughout the entire duration of the event
 - Frequent hand hygiene (when entering and exiting rooms)
 - Hand disinfectants must be provided
 - Physical distancing of min. 1.5 m between persons
 - Respiratory etiquette (use masks, proper coughing etiquette, etc.)
 - Visual reminders of proper measures and etiquette must be placed at doors
- Same groups
Where practicable, keep the same faculty member with the same participant group throughout the course, in small-group discussions as well as in practical exercises.
- High-risk groups
Members of groups at high risk either of transmitting or contracting COVID-19 should not attend AOA educational events.

2. In classrooms

- Physical distancing
 - Keep distance of min. 1.5 m between participants
- In small-group discussions: face masks must be worn
- Entering and exiting rooms observing one-way traffic
Where possible, use rooms with multiple doors and designate specific doors for entering and exiting the room.

3. At practical-exercise stations

Practical-exercise stations can often not be set up and run in accordance with the distancing guidelines outlined above. Therefore, practical exercises must be conducted respecting the following rules:

- Face masks and non-sterile, latex-free examination gloves should be worn
- Instruments must be disinfected (sprayed) after the practical exercise is completed
- Participants reuse the same station for the full duration of the event
- If necessary, adapt the quantity of workstations per table to meet space requirements

4. Faculty dinners / course social events

Faculty dinners can be held if local social distancing rules can be implemented. Other social events should not be planned.

5. What happens if there is an assumed COVID-19 case at a course?

If a course participant, faculty, or staff member displays symptoms indicating COVID-19, the following measures should be taken:

- The respective person must observe local guidelines, leave the event, and seek medical attention
- All course participants, faculty and staff must be informed (respecting the privacy rights of the patient) and be asked to follow rules that may apply
- In case a course participant, faculty member or staff has tested positive for COVID-19, all event attendees must be informed immediately according to local communication guidelines, respecting the privacy rights of the patient. Local protocol must then be followed.