



Training Guidelines for Recreational Divers and Instructors 2026

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Abbreviations

ABC Mask, Fins, and Snorkel	IE Instructor Examination; 2-day final exam to become an i. a. c. Instructor
AED Automated External Defibrillator	IT Instructor Trainer
AFA Advanced First Aid	ITC Instructor Training Center
BLS Basic Life Support	MD Master Diver
CD Course Director	MI Master Instructor
CMAS World Confederation of Underwater Activities	OWD Open Water Diver
DAN Divers Alert Network	OWI Open Water Instructor
DIN German Institute for Standardization	Prep Preparation Course; 2–3-day intensive exam preparation
DL Dive Leader	RSTC Recreational Scuba Training Council
DLP Dive Leader Professional	SC Specialty Course
IDC Instructor Development Course: includes modules 3–7 of the i. a. c. Instructor Course	

Definitions

Children and Adolescents	People between the ages of 6 and 15.
Introductory Dive	Also known as “Try Scuba Diving”; an introduction to diving in shallow water
Discover Scuba Diving	Also known as “Introduction to Scuba Diving”; an extended introductory diving experience with theoretical training, practical exercises in the pool or confined water, and an open-water dive to a maximum depth of 12 meters.
Diving Courses for Beginners	Courses for divers with little to no prior experience, designed to qualify participants to dive under the supervision of experienced divers upon completion of the training.
Diving Courses for Advanced Divers	(Advanced) courses for certified divers: The goal of these courses is to refine existing knowledge and skills, which should also enable the diver to supervise and assist other divers underwater upon completion of their training.
Supervised Diver	Also known as “Level 1 Diver” according to ISO 24801-1; this is a diver who has gained just enough experience to dive under the supervision of a highly experienced diver as defined by ISO 24801-3, e.g., an i. a. c. Dive Leader.
Independent Diver	Also known as “Level 2 Diver” according to ISO 24801-2; this is the minimum level of training required for a diver to be qualified to dive with other divers of the same training level under defined conditions (e.g., familiar surroundings, familiar depth range) even without the supervision of a dive instructor or experienced diver. This level is achieved when the diver has mastered the required content (see Training Record Card for OWD), the instructor has confirmed this on the Training Record Card, and the diver has countersigned it.
Dive Group Leader	Also known as “Level 3 Diver” according to ISO 24801-3; this is a highly experienced diver, such as an i. a. c. Dive Leader, who has gained sufficient experience to supervise even inexperienced divers under defined conditions after they have completed their training.

Training Record Card	A standardized, personalized form used to track training progress. It serves as a checklist for pending or completed training steps, as a referral form, and as a binding basis for verifying the quality and content of training.
Instructor	Diving instructor for recreational divers in accordance with ISO 24802-1 and ISO 24802-2.
Scuba Instructor	Also known as “Assistant Diving Instructor,” “AI,” or “Basic Instructor”; this is the designation for an instructor certified under ISO 24802-1 who is already authorized to teach independently, albeit with certain restrictions.
Open Water Instructor	An instructor certified under ISO 24802-2 with the authority to conduct training and administer exams up to and including the i. a. c. Master Diver level.
Master Instructor	An instructor certified under ISO 24802-2 with the authority to conduct training and administer exams up to and including i. a. c. Dive Leader Professional.
Instructor Trainer	Highly experienced instructor certified under ISO 24802-2 with the authority to conduct training and administer exams up to and including the Master Instructor level.
Course Director	Instructor Trainer with expanded responsibilities.
Instructor Training Center Nitrox	Training facility for instructor training, accredited by the i. a. c. Head Office A breathing gas mixture of nitrogen and oxygen with an oxygen content of 21% or higher.
Freediving Dive	Diving while holding one’s breath without scuba equipment. An underwater activity conducted at depths between 5 and 40 meters with a minimum bottom time of 15 minutes.
Introductory Dive	An open-water dive conducted under the direct supervision of an instructor to introduce participants to the fun and adventure of recreational diving. The introductory dive does not lead to certification. It includes the following minimum components: 1. Briefing, 2. Dive preparation, 3. Entry, 4. Underwater tour, 5. A maximum depth of 12 meters, 6. Entry and exit, 7. Debriefing.
Training Dive	A dive during which new training content is taught. Depending on the dive course, specific depth ranges must be adhered to, as indicated on the respective Training Record Card. Open-water training dives may only be conducted independently starting at the OWI level in accordance with ISO 24802-2, provided the diver holds the appropriate training certification.
Practice Dive	Also known as a training dive or adventure dive; material already learned is reviewed and practiced during a dive. Practice dives may be conducted by a SCUBA Instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-1.
Exam Dive	A dive designed to assess specific exam content. Exam dives must be conducted by an instructor at the OWI level or higher, who holds the appropriate training and certification authorization for the respective diving activity.
Pool-like conditions	Also known as confined water; characterized by a maximum water depth of 5 m with a water temperature of at least 16 °C at a depth of 1 m. A shallow water zone where one can stand must be present. The bottom of the body of water must be visible from the water’s surface, and the body of water must have a safe, easy entry and exit point.
basic equipment	Equipment for beginners and snorkelers, consisting of a mask, snorkel, and fins.
Diving Equipment	Standard diving equipment, consisting of: basic equipment, regulator, alternative air supply (simple octopus configuration or independent, separate second air supply, depending on regional regulations and environmental conditions), compressed gas cylinder with suitable carrying device, BCD, weight system with quick-release mechanism (if required), instruments for measuring dive time, depth, and tank pressure, and cold-weather protection (adapted to

	environmental conditions). Special environmental conditions may require additional equipment (e.g., compass, knife/cutting tool).
	The instructor's diving equipment must be configured so that they are able to perform all diving skills of scuba divers at training levels 1, 2, and 3 in demonstration quality, in accordance with the respective standards ISO 24801-1, ISO 24801-2, and ISO 24801-3.
Direct Supervision	A certified instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-2 must be present in the water and immediately available.
Indirect Supervision	A certified instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-2 maintains overall oversight and responsibility and can intervene immediately if necessary.
Qualified Assistant	Also known as certified assistant; a diver certified to ISO 24801-3 who possesses the foundational knowledge and skills of a dive instructor but has not yet completed full instructor training. In the i.a.c. system, this corresponds to the Dive Leader Professional.
Ratio	The ratio of instructors to students.
BLS	Basic Life Support at the scene of an accident (also known as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, CPR).
AFA / Advanced First Aid	In addition to basic first aid (= BLS), the AFA course also covers advanced first aid as well as the use of an AED and oxygen following diving accidents. Training completed through other qualified institutions (e.g., DRK, ASB) may be recognized.
Emergency Alternatives for Air Depletion	Methods that enable a diver to ascend to the surface in the event of a lack of air (e.g., empty tank, defect in the air supply). Possible methods include: alternative air supply (e.g., octopus breathing, alternate breathing), emergency ascent, free ascent, and redundant air supply (e.g., "Spare Air").

Introduction

The i.a.c. is one of the most respected organizations in recreational diving. Through its membership in RSTC Europe and the EUF, as well as its certification in accordance with all ISO standards relevant to the sport of diving, i.a.c. training enjoys worldwide recognition. The certificate, issued by the ISO-accredited institute "Austrian Standards plus," lists the certified proficiency levels.

These training guidelines are supplemented by additional standards and documents, including in particular:

1. Training Record Cards
2. Safety Standards
3. Regulations for Instructor Training
4. Standards for Instructor Trainers and Course Directors

These standards and guidelines apply to all i.a.c. instructors and are taught and tested during instructor training. They serve as benchmarks and guidelines for all training programs, including those for both i.a.c. instructors and divers. All i.a.c. instructors are required to keep their knowledge of these standards up to date and to adhere to them at all times.

Additional standards apply to specialized areas such as technical (TEC) and rebreather diving, cave diving, freediving, and diving with physical disabilities. These are covered in separate seminars and are relevant only to instructors who train and certify students in these areas.

All courses and proficiency levels are taught at dive centers officially authorized by the i.a.c. Head Office. By signing a license and training agreement, instructors commit to complying with all relevant standards and guidelines.

Training Objectives

Depending on the training level, certifications qualify divers to dive under the supervision of an instructor, to dive with an experienced diver, to dive independently with suitable partners, or to accompany and guide less experienced divers. The various instructor levels qualify individuals to safely train and provide continuing education to recreational divers of all skill levels — initially under the supervision of an experienced instructor, and later independently. The highest level qualifies you to train and/or evaluate instructors.

I.a.c. Training Path

The i. a. c. training path for divers and instructors is based on RSTC Europe guidelines and DIN/EN/ISO standards.

The training of recreational and hobby divers is divided into various levels. The most important of these are:

- Supervised diver — qualified to dive when accompanied by an experienced diver
- Independent diver — qualified to dive when accompanied by a diver with at least the same certification level
- Dive group leader — qualified to lead inexperienced divers and larger dive groups

These levels are supplemented by specialty courses that build additional skills and competencies.

Recreational diver training is followed by dive instructor training. This training also takes place in various stages:

- Dive Leader Professional — qualified to assist with dive training and authorized to conduct Try SCUBA Diving sessions under controlled conditions
- Scuba Instructor — qualified to assist in dive training
- Instructor — qualified to independently train divers
- Instructor Trainer — qualified to train instructors

These training guidelines give an overview of the prerequisites, content, and duration of the various training levels. Detailed information on content and exercises is found in the respective Training Record Cards, which are an integral part of these guidelines and serve as specific, binding work instructions for instructors.

Brief Overview of i.a.c. Standards for Divers and Instructors

Course Name	Min. Age	Div e (K) ¹	Prerequisites, Content, Notes	Div e (B) ²	Instructor Level
(Junior) ³ Indoor Diver	(10) 15	4	V: none I: Theory, pool sessions, and 4 qualifying dives at approved indoor dive centers B: Upon presentation of the Scuba Diver certification (not older than 1 year), only 2 additional dives in accordance with TRC at approved indoor diving centers are required The Indoor Diver certification authorizes diving in indoor diving facilities without an instructor present	4	Scuba Instructor
(Junior) ³ Scuba Diver	(10) 15	2	V: none I: Theory and pool sessions as for OWD, but only 2 qualifying dives B: None	2	Scuba Instructor/O WI
(Junior) ³ Open Water Diver	(10) 15	4	V: none I: Theory, pool sessions, and 4 qualifying open-water dives B: If you have a Scuba Diver certification (no older than 1 year), only 2 open-water dives as specified by the TRC are required	4	OWI
(Junior) ³ Advanced Open Water Diver	(12) 15	5	V: OWD or equivalent I: SC Navigation, SC Deep Diving plus at least 1 additional SC NO Deep Diving for youths under 15 years of age B: At least 6 qualifying dives for the compact course or at least 2 dives per SC for 3 individual courses Upgrade from JAOWD to AOWD only after completing the SC Deep Diving course	9	OWI
Master Diver	15	-	Requirements: i. a. c. AOWD or equivalent plus the Stress & Rescue SC and one additional SC I: None B: Certificate of recognition without an exam	20	OWI
Dive Leader	18	5	V: i. a. c. Master Diver or equivalent plus the Stress & Rescue course or equivalent plus the SC Dive Group Management course I: Advanced training in group leadership, supervising inexperienced divers and larger groups underwater, instruction in local diving practices,	65	MI

			and at least 5 qualifying dives B: None		
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Dive Leader Professional	18	-	Prerequisite: Dive Leader or see I: Introductory diving (Try Scuba) with beginners in the pool and confined water, refresher courses, local diving, assistance with diver training, etc. B: The course to become a certified instructor assistant	65	MI
Scuba Instructor	18	20	V: Dive Leader or equivalent I: Instructor training in the form of an internship or modular training B: Proof of DLP = possible course shortening	80	IT
Open Water Instructor	18	6	V: Dive Leader or equivalent ⁴ I: Instructor course with exam preparation B: Training duration depends on prior experience (see prerequisites)	120	IT/CD
Specialty Instructor	18	see below	V: Scuba Instructor I: Acquisition of certification authority for SC B: Not available for all SCs	100	IT
Master Instructor	18	-	V: OWI or equivalent I: Proof of training experience after obtaining the OWI through: at least 50 i.a.c. certifications or at least 25 i.a.c. certifications and the acquisition of at least 3 additional certification authorizations for SC, at least 1 of which must be based on a course concept B: Recognition certification without a further instructor exam; Master Instructor is not equivalent to TL2 (see CMAS Standards)	220	IT/CD
Instructor Trainer	23	5+	V: Proof of outstanding training activity: at least 150 diving certifications, including at least 50 i.a.c. certifications since MI, successful observation of an i.a.c. Instructor Seminar I: Participation in an Instructor Seminar as a member of the trainer team, teaching, coaching, and evaluating instructor candidates B: IT cannot be obtained through a Crossover program	500	Head Office

Course Director	25	5+	V: Proof of outstanding training activity: At least 50 i. a. c. certifications since IT, Proof of having trained at least 3 Scuba Instructors or having conducted 3 crossover seminars, and participation as an instructor in at least 3 instructor seminars I: Organizing and conducting instructor seminars; teaching, coaching, and evaluating instructor candidates B: CD cannot be obtained through a Crossover; a CD may be appointed as an Examiner for certain exams	50 0	Head Office
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¹ Dive(K) = Minimum number of dives during the course

² Dive(B) = Minimum number of dives required for certification

³ Specific regulations and all information regarding diving with children and adolescents are set forth separately in the training guidelines for children's diving and can be viewed there.

⁴ The entry level (= DL, DLP, or Scuba Instructor) determines the duration of the instructor course and the training modules to be completed.

Notes

General Prerequisites for Participation in All Courses

- Current medical health status
- Submission of a self-assessment form or a medical certificate of fitness for diving, in accordance with i. a. c. Safety Standards
 - From the Dive Leader Professional level onward, the self-assessment option is no longer available — a medical certificate of fitness for diving is mandatory. The certificate may be issued by any licensed physician, unless national law requires otherwise.
- Sufficient swimming ability as specified in the respective Training Record Card.

Specialty Instructor

- Optional additional qualification, available after obtaining the training authorization
- A minimum of 20 dives in the respective specialty
- Dives as specified in the respective Training Record Card
- Submission of a detailed course plan and/or attainment of the corresponding qualification at an authorized ITC (see also 4.6).

Brief Overview of CMAS Standards for Divers and Instructors

Course Name	Min. Age	Dive (K)¹	Prerequisites, Content, Notes	Dive (B)²	Instructor Level
CMAS*	14	5	V: none I: Theory, pool sessions, and 5 qualifying open-water dives B: After certification as an i.a.c. OWD, only 1 additional dive and the ABC section are required within 12 months	5	TL1
CMAS**	16	5	V: OWD, CMAS*, or equivalent, plus SC Navigation, Dive Group Management, and Advanced First Aid I: Theory, pool sessions, and 5 qualifying open-water dives B: None	25	TL2
CMAS***	18	5	V: Master Diver, CMAS**, or equivalent I: Dive Group Management and at least 5 qualifying dives B: None	65	TL2
TL1	18	6	V: Dive Leader or equivalent ³ I: Instructor course with exam preparation B: Training duration depends on prior experience (see prerequisites)	120	IT/TL3/CD
TL2	20	6	V: OWI, TL1, or equivalent I: Instructor course with preparation for the instructor exam B: Qualification through participation in a 5-day exam	220	IT/TL3/CD
TL3	23		V: MI, TL2, or equivalent Proof of outstanding training activity: At least 50 i.a.c. certifications since TL2, Observation of an i.a.c. Instructor Seminar I: Participation in an Instructor Seminar as a member of the trainer team, teaching, coaching, and evaluating instructor candidates B: TL3 cannot be obtained through a Crossover	500	Head Office

¹ Dive(K) = Minimum number of dives during the course

² Dive(B) = Minimum number of dives required for certification

³ The entry level (= DL, DLP, or Scuba Instructor) determines the duration of the instructor course and the training modules to be completed.

Brief Overview of i.a.c. Standards for Specialty Courses

Course Name	Min. Age¹	Dive (K)²	Prerequisites for Participation	Instructor Level
Advanced First Aid	12	-	-	Authorization to administer the corresponding SC
Navigation	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Dive Group Management	15	2	OWD or equivalent	
Deep Diving	15	2	OWD or equivalent	
Stress & Rescue	15	4	AOWD or equivalent ³	
Nitrox Basic	15	-	OWD or equivalent ³	
Night Diving	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Dry Suit Diving	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Environmental Diver	10	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Altitude Diving	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Underwater Photographer	10	Pool	OWD or equivalent ³	
Equipment	12	-	OWD or equivalent ³	
Scooter	15	5	OWD or equivalent	
Search & Recovery	12	4	OWD or equivalent ³	
Full-Face Mask	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Perfect Buoyancy	10	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
Drift Diving	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	
River Diving	15	2	OWD or equivalent	
Wreck Diving	15	2	OWD or equivalent	
Ocean Cavern Diving	15	2	AOWD or equivalent	
Ice Diving	18	2	AOWD or equivalent	
Sidemount Diving	12	2	OWD or equivalent ³	

¹ All specialty courses for students under 15 years of age are certified as junior versions, where available; see footnote 3

² Dive(K) = Minimum number of dives during the course

³ These courses may be taken even if the student holds only the junior version of the required certification level.

Rules and Recommendations for Forming Dive Groups

In addition to the minimum requirements set by ISO standards, the following recommendations for safe diving apply at the i. a. c.:

Certification Level: Diver 1		Certification Level 2 Diver		Safe diving is possible	Notes/Recommended Max. Dive Depth
Scuba Diver	wit h	Scuba Diver	=	NO	-
Scuba Diver	wit h	Dive Leader	=	YES	12 meters
Indoor Diver	wit h	Indoor Diver	=	Restricted, see footnote ¹	
OWD	wit h	OWD	=	Restricted, see footnote ²	
OWD	wit h	AOWD	=	Restricted, see footnote ²	
OWD	wit h	Master Diver	=	Restricted, see footnote ²	
AOWD	wit h	AOWD	=	YES	See footnote ³
AOWD	wit h	2 OWD	=	NO	-
Master Diver	wit h	2 OWD	=	NO	-
Master Diver	wit h	Master Diver without AOWD	=	YES	See footnote ³
Master Diver	wit h	2 Master Diver	=	YES	See footnote ³
Dive Leader ⁴	wit h	Scuba Diver	=	YES, see footnote ⁴	See footnote ⁴
Dive Leader ⁴	wit h	OWD	=	YES, see footnote ⁴	18 meters
Dive Leader ⁴	wit h	AOWD	=	YES, see footnote ⁴	See footnote ⁴
Dive Leader Professional	wit h	Introductory Diver	=	YES	Confined Water

The i. a. c. Indoor Diver is qualified to dive at indoor diving centers with a second, equivalently trained dive partner, without supervision by an experienced dive instructor or diver. At least one of the two dive partners must be of legal age. The Indoor Diver certification does not authorize open water diving.

² In accordance with DIN/EN/ISO standards, the OWD has the necessary abilities and skills to dive with a second, equivalently trained dive partner without supervision by an experienced dive instructor or diver.

However, independent diving by two such inexperienced divers is subject to certain conditions. Diving is permitted only if:

1. the prevailing conditions are equivalent to or better than those in which the i. a. c. OWD was trained, and adequate surface support is ensured;
2. the dive is conducted within the no-decompression limit, and the maximum depth does not exceed the maximum depth dived with an instructor during training;
3. at least one of the two dive partners is of legal age.

In all other cases, supervision by a more experienced, adult dive partner or dive instructor is required. A diver's experience depends not only on their certification but also on the number of dives completed and their current level of activity. Thus, an AOWD or Master Diver with more than 100 dives may also be considered experienced.

³ The i. a. c. recommends a maximum depth of 40 meters for dives conducted under optimal environmental conditions (e.g., warm, clear saltwater). Under less-than-optimal conditions (e.g., limited visibility, cold water, currents), depth should not exceed 30 meters. All dives are conducted as no-decompression dives.

⁴ During training, the i. a. c. Dive Leader learns to assess environmental conditions and the diving skills of their dive partners, and to adapt the dive plan accordingly. This applies especially to the choice of dive site, the composition of the dive group, the number of divers, and the maximum dive depth. The i. a. c. recommends limiting the dive group to a number that allows the

Dive Leader to maintain physical contact with each dive partner at all times without losing overall oversight of the group. If necessary, reduce the group size and/or the dive depth, and seek the assistance of a qualified assistant.

Implementation Regulations

Diving courses and activities that build on previously acquired skills and abilities may only be conducted by appropriately qualified and certified instructors who are authorized to provide training and administer exams for the respective proficiency levels, courses, and SC.

i. a. c. courses include both theoretical and practical training. Theory may be delivered as traditional classroom instruction at the dive center, as self-study using i. a. c. teaching materials, or via i. a. c. e-learning. Achievement of the training course objectives is verified through assessment of practical skills and theoretical knowledge. The theory exam consists of knowledge reviews, knowledge tests, or specific exam questions. If a final theory exam is required, it must be administered in written form and always conducted at the dive center. In justified individual cases, an oral exam is also permitted; in this case, the instructor must keep a written record.

Practical skills are assessed as part of the exercises. A training segment is only considered passed when the relevant exercises have been mastered with confidence. All completed training segments are recorded in the Training Record Cards, dated and countersigned by both the instructor and the student.

Training for the various diving courses is conducted in accordance with the guidelines set out in the respective current Training Record Cards. These must be reviewed together before training begins and completed by the instructor and student throughout the course. The current version is available on the password-protected Instructor Portal at www.diveiac.com.

Theoretical and practical content may be combined as needed. Before performing practical exercises, students must be familiar with the relevant theoretical content. Students must first master the required skills in a pool or confined water before performing them in open water. Exercises are practiced with the instructor until performed with confidence. Exercises in which a student shows uncertainty may only be repeated immediately if doing so poses no risk to the instructor or student. If necessary, preliminary attempts or practice exercises may be conducted at shallower depths to gradually build the student's confidence.

All dives must be conducted with a complete set of diving equipment. During all SCUBA training dives, each diver must carry an alternative air source/octopus. In cold water (i. e., water temperature below 10°C at the planned dive depth) or at depths exceeding 30 meters, each diver must also carry a complete second regulator connected to a separately isolatable tank valve. Students and instructors must use the same equipment configuration. The instructor must be in the water during every training session and maintain direct supervision of each student, whether in a pool, confined water, or open water.

Training dives may only be conducted during daylight hours, with a direct vertical ascent route, and not in wrecks or under ice (exceptions: SC Ice Diving, Wreck Diving, Night Diving, Ocean Cavern Diving).

The student-to-instructor ratio must never exceed 8:1. This ratio applies only under optimal conditions. Under non-optimal conditions, the ratio must be reduced accordingly — down to 1:1 if necessary. The instructor must always be able to establish immediate physical contact with each student during training dives. A certified, qualified assistant can increase dive safety and thus the permissible ratio; however, more than 8 students per instructor and more than 12 students underwater are never permitted.

Qualifying dives for the next certification level are all SCUBA dives in open water between 5 and 40 meters in depth, lasting at least 15 minutes. The applicable maximum depths are determined by the training level and prevailing conditions. All SCUBA dives must be conducted as no-decompression dives.

The instructor determines the maximum depth for training and practice dives, taking local conditions into account. Until the SC Deep Diving course has been successfully completed, the maximum permitted depth is 18 meters. For students under 15 years of age, the maximum depth is limited to 12 meters.

Upon certification as a Deep Diver, the depth limit is extended to 30 or 40 meters. In very cold water or under poor environmental conditions (e.g., poor visibility), the i.a.c. recommends a maximum depth of 30 meters.

The instructor who conducts the first exercise toward an i.a.c. diving certification verifies that all relevant requirements have been met and confirms this on the corresponding Training Record Card. For youths under 15 years of age, certifications are issued with the prefix “Junior.” This certification can be converted to a certification without the “Junior” designation upon reaching the age of 15 (e.g., Junior OWD becomes OWD). To do so, a new certification card with a current passport photo must be issued—possibly after completing a refresher course (details are provided on the respective Training Record Card).

Exception: The Junior Advanced Open Water Diver certification can only be converted to AOWD after successfully completing the Deep Diving specialty.

The minimum number of qualifying dives specified in these guidelines must be met in all cases. The specified exercises must also be completed in full and safely; however, they may be combined at the instructor’s discretion and distributed across the required practice dives. If the exercises have not been mastered to a safe standard after the specified minimum number of dives, additional dives must be completed before certification can be issued.

The instructor determines whether the candidate has achieved the training course objectives by evaluating the written exam and by guiding and supervising the exercises during practical training. The instructor regularly discusses the candidate’s current level of performance in theory and practice with the candidate during the course and at the end of the course. The instructor confirms all successfully completed exercises and training dives they supervised on the Training Record Card and has the student countersign as well.

The instructor who certifies the final outstanding exercise for an i.a.c. diving certification records this in the candidate’s logbook and on the Training Record Card.

All exercises required for an i.a.c. diving certification (theory and practice) must be successfully completed and confirmed on the Training Record Card within 12 months. Otherwise, all previously confirmed components will expire and the candidate must start the certification process from the beginning.

Prerequisites for Participation in Diving Courses

To participate in a training program, the following requirements must be met:

- Minimum age as specified on the Training Record Card
- For minors, written consent from a legal guardian is required. The restrictions on children's diving must be observed.
- Proof of swimming ability, e.g., by swimming on the surface without aids for at least 10 minutes and covering a distance of at least 200 meters.
- Proof of meeting health requirements. The i. a. c. recommends a medical examination in accordance with the recommendations of the Society for Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine (GTÜM). Alternatively, a medical self-assessment form completed entirely with "yes" responses on the standardized RSTC Europe form may be sufficient, provided there are no legal requirements to the contrary.
- Current physical fitness and mental aptitude.

Preliminary Information for Training

Before training begins—i.e., before or during the first training session (e.g., at an orientation meeting)—the following information must be provided to the student and, in the case of minors, also to the parents:

- Health status requirements and information on the importance of regular medical examinations.
- Validity and limitations of the intended certification, including a note that at least one member of the dive group must be of legal age for post-course diving activities (country-specific regulations must be strictly observed).
- Course content, schedule, and costs, including information on insurance and applicable legal requirements.
- Equipment requirements.

Certification

Upon completion of the course, the student receives a digital certification and, if applicable, a physical biodegradable card. The course is not considered complete until the corresponding card application has been submitted online and received by the i. a. c. Head Office.

1.0 Diving Training for Beginners

For the purposes of these training guidelines, “beginners” are individuals who require supervision by a highly qualified, advanced, and specially trained diver or dive instructor during the preparation for and execution of a dive. For diving courses with children and adolescents under 12 years of age, additional qualifications as a children’s diving instructor may be required, unless this content was explicitly part of the diving instructor training. Upon completion of training, participants may have attained a level of competence that allows them to dive under familiar, optimal conditions without the direct supervision of an experienced diver. Further requirements are described under the respective courses.

Details on prerequisites, course content, performance assessment, and certification can be found in the current i. a. c. Training Record Card for the respective course.

For all junior courses, a written consent form from a parent or legal guardian must be submitted before the course begins.

1.1 i.a.c. Snorkeling

Prerequisites:

- Minimum age: 6 years
- Proof of swimming ability

Training course objectives

The Snorkeling course is designed to be fun and motivating while familiarizing participants with the basics of snorkeling. Participants will learn:

- Minimum snorkeling equipment
- Characteristics, function, operation, care, and maintenance
- Basics of body temperature regulation, pressure/pressure equalization, and finning techniques
- Swimming rules and how they apply to snorkeling
- Tips for handling basic equipment
- Swimming and Diving Exercises

Instructor Certification

From **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional**.

1.2 i.a.c. Try Scuba Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 8 years
- Proof of swimming ability
- Proof of medical fitness for diving
- Restrictions on children’s diving must be observed.

Training course objectives

The course gives participants their first experience of diving — in particular: breathing underwater, equalizing pressure, and swimming underwater.

After this dive, the candidate should ideally be motivated to pursue further diving training. Introductory dives must be conducted in a pool or confined water.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** for dives in a pool or confined water.

1.3 i.a.c. DSD – Discover Scuba Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years
- Proof of swimming ability
- Proof of fitness for diving
- For minors, a written consent form from a parent or legal guardian is required. The restrictions on children's diving must be observed.

Training course objectives

The course is designed to give participants their first experience with diving. This includes, in particular: Breathing underwater, equalizing pressure, and swimming underwater.

In addition to the content of the "Try Scuba Diving" course, the candidate will complete one open-water dive to a maximum depth of 12 meters. A prerequisite for this is that all exercises listed on the Training Record Card have been learned in advance in a pool or confined water and have been adequately mastered.

Instructor Qualification

From i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional for dives in a pool or confined water. Open-water dives require at least the i.a.c. Open Water Instructor level.

SCUBA Diving Courses From Ages 8 and Up

1.4 i.a.c. Junior Diver

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 8 years
- Proof of swimming ability
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

This course is specifically designed for children ages 8 and up. Participants learn the basics of diving and gain their first underwater experiences, with an emphasis on play and having fun underwater.

Instructor Qualification

From **an i.a.c. Scuba Instructor** with certification authority for children's diving.

Scuba Diving (SCUBA) From Ages 10 and Up

1.5 i.a.c. Indoor Diver/Junior Indoor Diver

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years
- Proof of swimming ability
- Proof of fitness to dive

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, in both theory and practice, with the principles governing participation in dives at indoor diving facilities specifically designed for diving activities. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to dive in appropriate environments with dive partners who hold at least an equivalent certification.

To earn the i.a.c. Indoor Diver certification, at least 4 qualifying dives must be completed as specified in the current Training Record Card.

Further training leading to a higher certification level or a specific qualification (e.g., OWD or specialty courses, open-water diving) may only be conducted by a qualified diving instructor.

The recommended maximum depth for i.a.c. Indoor Divers is 18 meters. For divers under 15 years of age, the maximum depth is 12 meters.

Special Regulations

No more than three SCUBA dives may be conducted per training day.

Holders of the i.a.c. Scuba Diver certification are required to complete only two additional qualifying dives, provided no more than 12 months have elapsed between the start of the i.a.c. Scuba Diver certification process and the completion of the i.a.c. Indoor Diver course.

Special conditions for children's diving apply to the training of participants under 12 years of age.

During training, nitrox with a maximum oxygen content of 40% may be used, provided that the specific requirements for diving with oxygen-enriched breathing gases are covered in the course and no other regulations (e.g., laws, minimum age requirements) preclude this.

The i.a.c. Indoor Diver may participate in specially approved SC courses, provided they take place under at least equivalent conditions (e.g., exclusively in authorized indoor pools).

The i.a.c. Indoor Diver certification can be upgraded to OWD upon successful completion of 2 qualifying open-water dives as specified in the current Training Record Card.

Instructor Qualification

From i.a.c. Open Water Instructor. Where required, with authorization to certify children in diving.

1.6 i.a.c. Scuba Diver/Junior Scuba Diver

Requirements

- Minimum age: 15 years, or 10 years for Junior Scuba Diver
- Proof of swimming ability
- Proof of medical fitness for diving
- The restrictions on children's diving must be observed.

Training course objectives

Upon completion of training, the i.a.c. Scuba Diver must demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skills, and experience to dive in open water under the direct supervision of a diver at least at the i.a.c. Dive Leader level. The maximum dive depth is 12 meters.

Instructor Qualification

From i.a.c. Scuba Instructor or higher. Where required, with authorization to certify child divers.

Qualifying open-water dives may only be conducted by the i.a.c. Scuba Instructor under the direct supervision and with the approval of an instructor holding at least the i.a.c. Open Water Instructor certification.

Physical contact must be maintained at all times. A maximum ratio of one instructor to one student diver must not be exceeded under any circumstances.

1.7 i.a.c. Open Water Diver/Junior Open Water Diver

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years, or 10 years for Junior Open Water Divers
- Proof of swimming ability
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the principles governing participation in open-water dives. In this context, the candidate should also learn the fundamentals for independently conducting open-water dives with dive partners who have received at least equivalent training. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to

- be able to safely participate in dives led by an experienced diver (e.g., **i.a.c. Dive Leader** or equivalent),
- be able to dive in open water with other divers who have at least the same level of training, without supervision by a diving instructor, provided that
 - o the prevailing conditions are equivalent to or better than those under which the i.a.c. OWD was trained, and a thorough briefing on local diving conditions (e.g., temperature, visibility, modified equipment) has been provided,
 - o diving is conducted within the no-decompression limit, and the maximum depth may not exceed the maximum depth dived with an instructor during training until additional training has been completed,
 - o adequate surface support is ensured (e.g., emergency equipment, a supervisor, a safety diver, boat crew).

To earn the i.a.c. OWD certification, at least 4 qualifying open-water dives must be completed in accordance with the

current	Training	Record	Card.
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Further training that leads to a higher certification level or a special qualification (e.g., diving or specialty courses, diving to greater depths than those covered during training, diving in unfamiliar waters or at unfamiliar dive sites) may only be conducted by a qualified diving instructor.

The recommended maximum depth for **the i.a.c. OWD** is 18 meters.

For children and adolescents under 15 years of age, the maximum diving depth is limited to 12 meters.

Special Regulations

No more than three certification dives (SCUBA) may be conducted per day.

Upon presentation of the i.a.c. Scuba Diver certification, only two qualifying open-water dives are required, provided that no more than 12 months have elapsed between the completion of the i.a.c. Scuba Diver certification and the completion of the i.a.c. OWD.

For the training of children under 12 years of age, the special conditions for diving with children apply.

During training, Nitrox with a maximum oxygen content of 40% may be used, provided that diving with oxygen-enriched breathing gases is covered as part of the course and no other regulations (e.g., laws, minimum age requirements) preclude it.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor**. If required, with certification to conduct children's diving courses.

2.0 Advanced Diving Training

As defined by these training guidelines, advanced divers are divers who, based on their experience, are already capable of diving without special supervision by an experienced diver, or of supervising and guiding other divers — before, during, and after the dive. Depending on their level of training and objectives, holders of these certifications may accompany beginners or other advanced divers, or guide them underwater.

Regardless of the level of training, the following general conditions apply:

- Diving at new or unfamiliar dive sites is permitted only if the conditions there are equivalent to or better than those under which the diver was trained, and only after receiving an appropriate briefing.
- Additional training or experience leading to a higher certification level or specialized qualification may only be conducted by an appropriately qualified diving instructor.

2.1 i.a.c. Refresher

Requirements

- Minimum age of 10 years
- Hold a recognized diving certification from **i.a.c. OWD** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should be brought up to date in theory and practice with regard to:

- Diving Theory
- Diving equipment
- Skills

and, as a result—especially after a long break from diving—be prepared to participate in various diving activities.

Instructor Certification

From **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional**.

2.2 i.a.c. Advanced Open Water Diver (AOWD)/Junior Advanced Open Water Diver (JAOWD)

Prerequisites

- Minimum age of 15 (or 12 for JAOWD)
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and practice, with the principles of underwater navigation (SC Navigation) and diving deeper than 18 meters (SC Deep Diving), as well as gain further experience by completing at least one additional specialty course of their choice. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to:

- be able to safely plan and conduct dives with divers of similar experience,
- be able to navigate safely underwater, with and without the aid of a compass,
- be able to dive safely to the recommended depths defined by the i.a.c. Safety Standards.
- **For children and adolescents under 15 years of age, the maximum diving depth is limited to 12 m.**

Special Provision

The Junior AOWD is only available without the SC Deep Diving course. An upgrade to the AOWD therefore also requires successful completion of the SC Deep Diving course (available from age 15).

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or higher**.

2.3 i.a.c. Master Diver

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of completion of the SC Navigation, Deep Diving, Stress & Rescue courses or equivalent
- Proof of two additional SCs of your choice
- At least 20 logged dives at the time of certification
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

Qualification as an i.a.c. Master Diver is achieved through practical diving experience. The candidate should further build on the skills and knowledge acquired to date. By gaining diving experience and completing the required specialty courses — SC Navigation, SC Deep Diving, and SC Stress & Rescue — plus at least two additional elective courses, the diver should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the key concepts necessary for safely conducting any open-water dive with equally trained dive partners.

Certification is granted without further examination upon proof that the requirements have been met.

Instructor Certification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor**.

2.4 i.a.c. Dive Leader

Requirements

- Minimum age of 18
- Proof of i.a.c. **Master Diver** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of the specialties required for the Master Diver certification
- Proof of SC Dive Group Management at the time of certification
- At least 65 logged dives at the time of certification
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the principles for organizing and leading dives under challenging conditions. This includes both leading groups with inexperienced dive partners and accompanying/leading dive groups with more than one dive partner. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to safely plan and conduct dives under challenging conditions as well as simple dives with inexperienced divers (at least **i.a.c. Scuba Divers**).

The i.a.c. Dive Leader must be able to handle the most challenging conditions in their environment and competently lead appropriately trained dive partners.

The training objective also includes safely handling inexperienced divers and accompanying them underwater, covering the following topics:

- Planning, organizing, and conducting dives, and guiding other divers—including inexperienced ones—in open water,
- Planning and executing emergency procedures while taking local diving conditions and activities into account,
- Introduction to local diving.

During the course, at least 5 qualifying dives must be completed in accordance with the Training Record Card.

Instructor Certification

From **i.a.c. Master Instructor**.

2.5 i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 (country-specific regulations must be observed)
- Proof of i.a.c. Dive Leader certification, or an equivalent certification in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Valid medical clearance for diving (no more than 2 years old; for those 40 and older, no more than 1 year old)
- Instructor liability insurance

Training course objectives

Building on the skills and abilities developed in the Dive Leader course, the candidate should learn how to assist in dive training and gain their own teaching experience. They should learn to support students in achieving their training course objectives and get a first look at the day-to-day work of a dive instructor.

By the end of the course, the **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** should be able to independently conduct training for

- snorkeling,
- DSD in Confined Water and Pool,
- refresher courses,
- acclimatization dives and introductions to local underwater features
- lead group dives, even with larger groups and beginners

to be conducted.

During a course, the i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional is expected to assist the instructor in supervising students and ensuring their safety; however, they may neither assess students nor teach them new skills or knowledge.

Through their training, the **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** must possess the following additional skills:

- Assisting an instructor in dive training. As a qualified assistant, they can increase the instructor-to-student ratio by a maximum of 4 students in the pool and a maximum of 2 students in open water, if conditions permit.
- Designing and conducting DSD courses in the pool and in confined water
- Planning and conducting refresher courses

Special Provisions

The **i.a.c. Dive Leader** and **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** training programs can be combined into a single course.

The **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** must have liability insurance in place no later than the time of certification. Under indirect supervision, the **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** may conduct practice dives with students in the OWD course, provided that no new course material is covered.

The **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional** may conduct open-water dives as part of an OWD course only under the direct supervision of an instructor who holds at least the **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** certification.

Instructor Qualification

From **the i.a.c. Master Instructor level**.

3.0 i.a.c. Specialties (SC)

Specialty courses offer recreational divers a wide range of opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills. The i.a.c. recommends participating in specialty activities — such as Specialty Night Diving, Specialty Dry Suit Diving, etc. — only after completing the corresponding course.

SC Navigation and SC Deep Diving are of particular importance, as they are an integral part of the i.a.c. Advanced Open Water Diver course. The same applies to SC Stress & Rescue, which is an integral part of the i.a.c. Master Diver program. For the i.a.c. Dive Leader, SC Dive Group Management is also mandatory.

With a few exceptions, candidates holding at least the i.a.c. OWD certification or equivalent may enroll in any specialty course. Where a higher skill level is required, this is noted in the prerequisites. The following applies to all specialties:

Details on prerequisites, course content, assessment, and certification can be found in the current i.a.c. Training Record Cards for the respective SC.

3.1 i.a.c. Advanced First Aid

Requirements

- Minimum age: 12 years
- For minors, a written consent form from a parent or legal guardian is required

Training course objectives

In addition to immediate life-saving measures, the **i.a.c. Advanced First Aid** course also covers providing further support to the injured person. This includes the use of equipment such as oxygen and an AED, as well as instruments and supplies from the first-aid kit, provided they are appropriate for use by laypeople with no medical training. The course consists of a theoretical and a practical component with exercises using the various devices:

- BLS with exercises on a resuscitation manikin
 - o Rescue procedure from the moment the injured person is found until the arrival of emergency medical services
 - o Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
 - o Recovery position
 - o First aid for airway obstruction
 - o First aid for severe external bleeding (life-threatening)
 - o First aid for shock
- Oxygen Administration and Overview of Various Systems
 - o Benefits of oxygen use and its effects following diving accidents
 - o Legal aspects and hazards associated with handling oxygen
 - o Precautions
 - o Familiarization with the various systems: constant-flow, demand system
- Use of an Automated External Defibrillator
 - o Fundamentals of Cardiovascular Function
 - o How to Use an AED
 - o Applications and limitations of the AED

- Secondary care for accident victims (= treatment of injuries that are not immediately life-threatening)
 - o Recognizing and Assessing an Emergency Situation
 - o Treatment of Wounds and Fractures
 - o Shock position, recovery position
 - o Rescue and transport techniques
 - o Measures for hypothermia or overheating
 - o Measures to Take After Injuries Caused by Marine Animals

Instructor Qualification

From an i.a.c. Scuba Instructor with certification authority for Advanced First Aid, valid within the last 2 years. The certification authority must be renewed every 2 years. Renewal can be achieved by:

- At least 10 AFA certifications since the current certification authority was issued
- Participation in an advertised/approved refresher course

3.2 i.a.c. Navigation

Requirements

- Minimum age of 12 years
- Proof of **i.a.c. OWD** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should be able to determine their course and location during a dive and safely return to the dive site's starting point. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- be familiar with and able to use natural aids for navigation,
- be able to recognize and use technical navigation aids,
- be able to safely manage dives using these aids.

Instructor Qualification

From an i.a.c. Open Water Instructor with certification authority for Navigation.

3.3 i.a.c. Dive Group Management

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving
- Proof of SC Navigation certification
- Recommended: Proof of SC Stress & Rescue and SC Deep Diving certifications

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the basic elements of dive group management and how they interact. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- be familiar with the basic elements of dive group management,
- have experience with how these elements interact within a dive group,
- be able to assess group members,
- be able to respond to their dive partner,
- be able to ensure communication within dive groups,
- be able to ensure the safety of dive groups both above and below water,
- be familiar with the duties of the safety team.

Instructor Qualification

From an i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or higher with certification authority for Dive Group Management.

3.4 i.a.c. Deep Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of **i.a.c. OWD** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar with deep diving to a maximum depth of 40 meters, both in theory and in practice. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- Have a basic understanding of psychology, physics, physiology, and decompression theory,
- have a basic understanding, both theoretical and practical, of the technical requirements for equipment (especially when diving in cold water according to EN 250),
- be able to assess group members for deep diving,
- be able to adapt to their dive partner during deep dives.

Special Provision

Due to the minimum age requirement for the **i.a.c. Deep Diving** course, there is no Junior Deep Diving course. The **i.a.c. Junior AOWD** course may not include the **i.a.c. Deep Diving** course.

Instructor Qualification

From an i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or higher with certification authority for Deep Diving.

3.5 i.a.c. Stress & Rescue

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of **i.a.c. AOWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of completion of an **i.a.c. Advanced First Aid** course (or equivalent), no more than 2 years old
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with accident prevention and the measures to be taken in the event of a diving accident. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- be aware of the particular importance of accident prevention,
- be able to conduct dives in such a way that situations which could lead to problems or even accidents for themselves or fellow divers are prevented as early as possible,
- be able to handle accident situations,
- be able to perform rescue and transport techniques in the water and on land,
- be familiar with the efficient use of rescue and signaling equipment,
- be familiar with the chain of survival, be able to initiate it, and apply first aid and CPR techniques.

Note

Ascent and rescue drills during the course may be conducted at a maximum depth of 9 meters!

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Stress & Rescue.

3.6 i.a.c. Nitrox Basic

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of nitrox dives using gas mixtures consisting exclusively of nitrogen and oxygen, with a maximum oxygen percentage of 40%. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- be familiar with the specific issues and hazards associated with Nitrox dives,
- be able to assemble and use the proper equipment for Nitrox dives,
- be able to conduct safe dives within the limits specified above,
- be familiar with the safety precautions required for the safe handling of Nitrox and oxygen.

The Nitrox Basic diver training can be conducted with or without dives. In either case, the practical portion must include measuring the current oxygen content, properly labeling the tanks, and determining the MOD.

Notes

Youth aged 12 and older may take a Nitrox Basic course and receive a (Junior) Nitrox Basic certification. This allows them to conduct dives with Nitrox, but only when accompanied by an adult Nitrox diver.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Nitrox Basic.

3.7 i.a.c. Night Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of sufficient skills in navigation and perfect buoyancy
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of night dives. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to function as a safe member of a dive group:

- be able to handle the specific challenges and hazards associated with night dives,
- be able to assemble the proper equipment for night dives,
- be able to use navigation aids at night,
- be able to behave appropriately toward their dive partner before, during, and after the dive.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Night Diving.

3.8 i.a.c. Dry Suit Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the operating and movement techniques involved in diving with dry suits. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- have greater confidence in dry-suit diving and knowledge of its specific characteristics,
- have gained greater safety through proper handling and specialized training techniques,
- have improved their ability to assess their performance when using their own dry suit.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Dry Suit Diving.

3.9 i.a.c. Environmental Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should gain an initial insight into aquatic biology, covering the following topics:

- the interrelationships within aquatic ecosystems,
- major habitats and biotic communities, particularly representatives of the most important animal groups and their biology,
- typical aquatic plants,
- planning, organization, procedures, techniques, problems, and hazards of diving (freshwater and saltwater),
- an overview of the taxonomy of major underwater life forms,
- fact-based information to debunk myths about potentially dangerous aquatic life forms,
- an overview of the interactions and interconnections among underwater life forms,
- Responsible human interaction with underwater life,
- Diving techniques that help protect life on the seafloor and minimize disturbances to underwater life,
- Protection of coastal areas,
- resting and spawning grounds

Instructor Certification

i.a.c. Scuba Instructor or higher with certification authority for Environmental Diving.

3.10 i.a.c. Altitude Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Cold-water-rated diving equipment in accordance with EN 250
- Additional equipment (e.g., torch, appropriate cold-weather gear)
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of mountain lake dives. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to:

- be able to handle the preparation, logistics, and organization of mountain lake dives,
- be able to determine the elevation of the mountain lake (using an altimeter or map) in order to accurately plan the ascent and descent routes—in terms of time and pressure—before and after diving in the mountain lake during the saturation or desaturation phases,
- understand the basics of meteorology in order to rule out any potential hazards,
- understand that, with regard to environmental protection, shoreline areas, spawning grounds, and resting areas require special protection,
- ensure optimal equipment configuration and buoyancy control,
- be familiar with the physical and medical aspects of mountain lake diving,
- be familiar with and proficient in the technical aspects of mountain lake diving, both above and below water, using appropriate equipment in accordance with EN 250, including a drysuit and the necessary additional equipment,
- be proficient in conducting dives in mountain lakes.

Instructor Qualification

From an i.a.c. Open Water Instructor with certification authority for Altitude Diving.

3.11 i.a.c. Underwater Photographer

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should gain an initial insight into underwater photography. The candidate should:

- learn the most important technical and practical fundamentals,
- be able to take underwater photos, while also taking environmental considerations into account,
- learn the basics of image editing.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Underwater Photographer.

3.12 i.a.c. Equipment

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should gain a thorough basic understanding of diving equipment. The candidate should:

- become familiar with the most important pieces of equipment and how they work,
- receive useful tips on care and maintenance,
 - o What can/should the diver do on their own?
 - o What must a qualified professional do?
- learn about helpful additional equipment,
 - o Diving equipment (e.g., instruments),
 - o auxiliary/care products,
 - o useful tools and replacement parts.

Instructor Certification

From **i.a.c. Scuba Instructor** with authorization to certify equipment.

3.13 i.a.c. Scooter

Requirements

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of i.a.c. SC Perfect Buoyancy certification
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of scooter dives. Above all, the candidate should learn about:

- various systems,
- the advantages and disadvantages of scooter diving,
- specific features/hazards,
- group organization and behavior.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for scooters.

3.14 Search & Recovery

Requirements

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of i.a.c. SC Navigation and SC Perfect Buoyancy certifications
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should be able to plan and conduct effective underwater search operations with and without aids.

To this end, the candidate should learn:

- The basics of underwater navigation and the effective use of aids,
- search methods and hazards,
- selection of equipment and a dive partner.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Search & Recovery.

3.15 i.a.c. Full Face Mask

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should learn about the advantages and disadvantages of diving with a full-face mask, such as:

- the development, construction, and operation of a full-face mask,
- special requirements for the user,
- mask-specific (breathing) exercises,
- the correct response to water entering the mask,
- communication while wearing a full-face mask.

Special Provision

A correctly fitted and airtight mask is required in all cases. If no suitable mask is available, the course cannot be conducted.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for the Full Face Mask.

3.16 i.a.c. Perfect Buoyancy

Requirements

- Minimum age: 10 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

Through additional knowledge and sufficient practical exercises, the course aims to improve buoyancy control, the use of the buoyancy compensator, and overall water position. To this end, the candidate should learn the following:

- The relationship between breathing and buoyancy,
- The interaction between the weight system, BCD, and breathing,
- The effects of buoyancy control underwater on body position,
- Positioning and distribution of weights.

Instructor Certification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or higher** with certification authority for Perfect Buoyancy.

3.17 i.a.c. Drift Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of Medical Fitness for Diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of current dives. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- Possess knowledge of the formation and behavior of currents,
- be able to recognize and assess currents,
- be able to plan and conduct current dives from shore and from a boat,
- be able to take the appropriate measures when conditions suddenly become more challenging.

Special Provision

The current strength must be appropriate for the participants' age and level of training. The younger or less experienced the divers are, the weaker the current must be.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for drift diving.

3.18 i.a.c. River Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of i. a. c. **OWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i. a. c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should be able to independently plan, prepare, and conduct river dives. To this end, the candidate should learn about:

- Special considerations when diving in flowing waters,
- specific current characteristics in rivers,
- differences between river diving and other current dives in the ocean (e. g., drift dives),
- environmental issues related to river diving,
- differences between drift diving and river diving.

Instructor Qualification

From **i. a. c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for river diving.

3.19 i.a.c. Wreck Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of i. a. c. **AOWD certification** or equivalent, in accordance with the current i. a. c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of wreck dives. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- be able to handle the specific problems and hazards associated with wreck dives,
- be able to assemble the proper equipment for wreck dives,
- be able to use orientation aids on and inside wrecks.

Instructor Qualification

From **i. a. c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Wreck Diving.

3.20 i.a.c. Ocean Cavern Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **AOWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and in practice, with the safe planning, preparation, and execution of cave dives. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- know the criteria for selecting suitable caverns,
- be able to handle the specific problems and hazards associated with cave dives,
- be familiar with the equipment required for cave dives and be able to assemble it appropriately,
- know how to behave correctly to ensure their own safety and that of their dive partners,
- know how to behave in an environmentally responsible manner during cave dives.

Instructor Certification

i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or higher, with certification authority for Ocean Cavern Diving.

3.21 i.a.c. Ice Diving

Requirements

- Minimum age: 18 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **AOWD certification** or equivalent, as per the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar, both in theory and practice, with the logistical and organizational requirements as well as the operational and movement techniques involved in ice diving. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should be able to:

- handle the preparation, logistics, and organization of ice dives or cold-water dives,
- organize and carry out the dive, including managing personnel on the ice,
- understand the basics of meteorology in order to identify and rule out potential hazards,
- understand that, with regard to environmental protection, shoreline areas, spawning grounds, and resting areas require special care,
- ensure optimal equipment configuration and buoyancy control,
- master knot-tying and line signals for ice diving,
- understand the physical and medical aspects of ice diving,
- be proficient in the technical aspects of ice diving with appropriate equipment above and below the water in accordance with EN 250, including the wetsuit and any necessary additional equipment,
- master the execution of dives under ice or in cold water,
- understand the general safety aspects of ice diving and the emergency plan/chain of survival,
- know third-party and self-rescue procedures in the event of an ice accident,
- understand environmental protection requirements.

Instructor Qualification

From **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor** with certification authority for Ice Diving.

3.22 i.a.c. Sidemount Diving

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years
- Proof of i.a.c. **OWD** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of medical fitness for diving

Training course objectives

The candidate should become familiar with an alternative method of securing and carrying diving equipment. The course teaches participants how to handle side-mounted SCUBA equipment as an alternative to the traditional back-mounted setup. Upon completion of the course, the candidate should:

- have a basic understanding of sidemount diving and its limitations,
- be familiar with the main advantages and disadvantages of sidemount diving,
- be familiar with the different types of equipment (cold-water/warm-water gear) used for sidemount diving and how to use them.

Instructor Qualification

i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or higher with certification authority for sidemount diving.

3.23 i.a.c. Distinctives

A “Distinctive” refers to a specialty that is not included in the general training guidelines but is developed and presented by an instructor. To this end, the instructor must prepare at least the following documents, modeled after standard i.a.c. specialties:

- A comprehensive and detailed course outline.
- Appropriate Training Record Card
- Question and answer sheet for the theory exam
- Bibliography/teaching materials

Only the instructor who developed the Distinctive and has received training and certification authorization from the i.a.c. Head Office is authorized to conduct training and administer the exam for it.

4.0 i.a.c. Instructor Standards

General

The i.a.c. is one of the founding members of RSTC Europe and has been working closely with CMAS Germany and CMAS Austria for many years. As a result, every i.a.c. instructor residing in Germany or Austria has the choice between:

- i.a.c. instructor without a CMAS title or
- i.a.c. Instructor with a CMAS title.

The qualification to become a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria instructor is completed during an additional session (e.g., a Crossover course or a supplementary day following an IE). Further details are described in Section 7.0.

Only certified instructors with a valid i.a.c. license are authorized to conduct training and administer certifications. Certification is issued exclusively by the i.a.c. Head Office via a corresponding certification letter, an instructor card, and a certificate.

Training to become an i. a. c. Instructor takes place at an i. a. c. dive center in Germany or abroad that is authorized to train instructors. Dive centers operated by other organizations may also be used if they meet i. a. c. standards and have the appropriate training staff available.

General Requirements for i.a.c. Instructor Training

The following general requirements apply to all training levels for i. a. c. Instructors and are supplemented by the specific content of each training level.

Information Before the Start of Training

The prospective Instructor must be informed of the following points before beginning training:

- Training prerequisites (e. g., medical certificate, minimum practical experience, theoretical knowledge, teaching techniques, instruction and supervision of diving skills, supervision and leadership of diving activities, and emergency procedures, if applicable)
- Validity and limitations of the intended certification
- Content and scope of the course
- Course schedule
- Costs and other contractual matters, taking into account national regulations
- Equipment requirements
- Insurance provisions for your own training and for the training of dive students

Requirements for the Training Facility

The training facility must be suitable for training dive instructors in terms of equipment, opening and operating hours, staff, diving opportunities and environment, as well as the range of services offered. Upon request, the i.a.c. Head Office grants accreditation as an i.a.c. Instructor Training Center, provided that all necessary requirements are met and verified.

In particular, the following applies:

- Active status as an i.a.c. Dive Center
- A suitable training room with modern teaching aids (e.g., flip chart, whiteboard, presentation boards, projector)
- Regular training and diving operations
- Evidence of above-average training activity within the i.a.c. training system
- Suitable diving opportunities in a pool or confined water and in open water for teaching the relevant training content
- Appropriate instructional and visual aids (e.g., books, cross-sectional diagrams, 3D models)
- Sufficient quantities of suitable diving equipment and accessories
- The ability to fill diving tanks at any time
- A workshop capable of handling at least minor maintenance tasks
- A permanent training team with at least one experienced, active **i.a.c. Instructor Trainer**.

The additional equipment requirements for a suitable facility are listed in detail in ISO 24803.

Requirements for Training Personnel

All instructors and trainers involved in the training must hold the necessary qualifications.

At least two instructors authorized to conduct training must be involved in the training of prospective Instructors.

In particular, the person in charge of the respective training program must:

- lead and oversee the entire training program
- hold the required minimum qualifications and authorization to conduct training and certification exams

By the final exam at the latest, a qualified Course Director approved by the i.a.c. Head Office must be present in addition to the Instructor Trainer. The Course Director's primary responsibilities include:

- evaluate the quality of the training provided by the trainer(s)
- conduct the final evaluation of the candidate
- verify that all required documentation has been submitted.

To this end, the Course Director must verify the qualifications of all participants — at least through random checks — and must be present at least during Module 9. While the Course Director is present, at least one additional Instructor Trainer must also be present, provided there are no more than four exam candidates. For larger groups, the ratio is four candidates per Instructor Trainer.

Training to Become an i.a.c. Instructor

The training consists of various modules. These can be completed either on a modular basis or all at once, in any order.

Modules 1–9, described below, constitute the Open Water Instructor training. Completing Modules 1–2 leads to Dive Leader Professional status. Participants can also be certified as Scuba Instructors by completing an IDC (Modules 3–7). The intermediate certifications DLP and SI may be obtained, but are not required.

Modules 8–9 constitute the final exam for the Open Water Instructor certification. Prerequisites for participation and completion are listed on the corresponding Training Record Card.

Training Record Cards (TRC) provide detailed information about the respective course content. Each training course must be conducted in accordance with the relevant TRC; their use is mandatory. Training Record Cards must be retained for at least eight years. Applicable local regulations must be observed.

The individual modules can be completed at any active and authorized Instructor Training Center and do not have to be taken consecutively. The maximum training period is 12 months. Training must be completed within this period; otherwise, completed modules will expire and must be repeated.

Code of Conduct for i.a.c. Instructors

General

i.a.c. Instructors work professionally and independently. They respect their peers, including those from other training organizations, and serve as role models for divers, staff, and colleagues in terms of sportsmanship, professional competence, and conduct.

They are expected to uphold the interests and standards of ISO, EUF, and RSTC — particularly in the areas of safety and mutual recognition.

Safety and Self-Assessment

The well-being and safety of divers and course participants are the top priority for i.a.c. Instructors. They perform their duties only when their own health and fitness allow. To ensure they can respond appropriately in emergencies, they regularly refresh their first aid skills through courses and training sessions. i.a.c. Instructors supervise their guests only when their physical and mental condition permits. Any form of overexertion or overconfidence must be avoided — whether while diving, teaching, or evaluating candidates.

A change in general or environmental conditions may require adjustments to the dive plan or instruction at any time. If necessary, factors such as the instructor-to-diver ratio, dive depth and duration, group composition, or dive site must be adjusted accordingly. If a diving guest is overwhelmed, diving activities must be canceled or terminated as needed. This also applies to any signs of stress or panic.

Respect and Consideration

All dive students and guests are treated with respect — regardless of age, gender, religious beliefs, nationality, disability, or sexual orientation. Special attention and appropriate measures apply when working with children and adolescents.

Training Guidelines and Safety Standards

i.a.c. Instructors must adhere to the applicable training guidelines and Safety Standards. Any liability arising from violations of these guidelines and Standards rests with the Instructor.

Dives must not exceed a depth of 40 meters without a valid reason.

Environment

i.a.c. Instructors protect the environment and take full advantage of every opportunity within their sphere of influence to do so. They also pursue ongoing education in sustainability and environmental protection, and share their knowledge with dive students, staff, colleagues, and guests.

Quality and Control

The i.a.c. places a high value on quality — particularly in the areas of dive training, sustainability, promoting fun and safety while diving, and guest satisfaction. i.a.c. Instructors are committed to honesty, to working cooperatively to resolve issues, and to correcting errors — especially in response to justified complaints.

Module Overview

Course Prerequisites

Minimum age: 18 years

Training Level: **i.a.c. Dive Leader** or equivalent, according to the current i.a.c. equivalency list

General:

- Valid medical clearance for diving, not older than 12 months
- Proof of required SC skills
- Dive log showing at least 80 dives (DG) in various bodies of water (at least 30 of which must be in the ocean), with at least 25 DG documented as a group leader

The i.a.c. Instructor training can be completed either as a modular program or as a compact course. In the compact course, all content from Modules 1–9 is taught and tested during a comprehensive training internship. Depending on the participants' prior knowledge, the seminar location, schedule, and agreement between the candidate and the ITC, this can take anywhere from 4 weeks to several months.

The modular approach allows candidates to learn and practice at their own pace.

Regardless of the training method chosen, the total training duration must comprise at least 100 training hours.

Module 1: Introduction

- Review and completion of formalities
- Assessment of i.a.c. Dive Leader skills and knowledge — theory and practice in accordance with the Training Record Card, including theory exams with corrections
- Training and certification system, Safety Standards, and regulations for training i.a.c. Instructors
- Introduction to the expectations of a dive professional
 - Professional Competence
 - Social competence
 - Personal competence
- Introduction to the specifics of introductory dives

Module 2: Practical Diving

- At least 20 dives since obtaining the Dive Leader certification, including:
 - Dives as a group leader/dive guide, including under challenging conditions such as leading groups of inexperienced divers or larger dive groups
 - Accompanying and assisting with dives and training modules as part of beginner SCUBA courses
- Review and refresher of training content from AFA and Stress & Rescue
- Conducting introductory dives

Upon successful completion, candidates can be certified as Dive Leaders or proceed directly to the Scuba Instructor training program.

Module 3: Development of Theoretical Knowledge

- Review and in-depth study of dive physics and dive medicine
- Expanding knowledge of diving equipment and compressors
 - o Familiarization with the design and basic operation of diving equipment, regulators, and compressors
 - o Equipment for dive students and instructors
 - o Care and maintenance of diving equipment — what is permitted, and what requires additional training?
 - o Setup and operation of compressors

Module 4: Working at Dive Centers

- General dive center tasks, such as equipping guests, filling SCUBA tanks, and preparing, cleaning, disinfecting, and storing used diving equipment
- Understanding the structure, organization, and operations of a dive school or center
- Basic sales skills (e.g., dive courses, equipment)

Module 5: Fundamentals of Teaching

- Instructional theory: methodology, didactics, and communication skills — in theory and practice
- Developing course programs and lesson plans for beginner training — in theory and practice
- Observation of an SC certification course and independent delivery of at least one course (under the direct supervision of an Instructor holding at least the i.a.c. Open Water Instructor certification, with the authority to conduct the respective SC certification course)
- Training beginners in theory and practice under the supervision of an Instructor Trainer

Module 6: Developing and Teaching Specialties

- Preparation and cost planning
- Development
- Teaching
- The following specialties must be developed: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, and Stress & Rescue
Assessment is conducted on a random basis at the Instructor Trainer's discretion

Module 7: Scuba Instructor Exam (certified as a Level 1 SCUBA Instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-1)

- Theory exam
- Practical exam: two dives with selected exercises as specified on the Training Record Card
- Demonstration of sufficient teaching ability

Module 8: Preparation Course (Prep Course)

- Improving existing or identified deficiencies in theory and practice
- Practice dives for exam preparation in accordance with the Training Record Card and instructor training regulations
- i.a.c. standards, philosophy, and working methods via a Crossover/instructor presentation

Module 9: Open Water Instructor Examination (IE)

- Theory exam
- Practical exam: minimum two dives with selected exercises as specified on the Training Record Card
- Teaching demonstrations in theory and practice
- Rescue exercises

= Successful completion of the Open Water Instructor training

Module 10 (optional): Upgrade to CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria Instructor (see 7.0)

= Successful completion of the Open Water Instructor and CMAS Germany or Austria Instructor* training

4.1 i.a.c. Scuba Instructor (certified as a Level 1 SCUBA Instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-1)

Prerequisites

- Proof of i.a.c. Dive Leader certification, or an equivalent certification in accordance with the current i.a.c. equivalency list
- Proof of successful completion of training and exam modules 1–7. Alternatively, individual modules from other organizations may be considered equivalent and accepted. The decision on this rests solely with the i.a.c. Head Office.
- Logbook evidence of at least 80 dives
- Submit the following complete instructor documents to the Instructor Trainer:
 - o Application for admission
 - o Digital passport-size photo
 - o Diving resume with supporting documentation
 - o Study Guide answer sheet: Training Guidelines
 - o Study Guide answer sheet: Safety Standards
 - o Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving (issued within the last 12 months, unless otherwise specified by the issuing physician)
 - o Dive Instructor Liability Insurance
 - o Proof of most recently logged dives
 - o Training Record Card

Upon completing the Scuba Instructor training, the candidate may:

- Participate in the next scheduled Open Water Instructor seminar without any additional requirements or courses
- Work as a Scuba Instructor
- Take the Open Water Instructor exam at a later date (no time limit applies). If there is a significant gap between completing the Scuba Instructor course and taking the Open Water Instructor exam, attendance at a dedicated preparatory seminar is strongly recommended.

Upon confirmation by the i.a.c. Head Office and proof of instructor liability insurance, the Scuba Instructor may teach and certify the following certifications (requirements for diving activities with children and adolescents must be strictly observed):

- Snorkeling certifications
- Discover Scuba Diving
- Scuba Diver
- The following specialties, after obtaining the corresponding certification authorization:
 - o Advanced First Aid
 - o Environmental Diver
 - o Underwater Photographer
 - o Equipment

When conducting training for the Discover Scuba Diver, Scuba Diver, or Open Water Diver courses, the Scuba Instructor may conduct open-water training dives only under the direct supervision of an instructor holding at least the i.a.c. Open Water Instructor certification.

4.2 i.a.c. Open Water Instructor (certified as a Level 2 Scuba Instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-2)

Prerequisites

- Proof of successful completion of training and exam modules 1–9. Alternatively, individual modules from other organizations may be considered equivalent and accepted. The decision on this rests solely with the i.a.c. Head Office.
- Logbook evidence of at least 120 dives
- Submit the following complete instructor documents to the Course Director:
 - o Application form
 - o Digital passport-size photo
 - o Diving resume with supporting documentation
 - o Study Guide answer sheet: Training Guidelines
 - o Study Guide answer sheet: Safety Standards
 - o Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving (issued within the last 12 months, unless otherwise specified by the issuing physician)

 - o Dive Instructor Liability Insurance
 - o Proof of most recently logged dives
 - o Completed and signed Training Record Card
 - o Proof of certification authorization for the following specialties: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, Stress & Rescue

Upon certification, the Open Water Instructor is qualified to independently conduct the following courses, in addition to those the Scuba Instructor is already authorized to teach:

- Open Water Diver
- Advanced Open Water Diver
- Master Diver
- Specialties: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, Stress & Rescue

Certification authorization for additional specialties requires further training in accordance with these standards.

4.3 i.a.c. Master Instructor

Requirements

- Minimum age: 18 years
- A valid diving instructor certification as an i.a.c. Open Water Instructor or equivalent, with additional practical experience in Germany or abroad. Proof of practical training experience primarily consists of the training courses and certifications conducted since obtaining the first exam authorization, as well as the training and practice dives completed since that time
- Proof of certification authorization for at least the following specialties: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, Stress & Rescue, Nitrox Basic
- Proof of having certified at least 50 dive students within the i.a.c. training system, including at least 10 Open Water Divers, or
- Proof of having certified at least 25 students within the i.a.c. training system, including at least 10 Open Water Divers, as well as proof of three additional certification authorizations beyond the mandatory OWI courses, at least one of which must be obtained by submitting a course proposal to the i.a.c. Head Office.
- Logbook evidence of at least 220 dives
- Proof of dive instructor liability insurance
- Proof of a valid medical certificate of fitness for diving (issued within the last 12 months, unless otherwise specified by the issuing physician)

Status and Certification

The candidate qualifies as an i.a.c. Master Instructor by submitting the above-mentioned proof of their diving activities and training work. No additional exam is required. Upon certification, the candidate is authorized to conduct the following additional training courses:

- **i.a.c. Dive Leader**
- **i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional**
- SC courses as confirmed by the i.a.c. Head Office

4.4 i.a.c. Instructor Trainer

Requirements

- Minimum age: 23
- Valid instructor certification as an i.a.c. Master Instructor, or an equivalent certification recognized by the i.a.c.
- Proof of three years of active training experience as an i.a.c. Master Instructor or equivalent. For candidates working professionally as commercial instructors at a dive center or school, the waiting period may be reduced to one year upon proof of relevant training activity.
- Proof of commercial work as an instructor as follows:
 - o own dive school with a business license or
 - o an employment contract with a dive school or shop, or
 - o Proof of active work as an instructor at a club
- Proof of successful completion of an internship at an i.a.c. Instructor Training Center
- Proof of dive instructor liability insurance
- Proof of having conducted at least 150 dive training courses and certified at least 50 students within the i.a.c. training system since receiving certification as an i.a.c. Master Instructor
- Proof of current certification authorizations
- Logbook evidence of at least 500 dives

Status and Certification

The candidate qualifies as an i.a.c. Instructor Trainer by participating in an i.a.c. Instructor Trainer Seminar, as documented on the Training Record Card. For all training and qualification components, the candidate is assessed by the training team as described in the regulations. The training and examination cover, in particular:

- Philosophy and Standards
- Content of the Instructor Training
- Planning, budgeting, organizing, and running instructor seminars
- Assessment of seminar participants' exam performance
- Demonstrating a high level of personal, social, and professional competence in theory and practice (e.g., diving skills, teaching ability, and aptitude as a coach/trainer)
- General Update

Upon certification, the Instructor Trainer is authorized to conduct the following additional training courses:

- Authorized to conduct independent examinations up to the **i.a.c. Scuba Instructor level**
- Independent conduct of Crossover seminars and instructor updates up to the i.a.c. Master Instructor level, in accordance with the i.a.c. standards for Instructor Trainers and Course Directors
- Conducting IDCs and prep courses up to the i.a.c. Master Instructor level, in accordance with the i.a.c. standards for Instructor Trainers and Course Directors

Instructor training and the conduct of Crossover courses determine the quality of training within the i.a.c. system and must be reserved exclusively for highly qualified and specifically suitable instructors. The i.a.c. Instructor Trainer therefore bears significant responsibility for the quality of future instructors. For this reason, the exam for this qualification may be retaken no more than once. If the exam is failed a second time, there is no further opportunity to obtain the i.a.c. Instructor Trainer qualification. Further details are governed by the i.a.c. Standards for Course Directors.

4.5 i.a.c. Course Director

Requirements

- Minimum age: 25
- Valid i.a.c. Instructor Trainer certification with at least three years of active experience. Where suitability can be demonstrated, equivalent certifications from recognized organizations may be accepted. In such cases, the candidate must have participated in at least one IDC and one IE.
- Proof of having successfully trained at least three Scuba Instructors within the last 36 months, or participation as an Instructor Trainer in at least three IDCs/IEs with consistently positive evaluations from the training team and candidates.
- Proof of commercial work as a dive instructor, including proof of ownership of a dive school meeting the i.a.c. requirements for an Instructor Training Center (business license). Alternatively, a contractual affiliation with a recognized i.a.c. Instructor Training Center may be accepted. In this case, the candidate must have played a significant role in the preparation and conduct of at least three IDCs/IEs.
- Proof of instructor liability insurance or, where applicable, dive center liability insurance

Status and Certification

The candidate qualifies as **an i.a.c. Course Director** by participating in a qualifying seminar in the role of an active, responsible trainer, where they teach and assess the following content and evaluate participants' performance up to the Instructor Trainer level:

- Philosophy and Standards
- Content of the Instructor Training
- Planning, budgeting, organizing, and running instructor seminars
- Supporting Instructor Trainers in conducting examinations and evaluating the conduct and performance of Instructor Trainers with respect to seminar participants
- Demonstrating the highest level of personal, social, and technical competence in theory and practice (e.g., in-depth knowledge of the i.a.c. and its standards, training materials and pathways, diving theory, diving skills, teaching ability, and suitability as a coach/trainer)
- General Update

Upon certification, the individual is authorized to conduct the following additional training courses:

- Specialty Certification Authorizations
- IE Conduct

As the highest training level, the i.a.c. Course Director serves as the link between the diving training program and the i.a.c. Head Office. They determine whether participants pass or fail during instructor seminars. Further details are governed by the i.a.c. Standards for Course Directors.

4.6 i.a.c. Specialty Instructor

In addition to the certification authorizations for i.a.c. specialties obtained during Open Water Instructor training:

- Navigation,
- Dive Group Management,
- Deep Diving,
- Perfect Buoyancy,
- Stress & Rescue,

additional certifications (see above) can be earned. This can be done by:

- Submitting a course proposal (only possible after completing the Open Water Instructor course or higher)
- Study Guides, if available (only after completing the Open Water Instructor course or higher)
- Taking a course at an Instructor Training Center (from the Scuba Instructor level onward, for a limited number of specialties)

Certified Scuba Instructors may obtain certification authority for the following specialties:

- Advanced First Aid
- Environmental Diver
- Underwater Photographer
- Equipment

Special Provisions

To maintain certification as an Advanced First Aid Instructor, you must complete a corresponding refresher course every two years.

5.0 i.a.c. Cross-Over Standards

General

The i.a.c.'s Crossover courses offer trained instructors from other organizations recognized by the i.a.c. in accordance with the current equivalency list the opportunity to transition into the i.a.c. system. Placement into the various instructor levels following the Crossover is based primarily on demonstrated knowledge, skills, and competencies. There is no entitlement to placement at a specific instructor level.

The i.a.c. recognizes all achievements completed with other recognized organizations to the greatest extent possible. All crossover seminars are therefore always tailored to the participants' prior knowledge. Candidates from CMAS, EUF, and RSTC partner organizations are generally eligible for Crossover. All other candidates require individual review by the i.a.c. Head Office.

Requirements

- Minimum age of 18
- Valid diving instructor certification at minimum as an Open Water Instructor, or equivalent training from an organization recognized by the i.a.c.
- Dive log with a minimum of 120 logged dives
- Proof of instructor liability insurance
- Submission of the following complete documentation:
 - o Application for admission
 - o Digital passport-size photo
 - o Diving resume with supporting documentation
 - o Study Guide answer sheet — Training Guidelines
 - o Study Guide answer sheet — Safety Standards
 - o Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving (issued within the last 12 months, unless otherwise specified by the issuing physician)
 - o Diving Instructor Liability Insurance
 - o Proof of most recently logged dives
 - o Completed and signed Training Record Card
 - o Proof of authorization to teach at least the following specialty courses: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, Stress & Rescue
- Proof of current instructor status (if you do not yet hold an i.a.c. license)

Contents of the Crossover Seminar

The Crossover seminar focuses on topics the candidate has not covered in their previous training. These include, above all:

- The i.a.c. philosophy — particularly what sets it apart from and makes it advantageous over other organizations
- Training-specific differences compared to other organizations (e.g., tables, skills)
- The advantages of combining i.a.c. with diving and travel
- The i.a.c. training system
- Opportunities for collaboration
- Content of the members-only section of the i.a.c. website
- E-Academy and e-learning
- Ordering process (training materials, merchandise, etc.)
- Certification process
- Dive center system
- Insurance
- Tourism

Training is conducted in accordance with the current i.a.c. Training Record Cards.

Status and Certification

Depending on their prior qualifications, Crossover graduates are classified as:

- **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor**
 - o Authorized to certify up to and including the i.a.c. Master Diver
 - o Authorized to certify all specialties recognized by the i.a.c. Head Office

- **i.a.c. Master Instructor**
 - o Authorized to certify up to and including the i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional
 - o Authorized to certify all specialties recognized by the i.a.c. Head Office

A direct Crossover to Instructor Trainer or Course Director is not possible.

To reach these levels, additional content is covered so that candidates can fulfill the duties required by these standards.

The Instructor Trainer should be able to train and supervise prospective diving instructors. To this end, after successfully completing the Crossover, candidates must, in particular, acquire and further deepen their knowledge of the i.a.c. and the i.a.c.'s specific philosophy as it relates to training content and exam questions.

Further details are set out in the standards for Instructor Trainers and Course Directors.

6.0 CMAS Standards for Diving Students

The i.a.c. certifications OWD, Master Diver, and Dive Leader can be supplemented with a CMAS card upon passing an additional exam. The required supplementary exercises are conducted using the corresponding i.a.c. Training Record Cards.

Only i.a.c. instructors who hold the additional license as a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria Instructor and a valid CMAS Instructor card are authorized to conduct this training.

Details and Prerequisites for All Courses

- Details on prerequisites, course content, and certification can be found in the current i.a.c. Training Record Card.
- For minors, written consent from a legal guardian is required.
- Proof of Medical Fitness for Diving

Important Note

The i.a.c. has licensing agreements with various CMAS partners!

According to current CMAS standards, divers may only be certified with a CMAS Germany card if their training takes place in Germany. This applies to divers of all nationalities. Outside Germany, CMAS Germany certifications may only be issued if the diver:

- a) is a German citizen or
- b) has a registered residence in Germany.

A CMAS Austria card may only be issued if the training takes place in Austria. This applies to divers of all nationalities. Outside Austria, CMAS Austria certifications may only be issued if the diver:

- a) is an Austrian citizen or
- b) has a registered residence in Austria.

Exceptions are permitted only with prior approval from the respective national CMAS federation. If in doubt, consult the i.a.c. Head Office before issuing any certification.

6.1 CMAS 1 Star

Training course objectives

In addition to the content already covered in the OWD course, the candidate must be able to demonstrate the physical fitness and motor skills required of a CMAS 1-Star diver. In addition to the supplementary pool training, one additional open-water dive is required.

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 14 years
- Completed OWD diving course—no more than 12 months may elapse between the start of OWD training and the completion of CMAS 1 Star diver training.

Instructor Qualification

Minimum i.a.c. Open Water Instructor with a CMAS 1-Star Instructor license.

6.2 CMAS 2-Star

Training course objectives

After completing the OWD or CMAS 1-Star course, the candidate acquires additional knowledge and skills for safe, independent diving and earns the CMAS 2-Star Diver certification.

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 16 years
- Proof of i. a. c. Open Water Diver or CMAS 1-Star Diver certification
- Certifications in Dive Group Management, Navigation, and Advanced First Aid
- Minimum 25 logged dives at the time of certification

Instructor Qualification

Minimum i. a. c. Master Instructor with a CMAS 2-Star Instructor license.

6.3 CMAS 3-Star

Training course objectives

In addition to the content already covered in the Dive Leader course, the candidate must demonstrate the physical fitness and motor skills required of a CMAS 3-Star diver. This requires an additional pool exam.

The candidate must also pass the theory exam for the CMAS 3-Star Diver certification.

Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 (country-specific regulations must be observed)
- Proof of i. a. c. Master Diver or CMAS 2-Star Diver certification
- Minimum 65 logged dives at the time of certification.

Instructor Qualification

Minimum i. a. c. Master Instructor with a CMAS 2-Star Instructor license.

7.0 CMAS Standards for Instructors

General

In addition to the standard i.a.c. instructor training program, the i.a.c. training system also offers the opportunity to earn a CMAS instructor license. This can be done either separately — by successfully completing a corresponding instructor seminar — or by attending an additional seminar alongside existing i.a.c. instructor status.

Important Note

The i.a.c. has licensing agreements with various CMAS partners!

According to current CMAS standards, divers may only be certified with a CMAS Germany card if their training takes place in Germany. This applies to divers of all nationalities. Outside Germany, CMAS Germany certifications may only be issued if the diver:

- a) is a German citizen or
- b) has a registered residence in Germany.

A CMAS Austria card may only be issued if the training takes place in Austria. This applies to divers of all nationalities. Outside Austria, CMAS Austria certifications may only be issued if the diver:

- a) is an Austrian citizen or
- b) has a registered residence in Austria.

Exceptions are permitted only with prior approval from the respective national CMAS federation. If in doubt, consult the i.a.c. Head Office before issuing any certification.

Certifications issued in violation of these standards — regardless of the reason (e.g., issued in error) — are invalid and may be revoked.

Implementation Provisions

Certified i.a.c. instructors may obtain authorization to issue CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria certifications by completing an additional seminar. The additional seminars cover exercises not already completed during the i.a.c. instructor seminars.

The integrated exams for the i.a.c. /CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria Instructor certification include both i.a.c. and CMAS exercises.

Corresponding Training Record Cards are available for both versions and are mandatory.

Duration and Conduct of an i.a.c./CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria Instructor Seminar

The preparatory module of a complete Instructor Seminar includes a minimum of four practice dives; the examination module includes a minimum of six examination dives. The modules do not need to be completed in one continuous session. A maximum of two dives may be conducted per day.

A Crossover seminar primarily introduces candidates to the CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria system and to the differences between teaching standard i.a.c. courses and courses with the CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria add-on certification.

All theoretical and practical content required for the respective training levels is described in detail in the corresponding Training Record Card and must be communicated to candidates well in advance of the exam.

Principles

The instructor-level certification exam (CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria Instructor) must be conducted exclusively by at least two CMAS 3-Star Instructors. The CMAS 3-Star Instructor is the highest licensable instructor level within CMAS Germany and CMAS Austria. At least one of the two i.a.c. Instructor

Trainers/CMAS TL3s must also hold the i.a.c. Course Director qualification. The i.a.c. Head Office determines who leads each seminar.

Crossover to the CMAS 3-Star Instructor is not possible under any circumstances — not even within CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria licensing partners. Candidates seeking the CMAS 3-Star Instructor certification must in all cases complete at least one full Instructor seminar.

To renew CMAS examination authorizations, 30 hours of continuing education must be documented within a five-year period. This continuing education must cover the subject areas of “Diving Medicine” and “Practical Training.” Participation may be fulfilled through appropriate i.a.c. seminars. Seminars offered by other providers recognized by the i.a.c. (e.g., aqua med, DAN, CMAS Germany, or CMAS Austria license partners) may be accepted.

Reporting Requirements

The following information must be submitted to the i.a.c. Head Office no later than six weeks before the start of an instructor seminar:

- Location, body of water, and dates of the instructor seminar
- Names and TL numbers of the examiners

In addition, participants must be registered no later than 3 weeks before the start of the seminar with the following information:

- First and last name
- Date of birth
- Nationality
- Street, house number, ZIP code, and city
- Current Instructor certification (specifying the issuing organization)
- Exam date of the current certification
- Desired Instructor level

CMAS Germany, CMAS Austria, or the i.a.c. Head Office are authorized to participate in the instructor seminars as observers. The i.a.c. Instructor Training Center must be notified of this at least 14 days before the exam begins, specifying the individuals who will be observing the exam. Any costs incurred as a result are not the responsibility of the ITC.

Exam Content: Diving Theory

For all instructor levels, the following is required based on the candidates' respective learning and training levels:

- written answers to a questionnaire (long-answer and short-answer questions)
- A 20-minute teaching demonstration on a topic of the candidate's choice from the following subject areas: diving instruction, diving practice, diving physics, diving medicine, diving physiology, diving equipment, and diving and the environment. The candidate must be prepared to conduct two teaching demonstrations on different topics.
- Demonstration of first aid procedures for diving accidents, including the use of at least one oxygen system. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to perform the appropriate first aid measures, and answer technical questions on anatomy, physiology, and diving medicine.
- For candidates for the CMAS 2-Star Instructor and CMAS 3-Star Instructor certifications, the written essay on a specified topic is also mandatory.

Exam Content: Practical Diving

For all instructor levels, the following is required at the candidate's respective training level:

- Rescue Techniques
- Safety on board/at the dive site
- Endurance and freediving skills
- Demonstration of a buddy rescue involving controlled transport from a depth of approx. 10 meters to the surface using all equipment, emergency signals at the surface, transport to the shore or boat (approx. 50 meters), and subsequent transport to shore or aboard the boat, first aid measures, and initiation of further actions

In addition, depending on the target instructor level, candidates must complete additional content specifically relevant to that level of proficiency. The exam content is described in detail in the regulations for instructor training and in the Training Record Cards.

7.1 CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 1-Star Instructor

Responsibilities

In addition to the duties of an **i.a.c. Open Water Instructor**, the role of the CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 1-Star Instructor includes training beginner divers up to and including the CMAS 1-Star Diver level in both theory and practice.

Requirements

- Minimum age of 18 years
- SCUBA Instructor in accordance with ISO 24802-1
- CMAS 3-Star or equivalent according to ISO 24801-3
- At least 120 logged dives, including at least ten dives to a depth of 30 meters
- Completed courses in diving medicine and night diving
- Participation as an assistant in a complete CMAS 1-Star course
- Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving

Exam Content: Practical Diving

In addition to the general exam requirements, the following are required:

- At least six dives with various exercises, including at least one dive to a depth of at least 25 meters
- Training of Beginners
- The exam requirements are described in detail in the regulations for instructor training and in the Training Record Cards.

7.2 CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 2-Star Instructor

Responsibilities

In addition to the duties of an **i.a.c. Master Instructor**, the role of a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 2-Star Instructor includes training divers from CMAS 1-Star to CMAS 3-Star levels, as well as all advanced and specialty courses for which the instructor has been authorized to conduct training and administer certification exams.

Requirements

- Minimum age of 21
- Valid CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 1-Star Instructor license with at least one year of active training experience, including:
 - o 150 logged dives since completing the CMAS 3-Star certification, of which at least 30 must have been completed in the 12 months preceding the application date, and at least six at a depth of 30 meters in freshwater or 35 meters in saltwater
 - o Responsible leadership of a complete CMAS 1-Star course, confirmed by an instructor (at least a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 2-Star Instructor)
 - o Participation as an assistant (instructor and examiner) in a CMAS 2-Star, CMAS Specialty, or Refresher course, including theoretical and practical exams, confirmed by an instructor (at least a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 2-Star Instructor)
- Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving

Exam Content: Practical Diving

The practical exam is conducted in open water or inland waters with a minimum depth of 30 meters. At least six dives must be completed in accordance with the guidelines of CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria, with the following requirements:

- At least two of the six dives must reach a depth of at least 30 meters
- Organization and supervision of dives with various exercises, in accordance with the regulations for instructor training and the Training Record Cards

7.3 CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 3-Star Instructor

Responsibilities

In addition to the duties of a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 3-Star Instructor, the role of a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 3-Star Instructor includes the training and certification of the various instructor levels within CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria.

Requirements

- Minimum age: 23
- Valid CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 2-Star Instructor license with at least two years of active training experience, including:
 - o 500 logged dives, at least 30 of which must have been completed in the 12 months preceding the application date, and at least six at a depth of 40 meters or more
 - o Responsible leadership of a CMAS 2-Star or CMAS 3-Star course, or completion of at least 50 full CMAS courses, as confirmed by a dive center or the certification holder
 - o At least two practical training sessions for the CMAS 3-Star course
 - o Participation as an assistant (presenter and examiner) in a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 1-Star Instructor seminar, including theoretical and practical exams, confirmed by an instructor (at least a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 3-Star Instructor)
- A valid medical certificate of fitness for diving

Exam Content: Practical Diving

A minimum of six dives must be completed within three consecutive days, in accordance with CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria guidelines. At least two of the six dives must be conducted from a boat. The following content is mandatory:

- At least two of the six dives must reach a depth of at least 30 meters
- Organization and leadership of individual components of a CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria Instructor Seminar
- A presentation of approx. 30 minutes on fundamental topics related to the training of divers or SCUBA Instructors
- Organization and supervision of dives incorporating various exercises, in accordance with the regulations for instructor training and the Training Record Cards

8.0 CMAS Standards for Crossover

General

The i.a.c.'s Crossover programs offer certified instructors from other organizations recognized by the i.a.c. in accordance with the current equivalency list the opportunity to transition into the i.a.c. system. The classification into the various instructor levels following the Crossover is primarily based on demonstrated knowledge, skills, and competencies. Candidates cannot claim placement at a specific instructor level.

The i.a.c. recognizes all achievements completed with other recognized organizations to the greatest extent possible. All Crossover seminars are therefore always tailored to the participants' prior knowledge. In general, all candidates from CMAS, EUF, and RSTC partner organizations are eligible for Crossover. All other candidates must undergo an individual assessment.

8.1 Crossover to i.a.c. Open Water Instructor, including CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 1-Star Instructor

Requirements

- Minimum age of 18
- Valid TL1 license or equivalent training (e.g., Open Water Instructor) from an organization recognized by the i.a.c.
- Dive log with at least 150 logged dives
- Proof of authorization to teach and certify the following specialty courses: Navigation, Deep Diving, Stress & Rescue, Dive Group Management, and at least one additional specialty.
- Submission of the following complete documentation:
 - o Application for admission
 - o Digital passport-size photo
 - o Diving resume with supporting documentation
 - o Study Guide answer sheet: Training Guidelines
 - o Study Guide answer sheet: Safety Standards
 - o Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving (issued within the last 12 months, unless otherwise specified by the issuing physician)
 - o Diving Instructor Liability Insurance
 - o Proof of most recently logged dives
 - o Completed and signed Training Record Card
 - o Proof of authorization to teach at least the following specialty courses: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, Stress & Rescue
 - o Current instructor status

Contents of the Crossover Seminar

The theoretical and practical content is taught in accordance with the current i.a.c. Training Record Card. The crossover programs can be requested through the i.a.c. Head Office or online at www.diveiac.de.

Status and Certification

- Certification authority up to CMAS 1-Star
- Authorization to certify up to i.a.c. Master Diver
- Authorization to conduct SC exams confirmed by the i.a.c. Head Office

8.2 Crossover to i.a.c. Master Instructor, including CMAS Germany or CMAS Austria 2-Star Instructor

Requirements

- Minimum age of 21
- Valid TL2 license or equivalent training (e.g., Staff Instructor) from an i.a.c.-recognized organization, with at least 12 months of practical experience in Germany or abroad, as well as a successfully completed exam at the TL 2-star level. In addition to the instructor certification, the candidate's current employment and wealth of experience—e.g., at professional dive schools or dive centers worldwide—are decisive factors in determining their current status. The final classification is determined by the i.a.c. Head Office.
- Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving
- Dive log with at least 220 logged dives
- Submission of the following complete documentation:
 - Application form
 - Digital passport-size photo
 - Diving resume with supporting documentation
 - Study Guide answer sheet: Training Guidelines
 - Study Guide answer sheet: Safety Standards
 - Valid medical certificate of fitness for diving (issued within the last 12 months, unless otherwise specified by the issuing physician)
 - Dive Instructor Liability Insurance
 - Proof of most recently logged dives
 - Completed and signed Training Record Card
 - Proof of authorization to teach at least the following specialty courses: Navigation, Dive Group Management, Deep Diving, Perfect Buoyancy, Stress & Rescue
 - Current instructor status
- Proof of at least 50 certifications issued, including at least 30 Open Water Divers
- Proof of participation in an i.a.c. Advanced First Aid Seminar or equivalent within the past 2 years
- Basic knowledge of boat handling and seamanship

Contents of the Crossover Seminar

The theoretical and practical content is taught in accordance with the current i.a.c. Training Record Card. The crossover programs can be requested through the i.a.c. Head Office or online at www.diveiac.de.

Status and Certification

- Authorization to conduct exams up to CMAS 3-Star level
- Authorization to certify up to i.a.c. Dive Leader and i.a.c. Dive Leader Professional level
- Authorization to conduct SC exams confirmed by the i.a.c. Head Office

9.0 Quality Assurance and Complaint Management

9.1 Quality Assurance

In Training

The training of i. a. c. recreational divers is governed by:

- Training Guidelines/Training Standards, which govern the individual course levels and the respective prerequisites for participation, as well as establish implementation regulations and limits for the various training programs and certifications
- Safety Guidelines, which, in addition to the training guidelines, contain further binding provisions regarding risk management and hazard prevention
- Regulations for the Training of Assistant Instructors and Instructors/Guidelines for Instructor Training, which define the prerequisites, content, and evaluation mechanisms for instructor training and exams
- Training Record Cards, which, in addition to the training guidelines, provide detailed information on the theoretical and practical content of each diving course.

Upon completion of the instructor training, every i. a. c. instructor commits to unconditionally adhering to and applying the above-mentioned guidelines in their current version, and confirms this by signing the Training Record Card and/or the membership application.

The training of dive students requires that all training content has been completed in full and to an appropriate standard in accordance with the above-mentioned standards. Passing an exercise once is not sufficient — the instructor must ensure that all required exercises are performed safely and can be reproduced at any time.

Certification

Divers are certified upon course completion exclusively online via the i. a. c. database. To this end, every active instructor receives individual, password-protected access to the internal area. Each instructor's permissions (e.g., certification authorizations) are stored in the internal area. This ensures that instructors can only certify courses for which they are authorized. Permissions are stored in the instructor database and are automatically verified with each certification.

Certifications not issued through this system are not recognized. Such a serious standards violation will be penalized in accordance with the complaint management process (see p. 60).

Before issuing a certification, the instructor must inform each course graduate about the limitations of their training level and discuss appropriate or recommended continuing education options.

Post-Certification

As soon as certification is complete, the student diver receives a digital certification, which is sent to the student diver's registered email address.

Physical certification cards are produced centrally at the i. a. c. Head Office and mailed to the student, the instructor, or the dive center within 2 business days, provided they were ordered through the i. a. c. Head Office. Each certification also includes an invitation to complete a course evaluation. This is done online via a special URL or by scanning the corresponding QR code. All feedback is submitted anonymously.

9.2 Complaint Management

Purpose

The complaint management system is designed to investigate and address violations of i.a.c. standards (see p. 59) and ethical principles.

The complaint management system does not handle complaints unrelated to i.a.c. training.

The complaint management system is also an essential component of internal quality control and can be initiated even without an explicit complaint — particularly when anomalies appear in course evaluation results sent with the certification.

Complaints Committee

Complaints may be submitted to the i.a.c. Head Office at any time. Upon receipt, the complaint is forwarded to the responsible parties:

- a. the Managing Director of the i.a.c.,
- b. the Executive Director of the i.a.c., and
- c. the Training Director of the i.a.c.

Any decision on the outcome of a complaint, including measures or sanctions to be imposed, requires the agreement of at least two of the above-mentioned individuals.

Complaint Management Process

1. Receipt of a Complaint

Complaints may be submitted to the i.a.c. Head Office verbally (e.g., by phone) or in writing (e.g., by email). While all complaints are taken seriously, only written and signed complaints can be formally pursued. A verbal complaint must therefore be followed up in writing. Until then, all information is treated confidentially.

2. Further Procedure

Once the complaint is received, the complainant is notified of its receipt. They then have 15 business days to confirm their consent to having their personal data and the complaint forwarded to a third party or committee. If consent is not provided, the case is closed and no further investigation is conducted.

If consent is granted, the instructor or the Instructor Training Center/dive center will be informed of the complaint. The accused has 15 business days from the date the complaint is served to respond in writing.

If no response is received within this period, or if the response is incomplete, the accused will be placed on inactive status until the matter is fully resolved. During this time, no i.a.c. or CMAS courses may be offered, conducted, or certified. The obligation to continue paying dues remains unaffected.

If the accused party's written response is complete, the Appeals Committee will review it and determine whether the standards have been violated. If no violation of standards has occurred, the Committee will notify the complainant and the Instructor Training Center of this and take no further action. The case is closed.

If the committee finds evidence that standards may have been violated, further investigations will be conducted depending on the severity of the allegation.

The following investigative measures may be applied:

- The accused is asked to submit all Training Record Cards for courses completed in the last 12 months.

- The Complaints Committee will contact a random selection of trained divers to ask about any similar issues.

After reviewing all the facts, the committee decides whether a violation of standards has occurred.

If no violation is found, the committee will notify the complainant and the Instructor Training Center/instructor accordingly, close the case, and take no further action.

If a standards violation is identified, the committee may, at its discretion, issue specific requirements to the Instructor Training Center or instructor.

Depending on the nature of the standard violation:

- the accused may regain active status by successfully completing a refresher course;
- the instructor's qualification may be downgraded,
- the license may be permanently revoked, with no possibility of future reinstatement as an i.a.c. Instructor.

Legal counsel may be consulted before any further steps are taken.

Regardless of the outcome, the instructor or training center will be notified in writing by the i.a.c. Head Office — either by email or by certified mail where necessary.

10.0 Licensing, Fees, Use of the License, and Termination Provisions

Admission of Instructors from the Dive Leader Professional Level

The applicant must submit all required, currently valid documents and forms — or copies thereof — fully completed to the i.a.c. Head Office or to the responsible Instructor Trainer. By doing so, the applicant acknowledges the applicable i.a.c. guidelines and standards and commits to conducting all training courses in accordance with them at all times.

Processing of Certification Authorizations and Other Applications

Applications will only be processed once all required documents have been submitted in full. Incomplete submissions cannot be processed and will be returned to the sender. Any costs incurred will be billed.

Licensing Fees

The Instructor Trainer will inform the applicant of any applicable fees; these may also be requested directly from the i.a.c. By submitting the documents, the applicant acknowledges these costs. Once the license has been issued, withdrawal with a refund or credit is not permitted.

Annual Fee

The annual fee is billed upon issuance of the license. Unless terminated by the instructor or the i.a.c., the license automatically renews for 12 months.

Passive Instructor Status

i.a.c. instructors may convert their active license to passive status no earlier than 9 months after the start of the license period, or 3 months before the annual fee is due. Instructor liability insurance is not required under passive status.

Converting to passive status revokes the authority to issue all i.a.c. and CMAS certifications. Switching back to active status is straightforward within the first two years, provided a current medical clearance and instructor liability insurance are submitted. After more than two years, reactivation requires participation in an update course.

Ordinary Termination

Either party may terminate the license without providing a reason, with at least three months' notice before the annual fee is due.

Termination Without Notice and Suspension of the License

If an instructor violates i. a. c. standards or acts in a manner detrimental to the contract, the i. a. c. may suspend the license pending final resolution. The affected party must be notified immediately in writing. Any appeal must be submitted in writing to the i. a. c. Head Office within four weeks of this notification, as evidenced by the date or postmark.

In addition, the i. a. c. is entitled to terminate the instructor's contract without notice for the following reasons:

- failure to settle an invoice after a prior reminder,
- a serious violation of the i. a. c. 's guidelines or Safety Standards,
- Violation of the i. a. c. 's general standards of conduct,
- A final judgment by a court of law.

Outstanding invoices remain due even after a justified termination without notice and must be settled.

Use of the License

The use of the registered word and figurative mark "International Aquanautic Club" is expressly permitted for promotional purposes. Logos and additional information are available for download by instructors in the members-only section of the website. Upon expiration of the license, advertising using the brand name, the corresponding logos, or instructor titles is no longer permitted.

Teaching Materials

The i. a. c. offers a wide range of teaching materials (e.g., e-learning, books, and presentations) available for purchase or as free downloads via the website. While there is no requirement to use specific materials, instructors should use i. a. c. -specific teaching materials whenever possible. Instructors agree to always use the most current versions of teaching materials during training, and to use all copyrighted materials solely for personal use — not to modify or reproduce them in any way without the written permission of the copyright holder.

11.0 Appendix: Children's Diving

Introduction

The term “child” does not have the same meaning in all language regions. For the purposes of these standards, students are defined as children between the ages of 8 and 15. When the term “children's diving” is used here, it refers to diving with minors who have not reached the age of majority. Minors have limited legal capacity. This also means that at least one legal guardian must sign the registration form for a training course.

Minors—that is, the participants or graduates of our children's diving courses—may only go diving in the company of at least one adult, even after completing their course.

Children have a different anatomy than adults. This means that equipment suitable for children is essential. It is not enough to simply use the smallest sizes designed for adults. All wetsuits and pieces of equipment must be tailored to a child's physique to avoid negative experiences and, in particular, excessive strain on the young musculoskeletal system.

Special care must be taken to ensure that they:

- feel respected as individuals,
- are motivated and want to participate in the training of their own free will,
- feel safe in every situation and are confident that the chosen dive site matches their ability,
- are aware that no two dive sites are alike,
- understand that the daily dive time is sufficient for them,
- consider the individual learning steps to be appropriate and can easily follow them, as well as understand the purpose of the exercises,
- are able to control themselves,
- be able to build complete trust in their instructor.

Notwithstanding the current training regulations for scuba diving, children may also participate in the snorkeling course intended for adults.

11.1 Prerequisites

Medical Requirements

Children under the age of 15 are not yet fully mature, both physically and mentally. Due to a lack of experience, they often fail to recognize dangers in time. They have fewer options for resolving problems, and they are more prone to decompensation (organ dysfunction) than adults. For this reason, minors are not yet responsible for themselves but remain under the protection of their parents.

Like other sports, diving carries certain risks. Unfortunately, diving accidents do occur occasionally, usually due to personal errors, a misjudgment of one's own abilities, or an excessive willingness to take risks. In particularly severe cases, this can lead to permanent health damage and, in rare cases, even death. As responsible instructors, we must therefore never forget that parents entrust their minors to us in good faith, and we must do everything we can to safely prepare them to participate in this wonderful sport.

There are very few studies in the medical literature that address the topic of “children and diving.” The cause of decompression sickness in adults has not yet been conclusively determined. However, if certain rules are followed, such an incident is rather unlikely for adults. The situation is different for children: They are still growing, meaning certain parts of their bodies are not yet fully developed and may be much more vulnerable. For example, the longitudinal growth of bones does not cease until puberty. This naturally surfaces the question of whether bubble formation in the sensitive growth zone of the bone could lead to stunted growth. To prevent this problem from arising in the first place, we must observe and adhere to the following guidelines to protect children:

- shallow diving depths,
- short dive times,

- no repeat dives whenever possible.

Furthermore, scuba diving equipment with the smallest possible volume—and thus less weight—must be selected so as not to place excessive strain on the child’s musculoskeletal system (out of the water). Any pre-existing spinal conditions must be given special consideration during the medical health status examination.

In addition, the following points require special consideration when training children:

- The **lungs** are not yet fully developed at birth. The pulmonary alveoli continue to multiply until the age of 8, and the elastic fibers of the lungs continue to develop until the age of 18. Special attention must therefore be paid to exhalation during the ascent phases.
- The **ear, nose, and throat system** requires special attention, as pressure equalization may occur much more slowly under certain circumstances. Pressure differences have a significantly greater effect on smaller bodies.
- The **sensation of cold** is often ignored, even though heat loss is greatly increased due to the less favorable distribution of body size and surface area.

The primary goal of children’s diving should be for children between the ages of 8 and 15 to joyfully explore the beauty of the underwater world on their own initiative at shallow depths and during short dives, accompanied by a responsible adult trained in diving with children. In this context, any tendency toward risk-taking must be nipped in the bud to ensure the necessary protection of the child’s health.

General Requirements

Based on medical guidelines—which must always take precedence in any planning—the following principles apply to children’s diving instructors:

- The minimum age for children to begin diving is 8 years old (on their 8th birthday).
- The child must want to participate in the training entirely of their own free will and with enthusiasm (it is not compulsory).
- The child must be in good health and must demonstrate this by completing the standardized RSTC health questionnaire, which must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.
- For children, a medical evaluation may be recommended before beginning diving activities. Often, children feel completely healthy (in some cases, they may not yet be able to interpret certain warning signs from their bodies), and parents also consider their children to be healthy. The i.a.c. recommends that for children under the age of 12, the medical examination should not have been conducted more than six months prior. For children over the age of 12, it should not have been conducted more than 12 months prior.
- For each individual training program (course leading to a junior certification or junior specialty certification), written consent from the legal guardians (legal representatives) is required.

11.2 Curriculum

Training Process

The most important aspect of training children is instilling a sense of fun and enjoyment in the water. The proven sequence of snorkeling, pool training, and open-water training must always be followed during practical training. It is important to keep in mind the following questions: Why are the children here, and what do they want to learn?

Certainly, knowing how to safely use the basic equipment is a major advantage, but the willingness to learn—especially among children—stands or falls with the level of motivation.

From an educational perspective, the “principles of methodical learning” must also always be observed, e.g.:

- from simple to complex (e.g., clearing the mask = easier with SCUBA than with a snorkel),
- from the familiar to the unfamiliar (e.g., swimming/diving without/with fins).

The specific rules prescribed for each age group (e.g., maximum depth) must always be observed.

Training Objective

The goal of the training is to prepare children ages 8 and up for a form of recreational activity that offers joyful experiences in a playful manner.

In the process, they should learn:

- to maintain balance while floating,
- to use their legs as the sole means of propulsion for moving forward,
- to breathe through a snorkel or a regulator,
- adapt to a three-dimensional environment,
- to understand the necessary principles,
- to recognize the new hazards posed by the environment,
- to take responsibility for others, and
- trusting others in an emergency.

Methodological Structure

Due to the already limited dive time and the need to keep the training varied, advanced snorkeling training can be conducted in parallel with scuba training. It is up to the instructor to determine how the lessons are conducted. However, to ensure a meaningful learning experience, the following methodological structure should be followed:

1. Assessment of swimming skills
2. Swimming with a diving mask
3. Mastering snorkel breathing
4. Swimming with basic equipment
5. Preparing the diving equipment
6. Stationary Scuba Diving
7. Scuba Diving While Moving

All training courses are conducted using the corresponding Training Record Cards, which must be downloaded in their current version from the members-only section of the i. a. c. website.

11.3 Training Levels

Scuba Diving

For children's diving, we distinguish four junior certification levels:

- Junior Diver
- Junior Scuba Diver
- Junior Open Water Diver
- Junior Advanced Open Water Diver

In addition, after completing the Junior Open Water Diver course, various specialty courses can be taken with children (see Specialties)

The Junior Diver course is designed for children ages 8 and up and may only be conducted in a pool with a maximum depth of 2 meters. Through playful activities, young divers are introduced to breathing underwater and learn how to float underwater and equalize pressure.

The training is typically completed in one week or over a longer period with a similar time commitment. The minimum duration depends on the specific circumstances and is at the discretion of the responsible instructor.

The content of the Junior Scuba Diver training and the Junior Open Water Diver course corresponds to that of their adult counterparts. However, care must be taken to ensure that the training and examination are age-appropriate. In particular, theoretical content (e.g., laws of physics and medical topics) as well as motor or physically demanding tasks (e.g., putting on and taking off scuba gear above and below water) require age-appropriate support from the instructor.

Important Note Regarding the Junior Open Water Diver:

Provided the student demonstrates sufficient maturity and aptitude, the Junior Open Water Diver course may be completed from a minimum age of 10, even without having completed the prerequisite Junior Diver and Junior Scuba Diver courses. In such cases, the content of the two preceding courses must be integrated into the training. The "Open Water Diver" Training Record Card is relevant in this context. To conduct a Junior Open Water Diver course in accordance with this Training Record Card, the status of Children's Diving Instructor is not mandatory but is strongly recommended.

Important Note Regarding the Junior Advanced Open Water Diver:

The Junior Advanced Open Water Diver training includes the Specialty Navigation and two additional, freely selectable specialties. **The Specialty Deep Diving is only available to divers aged 15 and older and therefore cannot be part of this training.**

Upgrading from Junior Open Water Diver to Advanced Open Water Diver is only possible from age 15 or older and after successfully completing the Deep Diving specialty.

11.4 Certification Levels – Age – Depth Limits – Ratio

Achieving a Junior certification level does not depend on depth, but rather on the completion of the exercises assigned to that level. The individual Junior certification levels require mastery of an increasing number of specific basic rules and techniques, which is why they are also graded by age.

Junior Certification Levels	Minimum Age
Junior Diver	8 years
Junior Scuba Diver	10 years
Junior Open Water Diver	10 years
Junior Advanced Open Water Diver	12 years

The maximum depth at which you may dive with children depends on the child's certification and age.

Age	Certification	Maximum Depth
8 to 10 years	Junior Diver	2 meters in the pool
10 to 15 years	Junior Scuba Diver	12 meters, preferably in a pool or confined water
10 to 15 years	Junior Open Water Diver	12 meters
Ages 12 to 15	Junior Advanced Open Water Diver	12 meters

In addition to the maximum depths, there is a recommendation on how depths can be increased over the course of training based on age:

Instructor-to-student ratio during training

Training stage	Instructor	Diving student
Pool dive ¹⁾ up to a maximum depth of 2 meters	From Scuba Instructor	1 to 4 people ²⁾
Dive in a pool or confined water ¹⁾ , deeper than 2 meters	From Scuba Instructor	1 to 2 people ²⁾
Subsequent dives in open water ¹⁾	Open Water Instructor and above	1 person

¹⁾ Be sure to observe the maximum water depth and age (maturity) of the students!

²⁾ The deeper the pool or dive site, the fewer the number of divers; under less-than-ideal conditions, only 1 person per instructor

11.5 Certification Levels – Privileges

General

Achieving certification levels or specialty certifications does not authorize children to dive together on their own. At least one group member must be of legal age and thereby assume legal responsibility for the dive group. It is strongly recommended that this person demonstrate a sufficient level of experience and possess adequate knowledge of diving with children. However, children who attain a junior certification or specialty certification should ultimately also be qualified to dive with other divers besides the instructor. The decision of whom to entrust their child to rests primarily with the legal guardians (parents or guardians).

In any case, the instructor must ensure:

- that the experience and training level of the dive group leaders and any buddies meet the specified requirements,
- that the dive group leaders are familiar with the rules of diving with children (diving equipment, choice of dive site, daily, depth, and time limits),
- that attention is focused on the young dive buddy and under no circumstances on other activities, such as preparing for exams,
- that there is only one child (under 15 years of age) in each dive group.

Specifically

The conditions under which a child may dive with someone other than the instructor do not, under any circumstances, include further training. Therefore, this may only involve reinforcing practical movement skills, excluding all activities that the child has not yet learned. Consequently, recommendations are established regarding at what stage of training a child should dive with whom under optimal conditions after completing the training.

Ratio of Certified Divers to Certified Children After Completing Training

Child's Qualification	Qualification of accompanying person(s)
Junior Diver	In the pool only; certified diver as supervisor
Junior Scuba Diver	In the pool: Dive Leader Professional or higher In confined water: Scuba Instructor or higher
Junior Open Water Diver	At least Dive Leader (ISO 24801-3)
Junior Advanced Open Water Diver	At least Dive Leader (ISO 24801-3)

11.6 Safety Regulations

General

- The diving area (swimming pool or confined water) must be suitable for conducting the planned exercises without difficulty and must also be appropriate for the children's level of training. In open water, sites with suitable flora and fauna should be selected. Visibility must be greater than two meters.
- There must be a convenient and safe entry and exit point.
- The maximum diving depth specified for the respective age group must not be exceeded.
- Night dives must not be conducted with children under 12 years of age.
- The water temperature at the surface must not be less than 16°C.
- The dive time must not exceed 25 minutes.
- The child's physical and emotional well-being must always be the top priority (adjusting the dive time to the water temperature, local conditions, and the child's voluntary and joyful participation).
- Training for a junior certification must always take place from shore or the edge of a pool.
- Starting with the Junior Scuba Diver course, training may also be conducted from a dock or boat. In such cases, it must be ensured that there is a suitable entry and exit point for children.
- If training takes place from an inflatable boat or other small vessel, keep the trip as short as possible. Tanks must be properly secured and equipment must be well organized. Each child must be assigned a seat and told where the life jackets are, unless circumstances require them to be worn during the trip.
- Children must be supervised at all times — whether on shore or on the water (in a boat).
- Shower and changing facilities should be separate from those for adults and segregated by gender — either by location or by time.
- Supervision during changing and showering must be provided by a female supervisor for girls and a male supervisor for boys.

Health and Fitness Status

To assess the child's current health status, a questionnaire will be administered to the child and the legal guardians. Legal guardians must be informed of any possible risks and provide written consent. The standardized RSTC health questionnaire must be completed and signed by the legal guardians.

11.7 Dive Site

The dive site must be easily accessible. Student divers must not have to walk long distances carrying their equipment out of the water. The entry and exit point should, if possible, be at water level. Avoid jumping into the water while fully equipped.

The maximum depth and diving conditions of the body of water must be appropriate for the children's skill level. In particular, the body of water must be free of currents, must not have strong waves, and must have good visibility (at least two meters). The water temperature must not fall below 16°C. Terminate the dive immediately if the child begins to feel cold. Depending on the water temperature, the dive should last between 15 and a maximum of 25 minutes.

Above Water

- Supervision before the dive (prior to the briefing) and after the dive (after stowing equipment and the debriefing) must be provided by a responsible person who is familiar with the safety rules.
- All activities related to the dive must be performed or supervised by the assigned children's dive instructor. Before the dive, these include:
 - o Pre-dive briefing
 - o Preparation and inspection of equipment
 - o Equipment check
 - o Putting on and adjusting the equipment
 - o Buddy check
 - o Repetition of the exercises
 - o Practical dry runs
 - o Air Check
 - o Entering the Water

Underwater

The group leader in charge must respond appropriately to relevant feedback from dive partners, especially when it concerns the children's diving behavior and well-being. Only one dive per day should be conducted. Night dives are not recommended. Children must be supervised closely, especially during and immediately after entry. The descent must not take place without an orientation marker (no "free descent"). Also note:

- Group assignments for training dives:
 - o For the first dive in open water, the instructor-to-student ratio must be 1:1.
 - o The instructor must be able to maintain physical contact with the student at all times.
- Observe the maximum dive time and depth.
- As with adults, dive time is calculated from the start of the descent to the completion of surfacing. The maximum dive depth for children is not a target depth — it is an absolute limit, as specified above.
- Reduce times and depths earlier than you would for adults.
- The distance from the children must not exceed arm's reach.
- If any difficulty arises or the child shows signs of losing interest, abort the dive immediately.

After the dive:

- Exiting the Water
- Removing and doffing the equipment
- Storing the equipment
- Debriefing (can also take place simultaneously with the previous activities)

11.8 Safety equipment

In addition to general safety equipment (see i. a. c. Safety Standards), adequate safety equipment — such as life jackets on boats — must be available.

In addition to the standard safety equipment (first-aid kit, oxygen kit, cell phone, landline, marine radio), a child-sized mask must be available for oxygen administration or rescue breathing.

11.9 Diving Equipment

Children's diving equipment

- Diving equipment for children must always be in perfect working condition and suited to children's needs.
- Fins should not be too stiff or too heavy.
- The diving mask must fit the child's face size.
- The snorkel should have a soft mouthpiece that fits the child's mouth.
- The SCUBA set should consist of a BCD, a tank with a volume of at least four liters and no more than eight liters, and a regulator.
- The BCD must be adjusted to the child's height.
- Introduce the use of the BCD as a buoyancy control device early on — initially, the instructor may operate it if necessary.
- The regulator must be equipped with a submersible pressure gauge. For the first dives of the Junior Diver course in a shallow pool, the otherwise mandatory alternative air source may be omitted. The second stage should be lightweight, the mouthpiece soft, and adapted to the child's mouth size.
- At water temperatures below 25°C, a suitable, child-sized wetsuit is mandatory.
- The weight system must be easy to use and must not have any sharp edges. Taking the tank into account, weighting must be no more than the minimum required to offset the wetsuit's buoyancy.

Instructor's Diving Equipment

- The instructor must always carry diving equipment that complies with i. a. c. Safety Standards.
- The alternative air source must have a mouthpiece suitable for juniors, and the use of gloves should be avoided whenever possible.
- As a general rule, the instructor should wear the same thermal protection as the child.

11.10 Training Program

Based on i. a. c. guidelines and its training system, the training of children between the ages of 8 and 15 follows a similar approach to that of adults. A clear progression runs through all student training:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| • snorkeling in the pool | → | Practical and theoretical training |
| • Diving in the pool | → | Practical and Theoretical Training |
| • Open-water diving (lake or ocean) | → | Practice and Theory |

As instructors, we must never lose sight of the fact that every person has a limited capacity for absorbing and retaining information, as well as limited motor skills. It is counterproductive to try to cover multiple learning steps at once during a training session — for example, teaching fin kicks at the same time as conducting SCUBA exercises. A carefully structured curriculum imparts the necessary skills and knowledge step by step, taking into account the students' learning pace.

11.11 Diving Outside of Class/After the Course

Group Composition

The group must be led by someone who holds at least an i.a.c. Dive Leader certification (DL). Children with a Junior Diver or Junior Scuba Diver certification may only dive when accompanied by a SCUBA Instructor or someone with a higher certification. If no instructor is present, no more than one child holding a Junior Open Water Diver certification may dive with the group.

Dive Profile/Time

In accordance with i.a.c. guidelines for diving with children, depth limits are as follows:

- Ages 8–10: max. 2 meters
- Ages 10 and up: max. 12 meters

The dive depths are maximum values and must be reduced based on the students' abilities and the conditions. The dive must not exceed 25 minutes.

Termination Criteria

Terminate the dive immediately if the child begins to feel cold, experiences discomfort or increasing anxiety, loses interest in diving, or encounters any difficulties.

11.12 Training in Artificial Bodies of Water

Pool Requirements

The pool must provide enough space to perform all planned exercises without difficulty. Conflicts with other pool users — divers or swimmers — must be prevented. A dedicated pool area should be available if possible. The pool should have a shallow area where children can stand comfortably. Handholds along the edge — such as an overflow channel — are advantageous and essential if the water is too shallow to stand in. Entry and exit via stairs is recommended. The optimal water temperature is between 29°C and 33°C. If the temperature is below 25°C, thermal protection should be worn. The maximum water depth must not exceed five meters and depends on the diving students' level of training.

Supervision

The overall student-to-instructor ratio should not exceed 4:1. Depending on the students' level of training and discipline, the type of exercise, and the water depth, a lower ratio may be required. The instructor should lead the training session from the poolside and position themselves so they can see all students in the water at all times. If the instructor enters the water for pedagogical or methodological reasons, an additional qualified supervisor must be present for groups of more than four students. The instructor must position themselves to directly observe the student(s) practicing without losing sight of the rest of the group. For freediving exercises, a 1:1 supervision ratio must be strictly maintained.