



ACUC OPEN WATER INSTRUCTOR - Currículum and Standards

Ref: acuc-st-owi Nov 2002

Foreword

The ACUC Open Water Instructor course can be taught by any ACUC Instructor Trainer or higher level but must be evaluated and certified by an ACUC Instructor Evaluator. The main characteristics of this course is that besides doing the same as an ACUC Entry Level Instructor, the students that successfully complete the course, can also teach, evaluate and certify, the Advanced Diver, the ACUC Rescue Diver and the Divemaster courses, and can teach but not evaluate or certify, the ACUC Assistant Instructor course. They can also teach certain specialties for which they have requested and obtained from ACUC, the Instructor specialty rating. This course concentrates on teaching the students to teach the contents of the above mentioned courses.

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 recomendations.

1. Scope

This Standard specifies safety related minimum competencies to be achieved in recreational scuba training at the ACUC Open Water 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 Open Water Instructor

An ACUC Open Water Instructor shall be trained to have sufficient competencies by knowledge, skill and experience to, in addition of what an Entry Level Instructor must know, teach, evaluate and certify, the ACUC Advanced Diver, the ACUC Rescuer Diver and the ACUC Divemaster courses and to teach, but not evaluate or certify, the Assistant Instructor program.

ACUC Open Water 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 Open Water Instructor is familiar with.

If accompanied by an ACUC instructor of superior level, certified ACUC Open Water 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:** To start training: 18 years. (see also point 10, Assessment and Certification requirements)
- 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, Assistant Instructor, Entry Level Instructor or similar, with at least 41 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

If the candidate is an ACUC Divemaster

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

- 7.1 Teaching Techniques:** Students shall have an advanced knowledge of:
- < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diving course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course

If the candidate is an ACUC Assistant Instructor

Candidates must already have the knowledge of an Assistant Instructor, plus:

- 7.2 Teaching Techniques:** Students shall have an advanced knowledge of:
- < Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diving course
 - < Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course

If the candidate is an ACUC Entry Level Instructor

Candidates must already have the knowledge of an Entry Level Instructor, plus:

- 7.3 Teaching Techniques:** Students shall have an advanced knowledge of:
- < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course

8 Course content relating to scuba skills

If the candidate is an ACUC Divemaster

- 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 and Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diving course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course
- 8.2 Open water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of a Divemaster, students shall be able to perform the following skills in conditions typical of the local environment.
- < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diving course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course

If the candidate is an ACUC Assistant Instructor

- 8.3 Confined water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of an Assistant Instructor, 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.
- < Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diving course
 - < Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course
- 8.4 Open water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of an Assistant Instructor, students shall be able to perform the following skills in conditions typical of the local environment.
- < Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diving course
 - < Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course

If the candidate is an ACUC Entry Level Instructor

- 8.5 Confined water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of an Entry Level Instructor, 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 and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course
- 8.6 Open water scuba skills:** Besides the already acquired skills of an Entry Level Instructor, students shall be able to perform the following skills in conditions typical of the local environment.
- < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Advanced Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Rescue Diver course
 - < Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Divemaster course
 - < Teaching the ACUC Assistant Instructor course

9 Practical training parameters

- 9.1** All skills shall be introduced and directly supervised by an ACUC Instructor Trainer, who shall be in the water during each session. The Instructor Trainer shall be in direct control of students throughout all sessions.
- 9.2** All skills shall be evaluated by an ACUC Instructor Evaluator, who shall be in the water during each evaluation session.
- 9.3** When open water dives are involved, 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.
- 9.4** The maximum depth during training dives shall not exceed 25 meters / 80 feet
- 9.5** 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.
- 9.6** During open water dives the student shall at least be equipped with diving equipment according to 2.9.
- 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 Teaching Techniques:** The student shall demonstrate, by means of at least 2 classroom presentations, knowledge of teaching techniques according to 7 and 8.
- 10.3 Scuba Skills:** The student shall satisfactorily demonstrate to an ACUC instructor, the scuba skills according to 8.
- 10.4 Minimum Dives:** The student must have at least 70 hours of bottom time before obtaining the certification
- 10.5 Minimum Age:** To Obtain the certification: 19 years.

(**) 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 a Divemaster, Assistant Instructor or Open Water Instructor-in-training, are required for this level.

12 Deviations

None requested