

Cardiff University Sub-Aqua Club – Diving Code

As primarily a training branch with a largely fluid, largely inexperienced membership, we should recognise that for the safety of all concerned we must adhere to the following code.

This document refers to behaviour on a Club Dive, i.e. one organized by a club member, open to members of a stated diver grade, and a dive where club equipment is being used. Private dives choosing **not** to adhere the guidelines below shall not be considered as Club Dives, and shall not be permitted to use any club equipment.

Divers are, of course, expected to adhere to BSAC practices and recommendations as outlined in the publication “Safe Diving”. The points outlined below are modifications to the guidelines therein and reiterations of particular issues of importance to this branch of the BSAC.

1. Dive Trips

- The Diving Officer (DO) must be notified of all trips, and any necessary paperwork for the DO and/or the Union is to be completed in advance.
- Accurate log sheets of dives and training must be kept and returned to the DO.
- A qualified and responsible Dive Manager is to be appointed on all CUSAC dive trips. If necessary, Assistant Dive Managers may be nominated to assist the Dive Manager to carry out their duties.
- Correct arrangements for signing kit in and out of Talybont should be followed. See the Equipment Officer(s) for details.
- Accurate weather and tidal information for the proposed destination should be obtained.
- The Coastguard should also be briefed of any coastal diving activity, whether from a RIB or a shore dive. Remember to inform them when diving activities have concluded for the day.
- Divers are requested to follow ‘The Diver’s Code of Conduct’, attached.

2. Equipment

- All divers must carry an Alternative Supply (AS) of gas in the event that they may need to share air underwater. Acceptable AS include an octopus regulator, or a pony cylinder of 3 litres or more with its own regulator assembly.
- Furthermore, any divers planning to dive deeper than **30m** **MUST** carry a fully independent air source. This could be a pony rig or a twin-set, with either independent regulators or a manifold.
- Weight belts should be fitted with a reliable quick release device, and be positioned so that they fall clear of other equipment when released.
- SMB’s should be used where there is significant water movement; when operating well offshore; and in areas with surface boat traffic.
- DSMB’s should be carried on dives where SMB’s cannot be used safely due to the risk of entanglement, such as on a wreck dive.

3. Buddy Pairs

- Trainee Ocean Divers on their first open water dives will dive with Club/Open Water Instructors.
- Ocean Divers, and divers of similar or equivalent qualification, with limited experience will dive with Club/Open Water Instructors

- Ocean Divers, and divers of similar or equivalent qualification, who have considerable experience may dive with Dive Leaders.
- Newly qualified Sports Divers, and divers of a similar or equivalent qualification and experience, will dive in a buddy pair to a **maximum depth of 20m**. Experience of diving at depth will be built up progressively, up to a **maximum of 35m**, under the supervision of a Dive Leader/Instructor.
- Experienced Sports Divers shall be allowed to dive in a buddy pair to a **maximum of 35m**, providing that both divers have progressively gained experience at that depth.
- Similarly, newly qualified Dive Leaders and divers of a similar or equivalent qualification and experience, will be limited to a **maximum depth of 35m**. Progressive experience of diving at depths up to a **maximum of 50m** shall be conducted under the supervision of a suitably experienced Dive Leaders/Instructor.
- Diving shall be undertaken in pairs unless conditions dictate that three may enter the water, at the discretion of the DO/Dive Manager.
- Nothing herein removes the authority of the DO/Dive Manager to limit an individual’s diving on a Club Dive in the interests of safety.

4. Boat Handling

- Those holding the Combined Diving Associations’ Diver Coxswain Award and with suitable diver Cox’n experience, are permitted to Cox the boat. Holders of BSAC Boat Handling or RYA Level II Powerboat qualifications may drive the boat under the direct supervision of a Diver Coxswain, at the discretion of the Diving Officer.
- All those eligible to Cox the boat should read and adhere to the guidelines set out in the Boat Protocol document, which can be viewed/downloaded from the club website. Particular attention should be paid to the new SOLAS regulations, in particular the regulation that covers Passage Planning. Failure to follow these new regulations could have serious implications for the Cox, the boat and the club.
- The kill cord is to be used **at all times** by any person driving the boat.
- Buoyancy aids are to be used by all persons on the boat, unless a sufficient buoyancy suit is being worn.
- The International Code Flag ‘A’ is to be flown when diving is being conducted from the boat.

Member’s Declaration

Whilst a member of Cardiff University Sub-Aqua Club on organised Club Dives, I agree to dive according to the above guidelines. I understand that if I do not abide by these guidelines, I will not be eligible to use any club equipment and that I will not be diving with the support or recognition of Cardiff University Sub-Aqua Club.

Name..... Signature..... Date.....

BSAC - The Diver's Code of Conduct

More and more people are taking to the water. Some for recreation, some to earn their living. This code is designed to ensure that divers do not come into conflict with other water users and sets out some guidelines which should be observed alongside the regulations relating to Marine Nature Reserves.

Before leaving home

Contact the nearest BSAC Branch or the dive operator local to the dive site for their advice. Seek advice from them about the local conditions and regulations. If appropriate, have the correct chart and tide tables for the area to be dived.

On the beach, river bank or lakeside

1. Obtain permission before diving in a harbour or estuary or in private water. Thank those responsible before you leave. Pay harbour dues.
2. Try to avoid overcrowding one site, consider other people on the beach.
3. Park sensibly. Avoid obstructing narrow approach roads. Keep off verges. Pay parking fees and use proper car parks.
4. Don't spread yourselves and your equipment since you may upset other people. Keep launching ramps and slipways clear.
5. Please keep the peace. Don't operate a compressor within earshot of other people - or late at night.
6. Pick up litter. Close gates. Be careful about fires. Avoid any damage to land or crops.
7. Obey special instructions such as National Trust rules, local bye-laws and regulations about camping and caravanning.
8. Remember divers in wet or dry suits are conspicuous and bad behaviour could ban us from beaches.

In and on the water

1. Mark your dive boats so that your Club can be identified easily. Unmarked boats may become suspect.
2. Ask the harbour-master or local officials where to launch your boat - and do as they say. Tell the Coastguard, or a responsible person, where you are going and tell them when you are back.
3. Stay away from buoys, pots, and pot markers. Ask local fishermen where not to dive. Avoid driving through rafts of seabirds or seal colonies etc.
4. Remember ships have not got brakes, so avoid diving in fairways or areas of heavy surface traffic and observe the 'International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea'.
5. Always fly the diving flag when diving, but not when on the way to, or from, the dive site. Never leave a boat unattended.
6. Do not come in to bathing beaches under power. Use any special approach lanes. Do not disturb any seal or bird colonies with your boats. Watch your wash in crowded anchorages.
7. Whenever possible, divers should use a surface marker buoy.

On conservation

1. Never use a spear gun.
2. Shellfish, such as crabs and lobsters, take several years to grow to maturity; over-collecting in an area soon depletes stocks. Observe local Byelaws and restrictions on the collection of animal and plant specimens. However the BSAC recommends that you do not collect shellfish, but if you must collect, only take mature fish or shellfish and then only what you need for yourself. Never take a berried female (a female with eggs); this is stock for future years.

Never sell your catch or clean it in public or on the beach and do not display your trophies.

3. Ascertain and comply with seasonal access restrictions established to protect seabirds and seals from disturbance. During the seabird breeding season (1st March-1st August) reduce noise and speed near seabird breeding sites. Do not approach seal breeding or haul-out sites. Do not approach dolphins or porpoises in the water.
4. Be conservation conscious. Avoid damage to weeds and the sea bed. Do not bring up sea-fans, corals, starfish or sea urchins - in one moment you can destroy years of growth.
5. Take photographs and notes - not specimens.

On wrecks

1. Do not dive on a designated wreck site without a licence. Protected wrecks are indicated on Admiralty charts and marked by buoys, or warning notices on the shore nearby.
2. Military wrecks should not be disturbed or items removed from them. This includes the debris field. The debris field is the trail of wreckage that comes away from the main body of the wreck during the sinking process. This trail can consist of parts of the ship, the cargo and the personal possessions of the crew.
3. Do not lift anything that may be of archaeological importance.
4. If you do discover what might be an historic wreck do not talk about it, but contact the Receiver of Wreck (023 8032 9474), who will advise you about your next steps. If your find is important you may apply for it to be designated a protected wreck site. You can then build up a well-qualified team with the right qualifications to investigate your site with the assistance of a qualified archaeologist.
5. If you do lift any material from the sea-bed, it is a legal requirement to report it to the Receiver of Wreck as soon as reasonably possible, even if you own the wreck that the material has come from.
6. Avoid the temptation to take souvenirs. Go wreck diving to enjoy the scenery and life, or get involved in projects. If you must take something, try photographs or measurements, and records of marine life.
7. Know and understand wreck law. If you remove material from wreck, which you then sell for profit, you are diving for reward, which is outside the scope of sport diving and you must conduct your dives in strict accordance with HSE regulations. A sound knowledge of wreck law will prevent you breaking the law, perhaps even ending up with a criminal record where no crime was intended.

Members are reminded that in the light of this policy following any conviction of any BSAC member for an offence in relation to wreck the member will be liable to have his or her membership withdrawn for bringing the BSAC into disrepute.

Don't let divers down - keep to the diver's code