



## Educational Diving Program For Visiting Groups

### I. Policy and Procedures

#### **Purpose:**

SCUBA can be a useful educational tool and BIOS's Education Department is promoting training in SCUBA for students aged 12 and older for the following reasons:

- The process of learning to dive teaches many skills and concepts that reinforce classroom physics and biology lessons.
- The mature, safety-conscious attitude instilled through SCUBA training serves to teach students responsibility.
- SCUBA certification is a valuable asset and qualification to list on a resume.
- The ability to dive allows students to explore underwater habitats and thereby better understand field course work.
- Students can use SCUBA to collect simple data and generate interesting project reports.

#### **Designation of "Educational Diving":**

To avoid any confusion about policy for education vs. research diving, the following definition is provided:

#### **"Educational Diving" at BIOS:**

- Refers to initial training and Continuing Education in SCUBA through PADI or another universally recognized diving authority.
- Requires the direct supervision of a Dive Master or Dive Instructor as stipulated by PADI (or equivalent agency) and in compliance with the mandated minimum student to instructor ratios.
- May involve basic data collection only when part of a designated course (e.g. Project Aware Fish ID specialty).

#### **Jurisdiction:**

- **"Educational Diving"** at BIOS is conducted at the discretion of the Dive Safety Officer (DSO).
- The DSO has overall authority over Educational Diving at BIOS, and will ensure that all Educational Diving is supervised by BIOS staff members who are qualified SCUBA instructors and / or Dive Masters.
- Qualified BIOS SCUBA Instructors and / or Dive Masters are in charge of running any training courses, and will directly supervise student divers, and are responsible for ensuring all standards for training are met, as required by PADI or an alternate dive-training agency.

### **Certification:**

- Students participating in Educational Diving at BIOS will be encouraged to work towards a higher certification level.
- Diving will be conducted with the purpose of training rather than data collection.
- Qualified BIOS staff may certify students who meet required training objectives in accordance with PADI (or equivalent) standards. As per PADI standards, the certifying instructor will be responsible for maintaining records of each student's training.

### **BIOS Requirements, Costs and Practical Concerns:**

- Costs for the Educational Diving Program at BIOS are as per the published BIOS Fee Schedule. These include staff lectures (for dive theory training), Dive Master supervision (hourly or half day rate for confined and open water training), and tank rental. Groups will be responsible for the rental cost of a tank for the Dive Master.
- Registration cost of \$50.00 per student is for those continuing work toward their next certification vs. recreational diving as a part of their course at BIOS.
- Continuing Education students who have not dived for several months may be required by their instructor and / or the DSO to participate in a check-out dive before beginning training.
- BIOS strongly urges participants to bring their own mask, fins and snorkel but will provide BCD's and Regulators for rental as per the fee schedule.
- Any scientific research or course project work to be conducted using SCUBA will be carried out as an integral part of a specific dive training course. Dives conducted while carrying out such project work will be supervised as mandated by PADI (or equivalent). Student training and safety are priority for such dives.
- Such training dives that involve specialized tasks or data collection are conducted at the discretion of the DSO, who may veto a dive if student safety is not assured based on the nature of the work. Factors to be considered may include the required depth of the dive and / or any use of equipment requiring skills beyond a student's training and experience level.

## **II. Water Temperature and Wetsuits**

The water temperature changes quite a bit during the year at BIOS and can change rather drastically during a single semester. Water temperatures are approximately:

- **January:** 65 F/18 C
- **May:** 70 F/21 C
- **August:** 84 F/29 C
- **October:** 77 F/25 C
- **December:** 68 F/20 C

We do not have wetsuits available on station for loan and they are rather expensive to buy / rent here in Bermuda so please bring what you need. Here are some guidelines to help you purchase (or borrow / rent) a wetsuit suitable for diving or snorkeling in Bermuda (Note: the 3, 5 and 7mm numbers refer to thickness of the wetsuit material):

- **January to March:** at least a 5mm, up to a 7mm (if you get cold easily); should also consider a hood / hooded vest.

- **April-June:** 5mm with a hooded vest for the colder side of the season
- **July-September:** 3mm or shortie type suit.
- **October-December:** 5mm with a hooded vest for the colder side of the season.

Remember that approximately 70% of body heat is lost through your head. Use of a hooded vest, a hood, or a beanie, are great ways to add warmth at a relatively low price. Hooded vests are more suited to winter months, hoods for spring / fall months, and a beanie for summer.

People's idea of cold is highly subjective. There is a saying in Bermuda; Bermudians swim from May to September, Americans swim from April to October, and the English swim year round. Please try to adjust your wetsuit purchases accordingly.

### **III. Checklist for Paperwork**

The following information should be provided to the Educational Diving program assistant ([oa@bios.edu](mailto:oa@bios.edu)) by a group leader in a single .PDF package at least one month prior to arrival at BIOS.

- BIOS Activity, Media and Health waiver (signed standard for Visiting Groups)

#### **Educational Diving for Visiting Groups Waiver Packet**

- Diver Registration Form
- Photocopy of Diver Certification Card
- BIOS SCUBA Waiver
- BIOS SCUBA Regulations
- PADI Continuing Education Waiver\*  
(“Yes” answers-- PADI medical form is required)
  - Please note to use full words “yes” and “no” (Y/N) cannot be accepted
  - Please note that signatures have to be handwritten on PADI forms
- PADI Activity Waiver
- Diver History and Required Equipment Form