



## Special interest points:

- *This is an optional certification*
- *ACUC Scuba Divers must always dive under the direct supervision of an ACUC Divemaster or similar from another recognized organization*
- *The maximum depth is 15 meters / 50 feet*

## INTRODUCTION

The ACUC Scuba Diver is an **optional** course. Its place, with respect to skills and level of theory, within the ACUC training ladder, is above the Introduction to Diving course and below the ACUC Open Water Diver course. This course can be taught by any ACUC Divemaster or higher, but must be evaluated and certified by any ACUC Entry Level Instructor or higher. The main characteristics of this course are that candidates who successfully complete the course will **not** be able to dive if they are not, at least, under the direct supervision of someone with the ACUC Divemaster certification, or similar certification from other member organizations of the RSTC or CMAS, and may only dive to an absolute maximum depth of 15 meters / 50 feet.

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 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. 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 candidates, diving environment, etc), therefore the training hours needed are dependant on the fulfilment 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 Scuba Diver level. This Standard applies only to contractual training and certification in recreational scuba diving.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

For definitions, please see this [page](#)

## 3. COMPETENCIES

An ACUC Scuba Diver will be trained to have sufficient competencies through knowledge, skills and experience to dive with other certified divers in open water, of at least the same level, always under the direct supervision of at least one ACUC Divemaster or similar of other member organizations of the RSTC or CMAS. ACUC Scuba Divers will dive within the following parameters:

- Diving to a maximum depth of 15 meters / 50 feet, under the direct supervision of an ACUC Divemaster or similar.
- Participate in dives that do not require mandatory decompression stops.
- Only dive when appropriate surface support is available
- Diving under conditions that are equal to or better than the conditions in which they were trained.

If accompanied by an ACUC Instructor, a certified ACUC Scuba Diver can gain progressive experience beyond these parameters and develop proficiency managing dives with more challenging conditions designed to earn higher certifications.



## ACUC - SCUBA DIVER STANDARDS

Where additional experience is required, this can be provided by an appropriately qualified ACUC Divemaster. Where additional instruction is required, it can only be provided by a suitably qualified ACUC instructor.

### 4. TRAINING PREREQUISITES

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

**4.1 Minimum age:** 12 years. Parental or guardian consent is required when the applicant is a minor. (The definition "minor" will be according to the legislation of each country).

**4.2 Health requirements:** Candidates must pass a medical examination suitable for recreational diving, or if the legislation of the country where the course takes place allows it, fill in an appropriate questionnaire. In case of doubt, candidates should be referred to an appropriate doctor. If the candidate is not examined by a doctor, the candidate shall be required to confirm, by signing it, written information given by the instructor about illnesses or physical conditions that may be a risk related to diving. Candidates will be advised on the importance of appropriate regular medical examinations.

**4.3 Know how to swim.**

### 5. RATIOS

The Instructor:Candidate ratios to be maintained during training are:

- Theory (classroom or pool): No limit.
- Confined Water: 8 candidates per Instructor, with an additional 4 candidates per Divemaster, with an absolute maximum of 16 candidates.
- Open Water: 4 candidates per Instructor, with an additional 2 candidates per Divemaster, with an absolute maximum of 8 candidates.

### 6. INITIAL INFORMATION

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

- 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.

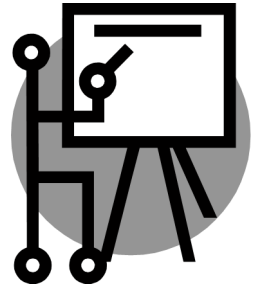
### 7. THEORY KNOWLEDGE

The content of the course related to theory knowledge is:

- Equipment: Candidates will have a basic level of theoretical knowledge about the use and handling of diving equipment.
- Diving Physics: Candidates will have a basic understanding of the influence and effects of changing pressure, in particular with respect to:
  - Compensation (for example, ears and mask)
  - Breathing (not holding your breath and effect of pressure on air consumption)
  - Buoyancy and how to control it
  - Time and depth (the Decompression Safety Curve)
- Diving Related Medical Problems: Candidates will have a basic understanding of how to avoid problems that result from:



- I. Direct effects of pressure
    - i. Rising pressure (descent phase)
      - Gas compression (for example: ears, sinuses, mask, lungs, suits, teeth)
    - ii. Decreasing pressure (ascent phase)
      - Gaseous expansion (for example: ears, sinuses, lungs, stomach, intestines, teeth).
      - Decompression sickness (for example: decompression sickness, arterial embolism)
  - II. Other risks
    - Physical and mental stress
    - The effects of temperature on the diver
    - Medication, drugs, alcohol, etc.
- Diving environment: Candidates will have a basic understanding of the local and general conditions of the diving environment, and their possible effects on the diver, and the diver's impact on the environment.



*“The minimum age according to ACUC is 12 years. Above this age, it depends on the legislation of each country”*

## 8. SKILLS KNOWLEDGE

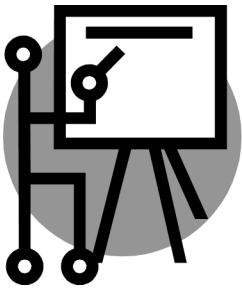
Course content related to diving skills

**8.1 Confined Water Diving Skills:** Candidates should be able to perform the following skills. Each skill must be mastered in confined water before that skill is performed in open water.

- Use of basic equipment
- Assembly and disassembly of diving equipment (at water's edge)
- Water entries and exits
- Mouthpiece rinse - snorkel and regulator
- Regulator/snorkel exchanges, surface swimming
- Proper descent and ascent procedures (for example: equalizing pressure in ears and mask)
- Underwater swimming
- Rinsing of mask, including taking them off and putting them on
- Buoyancy control, underwater and on the surface
- Underwater regulator recovery
- Basic instrument monitoring
- Surface operation of the quick release of the weight system
- Act as a recipient of an alternative breathing gas source
- Equipment care
- Basic hand signals

**8.2 Open Water Diving Skills:** Candidates should be able to perform the following skills in conditions typical of the local environment.

- Use of basic equipment
- Assembly and disassembly of diving equipment (at water's edge)
- Water entries and exits
- Mouthpiece rinse - snorkel and regulator
- Regulator/snorkel exchanges, surface swimming
- Proper descent and ascent procedures (e.g. equalizing pressure in ears and mask)
- Underwater swimming



*"The diver must be very clear about the limitations of his/her certification"*

- Rinsing of mask, including taking them off and putting them on



(\*) Special safety precautions will be taken during the process of removing and putting on the mask in open water, specifically in areas with cold water.

- Buoyancy control, underwater and on the surface
- Underwater regulator recovery
- Basic instrument monitoring
- Surface operation of the quick release of the weight system
- Act as a recipient of an alternative breathing gas source
- Equipment care
- Basic hand signals

## 9. PRACTICAL TRAINING PARAMETERS

**9.1** All confined water underwater skills will be introduced, directly directed and assessed by an ACUC instructor who will be in the water during each session. The diving instructor will be in direct control of the candidates throughout all sessions.

**9.2** Prior to the first open water dive the candidate will show effective proof of, or demonstrate to a diving instructor, the following aquacity skills, without the use of a mask, fins, snorkel, or other swimming aids:

- 50m swim
- 5 minute survival float.

**9.3** Prior to participating in open water dives, the candidate will have demonstrated in confined water sufficient theory knowledge and diving skills to be able to perform open water dives in prevailing conditions.

**9.4** The maximum depth during training dives will not exceed 15 meters / 50 feet

**9.5** All open water training dives will be conducted during daylight hours, in water that allows direct vertical access to the surface. Open water dives, therefore, will not be done in caves or under ice.

**9.6** During open water dives the candidate shall at least be equipped with diving equipment according to 2.9 (see [Definitions](#)).

**9.7** All open water underwater skills will be introduced, directly directed and evaluated by an ACUC instructor. The dive instructor will be in the water and in charge of each open water dive.

**9.8** According to clause 5, the absolute maximum number of candidates per diving instructor, under ideal conditions, for surveillance and escort under water is four. The maximum number of candidates per qualified assistant for surveillance and escort under water is two.

**9.9** At no time should a candidate be left unattended in or under the water.

**9.10** Under no circumstances will groups of certified divers be allowed (certified diver as buddy of another certified diver and so on) and groups of candidates from a Scuba Diver course in the same dive, under direct supervision of the same instructor.

**9.11** Under no circumstances it is allowed to buddy up a certified diver with a candidate (unless said diver has the necessary certification — Divemaster as a minimum).

**9.12** Before each dive the diving instructor will prepare an "emergency plan". In the immediate vicinity of the dive site there will be:

- A proper first aid kit
- An emergency oxygen unit with a capacity to supply 15 l/min. at least. For at least 20 min.
- Adequate communication system to alert emergency services.

**9.13** The instructor will cancel or abort the open water dive if environmental conditions or a candidate's physical or mental condition so require.

**9.14** A maximum of 3 training dives per day are allowed



## 10. EVALUATION

The evaluation and certification requirements will consider the following parameters:

**10.1 Knowledge:** The candidate will demonstrate, by means of a written exam (see note below) provided by ACUC, knowledge of diving theory according to point 7 and knowledge of skills according to point 8.

**10.2 Scuba Skills:** The candidate will satisfactorily demonstrate to an ACUC instructor the diving skills as per point 8.

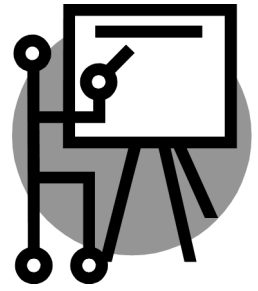
Note: If for any reason, the candidate is unable to take a written exam, then the Instructor may give the candidate an oral exam based on the written exam provided by ACUC and if this is the case, the Instructor will transfer the candidate's oral answers to the written exam. In either case, the written examination must be completed, either directly by the candidate or indirectly by the Instructor, using the candidate's oral responses. Instructors may, if they wish, do additional exams to the candidate, however, the exam provided by ACUC must be taken.

## 11. CHECKOUT DIVES

To become certified, candidates will complete at least two open water training dives under the direct supervision of an ACUC instructor. The underwater duration of each of these open water dives will be at least 20 min.

## 12. DEVIATIONS

None requested



*“All skills  
must be  
evaluated by an  
ACUC  
Instructor, who  
must be in the  
water at each  
session”*