Xceptional Diver
Distinctive
Specialty Course

This course provides the training required to indicate that a Master Scuba Diver with at least ten specialty diver certifications can display exceptional ability in a diverse range of diving situations

1. Course Objectives and Standards

A. Course Goals

The goals of the Xceptional Diver course are to:

a) Identify Master Scuba Diver skills

b) Review relevant dive sites

c) Qualify skills to be examined in complex learning scenarios

d) Identify hazards

e) Prepare for Xceptional diving!

B. Xceptional Diver Course Requirements

1. Minimum prerequisite certification: PADI Master Scuba Diver with a minimum of ten (10) specialty certifications

2. Minimum age of 15

3. Student to Instructor ratio: 8:1

4. Maximum depth 30 meters

5. Two (2) Open water dives

6. Minimum course duration is dependent on class size. As a guideline – a nominal duration for a class size of eight (8) students would be two (2) hours for theory; eight hours for practical exercises.

7. Minimum Instructor rating: Open Water Scuba Instructor and Specialty Instructor in the Distinctive Specialty of Xceptional Diver

C. Student and Instructor Equipment Requirements

(i) Equipment requirements

1. Student equipment

a. All standard diving equipment

b. Underwater light

c. Camera and lenses

d. Rubbish collection bags

e. Compass

f. Lifting bag/s

g. SMB

2. Instructor equipment

a. All standard diving equipment

b. Ropes

c. Underwater light/s

d. Camera

e. EANx tester

e. Any further equipment as deemed relevant to the specialty tasks delegated

f. Student Record File

g. Class Roster

(ii) References

a) PADI Encyclopaedia

b) Copies of all relevant PADI manuals and/or up-to-date Distinctive Specialty course outline notes provided by the PADI Course Director

D. Knowledge Development Topics

2. Course overview

a. Classroom presentations. Academic information will be via a short classroom discussion but essentially covered on-site at the dive site location/s. Other academic background may be reviewed through reading web-based text.

b. Open water training dives may be performed at various locations.

c. Performance assessment. All performance requirements must been met. Skills performed onsite are to be directly observed. Academic assessment may be accomplished through discussions with students and oral quizzes.

d. Certification: Upon successful completion of the course, you will be awarded the PADI Distinctive Specialty Diver Certification as an Xceptional Diver.

e. Class requirements: Equipment needs to be specified and materials used during the course as indicated prior to open water exercises.

3. *Why an Xceptional Diver?*

It is considered that becoming a Master Scuba Diver (MSD) indicates a diver with significant experience and training with fewer than 2% of divers ever achieving this rating.

This makes them an elite group.

Becoming an Xceptional Diver makes a diver an elite of the elites

4. *Identifying MSD skills*

The first task in this course is to identify which certifications an MSD already possesses and creating challenging environments to audit and re-qualify those skill sets.

These prerequisite certifications will be qualified by reference to the PADI web site for that particular candidate.

One table of possible certifications to draw from, but not limited to, could be as follows below:

1	Action Camera
2	Administer Emergency Oxygen
3	Advanced Wreck
4	AED for Divers
5	Air Fill Station Operator
6	Altitude
7	AWARE Coral Reef Conservation
8	AWARE Shark Conservation
9	Boat
10	Cavern
11	Deep
12	Digital Underwater Photography
13	Dive Against Debris (DAD)
14	Dive Propulsion Vehicle
15	Drift
16	Dry Suit
17	Enriched Air
18	Equipment Specialist
19	FFM
20	FFM & Communications
21	Fish Identification
22	Freshwater
23	GBR
24	Health for Diving
25	Introductory***
26	Jellyfish Diver
27	Kayak
28	Lake
29	Marine Life Injuries
30	Million Dollar Point
31	Muck
32	Multilevel

33	Night
34	Ocean Reef IDM & UW Comm
35	Ocean Reef Integrated Mask
36	Ocean Reef UW Communications
37	Open Water Scuba Instructor
38	Peak Performance Buoyancy PPB)
39	Project AWARE
40	Public Safety Diver
41	Quarry Diver
42	Research
43	S.S. President Coolidge
44	Scientific
45	Sea Turtle Awareness
46	Search & Recovery
47	Self-Reliant
48	Sidemount
49	SMB
50	Tec Rec Gas Blender Nitrox
51	Tec Sidemount
52	Tectonic Plate
53	Tropical
54	Two-Year Diver
55	Underwater Bottle Collecting
56	Underwater Naturalist
57	Underwater Navigator
58	Underwater Archaeology
59	Underwater Photographer
60	Underwater Videographer
61	Volcano
62	Wreck
63	Yongala
64	Zombie

Once identified, the skill sets will be listed to produce two separate dives combining skills to challenge the diver and prove his/her Xceptional diving abilities.

For instance, a MSD with the certifications of Altitude, Boat, Divers Against Debris (DAD), Deep, Digital Underwater Photography (DUP), Enriched Air (EANx), Freshwater, Peak Performance Buoyancy (PPB), Search & Recovery (S&R) and Surface Marker Buoy (SMB) could be given tasks to combine and perform appropriate skill sets to indicate true mastery of their specialty diving abilities. Examples of those skill sets are reflected in the sample dives presented later on.

5. Relevant dive sites

These would be chosen suitable for the specialty diving skill sets to be challenged. For instance, altitude diving will have to be somewhere other than sea level and deep diving would require a depth of greater than 18 meters can be reached. Freshwater could be lake, quarry or river.

6. Qualification of skill sets and hazard identification

Skill sets would primarily be challenged academically by the Xceptional Diver candidate producing completed knowledge reviews pertinent to the specialty certifications held. Discussion would then be made regarding challenges that could possibly be faced by each specialty. For instance, what would a deep diver do realizing they have overstayed their no-decompression time limit by three minutes? Or how does one avoid “silt-up” whilst diving in a lake?

7. Planning and organizing dives

This should be performed with reference to the specialty certifications each Xceptional Diver already holds. An example of two appropriate

open water dives are as follows using the ten levels of training as mentioned earlier: Altitude, Boat, DAD, Deep, DUP, EANx, Freshwater, PPB, S & R and SMB

8. Open Water Dives

1. Open Water Training Dive One [comprising a combination of Altitude, Boat, EANx, Deep, Digital Underwater Photography (DUP)]

Learning Objectives.
By the end of this dive, you will be able to:
• *Perform altitude and EANx adjustment calculations.*
• *Demonstrate appropriate streamlining of dive equipment.*
• *Perform an appropriate boat entry.*
• *Correct weighting and adjust buoyancy as required at depth.*
• *Take close up and wide angle photographs of underwater features and/or aquatic life.*
• *Perform an ascent rate of no more than 18 metres/minute or as indicated by the divers' computer.*
• *Perform a 3-minute safety stop at 5 metres (if necessary!)*
• *Perform an appropriate boat exit and stowage of equipment.*

a. Briefing
• Evaluate conditions
• Facilities at dive site
• Entry technique to be used-location
• Exit technique to be used-location
• Bottom composition, expected features and points of interest
• Depth range

• Planned air supply limit
• Review communication
• What to do if separated from class/buddy
• What to do if an emergency arises
• Buddy assignments

b. Plan Dive
• Have students determine theoretical depth (if dive site at altitude and/or using enriched air) and no-decompression limit [Instructor note: you should check these]
• Record no-decompression limit, maximum actual depth and maximum theoretical depth on slates
• Review depth gauges and instrumentation; each student should know how to account for behaviour of his/her instrument while diving
• Assign maximum planned dive time

c. Predive
• Prepare personal equipment including cameras and accessories and all extra emergency equipment
• Don equipment
• Predive safety check
• Proper entry
• Weight adjustment for neutral buoyancy
• Maintain buddy contact

d. Open Water Training Dive One
• Descend in buddy teams
• Use cameras to produce diver and other requisite subject

photos (if desired) and go slow!

• Ascent not to exceed 18 metres/minute with a three-minute safety stop at depth of 5 metres.

e. Post dive

- Proper exit
- Remove and stow equipment
- Rinse cameras
- Sketch terrain covered during the dive indicating significant features

f. Debrief

• Assess performance, make suggestions, give positive reinforcement

• Students calculate their ending pressure groups—review for correct calculation

• Log dive (Instructor signs log)

2. Open Water Training Dive Two [comprising Freshwater, PPB, DAD, S

& R and SMB]

Learning Objectives.

By the end of this dive, you will be able to:

- *Demonstrate appropriate streamlining of dive equipment.*
- *Correct weighting and continuously adjust buoyancy as required and/or directed at depth*
- *Identify local aquatic life and report*
- *Remove debris when found/when appropriate*
- *Search and recover using compass to locate and lift lost object [weightbelt]*
- *Use DSMB and ascend to safety stop depth*
- *Perform an ascent rate of no more than 18 metres/minute or as indicated by the divers' computer.*
- *Perform a 3-minute safety stop at 5 metres.*

a. Briefing

- Evaluate conditions
- Facilities at dive site
- Entry technique to be used-location
- Exit technique to be used-location
- Bottom composition, expected features and points of interest
- Depth range
- Planned air supply limit
- Review communication
- What to do if separated from class/buddy
- What to do if an emergency arises
- Buddy assignments

b. Plan Dive

[Instructor note: Have students plan this dive in buddy teams for your assessment and approval]

• Ensure that students record no-decompression limit, maximum actual depth and maximum theoretical depth on slates (if dive site at altitude and/or using enriched air).

c. Predive

• Prepare personal equipment including action camera and requisite accessories
• Don equipment
• Predive safety check
• Proper entry
• Weight adjustment for neutral buoyancy
• Maintain buddy contact

d. Open Water Training Dive Two

• Descend in buddy teams
• Identify local aquatic life and record
• Remove unwanted debris
• Locate a missing object [weightbelt previously positioned] using exceptional buoyancy control skills. Use lift bag to bring up missing object and send up a DSMB immediately prior to ascent to 5metre safety stop.
• Ascent not to exceed 18 metres/minute with a three-minute stop at a depth of 5 metres.

e. Post dive

• Proper exit
• Remove and stow equipment

• Compare photos with sketch and adjust to make clearer image/drawing for future reference

f. Debrief

• Assess performance, make suggestions, give positive reinforcement

• Students calculate their ending pressure groups—review for correct calculation

• Produce DAD report and communicate

• Log dive (Instructor signs log)

• Complete certification paperwork

9. KNOWLEDGE REVIEW

1. Briefly describe an Xceptional Diver

2. What could be five (5) suitable specialty diver programmes for freshwater diving at altitude?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

3. What are two advantages of multi-skilled diving?

(i)

(ii)

4. Why should divers aim to achieve MSD and Xceptional Diver status?

5. What equipment could be required when planning a search & recovery mission at depth in a lake at altitude?

I have had explained to me and I understand the questions I missed.

Student Signature _____ Date _____