



## ACUC ASSISTANT INSTRUCTOR - Currículum and Standards Ref: acuc-st-asi Oct 2003

### Foreword

The ACUC Assistant Instructor course is an **optional** level. This course can be taught by any ACUC Open Water Instructor or higher level but must be evaluated and certified by an ACUC Advanced Instructor or higher level. The main characteristics of this course is that besides doing the same as an ACUC Divemaster, the students that successfully complete the course, can also teach but not evaluate or certify, the Scuba Diver and the ACUC Open Water Diver courses. This course is designed more as a “hands on” learning type of course, rather than as a course with a fix content.

This is an ACUC International standard and therefore is always subject to the different national or local legislations. In cases where legislations exist that differ from this standard, the ACUC country or area delegation if it exist, must request in writing to the ACUC main office (Canada or Spain) a “**Deviation**” from this standard to satisfy the legislation of the area, supporting their request with the appropriate documentation. Deviations, if requested, to be considered valid, must appear at the end of each specific standard document (Point 12)

In cases where the local or national legislations are more restrictive than the ACUC Standard, then the local legislation will prevail, but if the ACUC Standard is more restrictive, then the ACUC Standard will prevail, because by complying with the more restrictive ACUC Standard, logically the local legislation will be also complied with.

Regarding required training hours, none are specified because these could vary depending on many factors (number of students, diving environment, etc), therefore the training hours needed are dependant on the fulfillment of learning objectives. In the ACUC manuals and documents where hours are specified, these are only to be considered recommendations.

### 1. Scope

This Standard specifies safety related minimum competencies to be achieved in recreational scuba training at the ACUC Assistant Instructor level. This Standard applies only to contractual training and certification in recreational scuba diving.

### 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this standard and any other standard referenced as acuc-st-xxx, the following definitions apply. Please note that not all terms shown next might appear in this specific standard.

- 2.1 ACUC:** Entity providing recreational scuba diving training systems and certification.
- 2.2 basic equipment:** Equipment consisting of the following items:
  - < mask
  - < fins
  - < snorkel
- 2.3 breathing gas:** Appropriate mixture of oxygen and nitrogen.
- 2.4 certification:** Confirmation that a student has completed all requirements of a course according to this Standard, as issued by ACUC.
- 2.5 cold water:** Water less than 10°C from its highest average temperature or water of 10°C or less
- 2.6 competencies:** What a diver can do once certified
- 2.7 confined spaces:** condition that applies when there is no direct access to the surface, such inside a wreck, cave, etc.
- 2.8 confined water:** Swimming pool with a depth appropriate to the activity, or body of water that offers similar conditions (maximum depth 6 meters)

- 2.9 diving equipment:** Equipment consisting of the following items:
- < mask,
  - < fins,
  - < snorkel,
  - < cylinder,
  - < regulator,
  - < alternative breathing gas system, which could range from a simple octopus system to a duplicate breathing system with a separate breathing gas supply,
  - < cylinder-support-system and buoyancy control device including (if appropriate) a quick release weight system,
  - < submersible pressure gauge (breathing gas pressure monitor),
  - < means to measure depth and time and to safely limit exposure to inert gas,
  - < diving suit (if appropriate).

Note: Specific environments may require appropriate additional equipment (e.g. an underwater navigational aid, knife/cutting device).

**2.10 dry specialty:** Specialty course where no water training takes place, such as for example, First Aid, Oxygen Administration, etc

**2.11 knowledge levels:**

- < Basic: knows how...
- < Intermediate: knows how and why...
- < Advanced: knows how, why and also, knows how to teach it...

**2.12 non certification scuba course:** Scuba course where the participants do not receive an ACUC certification at the end of the course, such as for example, scuba introduction, scuba refreshment, scuba buoyancy, etc

**2.13 open water:** Body of water significantly larger than a swimming pool offering conditions typical of a natural body of water encountered in the region where training takes place.

**2.14 prerequisites for training:** What a diver needs or conditions to be met prior to start training

**2.15 reduced visibility:** condition that applies when diving at night or when visibility is less than an arm's length, for whatever the reason

**2.16 scuba:** Self-contained under-water breathing apparatus.

**2.17 scuba instructor:** A qualified individual, sanctioned by ACUC to teach, evaluate and certify divers.

**2.18 theoretical knowledge:** knowledge imparted in a dry environment (classroom, pool deck, etc)

**2.19 training open water dive:** open water training experience under direct supervision of a qualified instructor, comprising at least the following activities:

- < briefing
- < preparation to dive
- < pre-dive checks
- < entry into water
- < descent procedures
- < under-water activity
- < ascent and surfacing procedures
- < exit from water
- < debriefing
- < post dive procedures
- < recording the dive.

**2.20 water skills:** knowledge imparted inside a wet environment (pool water, sea water, etc)

### 3 Competencies of a certified, recreational ACUC Assistant Instructor

An ACUC Assistant Instructor shall be trained to have sufficient competencies by knowledge, skill and experience to dive and act as a dive guide in open water of certified divers, to assist in the training of new divers, to give some scuba non certification courses and dry specialty courses and to teach, but not evaluate or certify, the Scuba Diver and the ACUC Open Water Diver courses.

ACUC Assistant Instructors shall dive within the following parameters

- < dive and lead divers to a maximum depth of 40 meters / 130 feet
- < dive and ensure that others dive only when appropriate support is available at the surface,
- < dive and ensure that others dive under conditions that are equal or better than the conditions where they were trained.
- < assist certified divers in new environments which the Assistant Instructor is familiar with.

If accompanied by an ACUC instructor, certified ACUC Assistant Instructors may gain progressive experience beyond these parameters (except depth) and develop competency in managing more challenging diving conditions designed to lead to higher qualifications. Where further instruction or experience is required this can only be provided by a suitably qualified ACUC instructor.

#### **4 Prerequisites for training**

In order to qualify for enrolment in a course according to this Standard the student shall meet the following prerequisites:

- 4.1 Minimum age:** 18 years.
- 4.2 Health requirements:** Students shall be medically screened as suitable for recreational diving by means of an appropriate medical examination. Students shall be advised of the importance of appropriate regular medical examinations.
- 4.3 Previous Certification:** ACUC Divemaster or similar, with at least 40 hours bottom time experience (see also point 10, Assessment and Certification requirements)

#### **5 Instructor:Student Ratios during training**

- < **Theory (classroom or pool):** No limit
- < **Confined Water:** 10 students per Instructor, with an additional 4 students per Divemaster or Assistant Instructor, with an absolute maximum of 20 students.
- < **Open Water:** 8 students per Instructor, with an additional 2 students per Divemaster or Assistant Instructor, with an absolute maximum of 12 students.

#### **6 Introductory information**

The following information shall be made available to the students prior to, or during the first class meeting.

- < prerequisites according to 4,
- < limitations of eventual qualification,
- < scope of course,
- < course procedures,
- < costs, insurance and contractual issues according to national regulations,
- < equipment requirements,
- < certification requirements according to 10,
- < diving related legislation and legal requirements.

#### **7 Course content relating to theoretical knowledge**

Candidates must already have the knowledge of a Divemaster, plus:

- 7.1 Teaching Techniques:** Students shall have an advanced knowledge of:
  - < Teaching the ACUC Scuba Diving course
  - < Teaching the ACUC Open Water Diver course

And an intermediate knowledge of:

- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Advanced Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Rescue Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Divemaster course

## 8 Course content relating to scuba skills

**8.1 Confined water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of a Divemaster, students shall be able to perform the following skills. Each skill shall be mastered in confined water before that skill is performed in open water.

- < Teaching the ACUC Scuba Diving course
- < Teaching the ACUC Open Water Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Advanced Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Rescue Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Divemaster course

**8.2 Open water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of a Rescue Diver, students shall be able to perform the following skills in conditions typical of the local environment.

- < Teaching the ACUC Scuba Diving course
- < Teaching the ACUC Open Water Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Advanced Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Rescue Diver course
- < Assisting in the teaching of the ACUC Divemaster course

## 9 Practical training parameters

**9.1** All underwater skills in confined water shall be introduced, directly supervised and evaluated by an ACUC instructor, who shall be in the water during each session. The scuba instructor shall be in direct control of students throughout all sessions.

**9.2** Before participating in open water dives a student shall have demonstrated sufficient theoretical knowledge and scuba skills in confined water to be able to perform the open water dives in the prevailing conditions.

**9.3** The maximum depth during training dives shall not exceed 25 meters / 80 feet

**9.4** All training open water dives shall be conducted during daylight hours in water that allows direct vertical access to the surface. Open water dives therefore shall not be conducted in underwater caves or below ice.

**9.5** During open water dives the student shall at least be equipped with diving equipment according to 2.9.

**9.6** All under-water skills in open water shall be introduced, directly supervised and evaluated by an ACUC instructor. The scuba instructor shall be in the water and in charge of each open water dive.

**9.7** As per clause 5, the absolute maximum number of students per scuba instructor in ideal conditions for supervision and escorting under water is eight. The maximum number of students per qualified assistant for supervision and escorting under water is two. At no time shall a student in or under water be left without supervision.

**9.8** Prior to open water dives the scuba instructor shall prepare an "emergency plan". In the immediate vicinity of the dive site there shall be:

- < a suitable first aid kit
- < an emergency oxygen unit with a capacity of delivering at least 15 l/min. for at least 20 min.
- < communication system suitable for alerting emergency services.

**9.9** The scuba instructor shall cancel or abort the open water dive if environmental conditions or a student's physical or mental condition make this necessary.

**9.10** A maximum of 3 daily training dives will be allowed

## 10 Assessment and certification requirements

- 10.1 **Knowledge:** The student shall demonstrate, by means of the written test (\*\*) supplied by ACUC, knowledge of scuba diving theory according to 7 and knowledge of skills according to 8.
- 10.2 **Scuba Skills:** The student shall satisfactorily demonstrate to an ACUC instructor, the scuba skills according to 8.
- 10.3 **Minimum Dives:** The student must have at least 40 hours of bottom time before obtaining the certification
- 10.4 **Minimum Participation in Training Courses:** The student must show proof in the Divemaster Training Log-Book, that he has participated as a Divemaster or Assistant Instructor-in-training, during at least 20 hours of theory classes and 20 hours of water classes before obtaining the certification.

(\*\*) If for some reason, the student can not do a written test, then the Instructor can do an oral examination to the student based on the written test provided by ACUC and if this is the case, the Instructor will transfer the student's oral answers to the written test. Whatever the case, the written test must be completed, either directly by the student or indirectly by the Instructor, using the student's oral answers.

Instructors can, if they wish, offer additional tests to the student, however, the ACUC provided test must be done.

## 11 Training Dives

No additional training dives, except those in which the student participates as an Assistant Instructor-in-training, are required for this level.

## 12 Deviations

None requested