

### Southampton hand course

---

**Authors:** Shakeel Rahman, Mark Gorman

**Publication date:** 13 Sep 2012

---

The Southampton hand course—formally known as the Wessex instructional hand course—is a one day course organised by hand surgeons, clinical specialist physiotherapists, and senior occupational therapists. It is held annually in Southampton and is in its seventh year.

#### Who is it for?

The course is for any health professional actively involved in the diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of conditions (of any aetiology) that affect the hand. Refreshingly, participants on the course reflected actual clinical practice—peers, juniors, or seniors whom we work with from all branches of the multidisciplinary team, such as plastic surgeons, orthopaedic surgeons, emergency medicine doctors, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists. Trainees in hand surgery at senior house officer or specialist registrar level would find this a particularly worthwhile day because of the wide expertise of the faculty and the interactive nature of the course.

#### Why did you do it?

The management of hand disorders is vast and complex. There are many times as a trainee when you wish you had a hand surgeon or physiotherapist sitting next to you to explain something to you or guide you in the right direction. This course is unique for its breadth and balance, which is largely because it is organised by senior members of the multidisciplinary team. A condition that affects the hand can be discussed and followed from its origin, therefore, through to the end of rehabilitation and therapy. This gives rise to an array of diverse learning points throughout the course from a variety of perspectives, both surgical and non-surgical.

## What does it entail?

The layout of the course content and programme is particularly novel. Every year the course has a different theme that is addressed alongside the common topics. Previous themes have included arthritis, hand and wrist disorders, general injuries, tendon disorders, and nerve disorders.

This well thought out course uses didactic and interactive lectures and surgical workshops. Of note to surgical trainees is the fact that the surgical workshops change every year depending on the theme. They have included tendon repair, mini-fragment fracture fixation, and nerve assessment. The basic sciences relevant to each year's theme as well as investigation techniques are covered every year.

## How much did it cost?

The course fee was £90 including lunch and tea breaks, which is very good value for money considering the relative cost of surgical courses that have a practical element to them.

## Was it worth it?

Yes. Being given the chance to work on saw bones using drills, plates, and screws with a high tutor to participant ratio was particularly helpful. More importantly, however, is that because of the diverse nature of the faculty and participants, there are a lot of things shared that you wouldn't get from a purely surgical course. Consequently there is a very open environment to ask questions of members of the multidisciplinary team, which made for an enriching and valuable experience.

## Top tip

- Some experience of hand surgery and knowledge of anatomy is imperative to get the most from this course.

## Further information

For more information contact Gemma, Linda, or Peter on 023 8079 6459 or email [info@southamptonhandcourse.org.uk](mailto:info@southamptonhandcourse.org.uk); [www.southamptonhandcourse.org.uk/index.htm](http://www.southamptonhandcourse.org.uk/index.htm)

Competing interests: None declared.

**Shakeel Rahman** *trauma tutor (plastics)* Morriston Hospital, Swansea, UK

**Mark Gorman** *plastic surgery research fellow* Canniesburn Plastic Surgery Unit, Glasgow, UK

[shakeel.rahman1@gmail.com](mailto:shakeel.rahman1@gmail.com)