

# Welcome to the Curragh Sub Aqua Club



## About us

Founded in 1958, the Curragh Sub Aqua Club is one of the oldest clubs in Ireland and with over 65 members one of the largest clubs in the country.

We have regular boat dives three times a week. Every Saturday morning during the diving season we boat dive from our clubrooms on the water's edge in Sandycove, here you'll find our two compressors and hot showers. On Wednesdays and Sundays we hop onto our two dive RIBs, Danú and Lir, which are located in Coal Harbour, Dun Laoghaire. We also have numerous weekends away during the season.



Diving is a great sport made even better when participating in a club atmosphere. We have a very high number of senior instructors who can develop your diving skills whether you are a complete novice or already have some experience.

We hope you will enjoy your time with the Curragh and have put together this pack of information to help you. Remember, if you have any questions, just ask.

Mark Seavers  
Chairman 2020/21

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# How the Curragh works as a Club

The Curragh is run by its members for the benefit of its members. We have a formal constitution which governs the clubs operation. There is a lot of equipment to look after, diving to be organised, training to be done and parties to be had so we have a committee appointed each year to oversee the crucial part of the club operations. The Committee is made up of volunteers – they aren't there to do all the work. We expect all club members to join in and share their skills, time and energy,

## Committee roles

### **Chairman**

Oversees the committee and invents jobs to keep them busy. [Chair@CSAC.ie](mailto:Chair@CSAC.ie)

### **Diving Officer (DO)**

In charge of all of the clubs diving and safety. Delegates to DODs (Instructors, Leading divers and experienced Club divers) for individual dives. Must be informed of all diving activity. [DO@CSAC.ie](mailto:DO@CSAC.ie)

### **Training Officer (TO)**

Your contact for everything to do with training and advancement within CFT. [Training@CSAC.ie](mailto:Training@CSAC.ie)

### **Treasurer**

Collects subscriptions, pays the bills and organises insurance for equipment. [Treasurer@CSAC.ie](mailto:Treasurer@CSAC.ie)

### **Equipment Officer**

Maintains the clubs equipment including our two 6.5m RIBS, Lir & Nora, as well as our two fixed and two portable compressors. A busy role and helping hands are always needed.

[Equipment@CSAC.ie](mailto:Equipment@CSAC.ie)

### **Public Relations Officer (PRO)**

The club's public face. Manages the website & Facebook page. The PRO also leads our recruitment and is the first point of contact for most new members until they start training. [info@CSAC.ie](mailto:info@CSAC.ie)

### **Social Secretary**

Organises social events throughout the year including the summer BBQ and Christmas Party.

[Social@CSAC.ie](mailto:Social@CSAC.ie)

### **Clubhouse Officer**

Maintains the clubhouse, makes sure the showers are always hot. [Clubhouse@CSAC.ie](mailto:Clubhouse@CSAC.ie)

### **Competitions officer**

Organises photo competitions, navigation trials, gives prizes for random good things.

[Competitions@CSAC.ie](mailto:Competitions@CSAC.ie)

### **Club Secretary**

Keeps records of meetings, maintains the constitution, and liaises with CFT to register the club.

[Secretary@CSAC.ie](mailto:Secretary@CSAC.ie)

# Training: A Brief Overview

Other than small registration fees and the cost of your log book, the training to become a scuba diver is included in your membership. Even advanced training is inexpensive as the instructors are volunteers.

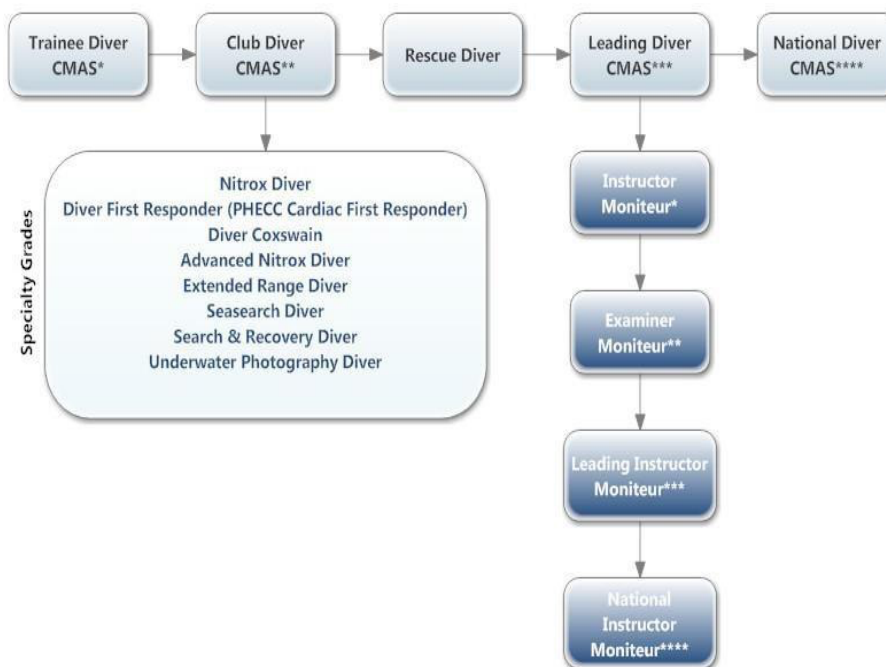
Our team of highly qualified instructors is organised by a Training Officer chosen by the club members each year. Every new member gets a mentor too. They can help you get the most out of the club, our facilities and ease your introduction.

The **first step for someone new to diving is the CMAS Diver\*** ('Trainee Diver'). We begin in December / January with weekly pool sessions and lectures. We run a special Trainee Weekend at Easter where you'll travel away for a long weekend of diving fun.

As a Diver\* you are qualified to dive to 20m under supervision of an experienced diver. The next step is to become a CMAS Diver \*\* ('Club Diver') which allows you to go to 30m and lead dives yourself with other divers of the same grade. You can also start to take specialist courses.

At the Curragh we have a lot of qualified instructors including 5 Moniteur\*\*\* (Leading Instructors) and one Moniteur\*\*\*\* a National Instructor. We are capable of training you from a complete novice to the highest level of instructor and many specialist skills in between.

Ask the Training Officer Colm Lowney if you want to know more.



\* As part of your CFT membership full diving insurance is included. Please talk to a committee member to get more information or go to [www.diving.ie](http://www.diving.ie) for more information.

\*\* Diving is a very safe sport when regulated correctly. For this reason it is compulsory to have a diving medical performed by your G.P before you undergo any SCUBA Training. Your G.P will be asked to fill out a medical form and to sign and stamp your log book. The GP can keep a copy of the form for their records, your log book must be presented to the TO/DO before you will allowed in the water

# Equipment

Here is a list of the equipment required to get you going for the upcoming dive season:

## To get you started for the pool sessions you will require the following

- Mask and Snorkel. Fit of your mask is key, like faces they vary...ask for tips and try as many as you can in the pool sessions.
- Open heel fins and wetsuit booties.

Our snorkelling sessions begin on Stephens day as the water is a little colder than the pool you have become accustomed to, so you will require more equipment as well as the above;

- 7mm or thicker wetsuit (try to get a real 'semi-dry' wetsuit –ask for help)
- Neoprene hood
- 3mm/5mm Neoprene gloves

Once your snorkelling is done it is time to get down to business and get diving and see what all the hype is about ☺ the extra equipment here is in two categories : mandatory and optional / not required immediately.

## Diving Mandatory

- Diving cylinder - most popular size is 12L with a 'DIN' fitting
- A set of regulators 1 first stage, 2 second stages, a depth and pressure gauge and hose for your BCD (Again DIN is the popular choice here).
- BCD (buoyancy compensator device) this comes in a variety of styles and sizes
- Weight Belt with lead weight (have a chat with your instructor to discuss the correct amount of weight you will require).
- Dive computer or waterproof watch (Dive computer will make your diving safer & more enjoyable)
- Compass (this often comes with your pressure and depth gauge).
- Life jacket for diving from the boat

## Diving Optional / not required immediately

- Diving torch
- Diving knife
- Neoprene socks – if you suffer the cold put this on the mandatory list
- Dry suit – alternative to a wetsuit (basically you stay dry) but is a little more complex to use and not recommended if you are just starting

## Equipment List and Approximate Costs

<u>Equipment List</u>	<u>Estimate Cost</u> <u>new</u>	<u>Estimate cost used</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Mask and Snorkel	€50-€60	N/A	Check size
Fins	€80-€120	€30-€80	Check size with wetsuit boots on
Wet suit boots	€20-€30	€10-€20	Check size
Wetsuit 7mm	€200-€500	€100-€400	Check size
Neoprene hood	€15-€25	€10-€20	Check Size
Neoprene gloves	€15-€40	€10-€25	Check size
Diving cylinder	€200	€100-150	If buying used check if the cylinder is in test
Regulators	€395-€650	€200-€400	If buying used we would recommend servicing before use
BCD	€250-€600	€125-€400	Check sizing and if buying used make sure it works correctly
Weight belt and Lead weight	€100	€50-€75	Ask instructor how much weight you need
Dive computer	€150-€600	€100-€400	Sunnto and Oceanic are good brands
Compass	€30-€40	€15-€30	
Diving torch	€30 -500	€10-€500	You will get good advice in the club on which torch to buy €100 will buy you a very good torch
Life Jacket	€100-€120	N/A	Don't buy an 'auto-inflate' type that goes off when wet. Buy one with a manual pull toggle for the gas cylinder
Diving Knife	€20-€50	€15	

There are some great deals to be had on diving equipment both new and used on the list below you will see a link to these suppliers.

- Lambay Diving / Below1bar (<http://www.below1bar.com/>)
- Flagship scuba (<http://www.flagshipscuba.com/>)
- [www.divegear.ie](http://www.divegear.ie) (a buy and sell style website for used dive equipment)
- Aquaholics (Northern Ireland)

If you have any questions about any of the equipment mentioned above your instructor or any club member would gladly share their advice and experience and may even come with you when purchasing for friendly advice if you ask nicely

## Fees: Club System v Commercial System

If you have already learnt to dive or tried it abroad then you probably used a commercial PADI dive centre. You may be thinking what will a club offer me? What can a club do for me?

Firstly there is the financial consideration... the Curragh have an annual subscription. The cost is **€440 for the year** plus €110 for comprehensive global insurance cover and registration with the governing body – CFT (Affiliated to CMAS, similar to PADI).

### Payment options

Pay full balance of €550 up-front, or €250 up-front and the remaining €300 spread out over the club year.

**So what else do you get for my fee?** If you do every dive available in Dublin it is less than €6 per dive. If you dive once a week in Dublin during the season this is less than €18 a dive.

- **All diving in Dublin is included at no extra charge; there is no pay per dive it's all covered.**
- **There is no charge for training other than the minimal registration fees for selected courses (trainee courses would be covered in the membership costs)**
- We dive three times a week in Dublin and more if the demand is there. In one season we had record breaking 10 days of back to back diving each evening in the summer.
- So if you dive once or twenty times in Dublin the costs are the same. In fact the more you dive the cheaper it works out.
- In house compressor; we can fill our own bottles for €2.00 a fill. We have a Nitrox blending machine also to mix our own gasses (qualified blenders only).
- A clubhouse beside the sea, with ladies and gents changing rooms and hot showers to use. Kitchen facilities and lecture room.
- We have 2 x 6.5m Rigid Inflatable Boats that can transfer 18 divers to a dive site when we have a full complement of divers.
- When the season is ending and the nights draw in we start 'Night Diving' from the clubhouse. You don't need to do a specialist course for it.
- We have a large number of instructors in the club who can help you develop your diving skills

To give an idea of the PADI pricing structure

Item	Description	Cost
<b>PADI COURSES</b>		
<b>Discover Scuba</b>	Come and try Scuba in the comfort of a heated pool	€65
<b>Open Water</b>	PADI Open Water course run over 6 weeks of evening classes	€495
<b>Open Water Gold</b>	PADI Open Water course run to your own schedule	€595
<b>Advanced Open Water</b>	PADI Advanced course run over 2 evenings and 2 weekends	€395
<b>Rescue Diver</b>	PADI Rescue Diver course run over 2 evenings and 2 weekends	€395

<b>DIVE DUBLIN</b>		
<b>Boat Dive</b>	Take a boat dive in Dublin Bay	€35
<b>Boat dive inc. full rental</b>	Boat dive in Dublin Bay with all equipment included	€55
<b>Wreck or long distance dive</b>	Excursion boat dive to one of Dublin bay's wrecks	€45
<b>Wreck dive inc. equip</b>	Excursion boat dive to one of Dublin bay's wrecks inc equipment	€65
<b>2 dives inc. equip (1 day)</b>	2 Boat Dive package in one day including equipment	€85

At the Curragh Sub Aqua Club, we are all about being a club. We have a mentoring system within the club, so regular members can take new recruits under their wings and help them along. Whether it is organising dives specifically for that person, helping with advice on the purchasing of equipment your Club mentor can help you out. On our weekends away we house share which is a great way to get to know people in the club and to make friends for life.

# Governing Bodies Explained

## PADI /CMAS/ CFT – What is it all about?

In order to develop training and safety standards to an internationally recognised standard the club is a member of CFT (Comhairle Fo Thuinn), The Irish Underwater Council. This is in turn affiliated with CMAS (see below for more information).

Many divers have come across PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors). PADI and CMAS are similar bodies. The certifications we get are internationally recognised and there is even a 'cross-over' programme specially developed for divers trained under the PADI system.

Crossing over is simple. All that is required is a basic assessment of your skills and water fitness along with a small number of lectures. However if you feel you would like to begin again please let us know as there is no problem with running over any sections you may feel unsure about.

The crucial difference for you to consider between the systems is that CFT/CMAS is not a commercially driven organisation. It is organised around supporting diving clubs. For regular divers this makes it a lot cheaper. In particular training costs are very low because other than nominal registration fees the instruction is given free.

**The Irish Underwater Council (CFT)** is the national governing body for recreational underwater sports in Ireland. It was founded in 1963 to organise and promote sport scuba diving and snorkelling and has grown since then to incorporate over 80 clubs around the Country.

CFT is an affiliate member of **CMAS** the international umbrella organisation for recreational diver training organisations represented in the CMAS Technical Committee and underwater sports governed by the CMAS Sport Committee. It also operates a third (Scientific) committee that promotes recreational diver awareness of and involvement in underwater science pursuits and marine conservation.

**European Underwater Federation (EUF)** The EUF serves as a forum allowing recreational scuba diver training organisations to meet, exchange ideas and speak with a common voice on important issues like diver safety. It is estimated that member organisations of the EUF represent over 3,000,000 divers, 60,000 diving instructors, 5,000 clubs and 2,500 diving schools.



## Dive Qualification Equivalence - 'Crossing Over'

The Curragh Sub Aqua Club is a member of the CFT (Comhairle Fo Thuinn), The Irish Underwater Council. This is in turn affiliated with CMAS (the international governing body).

Different training agencies both professional and non-commercial have different emphasis when it comes to training. If you have a diving qualification from a similarly affiliated training body or agency your qualifications will be recognised. This is referred to as the process of 'crossing over'. However you may have to do a few extra lectures to fill in gaps in the curriculums and some in water exercises to check fitness and skills. Nothing onerous and all in the interests of safety.

For more advanced Dive Leader class levels we include coxswain certification allowing you to drive the RIBs. This would often need to be undertaken when crossing over from PADI. We have a large number of instructors to help you cross over and increase your skills.

To simplify the process and remove some of the anachronisms the grades are broken down into the following categories the categories in the table below.

<b>Supervised Diver</b>	<b>Autonomous Diver</b>	<b>Dive Leader</b>
Trainee Diver / CMAS *	Club Diver / CMAS **	Leading Diver / CMAS ***
BSAC Ocean Diver	BSAC Advanced Diver	BSAC First Class Diver
<a href="#">PADI Open Water Diver</a>	BSAC Sports Diver	<a href="#">PADI Dive Master</a>
<a href="#">PADI Advanced Open Water Diver</a>	BSAC Dive Leader	SSA Dive Leader
SAA Elementary Diver	BSAC Practical Rescue Management	SSA Dive Master
SAA Open Water Diver	<a href="#">PADI Rescue Diver</a>	NAUI Dive Master
SSI Passport	SAA Club Diver	
SSI Open Water Diver	SAA Dive Leader	
NAUI Open Water Diver	SSAC 3rd Class Diver / Sports Diver	
NAUI Advanced Open Water Diver	SSI Advanced Open Water Diver	
	SSI Advanced Open Water Diver with 'Stress & Rescue' Speciality	

Most international diving qualifications are recognised, but if your qualification and/or training agency aren't listed in the above table, we will be happy to assess your current qualification and advise you of equivalent grade just bring along your certification and log book.



## Diving Officer (D.O.) Welcome Letter

This letter is designed to give you all the information you need you need as regards meeting points, times and equipment you should bring along for the dives.

Our regular diving timetable for the year is as follows

- Saturdays: meet at 9.30am in the clubhouse in Sandycove with a full cylinder and be ready to board the boat at 10.20am. We return to the clubhouse about 12.30 for showers and to fill bottles. We occasionally shore dive from the clubhouse
- Sundays: the times vary on Sundays depending on the Diving Officer of the Day (D.O.D.). Meet at Coal Harbour, Dun Laoghaire.
- Wednesday: meet at 17.45 at Coal Harbour, Dun Laoghaire with full equipment and ready to board at 18.15.

For all boat dives you **MUST** have a lifejacket and it must be worn at all times, it's the law. Make sure you have a windbreaker coat and a hat as it can get very cold on the boat. Feel free to bring a flask if you think you might like a coffee or soup! When diving from Dun Laoghaire remember to bring money for parking. €2 - €4 depending.

Arrive to each dive with a full cylinder. "Time and tide wait for no one" as the old saying goes so we are all timing everything so arriving late with an empty cylinder & needing a fill is not the way to go. If you need a fill please get down early and refill, and after your dive refill to be ready for the next dive. A refill is just €2 in the clubhouse. If you are stuck please send a mail out to the club and someone may be able to help you out. If you forget anything at the dive-site don't panic, tell the Diving Officer for that dive and they'll try and fix you up as we don't want anyone missing a dive.

Welcome aboard and enjoy the season,

Laura Connolly  
Diving Officer



## Meeting Locations – Dun Laoghaire



See the location for the **meeting points** at the **red diamonds**. It depends on the tide but look about for the car stickers and familiar faces.

If you have any doubts/questions feel free to call me.

Laura Connolly  
Diving Officer

# Acronyms & Buzzwords

Here is quick reference to the most commonly used acronyms and buzzwords in the diving world

Acronym / Buzz Word	Explanation
BSAC	British Sub Aqua Club
BUDDY	Diving Partner
Brevet	Certification card (usually from a CMAS affiliated body)
CTB	Courses & Tests Book
'C' Card	PADI Certification card
CFT	Comhairle Fo Thuinn, The Irish Underwater Council
CFT NO	Membership number
CMAS	Confédération Mondiale des Activités Subaquatiques
DIVER *	Trainee Diver
CSAC	Curragh Sub Aqua Club
DIVER **	Club Diver
DIVER ***	Leading Diver
DIVER ****	National Diver
DO	Diving Officer
DOD	Diving Officer of the Day
MON*	Instructor (basic grade)
MON**	Instructor (medium grade)
MON***	Instructor(advanced grade)
NISAC	Northern Ireland Sub Aqua Club
NAUI	National Association of Underwater Instructors
PADI	Professional Association of Diving Instructors
SSI	Scuba Schools International
SAA	Sub Aqua Association
REG	Regulator
SCUBA	Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus
STAB JACKET / BCD	Buoyancy Control Device
TC	Technical Commission of CFT
TO	Training Officer