

Hygiene guidelines for AO Alliance educational events (seventh version, validity till December 31, 2022)

The measures outlined in the following document are based on consideration of the WHO document [“Considerations for implementing and adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19, Interim guidance 14 June 2021”](#) and gradual easing of COVID-19 restrictions in our network countries.

Validity

This document is with immediate effect and will expire on **December 31, 2022**. 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.

- 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
 - Face masks should be worn throughout the entire duration of the event in case of doubtful sanitary conditions
 - Frequent hand hygiene (when entering and exiting rooms)
 - Hand disinfectants must be provided
 - Aware of physical distancing between persons at AO Alliance events
 - Respiratory etiquette (proper coughing and sneezing etiquette, etc.)
- Same groups
Consider keeping 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
 - Aware of physical distance between participantsWhere 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. Practical exercises should be conducted respecting the following rules:

- Equipment must be disinfected (sprayed) after the practical exercise is completed
- Participants reuse the same station for the duration of the event

4. Faculty dinners / course social events

Faculty dinners and other social events can be held if local social distancing rules can be respected.

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.