



## ABOUT ACUC SPECIALTIES

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ACUC classifies its specialties in two ways: the first according to the level of safety and the second as restricted or unrestricted. The level of safety refers to the risk or knowledge that the specialty entails. There are three grades: SL1; SL2 and SL3. "SL" means "Safety Level". The higher the SL, the higher the level of risk or special knowledge which that specialty entails.

SL1 specialties can be taken by people with a minimum Open Water Diver certification. SL2 from Advanced Diver and the SL3 from Rescue Diver. There are also some specialties with a classification of SL0. These specialties can be taken even by people who are not divers.

If the specialties are restricted or not, it refers to the requirements that the Instructor must meet before being able to teach those specialties. The "Non restricted" (NR) specialties are those in which the Instructor does not have to meet any specific requirement, except of course, to be a Diving Instructor. "Non restricted" specialties are divided into two types:

- NR1: The Instructor does not need to take any action and is automatically an Instructor of that specialty
- NR2: The Instructor does not need to take any specific Instructor course of said specialty, but must request ACUC to be an Instructor of said specialty and acquire the corresponding Instructor kit.

The "Restricted" (R) specialties are those in which the Instructor must take some type of specific course or training, before being able to teach said specialty.

Therefore, for example, a code "SL2-R" means that it is a specialty that can be made by any diver, who is at least an Advanced Diver and can be taught by a Diving Instructor, who has also had to complete a course or special program to teach said specialty. The ACUC specialties are presented below, along with their current code.

### SPECIALTIES SL0-NR1

- **Surface Controller** (SL0-NR1). It can even be given to non-divers but they must have First Aid and Emergency Oxygenation specialties. Any Open Water Instructor or higher level can teach it.

### SPECIALTIES SL0-NR2

- **Equipment Maintenance** (SL0-NR2). No need to be a diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be an Equipment Maintenance Instructor

### SPECIALTIES SL0-R

- **First Aid Provider** (SL0-R). It can even be given to non divers. The Instructor must take a specific First Aid Instructor course. This course includes general First Aid.
- **Diving Emergency Responder** (SL0-R). It can even be given to non divers. The Instructor must take a specific Diving Emergency Instructor course. This course includes specific First Aid for diving, Basic Life Support and Semiautomatic External Defibrillator.
- **O<sup>2</sup> Emergency Responder** (SL0-R). It can even be given to non divers. The Instructor must take a specific Emergency Oxygenation Instructor course.
- **Nitrox Mixing** (SL0-R). It can even be given to non divers. The Instructor must take a specific Nitrox Instructor course

## SPECIALTIES SL1-NR1

- **Rescue Specialist** (SL1-NR1). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. Any Open Water Instructor or higher level can teach it. **Note: Not to be confused with the main course of Rescue Diver**

## SPECIALTIES SL1-NR2

- **Altitude Diver** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be an Altitude Diving Instructor
- **Deep Diving 40m/130f** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be a Deep Diving Instructor.
- **Wreck Diving** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be a Non Penetration Wreck Diving Instructor.
- **Night Diving** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be a Night Diving Instructor.
- **Drift Diving** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be a Drift Diving Instructor.
- **U/W Orientation** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must request ACUC to be an Underwater Orientation Instructor.
- **Dry Suit Diving** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must be a Dry Suit Diver and request ACUC to be a Dry Suit Diving Instructor.
- **DPV Pilot Diver** (SL1-NR2). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must be a DPV Pilot and request ACUC to be a DPV Pilot Instructor

## SPECIALTIES SL1-R

- **U/W Biology** (SL1-R). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must take a specific Biology Instructor course and have a previous related academic degree.
- **U/W Digital Photography** (SL1-R). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must take a specific U/W Photo Instructor course.
- **Sidemount Diving** (SL1-R): The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must take a specific Sidemount Instructor course.
- **Nitrox 40 Diving** (SL1-R). The diver must be at least Open Water Diver. The Instructor must take a specific Nitrox Instructor course
- **Technical Nitrox Diver** (SL1-R). The diver must be at least Nitrox Diver. The Instructor must take a specific Nitrox Instructor course
- **Rebreather Diving** (SL1-R). The diver must be at least a Nitrox Diver. The Instructor must take a specific Rebreathers Instructor course

## SPECIALTIES SL2-NR1

- **Teaching Assistant** (SL2-NR1). The diver must be at least an Advanced Diver. Any Open Water Instructor or higher level can teach it. The dry portion of this Teaching Techniques course can be offered to anyone even if they are not a diver. **Note: Not to be confused with the Assistant Instructor**

## SPECIALTIES SL2-R

- **Intro to Cave** (SL2-R). The diver must be at least an Advanced Diver. The Instructor must take a specific Cave Diving Instructor course.
- **Ice Diving** (SL2-R). The diver must be at least Advanced Diver. The Instructor must take a specific course of Ice Diving Instructor

## SPECIALTIES SL3-NR1

- **U/W Guide** (SL3-NR1). The diver must be at least a Rescue Diver, with the ACUC First Aid and Emergency Oxygenation specialties. Any Open Water Instructor or higher level can teach it. **Note: Not to be confused with the main Divemaster course**

For any other specialty, consult with the ACUC Office.

Some specialties (photosub, biology, etc.) can be taught by divers (not necessarily instructors) who have completed the specialty of Teaching Techniques. In these cases, the “diver-instructor”, if the course requires practices in the water, must have assistance personnel with a Divemaster certification or similar or superior, who will be responsible for the underwater safety of the students while the “diver- instructor” is teaching. In no case can a “diver-instructor”, who is not a Diving Instructor, give practical classes in water without having such support personnel.

Occasionally, ACUC instructors may request ACUC to give specialty courses that are not listed here. This is possible as long as the Instructor submits a course program and standards to ACUC for approval. If ACUC approves it, then ACUC will issue a specialty certification card for the Instructor and for students who pass the course, however, that specialty will not be publicly announced as an "ACUC specialty" until it meets all the requirements of ACUC to be considered an "ACUC Specialty". These requirements are mainly:

- Standards for the course
- An instructor guide for the course
- An instructor exam for the course
- A manual for the course
- A diver exam for the course

The above documents must be made available to ACUC in at least one of the following languages: English; Spanish; French; Italian or German

On the following pages these specialties are explained in a more graphic way.

## ACUC SPECIALTIES TABLE

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE RELATED TO THE NUMBERS IN THE NEXT TABLE

### INSTRUCTORS

1. Should the Instructor candidate to this ACUC specialty be an ACUC Instructor first?
2. Can the Instructor candidate of this specialty be an Instructor of another organization recognized by ACUC, without having to become an ACUC Instructor first?
3. Can the Instructor candidate of this specialty be a diver who has completed the ACUC Teaching Techniques specialty?
4. Does the Instructor candidate of this specialty have to do a specific Instructor course in this specialty before?
5. What is the minimum level that the Instructor candidate of this specialty must have?

### DIVERS

1. Should the diver candidate to this specialty be an ACUC diver first?
2. What minimum diver level should he be?
3. Does the diver candidate to this specialty need to have a **minimum amount of bottom time**?

### Short forms:

**OWD:** Open Water Diver; **ADV:** Advanced Diver; **RES:** Rescue Diver; **DM:** Divemaster; **ELI:** Entry Level Instructor  
**OWI:** Open Water Instructor **ADI:** Advanced Instructor

**SEE TABLE IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES**

Specialty	Instructors					Divers		
	1	2	3 <sup>1</sup>	4 <sup>2</sup>	5	6	7	8
<b>Surface Controller (SL0-NR1)</b>	Yes	No	No	No <sup>3</sup>	DM	No <sup>4</sup>	-	-
<b>Equipment Maintenance (SL0-NR2)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	No <sup>5</sup>	-	-
<b>First Aid (SL0-R)</b>	No	Yes	No <sup>6</sup>	Yes	DM	No <sup>7</sup>	-	-
<b>Diving Emergency Responder (SL0-R)</b>	No	Yes	No <sup>8</sup>	Yes	DM	No <sup>9</sup>		
<b>O2 Emergency Responder (SL0-R)</b>	No	Yes	No <sup>10</sup>	Yes	DM	No <sup>11</sup>	-	-
<b>Nitrox Mixer (SL0-R)</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	OWI	No	-	-
<b>Rescue Specialist (SL1-NR1)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	5
<b>Deep Diving (40m/130f) (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	5
<b>Altitude Diving (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	4
<b>Wreck Diving (exit always visible) (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	4
<b>Night Diving (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	4
<b>Drift Diving (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	2
<b>U/W Orientation (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	OWI	No	OWD	2
<b>Dry Suit Diving (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No <sup>12</sup>	OWI	No	OWD	2
<b>DPV Pilot (SL1-NR2)</b>	Yes	No	No	No <sup>13</sup>	OWI	No	OWD	2
<b>U/W Biology (SL1-R)</b>	No	Yes	No <sup>14</sup>	Yes	DM	No	OWD	2
<b>U/W Digital Photography (SL1-R)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	OWD	No	OWD	2
<b>Sidemount (SL1-R)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	OWI	No	OWD	10
<b>Nitrox 40 (SL1-R)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	OWI	No	OWD	2

<sup>1</sup> In all cases where divers are allowed to be Specialty Instructors, candidates must have completed the Teaching Techniques specialty first

<sup>2</sup> In most cases, Specialty Instructor candidates must first obtain the ACUC Specialty Instructor kit (if available) and pay the Specialty Instructor certification fee

<sup>3</sup> It is not necessary to obtain a Specialty Instructor kit. Any ACUC DM or higher level can give this specialty

<sup>4</sup> Does not have to be a diver but must have First Aid and Oxygenation

<sup>5</sup> Does not have to be a diver

<sup>6</sup> Unless the person is a medical professional (doctor, nurse, etc.), in which case that person can become an Instructor of this ACUC specialty.

<sup>7</sup> Does not have to be a diver

<sup>8</sup> Unless the person is a medical professional (doctor, nurse, etc.), in which case that person can become an Instructor of this ACUC specialty.

<sup>9</sup> Does not have to be a diver

<sup>10</sup> Unless the person is a medical professional (doctor, nurse, etc.), in which case that person can become an Instructor of this ACUC specialty

<sup>11</sup> Does not have to be a diver but must have First Aid

<sup>12</sup> Must be a Dry Suit Diver

<sup>13</sup> Must be a DPV Pilot

<sup>14</sup> Unless the person is a biologist. Open water dives, if any, should be supervised by someone with a minimum Divemaster certification.

Specialty	Instructors					Divers		
	1	2	3 <sup>15</sup>	4 <sup>16</sup>	5	6	7	8
<b>Nitrox Ték (SL1-R)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	OWI	No	OWD	4
<b>Rebreather (SL1-R)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	OWI <sup>17</sup>	No	OWD <sup>18</sup>	3
<b>Teaching Assistant (SL2-NR1)</b>	Yes	No	No	No <sup>19</sup>	ELI	Yes	ADV	10
<b>Intro to Caves (SL2-R)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	ADI	No	ADV	10
<b>Ice Diving (SL2-R)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	ADI	No	ADV	10
<b>U/W Guide (SL3-NR1)</b>	Yes	No	No	No <sup>20</sup>	ELI	Yes	RES <sup>21</sup>	15

<sup>15</sup> In all cases where divers are allowed to be Specialty Instructors, candidates must have completed the Teaching Techniques specialty first

<sup>16</sup> In most cases, Specialty Instructor candidates must first obtain the ACUC Specialty Instructor kit (if available) and pay the Specialty Instructor certification fee

<sup>17</sup> Must be also a Nitrox Instructor

<sup>18</sup> Must be also a Nitrox Diver

<sup>19</sup> It is not necessary to obtain a Specialty Instructor kit. Any ACUC ELI or higher level can give this specialty

<sup>20</sup> It is not necessary to obtain a Specialty Instructor kit. Any ACUC ELI or higher level can give this specialty

<sup>21</sup> Must have First Aid and Oxygenation

<b>SHORT FORM STANDARDS</b>			
<b>Specialty</b>	<b>Training Ratios</b>	<b>Minimum age</b>	<b>MTBT<sup>22</sup></b>
Surface Controller	No limit. No water training	16	None
Equipment Maintenance	No limit. No water training	16	None
First Aid Provider	No limit. No water training	12	None
Diving Emergency Responder	No limit. No water training (training SAED mandatory)	12	None
O2 Emergency Responder	No limit. No water training	12	None
Nitrox Mixer	No limit. No water training	16	None
Rescue Specialist	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 10:1; 14:2; Max: 20 Open water: 6:1; 8:2; Max: 12	16	60' (40' in cold water)
Deep divin to 40m/130f	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 2:1; 4:2; Max: 4	16	20'
Altitude Diving	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	12	30' (20' in cold water)
Wreck Diving (exit point always visible)	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	12	60' (40' in cold water)
Night Diving	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 2:1; 4:2; Max: 8	12	60' (40' in cold water)
Drift Diving	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	12	60' (40' in cold water)
U/W Orientation	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	12	60' (40' in cold water)
Dry Suit Diving	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8 Open water: 2:1; 3:2; Max: 4	16	40'
U/W Biology	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 6:1; 10:2; Max: 14	12	60' (40' in cold water)
U/W Digital Photography	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 6:1; 10:2; Max: 14	12	30' (20' in cold water)
Sidemount	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 2:1; 4:2; Max: 4	16	80'
Nitrox 40 and Nitrox Tek	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	N40: 14 NT: 16	60' (40' in cold water) <sup>23</sup>
Rebreathers	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	16	120' (80' in cold water)
DPV Pilot	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	12	60' (40' in cold water)
Teaching Assistant	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	16	60' (40' in cold water)
Cave Diving	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 2:1; 4:2; Max: 4	16	80' (60' in cold water)

<sup>22</sup> Minimum **Training** Bottom Time, required in open water

<sup>23</sup> Not mandatory, although highly recommended

<b>Specialty</b>	<b>Training Ratios</b>	<b>Minimum age</b>	<b>MTBT<sup>24</sup></b>
Ice Diving	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 1:1 per ice hole	16	30'
Underwater Guide	Classroom: No limit Confined water: 8:1; 12:2; Max: 16 Open water: 4:1; 6:2; Max: 8	16	80' (60' in cold water)

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<sup>24</sup> Minimum **Training** Bottom Time, required in open water