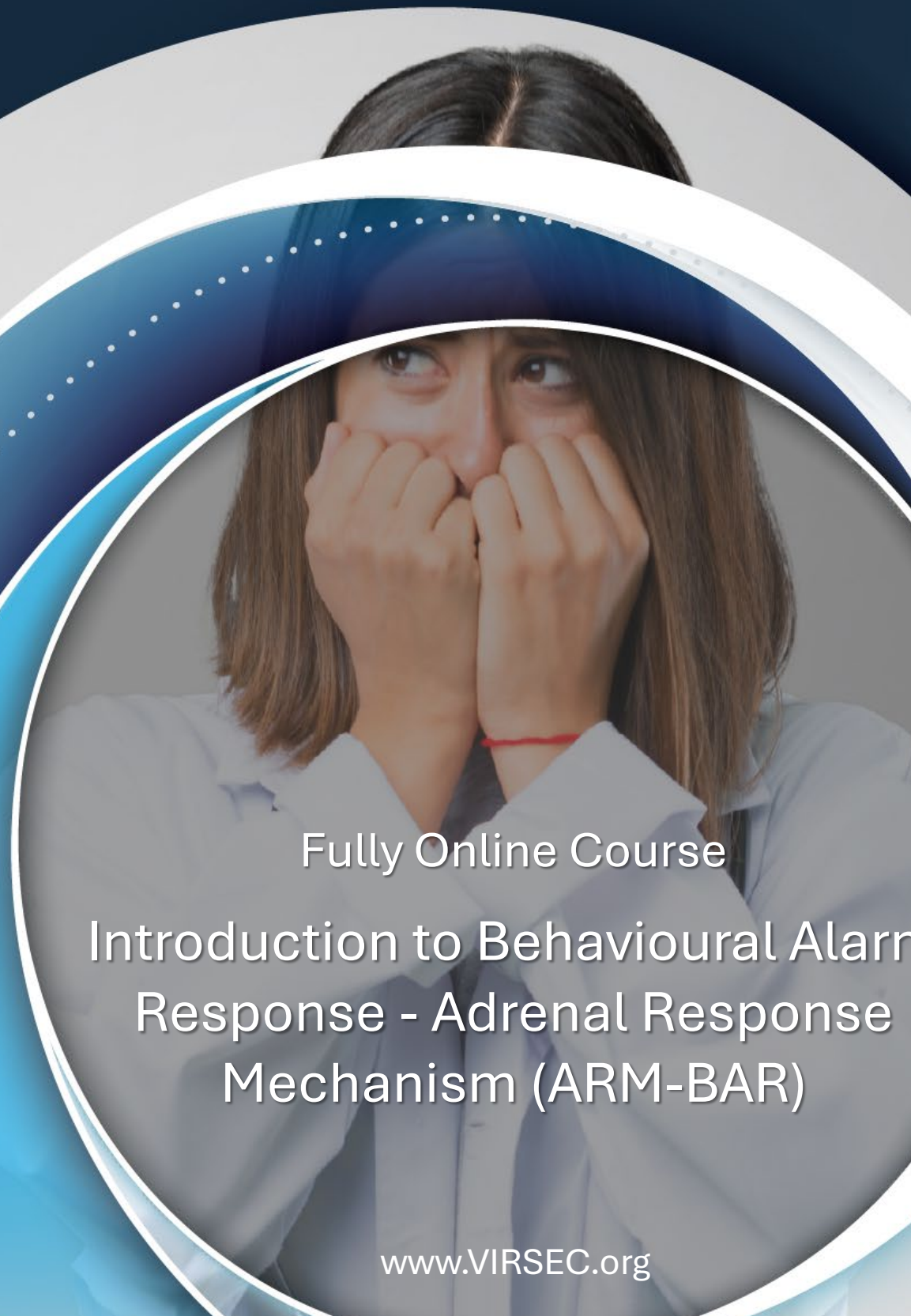




**VIRSEC**®



Fully Online Course  
Introduction to Behavioural Alarm  
Response - Adrenal Response  
Mechanism (ARM-BAR)

[www.VIRSEC.org](http://www.VIRSEC.org)

## About the Course

The Adrenal Response Mechanism – Behavioural Alarm Response (ARM-BAR) course explores how the human nervous system responds to threat through Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, and Flop behaviours.

It provides a clear, science-informed framework for understanding why people react the way they do under stress and how these automatic responses influence behaviour, decision-making, and recovery long after danger has passed.

This short online course explores the Adrenal Response Mechanism – Behavioural Alarm Response (ARM-BAR), helping you understand how the nervous system responds to threat and danger.

Moving beyond Fight or Flight, it examines the full spectrum of survival responses: Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, and Flop; and explains how these responses develop, how they show up in everyday life, and why they are adaptive.

Designed for anyone interested in self-awareness, well-being, trauma-informed practice, or human behaviour, the course offers a compassionate framework for understanding stress responses in yourself and others, supporting clearer and more informed decision-making when operating under pressure or threat.

## Course Aim

The aim of this course is to help learners:

- 1. Recognise and Understand Responses:** Identify the five key behavioural alarm responses and comprehend the physiological and psychological processes that drive them.
- 2. Enhance Self-Awareness:** Understand personal patterns of response under stress or threat, enabling greater self-regulation in challenging situations.
- 3. Develop Practical Strategies:** Learn evidence-based techniques to manage and modulate these responses, fostering resilience, emotional intelligence, and informed decision-making under pressure.
- 4. Apply Knowledge Across Contexts:** Gain insights that can be applied personally, professionally, and socially; enhancing communication, leadership, conflict resolution, and wellbeing.

By exploring the ARM-BAR framework, participants will move beyond simply recognising instinctive reactions, developing the tools to respond intentionally rather than react automatically.

This course empowers learners to transform the body's survival instincts into adaptive, constructive responses, improving safety, performance, and emotional resilience.



+44 (0)161 763 4427



[www.virsec.org](http://www.virsec.org)



[training@virsec.org](mailto:training@virsec.org)



## Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- 1. Identify Human Stress Responses:** Recognise and describe the five key behavioural alarm responses: Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, and Flop; and understand how they manifest in different situations.
- 2. Understand the Physiological Mechanisms:** Explain the role of the adrenal system and the body's survival mechanisms in triggering instinctive reactions to threat or danger.
- 3. Increase Self-Awareness:** Analyse personal patterns of response to stress and threat and understand the factors that influence individual behaviour.
- 4. Apply Practical Strategies:** Implement evidence-based techniques to manage, regulate, and modulate instinctive responses, promoting intentional and adaptive behaviour.
- 5. Enhance Resilience & Emotional Regulation:** Develop skills to maintain composure, make informed decisions, and respond constructively under pressure.
- 6. Utilise Knowledge Across Contexts:** Apply insights from ARM-BAR to professional, personal, and social settings to improve communication, conflict resolution, leadership, and well-being.

By achieving these outcomes, participants will not only understand their own and others' behavioural responses to threat but also gain practical tools to transform instinctive survival reactions into deliberate, constructive actions.

## Course Duration

The fully online Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARM-BAR) Course is approximately 1 hour in duration, pending individual reading and retention speeds.

## Course Certificate

After successfully completing the course and any related assessment, learners will receive their Certificate for An Introduction to Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARM-BAR) and they can download and save their certificate in PDF format.



+44 (0)161 763 4427



[www.virsec.org](http://www.virsec.org)



[training@virsec.org](mailto:training@virsec.org)

## Why Take This Course

The course offers a clear, science-informed understanding of the body's automatic survival behaviours: Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, and Flop; and why they occur under threat.

By exploring how the nervous system shapes behaviour before conscious thought, ARM-BAR helps you recognise and respond to these reactions with awareness, regulation, and compassion.

Whether for personal growth, professional practice, or supporting others, this course equips you to replace misunderstanding and judgment with insight, reduce escalation, and create safer, more effective responses in high-stress situations.

## Target Audience

The ARM-BAR course is designed for anyone seeking to understand human reactions to threat and enhance their ability to respond effectively under pressure. It is particularly valuable for:

- **Professionals in High-Stress Environments:** Police, military personnel, first responders, healthcare workers, and educators who encounter urgent, challenging, or high-pressure situations.
- **Leaders & Managers:** Individuals responsible for guiding teams, making critical decisions, and maintaining composure during conflict or organisational stress.

- **Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioners:** Counsellors, therapists, coaches, and psychologists who support clients in managing trauma, anxiety, and stress responses.
- **Individuals Seeking Personal Growth:** Anyone wanting to better understand their own Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, or Flop responses, build resilience, and improve emotional regulation.
- **Organisations Focused on Safety & Performance:** Teams looking to strengthen workplace resilience, improve communication under stress, and enhance overall wellbeing.

This course is ideal for those who wish to move beyond instinctive reactions, gain self-awareness, and develop practical strategies to respond intentionally rather than react automatically.

Whether for personal development or professional application, ARM-BAR provides the tools to transform survival responses into adaptive, constructive actions.



+44 (0)161 763 4427



[www.virsec.org](http://www.virsec.org)

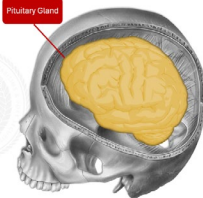


[training@virsec.org](mailto:training@virsec.org)

# Sample Course Slides

Understanding Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARMBAR)  
Fully Online Personal Security Training Programme by VIRSEC Ltd

### Response to Threat: The Pituitary Gland



- The pituitary gland is called the "master gland" as the hormones it produces control so many different processes in the body.
- It senses the body's needs and sends signals to different organs and glands throughout the body to regulate their function and maintain an appropriate environment.
- It secretes a variety of hormones into the bloodstream which act as messengers to transmit information from the pituitary gland to distant cells, regulating their activity.
- The pituitary gland also secretes hormones that act on the adrenal glands, thyroid gland, ovaries and testes, which in turn produce other hormones; and
- Through secretion of its hormones, the pituitary gland controls metabolism, growth, sexual maturation, reproduction, blood pressure and many other vital physical functions and processes.


Copyright VIRSEC | All Rights Reserved

Understanding Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARMBAR)  
Fully Online Personal Security Training Programme by VIRSEC Ltd

### Behavioural Alarm Response (BAR): Why People Remain in a BAR State

**3. The Threat is Internal, Not External**

- Even when the external threat has passed, internal cues may still signal danger:
  - body sensations (tight chest, shallow breath)
  - memories
  - tone of voice, facial expressions
  - anxiety/figures
  - conflict or uncertainty
- the nervous system responds to perceived threat, not logical reassurance.




Copyright VIRSEC | All Rights Reserved

Understanding Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARMBAR)  
Fully Online Personal Security Training Programme by VIRSEC Ltd

### Adrenal Response Mechanism: Fear & Trauma Responses

- There are many different reactions to fear. In the past, we have typically categorised these reactions in three ways:
  - Fight
  - Flight
  - Freeze
- Today, we also include the following:
  - Flop
  - Fawn
- These reactions fall under the Adrenal Response Mechanism, fear & trauma responses in the same category will look different from person to person.



Copyright VIRSEC | All Rights Reserved

Understanding Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARMBAR)  
Fully Online Personal Security Training Programme by VIRSEC Ltd

### ADRENAL RESPONSE MECHANISM

Behavioural Alarm Response (BAR)

Reactions to Threat & Danger

FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE	FAWN	FLOP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident &amp; Assertive</li> <li>• Quick Reaction</li> <li>• Unhesitant</li> <li>• Unconcerned</li> <li>• Unbothered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Signs</li> <li>• Rapid Breathing</li> <li>• Heart Rate</li> <li>• Sweating</li> <li>• Rapid Heart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to Move</li> <li>• Heart in Race</li> <li>• Stammering</li> <li>• Unresponsive</li> <li>• Unresponsive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeal to Fear</li> <li>• People Pleasing</li> <li>• Insubordinate</li> <li>• Unresponsive</li> <li>• Unresponsive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soften &amp; Slink</li> <li>• Soften Voice</li> <li>• Insubordinate</li> <li>• Unresponsive</li> <li>• Unresponsive</li> </ul>

Click Here to Download Infographic

Copyright VIRSEC | All Rights Reserved

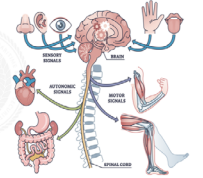
Understanding Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARMBAR)  
Fully Online Personal Security Training Programme by VIRSEC Ltd

### Behavioural Alarm Response (BAR): Why People Remain in a BAR State

Once the alarm system is activated:

**1. The Nervous System "Locks In"**

- Threat activates subcortical brain structures (amygdala, brainstem).
- These operate faster than conscious thought and override the prefrontal cortex (reasoning, time awareness, choice).
- For as long as the nervous system believes:
  - That the threat is ongoing, or
  - That exiting the state would increase danger ...
- ... then the state will persist.




Copyright VIRSEC | All Rights Reserved

Understanding Adrenal Response Mechanism - Behavioural Alarm Response (ARMBAR)  
Fully Online Personal Security Training Programme by VIRSEC Ltd

### Adrenal Response Mechanism: Fear & Trauma Responses

How do you think you'd react?



Fight      Flight      Freeze      Flop      Fawn

The following slides will cover each of these responses in greater detail.

Copyright VIRSEC | All Rights Reserved



+44 (0)161 763 4427



www.virsec.org



training@virsec.org



LIBERIAN REGISTRY





## Contact Us

VIRSEC Ltd.  
Canada House  
3 Chepstow Street  
Manchester  
M1 5FW  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)161 763 4427

E: [training@virsec.org](mailto:training@virsec.org)

W: [www.virsec.org](http://www.virsec.org)



+44 (0)161 763 4427



[www.virsec.org](http://www.virsec.org)



[training@virsec.org](mailto:training@virsec.org)

