

# How to welcome already trained divers into your club



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# Introduction

Already trained divers from other agencies can be a real asset to any BSAC club.

Not only do they come with a formal qualification, they also come with experience, enthusiasm and potentially additional skills that can directly contribute to the running of your club.

More than 40% of BSAC members have been PADI trained at some point. BSAC clubs offer an already trained diver a cost-effective opportunity to dive regularly, without the need to re-train. And for those who have learnt to dive on holiday, a BSAC club is the ideal way to make a safe and enjoyable transition to UK diving.

This guide has been put together to help your club successfully recruit already trained/other agency divers. It provides the key facts about welcoming other agency divers and outlines the dos and don'ts of integrating them into your club. It also includes tips on marketing to other agency divers and provides all the core information you need on how an already trained diver can really benefit from being a member of your club... and BSAC.

We've tried to provide all the essential information and guidance you need but if you do have any additional questions please do get in touch, we'd be happy to help even further.

## Useful contacts:

**Diver resources team** – [drt@bsac.com](mailto:drt@bsac.com) / +44(0)151 350 6203 Diver and training advice

**Membership team** – [membership@bsac.com](mailto:membership@bsac.com) / +44(0)151 350 6201 Membership advice and administration

**Marketing team** – [marketing@bsac.com](mailto:marketing@bsac.com) / +44 (0)151 350 6224 General marketing enquiries



# Welcoming other agency divers to BSAC – the key facts

BSAC HQ is often asked what a club should– and shouldn't – do when welcoming a potential new member who already holds a diving qualification. As a quick checklist, below are the 10 essential facts you need to know when recruiting already qualified or other agency divers:

1. BSAC welcomes ALL divers – if their qualification is recognised and valid then they can dive with us!
2. An already qualified diver can guest dive with a BSAC club and will be covered by BSAC's third party liability insurance **(see page 9 for full details)**.
3. A club's Diving Officer must see evidence of the diver's qualification and can ask to see their log book to assess competence and experience.
4. As long as it is valid, a diver with a qualification from another agency does not have to re-train with BSAC or apply for a BSAC equivalency qualification card. They can simply dive within the limits of their current diver grade (and within BSAC's Safe Diving guidance).
5. They can, if they wish, continue their training with BSAC, moving on to the next BSAC diver grade relevant to their existing qualification. **(see page 5 for BSAC's diver grade equivalency chart)**.
6. It is at the discretion of the Diving Officer and/or Training Officer to offer and provide remedial or refresher training **(see page 12 for more information)**.
7. BSAC welcomes instructors who have trained with other agencies and there is a simple route they need to follow to be able to teach in-branch **(see page 11)**.
8. The buddy pairing of an already trained diver must adhere to BSAC Safe Diving, taking into account their BSAC equivalency grade **(see [bsac.com/safediving](https://bsac.com/safediving) for full details)**.
9. BSAC's Diver Training Programme incorporates training modules such as drysuit, nitrox and SMB/DSMB use which would be a separate paid-for speciality with other diving agencies.
10. An already trained diver from another agency can access the above training modules for free in order to develop and consolidate their existing skills. **(See page 12 for more details)**.

## Did you know...

...that you can help BSAC keep its central membership database up-to-date by supplying HQ with evidence of your new members' qualifications. A scan of their qualification record and ideally a head and shoulders photograph emailed to **[drt@bsac.com](mailto:drt@bsac.com)** will do the trick!





# Diver grade equivalency chart

So what does 'welcoming all divers' actually mean? When it comes to a diver's qualification, it means recognizing and valuing the grade they currently hold and ensuring their transition into your club as an active diver is as smooth and supportive as possible.

To help, we've put together the below diver grade equivalency chart so you can see what BSAC diver level your potential new member is coming in at and what would be the next step in their training, should they choose to progress with BSAC. This list is not definitive – if you are presented with a qualification from an agency not listed please contact the Diver Resources Team

(Call **+44 (0) 1151 350 6203** or email **drt@bsac.com**)

Other agency diver qualifications	BSAC equivalent
<b>Entry level</b>	<b>Ocean Diver</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PADI/RAID/SSI/NAUI/ACUC/NASDS – Open Water Diver/Advanced Open Water Diver</li><li>• SDI Open Water Diver/Advanced Adventurer</li><li>• SAA Open Water Diver</li><li>• CMAS One Star Diver</li><li>• GUE Recreational Diver 1</li><li>• Royal Navy Ships Diver</li></ul>	
<b>Second level</b>	<b>Sports Diver</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PADI/RAID/SDI/ACUC/NAUI – Rescue Diver</li><li>• SSI Advanced Open Water Diver with 'Stress &amp; Rescue'</li><li>• SAA Club Diver</li><li>• SSAC Sports Diver (Third Class Diver)</li><li>• CMAS Two Star Diver</li><li>• GUE Recreational Diver 2/Recreational Diver 3</li><li>• HSE Divers</li><li>• Army Compressed Air Diver</li></ul>	
<b>Third level</b>	<b>Dive Leader</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PADI/RAID/SDI/ACUC/NAUI – Divemaster</li><li>• SSI Dive Control Specialist</li><li>• SAA Dive Leader</li><li>• NASDS Dive Supervisor</li></ul>	
<b>Higher level</b>	<b>Advanced Diver</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SAA Dive Supervisor</li><li>• SSAC Master Diver (Second Class Diver)</li><li>• CMAS Three Star Diver</li></ul>	

## Skill Development Courses

BSAC also recognises various speciality-type diving courses from other agencies such as the PADI Speciality courses and RYA boat handling and seamanship courses.

## Instructor qualifications

BSAC welcomes instructors who have trained with other agencies and there is a simple route for them to be brought into your club.

**See page 11 for full details.**



## Did you know...

...the Go Diving with BSAC information booklet has full details on the equivalent diver grades which you can give to your potential new member. You can order these booklets for free at **[bsac.com/promomaterial](https://bsac.com/promomaterial)**

# Getting their attention

So just how do you extend your 'join our club' invitation to already trained divers in your area?

The following are just a few ideas to assist you with recruiting new members and promoting your club. You can also find a wealth of information and guidance on new member recruitment including free promotional material at **bsac.com/wantnewmembers**

But to get you started...

1. **Read the 'Five step plan to recruit new members' booklet** – This is a great place to start if you don't know where that is. It's an easy-to-follow guide covering the essentials of new member recruitment. Download it at **bsac.com/fivestep**

2. **Supercharge word of mouth** – 57% of new members heard about BSAC through a contact or friend. Make this work even harder for you by asking your members to help you.

Connections within the club – via friends, social groups or work etc – will often bring other agency or already trained divers your way so make sure your whole club is on board and getting the message out there.

3. **Think about your local diver 'touch points'** – Diving is an activity after all, so as you are out and about at dive sites, shops and inland quarries, be aware of potential new members around you. A casual chat in the line for a cuppa at Capernwray for example could reveal a newly qualified diver looking for ways to dive regularly.

4. **Keep BSAC HQ up-to-date** – bsac.com's Find It tool delivers 1,000s of enquiries to clubs every year. Make sure you are giving your club the best chance by keeping your club's page up to date. Visit the Find It Tool to find your club and check the details are correct. Contact the membership department at **membership@bsac.com** or call **+44 (0) 151 350 6201**.

5. **Your website is key** – After 'word of mouth' referrals from club members, club websites are the best source of new member leads so make sure yours is looking its best. And if you don't have one, now is the time to get your club online! More website advice can be found in the Five-step Plan to recruit new members for your club **bsac.com/fivestep**

6. **But if your club does have a Facebook presence, use it!** Social media builds virtual communities and is a great way to set the tone for your club and create a dialogue with other divers. You need to ensure your Facebook page is updated regularly to make it work for your club but do make sure your posts are natural (not 'salesy') and reflect your club and all the diving and fun you are having. Remember, if your club has an open Facebook page, then it is a shop window and so ensure your posts reflect the image of your club you want to portray. And encourage all your members who have their own Facebook pages to share your club posts...and spread the word!

## Five-steps to recruit new members





**7. Build relationships with your local media** – Did you know that 67% of adults use their local newspaper for community news? In this age of digital media, that figure may surprise you but if your club is looking for new members, this is good news. For full guidance on how to get your club stories in your local paper check out **bsac.com/wantnewmembers**

**8. Think about a promotional video** – Clubs that have created their own promotional videos have found it easier to attract new members. Video is a great way to capture who you are as a club and grab attention.

With the widespread use of GoPros and underwater cameras with video, there's video potential in every BSAC club and it doesn't have to cost much. But the window on your club in action that a video offers is invaluable. You can read BSAC's guide to creating a promotional video at **bsac.com/videoguide**



**9. Diving, training, socialising, trips** – The most successful clubs in terms of new member recruitment and retention are the ones that have active diving, training and social programmes throughout the year.

**10. Make the most of BSAC HQ** – BSAC HQ is there to support you with all your recruitment activities. From online support - **bsac.com/wantnewmembers** - to promotional material, promotions and PR support. Please email **marketing@bsac.com** or call **+44 (0) 151 350 6201** and we'll be happy to help.



# Creating the right impression

It goes without saying that first impressions count and when inviting a potential new member to your club it's essential that they leave with the feel-good factor and hopefully wanting to join.

But it shouldn't just start when they actually visit, you should be creating the right impression of your club as part of your overall new member recruitment plan.

BSAC's Five-Step Plan to recruiting new members ([bsac.com/fivestep](https://bsac.com/fivestep)) has some fantastic general advice on creating the right impression but to get you started, here's some additional tips for recruiting already trained divers:

1. **Your club's website** – this is your virtual shop window and creates an immediate impression of what you offer a potential new member. Make sure your dive trip calendar is up-to-date, you have all your facilities and training listed and you have some great photos of recent club diving trips posted. On your home page have a clear message that you welcome other agency divers and repeat it throughout your site. Make getting in touch with your club as simple and as quick as possible by having your contacts details clear on the homepage and then repeated on every page within your website.
2. **Club contact** – it is essential that any inquiry gets a prompt and friendly reply. Ensure whatever email address and contact telephone number you use for your club is checked regularly – and try to work within a 24 hour response time, if you can.
3. **A warm welcome** – a simple invite to come along to a club night is the way forward and it's here that you really get to showcase your club. Identify the right host(s) for the night, someone who is friendly and can give the best impression of your club as well as create a really warm welcome for your potential new member.
4. **The right information** – As well as being prepared to answer general questions on how they can join your club, it is a good idea to have key information prepared and ready in advance. Use the free Go Diving with BSAC information booklet (you can order them online at [bsac.com/promomaterial](https://bsac.com/promomaterial)) – which includes the core information for other agency divers looking to join BSAC - and include information sheets about your club, its facilities and membership prices. **See page 10 for more guidance on the benefits of joining BSAC as an already qualified diver.**
5. **Invite them along for a dive** – if their qualifications are valid then a great way for a potential new member to 'road test' your club is to join you on a club dive. Also invite them to borrow dive kit if needed from the club as available. **See page 9 for more details.**
6. **Follow up** – if they don't join on the night, make sure you follow your potential new member up. Don't be too pushy, just a simple email or phone call, asking if they need any more information and, if you can, invite them to join your club on a dive.

## Did you know...

...you can ensure we have the right details on your club on the BSAC website by checking [bsac.com/findaclub](https://bsac.com/findaclub). If you need to make changes or add more information to your club's profile email [membership@bsac.com](mailto:membership@bsac.com)



# Guest diving with BSAC

One way of encouraging an already trained diver to join your club is to invite them along on one of your club diving days so they can 'try before they buy'.

This is a great way for them to experience first-hand just what BSAC club diving is all about and to spend time with members of your club doing what they love most – diving.

It is also an opportunity to show off your club facilities such as the compressor and club RIB which would all come part of their club membership package as well as create a rapport with your potential new member.

Before you organise a guest dive for a non-member there are some important things to remember.

## You are covered for your third party liability to your guest diver as long as:

- They are visiting with a view to joining your club/BSAC (if they have no intention of joining they would not be covered).
- You have seen evidence of their current diver qualification and experience to-date.
- That the diving location and dive plan is in line with their diving experience and the limits of their current diving qualification.
- They are not participating in a diving activity for which they are not suitably qualified or experienced (eg. drysuit diving).

\*In addition, you are currently covered for your guest diver looking to join your club for their liability towards you but this is restricted to seven visits in any one insurance year.

You also need to ensure you have an experienced Dive Manager overseeing the guest dive and that your Diving Officer is fully informed about the dive plan.

**Do you still have a third party liability insurance question relating to guest divers? Email [wendym@bsac.com](mailto:wendym@bsac.com) or call +44 (0) 151 350 6218 for advice.**

## Did you know...

...you can download the latest version of BSAC Safe Diving booklet from [bsac.com/safediving](https://bsac.com/safediving) or email [membership@bsac.com](mailto:membership@bsac.com) to order a hard copy.



\*These insurance T&Cs are subject to change annually. For the current version of the BSAC insurance policy please visit [bsac.com/memberinsurance](https://bsac.com/memberinsurance)

# Sealing the deal

For an already trained or other agency diver, a BSAC club is the ideal way for them to carry on diving. If that's not quite enough to get them to complete their BSAC membership form, here are a few more reasons why they can't afford NOT to join your club:

- Diving with a BSAC club is one of the most cost effective ways to further diver training as well as to dive regularly.
- A great social life! BSAC divers are a sociable bunch and the topside social activities just enhance the whole club and diving experience. In short, you get a ready-made group of divers to go diving with, regular dive trips and training opportunities and a whole group of new friends.
- BSAC diver training **includes** modules that would be a paid for separate speciality courses with other agencies.
- An already qualified diver coming into BSAC can access many of these training modules – such as nitrox, rescue skills and drysuit diving – for free with their BSAC club as part of their membership, if they have not been included in their training to-date.
- BSAC provides a full range of Skill Development Courses (SDCs) which are great value for money. Whether a diver's focus is on core skills, technical, seamanship, wrecks, underwater photography or marine life, BSAC has a course to match. For a full list of SDCs and prices go to **[bsac.com/skilldevelopment](https://bsac.com/skilldevelopment)**
- Access to a wide range of in-club skills, knowledge and experience among your fellow club members as well as training guidance and advice from BSAC HQ.
- As a BSAC member, they are entitled to the full range of benefits, including third party liability insurance and monthly issues of SCUBA magazine.
- They can also make the most of the BSAC Benefits package, including savings on diving holidays, diver

## Did you know...

...that your potential new member can find out more about the full range of BSAC Benefits at **[bsac.com/benefits](https://bsac.com/benefits)**





# Other agency instructors

Instructors who have trained with another agency can be invaluable to a BSAC club and are warmly welcomed. There is an induction process to follow which recognises their existing instructor qualification\* and provides accreditation so that the new member will also be able to deliver BSAC diver training instruction.

The process has been simplified to enable a club to make the most of their new other agency instructor as soon as possible. This process (outlined below) means that the crossover instructor can assist with club training under supervision **before** completing an Instructor Crossover course.

## Here's how:

1. On joining the club, your new other agency instructor will need to register for the one-day Instructor Crossover course. You will find more information, along with the latest course listings at [bsac.com/instructorcrossover](https://bsac.com/instructorcrossover). Once registered, they will receive their full induction pack.
2. Within this pack they will be provided with a form to complete to verify that they have gained an appropriate understanding of BSAC training from their induction pack and branch support. The form should be countersigned by an officer of your club and then sent to BSAC HQ.
3. Once received and confirmed by BSAC HQ, your Crossover Instructor will be able to assist with club training under the supervision of an Open Water Instructor (or above) prior to completing the Crossover Course.
4. On completion of the Crossover Course they will become a BSAC Open Water instructor and be able to fully instruct on your club's diver training.

**\*Please note:** BSAC recognises the equivalent of BSAC Open Water Instructor (OWI) and above, all of which, subject to following the above process, will be crossed over to OWI status.

Other agency divers with instructor qualifications below the equivalent level of OWI will need to complete the full BSAC instructor training, starting with the Instructor Foundation Course.

**Still have a question about other agency instructors teaching in your club?**

**Call +44 (0) 151 350 6203 or email [drt@bsac.com](mailto:drt@bsac.com)**



# They've joined... what happens next?

Your plan should now be to get your new member diving and active within your club as soon as possible.

## Diving with their current qualification

Using the equivalency chart, you can assess which BSAC diver grade they are currently equal to. This will enable you to incorporate your new member into dive trips and dive plans. **They do not have to apply for a BSAC equivalency card or progress to the next diver grade if they don't wish to.**

Remember – you must see evidence of their current diver grade and don't forget to send in this information to BSAC HQ (**see page 4 for more details**).

## Reviewing skills

It is at the discretion of your club's Diving Officer as to whether you formally review a new member's diving ability. Diver safety is paramount at all times so an initial review is not unreasonable and to be expected. When it comes to starting to dive with the club, a good way to start is a 'shakedown' dive in the club pool or as part of the club's training and dive plans at an inland site.

Progression to open water should take into account prior UK diving experience and appropriate kit. Ensure that your new member dives within the limits of their diving qualification and that BSAC Safe Diving is followed.

Also, be mindful of the likely difference in skills between training agencies, such as signals and maximum depths as well as differing competencies in buddy diving and leading.

## Filling in any gaps

**BSAC diver training offers some skills as part of the core package that other agency training does not.**

This includes basic nitrox and drysuit training as well as more in-depth rescue and safety skills. Buoyancy & Trim is another invaluable workshop to offer.

Don't forget to offer this complementary training to your new member if it is missing from their current skillset.

## Further training

BSAC is all about progressive training so do let your new member know about the further diver training opportunities and Skill Development Courses that are open to them.



### Did you know...

...that BSAC currently has more than 30 Skill Development and Technical Courses?  
Find out more at [bsac.com/skilldevelopment](https://bsac.com/skilldevelopment)



# FAQs from other agency divers

## Questions you may be asked

This section is based on scenarios and questions that real BSAC clubs have been asked by potential new members. If you, or your potential new member, have any further questions regarding welcoming other agency divers that have not been answered in this guide then please do let us know.

Email [info@bsac.com](mailto:info@bsac.com) or call **+44 (0) 151 350 6203**

**Q: I learnt on holiday back in 2006 and hold the PADI Advanced Open Water qualification. Since then I have only dived abroad and the last time was in 2008. Do I need to start all over again?**

**A:** As long as you provide evidence of your PADI qualification, you can dive with a BSAC club without starting from scratch. However, as with any diver who has been out of the water for some time, your new BSAC club will work with you to get back into the water safely. This will mean offering you drysuit training as well as some refresher sessions in the pool and in sheltered water to introduce you to UK diving.

**Q: I hold a PADI instructor ticket and have taught commercially overseas for several years. I have never dived in the UK but would like to resume my instructing within a club as a volunteer. Will my instructing experience and qualification be recognised in a UK club?**

**A:** Yes, your instructing experience can be recognized by registering for and completing the Instructor Crossover course (**see page 11**). Your local BSAC club can also help introduce you to drysuit diving.

**Q: I am a trained diver (SAA Club Diver) and just want to go diving, I am not interested in further training. Will I just be accepted into a BSAC club or will I have to apply for BSAC equivalency cards?**

**A:** You don't need to get a BSAC equivalency card. As long as you present evidence of your existing diving qualification you will be able to dive with your new BSAC club within the limits of your current diving grade.





**Q: As a holder of an alternative agency qualification, what am I covered for by BSAC's third party liability insurance?**

**A:** Once you have joined your chosen BSAC club, as a BSAC member you are entitled to BSAC Benefits, which include insurance cover. To be covered you simply need to dive within the limits of your qualification.

**Q: I can't find my old diving qualification, can I still go diving with a BSAC club?**

**A:** In this instance, you must obtain evidence of your qualification from your previous training agency. Most agencies will have a centrally held record for you and will be able to reissue your qualification. Evidence of previous training is essential.

**Q: I am a PADI instructor and would like to contribute to skills development within a BSAC club. Will my instructor qualifications allow me to also teach on BSAC's Skill Development Courses?**

**A:** You would need to complete the BSAC Instructor Crossover course but after completion, credit will be given for any relevant specialist skill teaching you may have.

**Q: I hold a diver qualification but have only ever dived overseas. What training and courses will I have to complete to be able to dive in the UK with a BSAC club?**

**A:** A BSAC club is a great way to get into UK diving and your chosen club will provide you with the additional training and skill development you need to be able to progress to diving in colder waters. This may include drysuit training. Speak to the Training Officer of your new club to discuss this further – your existing diver qualification will be recognised and your further training will be based on your current experience and grade.

**Q: How will I be assessed on my skills so that I can just go diving with a BSAC club?**

**A:** You will need to provide evidence of your current diving grade to the Diving Officer of your new BSAC club, who may also ask for sight of your log book so they can see your experience to-date. Your Diving Officer may assess your skills in-water, either in the pool or sheltered site. They may also offer you the opportunity to complete a short refresher course within your club.

Speak to your Diving Officer in the first instance, their aim is to get you safely in the water and diving as soon as possible. Also, don't forget to update BSAC HQ on any additional skill development or training, such as nitrox or drysuit, you receive within your club so we can update your records. Email [drt@bsac.com](mailto:drt@bsac.com)



# Need more guidance?

You can also find further references and subject related information at the following locations on [bsac.com](https://bsac.com):

## Support and guidance section on new member recruitment

The new member recruitment section of [bsac.com](https://bsac.com) contains a wealth of guidance, tools and information designed to support BSAC clubs to bring in new members. From advice on working with the media, guides on running recruitment events to how to get the best out of your website and social media plus free poster downloads and free promotional material you can order. [bsac.com/wantnewmembers](https://bsac.com/wantnewmembers)

## BSAC Qualification Cards

Contains the PDF application form needed for your new member to apply for an equivalency card if they have asked for one, plus FAQs on applying. [bsac.com/qcards](https://bsac.com/qcards)

## BSAC Safe Diving

BSAC's essential guide to safe diving and the go-to reference when planning dives, including for other agency divers. Informative and easy to read, it is also a beneficial guide to give to your new other agency diver member. You can access the A-Z guide to BSAC Safe Diving from the website or you can order a hard copy from [membership@bsac.com](mailto:membership@bsac.com). [bsac.com/safediving](https://bsac.com/safediving)

## Regional Coaching Team

The BSAC Coaching scheme can assist your club with in-branch training for your new member(s) by facilitating Skill Development Courses, additional regional training days – [bsac.com/trainingdays](https://bsac.com/trainingdays) - and helping you to overcome any short-term shortage of instructors. You can find full details of the scheme and contact details for the Regional Coach for your region at [bsac.com/coaching](https://bsac.com/coaching)





