

**EFFECTIVE**  
**1 June 2002**



**MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT**  
**FOR**  
**Recreational Assistant Scuba Instructor Certificate**

As Approved By


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**Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC)**  
**Minimum Course Content**  
**for**  
**Recreational Assistant Scuba Instructor Certificate**

**1. Scope and Purpose**

The Assistant Scuba Instructor Course provides individuals who have met the dive supervisor requirements with additional training as instructional assistants. Using the background established during dive supervisor training, the Assistant Scuba Instructor course builds on this foundation. The assistant scuba instructor candidate will learn through practical application (internship: hands on experience working with actual candidates) or through practical training exercises (designed to role play actual training circumstances) while supervised by the certified scuba instructor.

This standard provides minimum content requirements for recreational assistant scuba instructor training. These requirements do not define an optimum level of training for a recreational assistant scuba instructor. Instructional programs that exceed these requirements are encouraged. These standards are meant to be comprehensive, but general in nature. That is, the standards present all of the subject areas essential for minimum assistant scuba instructor training, but they do not give a detailed listing of the skills and information encompassed by each area. These items are simply listed in the standards; training organizations shall publish detailed course outlines that meet these standards, which would include specific techniques.

Although the information categories are outlined in what may appear to be a logical sequence, the outline should not be reviewed as a lesson plan. That is, the order in which the information is presented in the standards, while logical as a framework for the basic requirements of this standard, does not necessarily define the sequence of a class lesson plan. Similarly, the requirements presented in this standard do not indicate the emphasis that should be placed on a particular subject area, or the manner in which subjects are to be taught. Rather, course outlines, lesson plans and other training aids prepared by training organizations responsible for training recreational scuba assistant scuba instructor shall be used as guidelines for the sequencing and emphasis of course content requirements presented in these standards. Sequencing and emphasis decisions are at the discretion of the certifying training organization, and are to be made within the context of environmental factors, instructor characteristics, and other relevant considerations.

The intent of these standards is to provide individuals with sanctioned training as assistant scuba instructors. The standards cover the supervision, training, and assistance in the training of recreational divers. A certified assistant scuba instructor is qualified to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to assist certified instructors in conducting academic and scuba skills training of recreational scuba divers, to conduct limited or specialized training and issue certification for this training as outlined by their respective training organization, and to conduct supervised diving activities. The assistant scuba instructor may perform the duties as outlined by his/her respective training organization.

## 2. Definitions

**Certification.** Document indicating that the bearer has completed all requirements of an assistant scuba instructor certification course. This verification is issued by a training organization upon the confirmation of the satisfactory completion of all course requirements, as documented in the bearer's individual log/training record and the training organization's equivalent documentation.

**Current.** Certification or document issued which has not reached its expiration date prior to the issuing assistant scuba instructor certification.

**Diver Rescue.** Training offered by a training organization that includes diving-specific classes in emergency planning and accident management, along with open water training in the areas of self aid, self assist, buddy aid, buddy assist, locating, surfacing and egress of an unresponsive diver, diver emergency planning and accident management procedures.

**Assistant Scuba Instructor.** An individual who is currently qualified and sanctioned by a training organization to assist an instructor in teaching recreational scuba divers, to provide limited training in the use of scuba under the direction of a certified scuba instructor, independently provide limited training to certified divers as defined by his/her agency, and to conduct supervised diving activities as outlined by his/her respective training organization. To be sanctioned, the assistant scuba instructor must meet the annual renewal requirements of the training organization.

**Assistant Scuba Instructor Course.** The training course leading to assistant scuba instructor certification issued by a training organization. Successful completion of a course which meets or exceeds this standard qualifies an individual to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to supervise diving activities, assist a certified scuba instructor in conducting academic and scuba skills training and to independently provide limited training to certified divers as outlined by his/her respective training organization.

**Minimum Assistant Scuba Instructor Diving System.** This equipment is required to be worn by candidates while performing the skills listed in 5.4 and 5.5. This equipment includes, as a minimum: fins, mask, snorkel, cylinder and valve, buoyancy control device with low pressure inflator, backpack, regulator, alternate air source (active scuba/air delivery system), submersible pressure gauge, weight ballast system and exposure suit (if appropriate), timing device, depth gauge, knife/diver's tool (unless prohibited by law or regulation at the dive site), dive tables, compass/direction monitor and emergency signaling device.

**Limited Presentation.** A supervised teaching internship or practical training exercise designed to give the candidate teaching experience. Teaching assignments are to be non-complex topics; simple skills for pool/confined water and open water. Limited presentations are conducted under the direct supervision of the instructor. The instructor is to correct any errors that may be made by the candidate by summarizing the candidate's presentation for the students and should privately provide feedback on candidate performance and offer suggestions for improvement.

**Direct supervision.** Visual observation and evaluation of candidate skill performance and candidate diving activities by an instructor. Direct supervision requires personal observation and evaluation of the performance of the skills required for certification. During underwater skill performance and evaluation, direct supervision requires the candidate to be accompanied underwater.

**Out-Of-Air Emergency Alternatives.** Procedures allowing a diver to ascend to the surface in the event of an out-of-air situation.

dependent procedures include: alternate air source; buddy breathing; redundant air supply (provided by a buddy).

independent procedures include: emergency ascent; redundant air supply.

### 3. PREREQUISITES

In order to enroll in an assistant scuba instructor course an individual shall meet the following minimum Prerequisites.

**(1) Age.** The individual shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age; there is no upper limit.

**(2) Dive Experience.** An evaluation conducted by the instructor of the candidate's dive experience that includes, but is not limited to:

1. 40 logged dives.

2. Additional experience (e.g., advanced, night, deep, navigation, and search and recovery) since entry-level certification, as documented in the candidate's individual log book/training record or equivalent documentation.

**(3) Minimum Candidate Diving System.** The candidate shall possess (the minimum assistant scuba instructor candidate diving system).

**(4) Minimum Candidate Certification.** The candidate shall have completed the requirements and be certified at the dive supervisor level, or must receive the required dive supervisor training during the assistant scuba instructor course, as required by the training organization.

### 4. ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATION

**(1) Medical Examination.** The candidate shall have, within the past year, a medical examination and approval for diving, without conditions or restrictions, by a licensed medical practitioner prior to engaging in water activities. In no event shall medical approval be accepted, wherein the medical practitioner signing the approval is the participating candidate.

**(2) Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risk.** Candidates shall be informed of the inherent risks of scuba and shall agree to sign appropriate forms acknowledging and assuming those risks prior to participating in water activities. These forms may include, but are not to be limited to: liability release; waiver and release of liability; affirmation and liability release; assumption of risk; limitation of liability; safe diving practices; standards for safety; statement of understanding; etc.

**(3) Knowledge and Practical Application.** The individual shall assist a certified instructor with all academic, pool/confined water and open water sessions of at least one (1) complete open water diver scuba diving course and/or complete practical training exercises that simulates classroom, pool/confined water and open water challenges.

**(4) Teaching Presentations.** The individual shall present at least on (1) limited presentation each for academic, pool/confined water and open water in at least one (1) complete open water diver scuba diving course (three (3) presentation total). Teaching presentations done as part of the dive supervisor program may not be counted.

**(5) CPR.** At the time of certification, the candidate shall complete and have current, training in CPR as required by the training organization. CPR may be taught during the assistant scuba instructor course, but may not be counted towards the 70 total training hours.

**(6) First Aid.** At the time of certification, the candidate shall complete and have current, training in First Aid as required by the training organization. First Aid may be taught during the assistant scuba instructor course, but may not be counted towards the 70 total training hours.

**(7) Diver Rescue.** The candidate shall complete training in diver rescue skills as required by the training organization.

**(8) Training Hours.** The candidate shall complete at least seventy (70) hours of involvement/training/evaluation which may include no more than thirty (30) hours of dive supervisor training.

**(9) Dive Experience.** At the time of certification, the candidate shall have at least 60 verifiable open water logged dives.

**(10) Records.** Appropriate assistant scuba instructor records are to be retained by the training organization.

## **5. MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT**

The course shall consist of the topics and scuba skills required by the training organization and as outlined in this section.

**5.1 Introductory Information.** The following information should be made available to candidates before or during the first class meeting.

- (1) Certification requirements (see section 3 and 4)
- (2) Scope of course
  - (a) Content
  - (b) Limitations of eventual qualification
- (3) Equipment requirements
- (4) Course procedures

**5.2 Course Topics.** The candidate shall complete training under the supervision of a certified instructor. Training is to include the topics as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section.

- (1) Preparation, planning, and control in dive management and diving activities
- (2) Pool/confined water and open water procedures
- (3) Practical experience in assisting with the training of open water divers
- (4) Experience teaching limited segments
- (5) Pool/confined water and open water problem solving
- (6) The organization's training standards
- (7) The organizations' requirements for assistant scuba instructor certification
- (8) Professional and ethical responsibility of a recreational assistant scuba instructor
- (9) Indication of knowledge as outlined in section 4.

**5.3 Academic Session.** The candidate shall complete academic training as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section. This training is to occur during the academic portions of one (1) complete open water diver scuba course or through simulated classroom practical exercises.

- (1) Observing/Supervising
- (2) Assisting
- (3) Teaching of one (1) limited presentation -- lecture

**5.4 Pool/Confined Water Scuba Skills.** The candidate shall complete pool/confined water training as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section. This training is to occur during the pool/confined water portions of one (1) complete open water diver scuba diving course or through simulated practical training exercises.

- (1) Observing/Supervising
- (2) Assisting
- (3) Teaching of one (1) limited presentation – pool/confined water

**5.5 Open Water Sessions.** The candidate shall complete open water training as required by the training organization and as outlined in this section. This training is to occur during the open water portions of one (1) complete open water diver scuba course or through simulated practical training exercises.

- (1) Observing/Supervising
- (2) Assisting
- (3) Teaching of one (1) limited presentation – open water

**For more information, contact:  
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# Appendix A

## RSTC Members

### IDEA

International Diving Educators Association  
P.O. Box 8427  
Jacksonville, FL 32239 USA  
1-904-744-5554 Fax: 1-904-743-5425  
Email: [info@ideascuba.com](mailto:info@ideascuba.com)

### PADI

Professional Association of Diving Instructors  
30151 Tomas Street  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2125 USA  
1-949-858-7234 Fax: 1-949-267-1266  
Email: [Julie.taylor.sanders@padi.com](mailto:Julie.taylor.sanders@padi.com) or [jeff.nadler@padi.com](mailto:jeff.nadler@padi.com)

### PDIC

Professional Diving Instructors Corporation  
1015 River Street  
Scranton, PA 18505 USA  
1-570-342-9434 Fax: 1-570-342-6030  
Email: [info@pdic-intl.com](mailto:info@pdic-intl.com)

### SDI

Scuba Diving International  
18 Elm Street  
Topsham, ME 04086 USA  
1-207-729-4201 Fax: 1-207- 729-4453  
Email: [worldhq@tdisdi.com](mailto:worldhq@tdisdi.com)

### SSI

Scuba Schools International  
2619 Canton Court  
Ft. Collins, CO 80525 USA  
1-970-482-0883 Fax: 1-970-482-6157  
Email: [wdevore@divessi.com](mailto:wdevore@divessi.com)

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