

Successful university clubs

A guide and checklist



Introduction

This guide aims to help you get the most out of diving with your university club. We've put together a few ideas and some top tips that we've picked up from our experience with university clubs.

Feel free to drop us an email if you have any questions or comments about what we've written, or any suggestions for when we update it.

Membership – membership@bsac.com

Diving Resources team – drt@bsac.com

Marketing – marketing@bsac.com

Your diving

Lets face it we all just want to go diving – there's loads of great diving all around the UK, so get the trips going with your uni club!

As a member of BSAC, you can dive or train as a guest of another club. Why not approach clubs near uni to see if they have any opportunities, or one near your home?

The summer months are when most clubs go diving, but don't expect to just turn up and get a space on the boat this weekend. Maybe pop down at Christmas or Easter to introduce yourself?

Top tip:

Every club does things slightly differently, so make sure you know what the plan is and what you need to take with you (you'll only miss the boat or forget lunch once!).

Working with the university

Each university has a different set of policies and procedures, for running trips away, applying for budgets, and so on. Going along with them can make your life easier in the long run: it helps the uni and the union trust you.

It's important that they understand your club needs money for safety equipment and servicing kit, but try not to make diving sound too expensive and dangerous (they might try to stop you diving or shut down the club!).

It's also worth investigating other funding sources: many universities and students' unions have extra funding that you can apply for (like funds donated by alumni).

Crossovers

Some of your new members will already be divers. These people are great: they know how to dive and they know that they like it! If they have qualified with another agency (like PADI or SDI), they can join your club and BSAC and go diving within their qualification. It's a good idea for them to go for a check out dive with an experienced member before a major trip, so you can get to know them and their diving habits.

If they want to continue diver training with BSAC, then they don't need to start from the beginning: "Divers Qualified with Other Agencies" tells you what their next qualification is **bsac.com/otheragency**. Get them on the next course you're running!

If they are an instructor and want to join your club, the "Instructors from Other Agencies" document **bsac.com/instructorcrossover** explains what they can do and need to do.

What help is available?

As a first point of contact, BSAC HQ 0151 350 6200 or **info@bsac.com** can direct you towards the help that BSAC can provide.

BSAC HQ

BSAC HQ is run by a small number of full-time employees. They sort out membership forms, sell course packs and can book courses for you. Staff at BSAC HQ can also answer questions about BSAC and its policies.

Regional teams

Each region (e.g. the South West, Yorkshire) has a team of experienced instructors that volunteer to help local clubs (as well as their own). Each regional team is led by the Regional Coach.

They're good people to ask about diving, BSAC, or organising a club. The regional team run a range of courses that can be difficult for clubs to deliver (like Skill Development Courses or Dive Leader) and can often arrange additional instructors to help your club.

Find your regional coach here
bsac.com/regionalcoaching



Organising your club – Checklist

Diving

- ✓ Going diving is why people join the club – make sure there's something for everyone to do!
- ✓ Make sure people know what's going on: what trips are running, who's organising them, where and when to meet, what kit they need, etc.
- ✓ Do interesting diving: venture out of the quarries and go to the sea, rivers, dry dives in recompression chambers, or Nemo33.
- ✓ Some ideas for destinations, sites, boats and accommodation is a really useful thing to inherit from last year's committee (or to pass on to next year's).
- ✓ When you've been diving, a quick trip report and photos or videos on social media will encourage members to get involved in the next trip and it should generate some interest from potential new members... show your mates how amazing British diving is.



bsac.com/SheffieldUniVideo

Training

- ✓ Check out bsac.com/instructor_materials for everything you need to know about the lessons, including which instructors can teach which lessons, the student to instructor ratios and what supervision your assistant instructors need.
- ✓ There are different ways to schedule your training (theory or pool): you could do intensive sessions over a weekend or do a little bit every week. Make sure your students know where they need to be, and when!
- ✓ How much is the training going to cost? What do you want to include in the cost? Think about training materials, kit hire, transport, site entry, instructor expenses.
- ✓ Remember more advanced training – Sports Divers and Dive Leaders are really helpful in a club and Skill Development Courses are a good way to keep members involved through the winter months.
- ✓ Getting the instructors and the Diving/ Training Officers together every so often is a good way to keep track of your trainees' progress and update their records.



Before the Freshers' Fair

- ✓ Make sure HQ have up-to-date contacts for the committee and that you get all the freebies and promo material.
- ✓ Frequent committee meetings that are short and to the point work well: share jobs between the committee and follow everything up.
- ✓ Come up with a plan: How many try dives? What courses and trips? How many trainees? Have you got a social calendar?
- ✓ Have you got everything you need: kit serviced and maintained? Pool booked? Instructors lined up?

Social

- ✓ People might join for the diving, but they stay because of the friends they make – don't underestimate how important socialising your club is.
- ✓ Having a chat maybe down the SU after a pool session is a good place to sign QRB's.
- ✓ 'Clubs on tour' – arrange annual trips with clubs from local unis, why not go diving, enjoy BBQ's on the beach and you'll make some new friends.
- ✓ Update your social media pages at least once a week (even if it's a simple share or repost) and encourage your fellow club members to contribute and interact.
- ✓ Set up a Facebook page rather than group, this will make it easier for potential new members to find your club and see what it's all about.
- ✓ Club awards are a great way to end the year: keenest trainee, chief fish-feeder (most seasick), magpie (who's bought the most shiny kit?)...



Finance

- ✓ When you're coming up with a budget, do it early and make sure you've thought about how you will pay for maintaining (or replacing) the club's kit.
- ✓ Do you know how to use the union's systems (for membership, payments, etc)?
- ✓ Think about alternative funding sources, have a look for grants, alumni funds or ways to fundraise.
- ✓ Keep your membership fees simple – too many options is going to make your life more complicated!
- ✓ Buying things in bulk and a bit of friendly negotiation is a good way to save you, your members of the club some cash.
- ✓ Keep your eye out for competitions that offer vouchers for dive equipment or cash prizes that could be donated to the club.

Other clubs

It's very likely that there are other BSAC clubs nearby and they are a useful form of support. Think about how you can work together: remember that all our clubs are run by volunteers. Joint trips, for example 'clubs on tour', and filling spaces on each other's boat can help to keep both clubs active and is a good way to extend your experience.

Top tip:

University clubs tend to have access to facilities like lecture rooms and regular pool sessions that town clubs may not have. Play to your strengths: you could run joint lectures or SDCs, using university rooms and instructors from the local club.

"We need more instructors!"

Once you are a Sports Diver, you can go on the Instructor Foundation Course – it's a weekend introduction to instructing and it lets you teach under supervision (the instructor manual tells you what this means).

The main hurdle to teaching without needing supervision is getting to Dive Leader. Uni clubs often concentrate on Ocean and Sports Diver training, but getting members to Dive Leader makes it easier for them to contribute to the club's training.

Lots of Regional Teams run (or can organise) prep events for when you are thinking about the instructor exams, which are a good opportunity to get feedback and tips. They can also run sessions

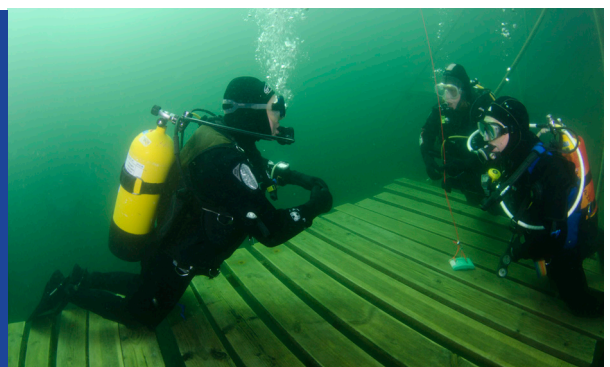
to help instructors develop their skills and stay up to date. Check out bsac.com/instructorexams for scheduled courses.

Regional teams and other local clubs are good places to ask for extra instructors. The more notice that you can give them, the more likely they are to be able to help – remember that these people are volunteers too! Use the Find It tool on the BSAC website to get contact details for a local club bsac.com/findaclub.

BSAC Centres are dive schools where you pay the instructors. They can be a useful way to increase your club's capacity for training new students, or for filling in one or two lessons for a student to get the next qualification.

Top tip:

Remember that the Instructor Resources are now online at bsac.com/instructor_materials, here you will get all the information you need in order to pass the exams and plan lessons for real students.



Diver training progression

Skill Development Courses...

Anyone can do these courses...

- Automated External Defibrillator
- Boat Handling
- Chartwork & Position Fixing
- Compressor Operation
- Diver Coxswain Assessment
- Outboard Engine & Boat Maintenance

For Ocean Divers (or equivalent) and above...

- Advanced Lifesaver Award
- Buoyancy and Trim
- Dive UK
- Drysuit Training
- Equipment Care
- First Aid for Divers
- Lifesaver Award
- Oxygen Administration
- RNLI Diver Sea Survival
- Wreck Appreciation

For Sports Diver (or equivalent) and above...

- Accelerated Decompression Procedures
- Dive Planning and Management
- Ice Diving
- Nitrox Gas Blender/Mixed Gas Blender
- Practical Rescue Management
- Search and Recovery
- Underwater Photography
- Wreck Diving
- Sport Mixed Gas Diver (50m)
- Advanced Mixed Gas Diver (60m)
- Advanced Mixed Gas Diver (80m)
- CCR Inspiration Diver
- Sports Mixed Gas CCR Diver (50m)
- Sports Mixed Gas CCR Diver (60m)
- Sports Mixed Gas CCR Diver (80m)

Try Dive



Diver Training Programme...

Ocean Diver



Sports Diver



Dive Leader



Advanced Diver



First Class Diver

Assistant Diving Instructor

Assistant Open Water Instructor

Practical Instructor

Theory Instructor

Open Water Instructor

Assistant Advanced Instructor

Advanced Instructor

National Instructor

