

Freediving Training Standards and Procedures



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English-Imperial
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STANDARDS-FREEDIVING

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Freediving General Training Standards

Overview

Governing Standard and Standards Waiver

Statements, written or oral, that are not processed in accordance with SSI Training Standards will not be considered the official position of SSI. The online English-metric version of the SSI Training and Training Center Standards are the default global standards.

Waivers from Standards

All waivers for deviations to the SSI Training Standards must be requested and approved in writing by the responsible SSI Service Center. The request must explain why the waiver is needed, and what will be done to ensure the quality of SSI training.

SSI Training Standards are updated annually; if a waiver for deviation is approved, it expires with the new Standards year.

Overview

How To Use These Standards

All SSI Training Centers and SSI Professionals, are accountable for following all general and program-specific training standards when conducting SSI approved programs.

For the purpose of these standards, an SSI Professional is defined as a person holding any professional-level rating with SSI, or any staff member of an SSI Training Center.

For the purpose of these standards, an SSI Training Center is defined as any business that conducts SSI training, including but not limited to: Dive Centers, Dive Resorts, Dive Schools, Swim Centers, etc.

General Training Standards

These standards apply to all SSI programs unless otherwise specified in program-specific training standards.

Minimum Instructor Rating

Any active status SSI Professional with the minimum applicable instructor rating or higher may conduct training as specified in the program-specific standard.

Recommendations, Notes and Examples

These Training Standards include recommendations, notes and examples.

- RECOMMENDATIONS provide additional suggestions whenever student needs and abilities, environmental conditions or equipment make it possible to enhance the experience of the training activity.
- NOTES and EXAMPLES help clarify a specific standard or recommendation.

Government Laws

If applicable, local, state and federal laws, bylaws and codes of practice supersede SSI Standards. SSI Training Centers and SSI Professionals are required to be familiar with these laws, and inform the responsible SSI Service Center, in writing, in the event of a conflict.

SSI Flexibility Rule

Students participating in SSI programs must complete all training requirements as set forth in the current SSI Training Standards and the applicable instructor manual. SSI Professionals must follow 100% of the SSI Total Teaching System; including all academic, pool/confined water, and open water requirements as outlined in the program-specific instructor manual.

The SSI Flexibility Rule also means that SSI Professionals can develop their own teaching style and program schedules including; the order and number of classroom and pool/confined water sessions, and the order of skills in the pool/confined water sessions and open water training dives.

SSI Professionals are NOT allowed to add skills that SSI does not endorse. Teaching additional skills or skills that “challenge” your students violates SSI Training Standards and can make you liable in the case of an incident. If you have any questions about the SSI Flexibility Rule and what skills are or are not allowed, please contact the responsible SSI Service Center for guidance or interpretation.

Example | Skills like packing, exhaling beyond the functional residual capacity level, deep hangs below 66 feet, and variable weight dives using the bottom weight and dive line as the ballast are not endorsed by SSI, and must NOT be taught during SSI training programs.

Example | Students are not required to complete pool/confined water skills while wearing wetsuits. However, to prepare students for the open water, SSI Professionals may elect to have an additional pool/confined-water training session for students to practice skills while wearing a wetsuit.

Example | If environmental conditions and student ability permit, SSI Professionals may evaluate any and all required skills during any open water training dive. All required open water training dives must still be completed for all SSI programs.

Exceeding Standards

SSI Professionals may exceed standards, may provide more detailed coverage of the materials, and may provide additional in-water training sessions. Incorporating newer techniques and equipment is encouraged. Any specific knowledge and skills changes must be approved by the responsible SSI Service Center prior to incorporating the changes.

Overview

Program Definitions

Entry-Level Program

Any SSI program where no prerequisite certifications or experience are needed to participate. Open water training for all entry-level programs must be conducted during daylight hours (between sunrise and sunset) in water that allows direct vertical access to the surface.

Certification Program

A digital certification card must be issued once a student completes all requirements of a specific SSI certification program.

SSI issues this verification upon receipt of the SSI Professional's and SSI Training Center's confirmation of satisfactory completion of all program requirements by the student, as documented in the student's training record and logbook.

Recognition Program

A digital recognition card must be issued once a student has completed a SSI recognition program.

SSI issues this recognition upon receipt of the SSI Professional's and SSI Training Center's confirmation of satisfactory completion of all program requirements by the student, as documented in the student's training record and logbook.

Recognition cards are a proof of experience, but do not qualify the student to dive autonomously without additional training.

Participation Criteria

Age

The minimum age to begin any SSI program is listed in the individual program's training standards.

The student or candidate may register for a program at any point, but they may not begin any SSI training prior to reaching the minimum age requirement.

Minors

For the purpose of these standards, a minor is anyone younger than 18 years old who participates in an SSI training program unless local laws or regulations dictate a more-restrictive age (e.g. 15 years old).

Experience Prerequisites

The minimum experience prerequisites are listed in the individual program's training standards.

Experience Sessions

Some programs require a minimum number of logged freediving experience sessions prior to registering for the Digital Kit. Valid experience sessions met the following criteria:

- A duration of at least 15 minutes
- Include an entry and exit (in-water sessions only)
- Include at least one dive or skill attempt applicable to the certification level

Example | A freediver with the SSI Freediver and SSI Training Techniques certifications completes a 45-minute open water session that includes two constant weight dives to 33 feet, a 30-minute pool/confined water session that includes a two-minute static performance, and a 30-minute walking apnea session. They may log three sessions in their logbook.

Water Fitness Evaluation

Some SSI programs have required water skills and stamina evaluations. The specific program training standards will specify whether these evaluations must be successfully completed prior to any in-water training, prior to any open water training or prior to certification.

Administration

Privacy Forms and Training Records

Completion Requirements

Training with an SSI Training Center

Training Records and required documentation are only valid for training conducted with the initiating SSI Training Center. If the student or candidate affiliates with another SSI Training Center, they must complete the required documentation for the new training center as well.

Duration of Validity

Some documentation is valid for the duration of the student/candidate's training with a single SSI Training Center. Other forms must be completed for individual training programs as outlined below.

Training Record Components

Each student or candidate must complete the required components of the SSI Training Record prior to participating in any SSI training program. The forms of minors must be reviewed and signed by a parent or guardian.

Prior to Training

Prior to beginning training, they must complete the:

Registration Form

- Permanently valid

Privacy Policy Form

- Permanently valid unless the student requests to withdraw their consent
- SSI recommends that all SSI Training Centers have individuals complete the SSI Privacy Policy form when they register for a MySSI account or affiliate their existing MySSI account to the training center

Freediving Responsible Diver Code

- Permanently valid within a category (scuba, freediving, XR, swim), and is re-affirmed by signing a completion record for any program in the same category
- Must be re-affirmed prior to starting any new training program in a different category

SSI Freediving/Breath-Hold Training Assumption of Risk, Liability Release & Hold Harmless Agreement (where required)

- Valid for one (1) year from the date of signing

Note | Signing an Assumption of Risk, Liability Release, & Hold Harmless Agreement is contradictory to liability regulations in some countries of the world.

Example | The Assumption of Risk, Liability Release, & Hold Harmless Agreement is not valid in the European Union, so students should not be forced to sign it.

Youth Addendum (required for any student younger than 18 years old)

- Valid for one (1) year from the date of signing
- Must be signed by the responsible parent or guardian

Prior to In-Water Training

Prior to beginning any in-water training, they must complete the:

Diver Medical Participant Questionnaire

- Valid for one (1) year from the date of signing
- Must be updated if their medical condition changes
- If required by the Medical Participant Questionnaire, a signed Physician's Approval to Dive must be obtained prior to in-water training

Example / The Ecology programs and Diving Knowledge programs do not have mandatory in-water sessions. The Medical Participant Questionnaire is only required for these programs if in-water training is conducted as part of the program.

Physician's Approval to Dive (when required)

- Valid for one (1) year from the date of signing

Prior to Certification

Prior to receiving their certification or recognition card, they must complete the:

Program-specific Completion Record

- Must be completed for each training program

Online Final Exam Record

- Must be completed if the program's final exam is completed online

Professional Program Candidates

Prior to beginning training, candidates participating in SSI professional training programs must also complete the:

SSI Professional Agreement

- Permanently valid

Candidates participating in professional level training must have digital copies of the following documents uploaded into MySSI before the final certification(s) can be issued:

- RSTC Medical Participant Questionnaire signed by a physician within one (1) year
- Proof of CPR training within two (2) years
- Proof of First Aid training within two (2) years
- Proof of Oxygen First Aid training within (2) years

Exceptions

Candidates for the following programs are not required to upload these documents:

- Specialty Instructor | excluding React Right Instructor candidates
- Online Upgrade candidates

Administration

Medical History

Medical Participant Questionnaire

Each student must complete the SSI Diver Medical Participant Questionnaire, or submit a valid medical statement, prior to any in-water activity.

If the Medical Participant Questionnaire or the appearance/behavior of the student indicate any condition contrary to participation in any in-water activities, the student is required to provide the Physician's Approval to Dive form, signed by a licensed medical practitioner and based on a medical examination, prior to any in-water activity.

The Medical Participant Questionnaires of minors must be reviewed and signed by a parent or guardian prior to any in-water activity.

Medical Participant Questionnaires and the Physician's Approval to Dive form, or valid medical statements, are valid for 12 months from the date they are signed. Students may participate in multiple SSI training programs within the 12 months without completing another form.

If the student becomes ill or injured within the 12 months, they must complete a new Medical Participant Questionnaire prior to any in-water activities, following the protocol outlined above.

Professional Program Candidates

Each candidate participating in professional-level training must provide to the responsible SSI Service Center a Medical Participant Questionnaire and Physician's Approval to Dive form—or valid medical statement approved and signed by a licensed medical practitioner—based on a diving medical examination dated within one (1) year of the training completion date. These documents must be uploaded by the candidate via MySSI for approval.

Active status SSI Professionals are required to notify SSI if they develop a medical condition that interferes with their teaching ability. They must submit a new Medical Participant Questionnaire to the responsible SSI Service Center (by uploading the form into their MySSI account) to maintain their active status.

Administration

SSI Materials

Student Materials

Each student must be issued the appropriate Digital Training Kit (if available) for every program they are participating in.

Professional Materials

The SSI Training Standards, SSI Professional Training Materials and SSI Student Materials (digital learning and printable workbooks) form the basis of the SSI Teaching System and must be used for all SSI training programs. Whenever there is a discrepancy between these materials, the SSI Training Standards take precedence. If in doubt, contact the responsible SSI Service Center for guidance or interpretation.

Each SSI Professional has access to the most current Instructor Manual and Student Manual for the program they are conducting, as well as any additional training materials required by SSI or their affiliated Training Center.

Administration

Certification Procedures

Certifying Instructor

The certifying instructor is the instructor-of-record on the student's certification. They are responsible for ensuring that the training record is properly completed, including all required verification signatures and dates.

- For programs requiring in-water training, the certifying instructor is the SSI Professional who completes the final skill assessment with the student.
- For programs without in-water training, the certifying instructor is the SSI Professional who completes the final knowledge evaluation with the student.

Student Data Entry

Training Centers and SSI Professionals must confirm that the student or candidate's first and last name, contact data, birthdate, an acceptable photo that clearly shows the student's face, and email address are correctly entered into MySSI.

Processing Student Certifications and Recognitions

SSI certifications and recognitions must be issued to all students that successfully complete all SSI training requirements at all levels of training. Digital cards will be produced immediately after the certification or recognition is processed in MySSI. All certifications and recognitions must be processed within seven (7) days of the program's completion.

Note | Students are not required to achieve any program progress in the digital learning prior to receiving their certification or recognition card, as long as all requirements from the individual program standard are met.

Some recognition programs do not require a final knowledge evaluation. If there is no final exam for the program (see "Certification Requirements" in the individual program standard), then the SSI Professional issuing the certification or recognition card must verify that the student has the appropriate level of knowledge by either completing an academic session or by asking questions.

Note | After a certification or recognition is processed in MySSI, the student will be sent an email including a copy of their certification or recognition card. The student can also access all their certification and recognition cards by logging into their MySSI account, or on the MySSI app.

Processing Professional Certifications

Upon completion of all SSI training requirements for all professional programs, the candidate's training records or application form must be completed in full and uploaded in PDF format into the MySSI System or sent to the responsible SSI Service Center within seven (7) days of the program's completion.

Note | See Freediving Professional Programs > Specialty Instructor for certifications issued using the co-teaching or verification methods, or for Specialty Instructor programs without digital materials.

For Specialty Instructor programs without digital materials, the certification is completed by the responsible Training Center, the Training Center QMS Manager authorizes the certification, and all required paperwork is maintained by the Training Center.

Junior Certifications

All students under the age of 15 that complete an SSI program will receive a Junior Diver certification for that program.

Digital Junior Diver certifications are automatically upgraded to the complete program certification when the student turns fifteen years old. Printed cards may be ordered and purchased through their local Training Center. Update the student's dives, photo and personal information in MySSI before printing the new certification.

Issuing a Referral

If a student only completes a portion of an SSI program and chooses to complete the program with another Training Center, you must provide copies of all appropriate training documentation, as well as a copy of the student's Medical Participant Questionnaire (or other valid medical document), to the student and/or the receiving Training Center.

All original training documentation and medical forms must stay with the referring Training Center.

Replacing Lost Cards

If a student has lost their printed card, do a diver search in MySSI to see if they have a digital card in their MySSI profile. If a digital card is found, have the student log in to access all their digital cards. They can order and purchase a printed card from their Training Center.

If there is no record of a digital card, contact the responsible SSI Service Center.

Training Records and Logbooks

Training Records and logbooks must be used for monitoring and evaluating each student's progress.

Logbooks

The instructor and student must log and verify (digital logbook) or sign and date (paper logbook) all training dives conducted for SSI training programs upon completion of the applicable skills.

Training Records

The instructor and student must initial and sign the training completion record upon completion of each session. Training records must be maintained and retained for a minimum of ten (10) years by the Training Center.

Digital training record components that are uploaded into MySSI are held securely on SSI's servers. This meets the training center's requirements for record retention.

If necessary for quality management or grievance resolution, SSI Training Centers are required to send the training records or legible copies to the responsible SSI Service Center—or upload them using the QMS System—within the given time limit.

Recommendation / If possible, the appropriate parts of the training completion record should be completed by the student/candidate and the responsible SSI Professional at the end of each session or training day.

Note / Local laws may require that training records must be retained for more than ten (10) years.

Administration

Equivalent Certifications

Certifications from Recognized Training Agencies

Certifications issued by an SSI-recognized training agency or federation are considered equivalent SSI certifications. The certification holder may advance to the next level of training in the SSI Education System.

If a customer requests an equivalent SSI rating for a certification they hold from an SSI-recognized training agency or federation, it is at the discretion and liability of the SSI Professional or SSI Training Center to issue that certification.

Certifications from Non-Recognized Training Agencies

Students certified by training agencies or federations that are not recognized by SSI cannot be considered equivalent without an additional knowledge and skill evaluation administered by the SSI Professional.

These students must successfully pass the SSI Experienced Diver Test as outlined in the SSI Training Standards. Mastery of all diving skills of the level the diver is qualifying for must be displayed during the open water training dives.

After successful completion of the Experienced Diver Test, these students may be issued an equivalent SSI certification, and are eligible to attend the next higher program in the SSI Education System.

Training centers may still elect to recognize students certified by non-recognized training agencies or federations as equivalent, but do so at their own risk, taking full responsibility for the student's judgment and the associated liability risk.

Example | If an actively diving customer with your training center loses their certification card that was issued by a certification agency that no longer exists, but the diver has other proof of diving experience (e.g. a signed logbook), then you may choose to issue this customer a new SSI certification based on your personal knowledge and verification of their diving experience.

The SSI Training Center must issue a Digital Kit for the applicable program and assess the diver's knowledge and skills before issuing a new certification. The Training Center must decide what level of assessment is required before issuing an equivalent SSI certification.

SSI Recognition Criteria

To qualify as an SSI-recognized training agency or federation, all of the following requirements must be met:

- Be in business for at least five (5) years
- Provide a complete range of training materials in at least three (3) languages
- Have at least 250 instructors and 50 authorized training centers globally

After proof/fulfillment of these prerequisites, the organization will be added to the current version of the SSI Equivalency Chart, and will be treated as an SSI-recognized training agency or federation.

SSI Professional Duties

Professional Liability Requirements

Professional Liability Insurance

Where required (e.g. the United States), the SSI Professional must maintain professional liability insurance.

The SSI Professional must:

- Verify SSI is listed as an Additional Insured on the professional liability policy
- Verify the professional liability insurance covers all SSI programs the SSI Professional is authorized to conduct (e.g. XR Instructors are required to have a Technical Diving insurance endorsement)
- Verify current proof of professional liability insurance is uploaded to the SSI Professional's MySSI profile
- Not provide any professional services in the absence of professional liability insurance
- Comply with all insurance policy terms, conditions, warranties and exclusions

SSI and SSI Service Centers are not responsible for verifying that an SSI Professional complies with professional liability insurance requirements. However, certifications may not be processed in the absence of proof of insurance where required.

SSI Professional Duties

SSI Professional Status

Active Status

SSI Professionals must fulfill the following prerequisites to maintain active status:

- Affiliate with an active status Training Center.
- Read and sign (online) the SSI Professional's Agreement and pay the annual membership dues.
- Maintain professional liability insurance (if required legally in the country). The SSI Professional must list SSI as an additional insured in the policy and must provide current proof-of-insurance to the responsible SSI Service Center.

Inactive Status

An SSI Professional who has met all the active status requirements but is not affiliated with an active status Training Center, and/or lacks current proof of professional liability insurance (where required).

The SSI Professional in inactive status will pay a reduced renewal fee and will still have access to training materials, but they cannot conduct any SSI programs until they return to active status.

Canceled Status

An individual who has been certified as an SSI Professional, but has not paid any annual fees to SSI.

Administrative Hold Status

A temporary status assigned to an SSI Professional as the result of a Verified QMS Complaint, Alert, or Incident Report. The SSI Professional must not conduct SSI programs while in Administrative Hold status. This status is generally communicated to the professional by the International QMS Manager.

An SSI Professional involved in the death of a participant/student/candidate for which they were providing direct supervision is automatically placed on Administrative Hold at the time of the fatal incident.

The individual's certification data cannot be verified any longer by the SSI Diver Verification system.

Expelled Status

An individual who has been certified as an SSI Professional, but has been expelled from SSI due to severe breaches of SSI Ethical or Training Standards. A member in expelled status cannot obtain active teaching status again with SSI globally, and the individual's certification data cannot be verified any longer by the SSI Diver Verification system.

Individuals Expelled From Other Agencies

If a professional is expelled from another agency for any reason, they may be eligible to earn SSI active status. This decision is at the discretion of SSI International, and will be considered on an individual basis. See the SSI Quality Management System Manual for more information.

Retired Status

Some SSI Professionals are placed in “Retired Status” if they do not meet the minimum active status requirements for their highest professional rating. SSI Professionals in retired status remain in active status for the highest professional certification that they meet the minimum active status requirements for. They may also continue to conduct all student-level programs that they are qualified to teach.

Affected certifications

- Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer
- Freediving Instructor Trainer
- Mermaid Instructor Trainer

SSI Professional Duties

Returning to Active Status

SSI Professionals in canceled status may return to active status by completing the following requirements, which are determined by the length of time the professional has been out of active status.

Duration of Inactivity

Any duration:

- If an SSI Professional is in canceled status with SSI for any period of time, but has maintained active status with a recognized training agency, the responsible SSI Service Center may—at their discretion—permit the SSI Professional to complete an SSI Crossover program to return to active status.

Less than two (2) years:

- Complete all components of the online renewal process.

Greater than two (2), but less than five (5) years:

Option 1

- Successfully complete an SSI Professional Crossover program for the applicable certification level.

Option 2

- Successfully complete a Professional Update for the applicable certification level as defined below.

Greater than five (5), but less than ten (10) years:

- Successfully complete a Professional Update for the applicable certification level as defined below.

Greater than ten (10) years:

- Complete all program requirements, including any water fitness evaluations, digital learning materials, academic assessments, final exams, and in-water training requirements as outlined in the program-specific instructor manual.

SSI Professional Duties

SSI Freediving Professional Update

Intent

The intent of the SSI Freediving Professional Update program is to update and reactivate SSI Freediving Professionals that have been in inactive or canceled status for at least two (2) years.

Purpose

SSI Professional Updates evaluate a candidate's knowledge of general diving theory, program-specific information, SSI training and teaching philosophies, in-water abilities, and any required teaching and evaluation requirements.

If there is any doubt or concern about a candidate's abilities, the Professional Update should be used to evaluate the candidate before issuing any SSI professional-level certification.

Requirements For Completion

Freediving Assistant Instructor Update

- Purchase and complete the Crossover/Update Kit.
- The applicable final exam.

Complete the following Practical Application Sessions from the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course:

- Practical Application 1 | Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation
- Practical Application 2 | Academic Teaching Presentation | Pool Freediver
- Practical Application 3 | Education System Evaluation
- Practical Application 5 | Breathing Session Presentation
- Practical Application 6 | Pool/Confined Water Performance Evaluation
- Practical Application 7 | Pool/Confined Water Teaching Presentation

Freediving Instructor/Advanced Freediving Instructor Update

Candidates must complete:

- All requirements for the Freediving Assistant Instructor Update
- Practical Application 9 | Open Water Performance Evaluation | Rescue skills only
- Practical Application 10 | Open Water Teaching Evaluation
- The applicable final exam.

Performance Freediving Instructor Update

Candidates must complete:

- All requirements for a Freediving Instructor/Advanced Freediving Instructor Update
- The applicable final exam.

And at least one of the following:

- Practical Application 11 | Coaching/Mouth Fill/Stretching Session Presentations

Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Update

The Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Update must be directly supervised by an active status Freediving Instructor Trainer who is authorized by SSI International.

- Purchase and complete the Crossover/Update Kit.

Candidates must complete:

- The applicable final exam.

And at least one of the following:

Option 1

- Practical Application 1 | Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation
- Practical Application 2 | Academic Teaching Presentation 2 | Freediving Instructor Training Course
- Practical Application 3 | Academic Teaching Presentation Evaluations
- Practical Application 7 | In-Water Teaching Presentation Evaluations
- Practical Application 8 | The SSI Education System Evaluation

Option 2

- Participate in at least one (1) complete Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Seminar.

Option 3

- Co-teach at least one (1) complete Freediving Assistant Instructor Training Course with an active status Freediving Instructor Trainer who is authorized by SSI International.

Freediving Instructor Trainer Update

The Instructor Trainer Update must be directly supervised by an active status International Training Director, and approved by the responsible SSI Service Center.

- Purchase and complete the Crossover/Update Kit.

Candidates must complete:

- The applicable final exam.

And at least one of the following:

Option 1

- Practical Application 1 | Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation
- Practical Application 2 | Academic Teaching Presentation 2 | Freediving Instructor Training Course
- Practical Application 3 | Academic Teaching Presentation Evaluations
- Practical Application 7 | In-Water Teaching Presentation Evaluations
- Practical Application 8 | The SSI Education System Evaluation

Option 2

- Participate in at least one (1) complete Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar.

Option 3

- Co-teach at least one (1) complete Freediving Instructor Training Course with an active status International Training Director.

Certification

Upon completion of the Professional Update, send the candidate's professional application form with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.

SSI Professional Duties

SSI Mermaid Professional Update

Intent

The intent of the SSI Mermaid Professional Update program is to update and reactivate SSI Mermaid Professionals that have been in inactive or canceled status for at least two (2) years.

Purpose

SSI Professional Updates evaluate a candidate's knowledge of general diving theory, program-specific information, SSI training and teaching philosophies, in-water abilities, and any required teaching and evaluation requirements.

If there is any doubt or concern about a candidate's abilities, the Professional Update should be used to evaluate the candidate before issuing any SSI professional-level certification.

Requirements For Completion

Mermaid Instructor Update

Candidates must complete:

- The applicable final exam.
- Participate in at least one (1) complete Mermaid Instructor Training Course.

Mermaid Instructor Trainer Update

- The Mermaid Instructor Trainer Update must be directly supervised by a qualified active status International Training Director and approved by the responsible SSI Service Center.

Candidates must complete:

- The applicable final exam.

And at least one of the following:

- Participate in at least one (1) complete Mermaid Instructor Trainer Seminar.
- Co-teach at least one (1) complete Mermaid Instructor Training Course with an active status International Training Director.

Certification

Upon completion of the Professional Update, send the candidate's professional application form with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.

SSI Professional Duties

Ethical Standards

As an SSI Professional, you are accountable for your decisions and actions when representing SSI and conducting SSI programs. SSI expects you to display appropriate professional behavior at all times while conducting SSI training or other related activities. The guidelines listed below are expected and required of each SSI Professional:

- Be a professional role model at all times during training and other business-related activities.
- Be a role model to the public, practicing and promoting safe diving, environmental awareness, and minimal ecological impact.
- Advocate and promote adherence to the appropriate SSI Responsible Diver Code during all diving activities.
- Conduct all SSI programs with integrity and honesty and with the goal of providing the best possible customer experience.
- Adhere to SSI Training Standards and Procedures. Attend SSI Professional updates when required and on a regular basis.
- Do not disparage or otherwise make negative statements about SSI International, SSI Training Centers, SSI Professionals, or any other member of the diving industry.
- You are required to notify SSI immediately—or prior to any professional-level training—if you have been convicted of a felony or any form of sexual offense.
- Notify SSI if an SSI Training Center or SSI Professional is the subject of an ethical or standards violation, investigation, action, or proceeding brought by any other recognized training agency or governmental agency.
- Indemnify and hold harmless SSI, its officers, directors, and assignees for any loss, claim, or damage resulting from action of an SSI Training Center, SSI Professional or their agents, students, or assignees.
- Comply with all quality management and compliance procedures outlined in the SSI Quality Management System Manual.

The SSI Professional understands that any breach of these Ethical Standards may result in an SSI QMS review and compliance action, which may have an effect on their SSI Professional status.

SSI Professional Duties

SSI Quality Management

Note / SSI has implemented a completely new Quality Management System (QMS).

The new Quality Management System (QMS) replaces previous versions of the Monitor Assessment Program (MAP), SSI Grievance Procedure and associated components with immediate effect. For definitions of terminology and a detailed description of SSI Quality Management procedures, please see the SSI Quality Management System Manual.

Conducting SSI Programs

Equipment Definitions

Snorkeling

During all in-water snorkeling training, each student and instructor must be equipped with a properly fitted Total Snorkeling System that includes:

- Mask
- Snorkel
- Fins
- Exposure suit appropriate for the environment

Freediving

Minimum Student Equipment

Unless the program-specific instructor manual states otherwise, each freediving student must be equipped with a properly fitted Total Freediving System, including:

- Mask
- Snorkel
- Bi-fins (standard length or long freediving fins)
- Exposure suit appropriate for the environment
- Weight System
- Logbook

Use Of Safety Lanyards

Students are required to wear a freediving safety lanyard if any of the following conditions apply:

- Advanced Freediver programs and higher
- Vertical visibility is less than 33 feet
- The planned freedive is deeper than 66 feet in depth
- On any site where the natural bottom depth is 99 feet or deeper

Recommendation / A lanyard should be used whenever the natural bottom depth is substantially deeper than the bottom plate depth.

Minimum Freediving Professional Equipment

- During all open water training, each SSI Professional must be equipped with at least all student equipment.
- They must use bi-fins for all training with the exception of the Monofin specialty program.

Conducting SSI Programs

Assessing Knowledge and Skill

SSI Training Centers and SSI Professionals must ensure that each student receives the required knowledge, skills and experience to comfortably and confidently dive at the specified level of training before conducting open water training dives.

It is the SSI Professional's duty to ensure that all students achieve mastery of all required skills before issuing a certification. To achieve mastery the student must be able to comfortably repeat the skill in diverse and adverse conditions.

Skill Mastery Definitions

Expert-Level Quality

- The skill is completed without pauses or mistakes, and can be repeated without noticeable effort.

Demonstration-Level Quality

- The skill is completed without hesitation or mistakes, and can be repeated without noticeable effort.
- Each key point of the skill is clearly identified and demonstrated during the exercise with pauses for emphasis.

Final Exam

If a final exam is required for certification, the following requirements must be met:

- The student/candidate must complete the exam without outside assistance or personal notes
- A qualified SSI Professional must directly supervise written final exams
- The professional administering the exam may only provide clarification to help explain the question
- Minimum passing score for student-level programs (written exam): 80%
- Minimum passing score for student-level programs (when an online exam is available): 100%
- Minimum passing score for professional-level programs: 90%

Approved Materials

Students and candidates may use the following materials to complete the final exam:

- SSI Training Standards
- Calculator

Instructor Assistance

If the final exam is not available in the student's native language, or the student has a documented learning disability, the SSI Professional conducting training may administer the exam orally. The answer sheet must still be completed by the student and signed by both the student and SSI Professional.

If the student is younger than 15 years old, the SSI Professionals may rephrase or explain a question or answer on the final exam to help clarify a concept, but they may not answer, or help the student answer, the question.

Conducting SSI Programs

Program Duration and Time Limits

Program Duration

There is no maximum time limit for the duration of any SSI program. Some SSI programs may have minimum program hours listed in their standards.

Professional Training Programs

The number of classes, hours and sessions per day are set by the individual instructor, based on the candidate's needs, ability and local water conditions.

Time Limit to Complete a Program

Open water training for all SSI programs must be completed within six (6) months of the last academic or in-water training session. If it has been more than six (6) months, an SSI Professional must conduct a reevaluation (both knowledge and skill review) to determine if the student is sufficiently proficient to continue to the open water training.

Training Sessions Per Day

Three (3) in-water sessions per day is the maximum allowed, unless otherwise indicated in the specific program standards.

Duration of a Training Session

To be counted as a freediving training session, each dive must include:

- An entry and an exit, or a surface interval long enough to debrief and brief the next session (for in-water training)
- An instructor demonstration
- A student demonstration
- Evaluation of the student
- Sufficient practice time for the student to demonstrate mastery of the skills

Conducting SSI Programs

Specialized Equipment

Guidelines for Specialized Diving Equipment

If specialized equipment or additional equipment is incorporated into SSI training programs, you must conduct an equipment orientation prior to taking students into the open water. Additional training is intended to provide practice and basic proficiency with the equipment, and should include a review of specialty materials, academic sessions, and pool/confined water training sessions.

Note | Any specialized equipment related to the program, like monofins, must be introduced to students in the pool/confined water prior to taking students into open water.

Use of Surface Floats and Flags

Follow the local requirements for using surface floats or diver down buoys whenever open water training is conducted.

Conducting SSI Programs

Using Certified Assistants

Freediving Programs

Recreational-Level Training

- If an instructor with the equivalent certification is used as a certified assistant, they are considered as another instructor, and may double ratios.
- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor or higher may act as a certified assistant for the pool/ confined water portion of the Advanced Freediver and Performance Freediver programs.
- An active status Freediving Instructor or higher may act as a certified assistant for the open water portion of the Advanced Freediver program.
- An active status Advanced Freediving Instructor or higher may act as a certified assistant for the open water portion of the Performance Freediver program.

Professional-Level Training

- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor or higher may act as a certified assistant for the Basic Freediving Instructor program.
- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor or higher may directly supervise all in-water performance requirements for the Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar under the indirect supervision of an active status Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer.
- An active status Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer may act as a certified assistant for the Freediving Assistant Instructor program.
- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer may act as a certified assistant for all SSI Freediving Instructor programs.

Mermaid Programs

- Any active status SSI Dive Professional, Freediving Professional, or Level 1 Swim Teacher or higher may act as a certified assistant for SSI Mermaid programs.

Conducting SSI Programs

Supervision

SSI Professionals must not engage in any activities other than supervision during in-water training for all entry-level programs.

Activities that do not affect the SSI Professional's ability to supervise and assist their students (e.g. taking a class photo with a pocket-sized camera) are permitted.

Direct Supervision

An active status SSI Professional certified to conduct the applicable SSI program must personally supervise and evaluate all students during any training. They may not delegate the supervision to a certified assistant.

Indirect Supervision

An active status SSI Professional certified to conduct the applicable SSI program is not required to personally observe all student knowledge and skills, but they must manage all program activities and be present at the training location.

In some SSI programs, an active status SSI Professional may delegate some supervision to a certified assistant, but the instructor must still be present at the location, and managing all program activities.

Distance Learning

With distance learning, the academic portion of the program is conducted by correspondence or over the internet, without the student's physical presence at the SSI Training Center.

All academic sessions for all SSI programs can be conducted using distance learning.

Proximity

Some program-specific standards require a minimum proximity (physical distance) between the SSI Professional and their students during in-water training.

Example / During a training dive, the instructor must act as the supervising buddy. They should descend to at least half the target depth of the student.

Before starting a dive and after surfacing, the instructor should make sure that the non-diving students are properly positioned at the buoy or surface line.

Recommendation / SSI does not recommend diving deeper than 66 feet with a student during any program.

Student-To-Instructor Ratios

The student-to-instructor ratio for academic sessions is set by the individual instructor, based on the ability of the instructor to deal effectively with all student needs.

The maximum student-to-instructor ratio for in-water training is provided in each specific program standard. Any certified divers that dive with a class during open water training dives must be counted towards the student-to-instructor ratios.

If conditions dictate, decrease the student-to-instructor ratio.

Recommendation / Whenever possible, additional certified assistants should be used during training.

Conducting SSI Programs

Duty of Care

Obligation of Care

All SSI Professionals must inform students that if they become excessively cold or tired, are under undue stress, injured, not feeling well, or have recently been sick, they must not dive, or must not continue the session, as is appropriate.

Environmental Conditions

Instructors have an obligation to cancel or modify open water training dives when environmental conditions, a student's physical or mental condition or equipment difficulties make it advisable.

Note / This judgment can only be made by the SSI Professional at the time and place of the open water training dive. Students who do not successfully complete the required skills during a training dive may complete those skills during a later training dive.

Skill Level

Only realistic skills may be presented when students reach a level of SSI training where they are capable of dealing with underwater problems. The students should solve these problems as they would in real-world diving situations.

Forcing Students

SSI Professionals must never force students to perform skills if the student indicates (verbally or physically) that they do not want to perform the skill.

Emergency Plan

Any SSI Professional conducting in-water training must have a written emergency plan for incidents for each location where training is conducted.

First Aid Equipment

Emergency equipment must be available in the vicinity of the dive site, including a first aid kit, oxygen unit and communications equipment. This equipment must be accessible at all times while training is being conducted.

Reporting Procedures

In the event that an SSI Professional is involved in, or is witness to an incident, or if a claim or suit is filed against them or their Training Center, they must immediately notify the responsible SSI Service Center, their Insurance Agent and their affiliated Training Center's Insurance Agent.

Recommendation / Use the SSI Incident Report form found in the MySSI download section.

Conducting SSI Programs

Environmental Definitions

Shallow Water

Water shallow enough to stand with the head out of the water.

Deep Water

Water too deep to stand in with the head out of the water.

Deep Diving

Defined as any dive deeper than 60 feet.

Diving in Cold Water

SSI Professionals must ensure that proper exposure protection is available to all students before conducting training in cold water.

Depth limits should be reduced by 20% when conducting freediving training in cold water (below 54°F when measured at depth) according to the following:

- Actual depth = Calculated depth in cold water
- 33 feet = 26 feet in cold water
- 66 feet = 53 feet in cold water
- 99 feet = 79 feet in cold water
- 132 feet = 106 feet in cold water
- 165 feet = 132 feet in cold water

Excursion Dive

A dive without formal performance requirements made prior to issuing a certification. Entry-level students must be directly supervised during excursion dives.

Example / A freediving session conducted between scheduled open water freediving sessions with no additional training or skill demonstrations.

Indoor Diving

Aquariums and purpose-built artificial diving facilities with a minimum depth greater than fifteen (15) feet, and a minimum water surface area of 120 square yards may be used to conduct open water training.

Note / All standards including depth limits still apply when conducting training at an Indoor Diving Facility. Contact the responsible SSI Service Center if you are unsure if an Indoor Diving location is appropriate for training.

Night Diving

Any dive conducted after sunset and before sunrise. SSI Professionals must make underwater dive lights available to all students when conducting training at night.

Conducting SSI Programs

Training Environments and Depth Limits

Pool

An enclosed artificial structure filled with water that is used for swimming and dive skills development. It must have adequate visibility to ensure an instructor can observe their students at all times.

- The maximum depth for all pool/confined water training is 15 feet unless specified in the program-specific standard.

Confined Water

Any body of water with a depth appropriate to the activity that offers conditions similar to those of a pool including visibility, depth, water movement, and access.

For all entry-level programs, pool/confined water should have depths both shallow enough for all students to stand up in and deep enough to adequately perform the program required skills.

- The maximum depth for all pool/confined water training is 15 feet unless specified in the program-specific standard.

Freediving Water Fitness Evaluations and pool/confined water practice sessions may be conducted in open water environments if:

- Conditions give the instructor adequate visibility and control
- No surface traffic is present in the training area

Open Water

An outdoor body of water suitable for swimming or diving activities with depths greater than fifteen (15) feet. Environmental conditions must be consistent with the requirements for the training program.

All open water training sessions must have direct vertical access to the surface, and must be conducted during daylight hours (between sunrise and sunset).

Freediving open water sessions may be conducted in a large dimension pool, an aquarium, or any other body of water if:

- The training location meets the depth limits required by the applicable program standard
- All in-water ratios for open water training are followed as outlined in the applicable program standard

Recommended Depth Limits After Certification

After certification, SSI certified divers should dive with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to a depth equivalent with their experience and level of training.

Recommended depth limit based on certification:

- Freediver | up to 83 feet
- Advanced Freediver | up to 116 feet

Conducting SSI Programs

Overhead Environments

Linear Distance

Linear distance is defined as the sum of the vertical distance, plus the horizontal distance, that the diver must swim to reach the surface.

Swim-Through

A natural or artificial structure that restricts direct vertical access to the surface.

During Advanced Freediver or higher training, active status SSI Professionals may accompany students through a swim-through that meets the following criteria during excursion dives.

A swim through must:

- Be less than thirty (30) feet in length
- At depths shallower than 100 feet
- Have separate and clearly visible entry and exit points, free of obstruction or entanglement hazards
- Be less than 50% of the student's certification level dynamic requirement

No swim-throughs are permitted if skills or training will be conducted while the student is underwater.

Example | Advanced Freediver students may reach a maximum of 83 feet linear distance, and Performance Freediver students may reach a maximum of 116 feet linear distance.

Water Fitness Evaluations

Freediving Student Water Fitness Evaluation

SSI recommends that each student completes a water fitness evaluation prior to any open water training. This evaluation can also be used to re-evaluate students before any SSI continuing education program, but it is not required unless specified in the program-specific standards.

Overall Comfort in the Water

The goal of this evaluation is to determine your students' baseline comfort level in the water. Some nervousness may be common, but as the program progresses, they should gain confidence in their equipment and in your abilities as an instructor.

Swim Assessment

Basic Freediver

- Be able to swim a distance of 83 feet without any swim or buoyancy aids.

Pool Freediver | Freediver | Advanced Freediver

- Be able to swim a distance of 110 yards without any swim or buoyancy aids.

Performance Freediver

- Be able to swim a distance of 440 yards without any swim or buoyancy aids.

Water Fitness Evaluations

Mermaid Student Water Fitness Evaluation

Instructor Objectives

The purpose of this evaluation is to ensure that students have an adequate level of fitness and comfort in the water. Some nervousness may be common, but as the course progresses, they should gain confidence in their equipment and in your abilities as an instructor.

Each student must successfully complete the water fitness evaluation prior to any open water training. You should administer this evaluation early in the pool/confined water sessions to gain an understanding of each student's in-water abilities, and to identify any weak areas that need to be addressed prior to the open water training.

If a student struggles to finish this evaluation, you can recommend remedial fitness tests, additional swim lessons, or suggest that they reschedule their training for a future date.

Swim Assessment

Swim 55 yards without any swim or buoyancy aids, or swim 110 yards using a mask, snorkel and fins. There is no time limit for this exercise, but it must be completed without stopping or standing.

Survival Float

Float or tread in water too deep to stand for five (5) minutes. The student's face must remain clear of the water for the duration of the exercise.

Notes

- SSI recommends re-evaluating students if it has been more than six months since their last successful water fitness evaluation.
- Failure of any portion of the evaluation does not constitute failure in the class.
- Allow your students to practice and repeat the evaluation until they are successful.
- Pay close attention to any students that appear uneasy, since they may require additional attention and guidance.

Water Fitness Evaluations

Freediving Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation and Performance Requirements

Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to ensure that SSI Freediving Professional candidates have an adequate level of fitness and comfort in the water prior to conducting any SSI training. This applies to Instructor Training Courses, Instructor Upgrade programs, and Instructor Trainer programs.

The candidate must only complete either the Surface Swim (Unassisted) or the Surface Swim (Mask/Fins/ Snorkel).

Snorkel Instructor | Basic Freediving Instructor

- Surface Swim (Unassisted) | 400 yard
- Surface Swim (Mask/Fins/Snorkel) | 770 yard | ≤ 20 minutes
- Tread Water | 15 minutes

All other Professional Levels

- Surface Swim (Unassisted) | 440 yard | ≤ 15 minutes
- Surface Swim (Mask/Fins/Snorkel) | 875 yards | ≤ 15 minutes
- Tread Water | 15 minutes

Performance Requirements

Prior to certification as an SSI Freediving Professional, candidates must be able to meet the following performance requirements. This applies to Instructor Training Courses, Instructor Upgrade programs, and Instructor Trainer programs.

Instructor Level	Dynamic Rescue	Blackout Rescue (depth and tow distance)	Blackout Rescue (with hang depth)	Dive Line Pull Rescue	DYN with Bi-fins	Static Performance	CWT with Bi-fins	5x (with 1-minute rests)	FRC Dive
Basic Freediving Instructor	Between 7-13ft	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none
Freediving Assistant Instructor	*Between 7-13ft (165ft tow)	none	none	none	165ft	2:30	none	none	none
Freediving Instructor	none	50ft (165ft tow)	50ft	none	198ft	3:00	99ft (or 5x66 with 1-minute rests)	50ft (optional if 5x66 CWT is done)	none
Advanced Freediving Instructor	none	66ft (165ft tow)	66ft	none	281ft	4:00	**132ft (or 99ft CWT and 3x83 with 1-minute rests)	66ft	none
Performance Freediving Instructor	none	83ft (165ft tow)	none	83ft	330ft	none	132ft (monofin or free immersion allowed)	none	83ft (maximum 17ft mouth-fill allowed)

All of the victim's weight must be removed before starting the tow.

An Advanced Freediving Instructor candidate that does not have the Performance Freediver certification must not perform the 132ft CWT.

Instructor Trainer Level	Dynamic Rescue	Blackout Rescue (depth and tow distance)	Blackout Rescue (with hang depth)
Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer	none	none	none
Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer	none	66ft (165ft tow)	66ft
Freediving Instructor Trainer	none	83ft (165ft tow)	66ft

Water Fitness Evaluations

Mermaid Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation

Intent

This water fitness evaluation ensures that Mermaid Instructor candidates have an adequate level of fitness and comfort in the water prior to certification.

Tread Water

- Tread water for 15 minutes without using any aids or flotation of any kind.

Surface Swim

- Swim 770 yards without stopping within 20 minutes using a mask, fins and a snorkel. If a wetsuit is used, weights must be added to ensure the candidate is neutrally buoyant.

OR

- Swim 400 yards without stopping, and without the use of mask, fins, snorkel or other swim aids.

Note | The 400-yard swim may be conducted as an alternative to the 770-yard assisted swim. It is required by RSTC standards to be completed for the ITC in North America.

Underwater Swim

- Swim underwater for 83 feet using a mask and bi-fins or monofin.

Swimmer Rescue

- Perform a full, surface rescue of an unconscious swimmer for a total distance of 165 feet. Both parties must use a monofin or mermaid tail.

Experience Programs

Snorkel Diver

Intent

The SSI Snorkel Diver program provides a basic introduction to the common equipment and skills needed to snorkel safely.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Snorkel Instructor may conduct the Snorkel Diver program.

Student Prerequisites

- There is no minimum age for the Snorkel Diver program.

Note / Students do not need to be proficient swimmers to participate in the Snorkel Diver program. They should be comfortable and able to maintain their buoyancy in water too deep to stand in prior to participating in open water sessions.

Duration

- There is no recommended duration for the Snorkel Diver program.

Depth Limitations

- If breath-hold diving is taught during the Snorkel Diver program, do not conduct training deeper than fifteen (15) feet.

Recommendation / If students are interested in breath-hold diving, they should be encouraged to take the SSI Basic Freediver program.

In-Water Ratios

- There is no maximum in-water ratio for this program.
- The student-to-instructor ratio should be set by the individual instructor, based on their ability to effectively supervise and respond to their students' needs.
- Decrease this ratio whenever conditions or logistics require.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Snorkel Diver Instructor must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all in-water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Snorkel Diver in a pool, confined water, or open water environment.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- The Snorkel Diver program is a recognition program only.
- Upon completion, process all students in MySSI so that they may receive their free digital recognition card on the MySSI app.

SSI Explorers

SSI Explorers

Intent

The SSI Explorers program provides children with the necessary knowledge and skills to safely participate in snorkeling, mermaid, freediving, or scuba experiences in a pool or confined water environment.

Note | This is a recognition program. The SSI Professional should focus on the students' safety and enjoyment, avoiding over-teaching.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Explorer Instructor qualified for the applicable category may conduct each part of the SSI Explorers program.

- Blue Oceans Explorer
- Snorkel Explorer
- Mermaid Explorer
- Freediving Explorer
- Scuba Explorer

Administrative Requirements

Prior to beginning training, they must complete the:

- Registration Form
- Privacy Policy Form
- Fit To Dive Screening
- Responsible Diver Code
- Assumption of Risk, Liability Release and Hold Harmless Agreement
- Youth Addendum

Prerequisites

Prior to any in-water training:

- Swim 40 feet without any swim or buoyancy aids.

Mermaid Explorer | Freediving Explorer

- Minimum age: 6 years old.

Scuba Explorer

- Minimum age: 8 years old.

Recommended Duration

Snorkel Explorer

2 sessions | Recommended hours for completion: 6–8.

Mermaid Explorer

2 sessions | Recommended hours for completion: 6–8.

Freediving Explorer

3 sessions | Recommended hours for completion: 9–12.

Scuba Explorer

4 sessions | Recommended hours for completion: 12–15.

Specialty Explorer

1 session per specialty | Recommended hours for completion: 3–4.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth: 15 feet.

In-Water Ratios

Snorkel Explorer

- The participant-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Mermaid | Freediving Scuba Specialty Explorer

- The participant-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- The ratio may increase to 6:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Minimum Supervision

- The Explorer Instructor qualified for the applicable Explorer program must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Proximity

- During all in-water activities, the participants must remain under the direct supervision of the Explorer Instructor so that physical contact can be made at any time.

Explorer Specialty Program

Snorkel Explorer

Participants who have completed at least the Snorkel Explorer program may complete the following specialty experiences:

- Boat Explorer
- Navigation Explorer
- Night and Limited Visibility Explorer
- Photo and Video Explorer
- Rescue Explorer
- Scooter/DPV Explorer
- Underwater Communication Explorer
- Underwater Model Explorer
- Ecology Explorer

Note / These experiences may also be customized for Mermaid Explorer, Freediving Explorer, and Scuba Explorer.

Freediving Explorer

Participants who have completed the Freediving Explorer program may complete the following specialty experiences:

- Monofin Explorer
- No-Fins Explorer

Scuba Explorer

Participants who have completed the Scuba Explorer program may complete the following specialty experiences:

- Enriched Air Nitrox Explorer
- Perfect Buoyancy Explorer
- Search and Recovery Explorer

Requirements for Completion

- Complete the academic and in-water requirements for each Explorer program as outlined in the instructor manual.

Sequence

- Snorkel Explorer must be completed prior to any of the other in-water Explorer programs.

Recognition Cards

- The SSI Explorers program is a recognition program only.
- Upon completion of each Explorer program, process all participants in MySSI so they may receive the applicable recognition card.

SSI Explorers

SSI Explorers Recognition Ratings

Intent

SSI recognizes its Explorers when they meet certain levels of training and experience.

Specialty Explorer

Requirements For Completion

- Completing two (2) Explorer specialty experiences.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- Once all requirements are complete and the participant's profile is updated in MySSI, the Specialty Explorer digital recognition card is automatically issued at no charge.

Advanced Explorer

Requirements For Completion

- Completing four (4) Explorer specialty experiences.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- Once all requirements are complete and the participant's is updated in MySSI, the Advanced Explorer digital recognition card is automatically issued at no charge.

Master Explorer

Requirements For Completion

- Complete the Rescue Explorer program and four (4) additional Explorer specialty experiences.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- Once all requirements are complete and the participant's profile is updated in MySSI, the Master Explorer digital recognition card is automatically issued at no charge.

Freediving Experience Programs

Try Freediving

Intent

The SSI Try Freediving program provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely partake in the recreational sport of freediving (breath-hold diving) with an SSI Professional in a pool/confined water environment.

Note | This is a recognition program. The SSI Professional should focus on the student's safety and enjoyment, and avoid over-teaching.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Basic Freediving Instructor may conduct the Try Freediving program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years old.

Duration

- There is no recommended program duration for Try Freediving.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet

In-Water Ratios

10- to 11-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- No more than two (2) students per instructor may be under the age of 12, and none of the remaining students may be younger than 15 years old.

Pool

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 8:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Confined Water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Basic Freediving Instructor must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made within an appropriate time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete an academic session, and at least one (1) in-water session and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Try Freediving.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- Try Freediving is a recognition program. Upon completion of the program, process all students in MySSI so they may receive their digital recognition card.

Freediving Experience Programs

Basic Freediver

Intent

The SSI Basic Freediver program provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely participate in the recreational sport of freediving (breath-hold diving) with an SSI Professional in a pool/confined water environment.

Note / This is a recognition program. The SSI Professional should focus on the student's safety and enjoyment, and avoid over-teaching.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Basic Freediving Instructor may conduct the Basic Freediver program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years old.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 6-8.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum depth limit: 15 feet.

In-Water Ratios

10- to 11-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- No more than two (2) students per instructor may be under the age of 12, and none of the remaining students may be younger than 15 years old.

Pool

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 8:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Confined Water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Open Water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Basic Freediving Instructor must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made within an appropriate time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Basic Freediver.
- Complete at least one (1) breathing session as outlined in the instructor manual for Basic Freediver.
- Complete two (2) pool/confined water sessions, or one (1) pool/confined water and one (1) open water session, and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Basic Freediver.

Certification

- Certified Basic Freedivers are qualified to freedive autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to depths equivalent with their training.
- After certification, all Junior Divers younger than 15 years must dive with a certified adult or dive professional.

Upgrades

To upgrade to the Pool Freediver certification, a Basic Freediver must:

- Complete all academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least one (1) additional pool/confined water session and all skill evaluations for Pool Freediver as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

To upgrade to the Freediver certification, the student must also:

- Complete Open Water Sessions 1 and 2 as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Mermaid Experience Programs

Try Mermaid

Intent

The SSI Try Mermaid program provides students with an introductory mermaid experience with an SSI Professional in a pool/confined environment.

Note | This is a recognition program. The instructor should only teach the skills outlined in the Try Mermaid program and focus on the students' safety and enjoyment, avoiding over-teaching.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Mermaid Instructor may conduct the Try Mermaid program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 6 years old.

Swim Skills:

- SSI Beginner II or equivalent (40 feet independent swim with stroke of choice).

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- The Try Mermaid in-water session must begin in water shallow enough for the students to stand.

Recommendation | If students are interested in breath-hold diving, they should be encouraged to take the SSI Basic Freediver program.

In-Water Ratios

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with a certified assistant.

Note | Any active status SSI Professional, Freediving Professional, or Level 1 Swim Teacher or higher may act as a certified assistant for SSI Mermaid programs.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Mermaid Instructor or higher must directly supervise the entire program.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made at any time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete an academic briefing and at least one (1) pool/confined water experience dive as outlined in the Try Mermaid Instructor Manual.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- Try Mermaid is a recognition program only. Upon completion, process all students in the MySSI system so they may receive their digital recognition card.

Recreational Programs

Experienced Diver Test

Intent

The Experienced Diver Test is intended for divers that have lost proof of certification, or were trained as a military, commercial, lifeguard, scientific diver, or competitive freediver. The diver must provide proof of relevant prior experience before conducting the Experienced Diver Test.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status SSI Freediving Instructor may conduct the Experienced Diver Test.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Provide a signed statement describing previous training and experience.
- Provide proof of prior experience and training.

Example / Proof of certification from an agency that no longer exists, a logbook signed or stamped by a dive professional or training center, official letter/credentials from a military, commercial, lifeguard, or scientific diving supervisor, or competition results.

Recommendation / Encourage the diver to enroll in a Freediver program when they do not have adequate proof of experience, or it has been a prolonged period of time since their last open water session.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 8-10.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum open water depth limit: 60 feet.
- Maximum open water depth limit for 12- to 14-year-olds: 40 feet.

In-Water Ratios

Pool

12 years and older:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 8:1.

Confined Water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Open Water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving Instructor must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least one (1) pool/confined water session and all pool/confined water skill assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete at least one (1) open water session and all open water skill assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Certification

- Upon completion of all academic and in-water requirements and final exam, an SSI Professional may issue the Freediver digital certification card.
- The certification will have the certifying instructor's name and SSI number, and qualifies the diver to continue to the next level of the SSI Education System.

Recreational Freediving Programs

Pool Freediver

Intent

The SSI Pool Freediver program provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely participate in the recreational sport of freediving (breath-hold diving) in a pool/confined water environment.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor may conduct the Pool Freediver program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 12–14.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet

In-Water Ratios

Pool

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 8:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Confined Water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made within an appropriate time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least one (1) breathing session as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete at least two (2) pool/confined water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Sequence

- Pool/confined water sessions may only be conducted after all requirements and evaluations for the related academic sessions are completed as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Certification

- Certified Pool Freedivers are qualified to freedive autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in pool/confined water environments and to depths equivalent with their training.
- After certification, all Junior Divers younger than 15 years must dive with a certified adult or dive professional.

Upgrade

- After completion of the Pool Freediver program, students can upgrade to Freediver by completing Open Water Sessions 1 and 2 as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Recreational Freediving Programs

Freediver

Intent

The SSI Freediver program provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely participate in the recreational sport of freediving (breath-hold diving) autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to a depth equivalent with their training.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Instructor may conduct the Freediver program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 16–20.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Minimum open water depth limit: 33 feet as outlined in the instructor manual.
- Maximum open water depth limit: 60 feet.
- Maximum open water depth limit for 12- to 14-year-olds: 40 feet.

In-Water Ratios

Pool

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 8:1.
- The ratio may increase to 12:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Confined Water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- The ratio may increase to 6:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Open Water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- The ratio may increase to 6:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor must directly supervise all academic and pool/confined water sessions.
- An active status Freediving Instructor must directly supervise all open water sessions.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made within an appropriate time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least one (1) breathing session as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete at least two (2) pool/confined water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Complete at least two (2) open water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Sequence

- Pool/confined water sessions may only be conducted after all requirements and evaluations for the related academic sessions are completed as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.
- Open water sessions may only be conducted after the related academics sessions are completed, and after the related in-water skills are completed in the pool/confined water as outlined in the instructor manual for Freediver.

Certification

- Certified Freedivers are qualified to freedive autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to depths equivalent with their training.
- After certification, all Junior Divers younger than 15 years must dive with a certified adult or dive professional.

Recommended depth limit based on certification:

- Freediver | up to 83 feet

Recreational Freediving Programs

Advanced Freediver

Intent

The SSI Advanced Freediver program provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely freedive (breath-hold diving) autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy in environments and to a depth equivalent with their training.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Advanced Freediving Instructor may conduct the Advanced Freediver program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years old.
- Have logged at least six (6) in-water freediving sessions.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Freediver

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 24-30.

Depth Limitations

- Minimum open water depth limit: 66 feet as outlined in the instructor manual.
- Maximum open water depth limit: 99 feet.

In-Water Ratios

Pool

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 8:1.
- The ratio may increase to 12:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Confined Water

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Open Water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- The ratio may increase to 6:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Advanced Freediving Instructor must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water, and open water sessions.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made within an appropriate time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Advanced Freediver.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least one (1) stretching session as outlined in the instructor manual for Advanced Freediver.
- Complete at least two (2) pool/confined water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Advanced Freediver.
- Complete at least four (4) open water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Advanced Freediver.

Sequence

- Pool/confined water sessions may only be conducted after all requirements and evaluations for the related academic sessions are completed as outlined in the instructor manual for Advanced Freediver.
- Open water sessions may only be conducted after the related academics sessions are completed as outlined in the instructor manual for Advanced Freediver.

Certification

- Certified Advanced Freedivers may freedive autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to depths equivalent with their training.

Recommended depth limit based on certification:

- Advanced Freediver | up to 116 feet

Recreational Freediving Programs

Performance Freediver

Intent

The SSI Performance Freediver program provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely freedive (breath-hold diving) autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to a depth equivalent with their training.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Performance Freediving Instructor may conduct this program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.
- Have logged at least 30 in-water freediving sessions.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Advanced Freediver

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 32-40.

Depth Limitations

- Minimum open water depth limit: 99 feet as outlined in the instructor manual.
- Maximum open water depth limit: 132 feet.

In-Water Ratios

Pool

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 8:1.
- The ratio may increase to 12:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Confined Water

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Open Water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- The ratio may increase to 6:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Performance Freediving Instructor must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water, and open water sessions.

Proximity

- Students must remain under the direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made within an appropriate time during any in-water training.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least one (1) stretching session as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.
- Complete at least one (1) coaching session as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.
- Complete at least one (1) mouth-fill session as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.
- Complete at least two (2) pool/confined water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.
- Complete at least five (5) open water sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.

Sequence

- Pool/confined water sessions may only be conducted after all requirements and evaluations for the related academic sessions and the applicable dry land session is completed as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.
- Open water sessions may only be conducted after the related academic sessions and the dry land session is completed as outlined in the instructor manual for Performance Freediver.

Certification

- Certified Performance Freedivers may freedive autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to depths equivalent with their training.

Recreational Mermaid Programs

Mermaid

Intent

The SSI Mermaid program provides students with the knowledge and training necessary to autonomously conduct mermaid activities with an equally-or more-qualified buddy in a pool/confined water environment, and to depths shallower than fifteen (15) feet.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Mermaid Instructor may conduct the SSI Mermaid program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Complete the Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 16-24.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet

Recommendation / If students are interested in breath-hold diving, they should be encouraged to take the SSI Basic Freediver program.

In-Water Ratios

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with a certified assistant.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Mermaid Instructor or higher must directly supervise the entire program.

Proximity

- During in-water skill evaluations, the students must remain under direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made at any time.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sections and assessments as outlined in the Mermaid Instructor Manual.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete at least three (3) pool/confined water sessions and skill evaluations as outlined in the Mermaid Instructor Manual.

Certification

- Upon completion of all academic and pool/confined water requirements and final exam, a Mermaid Instructor or higher may issue the digital Mermaid certification card.
- Certified Mermaids can swim with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments including aquariums and purpose-built indoor diving facilities, and within the recommended depth limits.

Upgrades

- To upgrade to Ocean Mermaid, a Mermaid must complete the Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation and at least two (2) open water training sessions in an open water environment as outlined in the Mermaid Instructor Manual.

Recreational Mermaid Programs

Ocean Mermaid

Intent

The SSI Ocean Mermaid program provides students with the knowledge and training necessary to autonomously conduct mermaid activities with an equally- or more-qualified buddy in environments equivalent with their training and to depth shallower than fifteen (15) feet.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Mermaid Instructor may conduct the Ocean Mermaid program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Complete the Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 16-32.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum in-water depth limit: 15 feet.

Recommendation / If students are interested in breath-hold diving, they should be encouraged to take the SSI Basic Freediver program.

In-Water Ratios

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with a certified assistant.

Note / Any active status SSI Professional, Freediving Professional, or Level 1 Swim Teacher or higher may act as a certified assistant for SSI Mermaid programs.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Mermaid Instructor must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Proximity

- During in-water skill evaluations, the students must remain under direct supervision of the instructor so that physical contact can be made at any time.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sections and assessments as outlined in the Mermaid Instructor Manual.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete a Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation prior to any open water training.
- Complete all pool/confined water sessions and skill evaluations outlined in the Mermaid Instructor Manual.
- Complete at least two (2) open water training sessions as outlined in the Mermaid Instructor Manual.

Certification

- Upon completion of all academic and pool/confined water requirements, including a water fitness evaluation and final exam, a Mermaid Instructor may issue a digital Ocean Mermaid certification card.
- Certified Ocean Mermaids can swim with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments equivalent to their training, and within the recommended depth limits.

Continuing Education Programs

Specialty Program General Standards

Intent

Freediving Specialty programs introduce and familiarize students to a variety of freediving activities by providing basic knowledge and experiences in these areas.

Non-Diving Specialties

- The Ecology Specialty programs do not have mandatory in-water training. SSI Professionals are encouraged to add in-water training to increase the value of the program.
- Ratios, depth limits, and supervision standards must be followed during all in-water training.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Instructor may conduct the specialty programs that they are certified to teach.

Duration

The time required to complete a Freediving Specialty program will vary depending on the applicable program.

Note | Specialty programs are designed to be completely focused on practical freediving skills. The total number of hours is determined by the individual instructor based on student needs, student ability and environmental conditions.

Depth Limitations

Snorkel students

- Maximum open water depth limit: 15 feet.

Freediving students

- In-water freediving sessions must be conducted in environments and depths within the limits of the student's freediving certification and experience.
- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum open water depth limit is determined by the student's certification level.

In-Water Ratios

Certification Limits

Snorkel students

6- to 9-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 8:1.
- The ratio may increase to 10:2 with one (1) certified assistant.
- The ratio may increase to 12:3 with two (2) certified assistants.

Basic Freediver and higher

10- to 11-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- No more than two (2) students per instructor may be under the age of 12, and none of the remaining students may be younger than 15 years old.

Environmental Limits

Pool

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 8:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Confined water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Open water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status SSI Professional certified to conduct the program must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Number of Dives

- Specialty programs require a minimum of two (2) dives when in-water training dives are required.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete any academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the individual Specialty Instructor Manual.
- Complete the applicable specialty program final exam (when available).
- Complete the pool/confined water sessions, as outlined in the individual Specialty Instructor Manual.
- Complete the minimum number of open water training sessions if required, including a professional briefing and debriefing as outlined in the individual Specialty Instructor Manual.

Recommendation / Specialty programs are intended to provide students with a variety of experiences. Whenever possible, conduct more training dives than the minimum required by the program. Always take student needs, student ability and environmental conditions into consideration when combining specialty programs and their training dives.

Certification

- Upon completion of a specialty program, process all students in MySSI so they may receive their digital certification card.
- Certified SSI freedivers may dive autonomously with an equally- or more-qualified buddy, in environments and to a depth equivalent with their training.

Credit

- Most specialty certifications will qualify toward SSI Recognition ratings for Specialty Freediver, Progressive Freediver, or Master Freediver.

Continuing Education Programs

Unique Recognition Specialties

Intent

SSI Professionals are encouraged to create and teach their own unique recognition programs. These programs are not officially sanctioned by SSI International, and are not valid toward SSI recognition level and ratings.

They are intended to recognize participation in a unique experience or environment, and are not certification programs.

Each program must still meet the minimum required standards for the applicable category of SSI specialty (e.g. Pool/Confined Water Specialty), and should cover at least the following concepts related to the topic:

- Equipment
- Theory
- Skills
- Safety
- Practical Application

Prior to teaching the program and issuing a recognition card, the SSI Professional must submit an instructor guide, program standard, and proof of experience in the specialty to SSI International for approval.

Minimum Instructor Rating

- Pool/confined water programs: Freediving Assistant Instructor
- Open water programs: Freediving Instructor
- Be authorized by SSI International to conduct the program

Student Prerequisites

Minimum age:

- 10 years old if any In-water training is conducted
- 12 years old if the program involves dedicated equipment beyond a recreational Total Freediving System
- 15 years old if the required training depth is deeper than 66 feet

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Pool Freediver

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum open water depth limit: 99 feet.
- Maximum open water depth limit for 12- to 14-year-olds: 66 feet.

In-Water Ratios

10- to 11-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.
- No more than two (2) students per instructor may be under the age of 12, and none of the remaining students may be younger than 15 years old.

Pool

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 8:1.

Confined Water

15 years and older:

- The student-to-Instructor ratio is 6:1.

12- through 14-years old:

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Open Water

- The student-to-instructor ratio is 4:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status SSI Professional authorized to conduct the program must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Proximity

- During in-water skill evaluations, the students must remain under direct supervision of the SSI Professional so that physical contact can be made at any time.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sessions and assessments as outlined in the instructor guide that has been approved by SSI International.
- Complete at least two (2) in-water training sessions if required by the applicable instructor guide.

Certification

- Upon completion of all academic and in-water requirements, the SSI Professional may issue a digital recognition card for the applicable program.

Continuing Education Programs

Freediving Recognition Ratings

Intent

SSI recognizes its freedivers when they meet certain levels of training and experience.

Note | This should not be confused with the Unique Recognition programs that SSI Training Centers and SSI Professionals may apply for and conduct with students.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- The number of sessions must be entered in the student's MySSI profile.
- Once all requirements are complete and the student's profile is updated in MySSI, the applicable digital recognition card is automatically issued at no charge.
- Students younger than 15 years old will be issued a Junior Freediver rating in the applicable category.

Specialty Freediver

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Have an SSI Basic Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete two (2) Freediving Specialty programs.
- Log 12 freediving sessions.

Note | Only one (1) specialty from another certification agency may be credited toward the Specialty Freediver rating. All non-SSI certifications must be entered into MySSI for the student to receive credit.

Progressive Freediver

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years old.
- Have an SSI Advanced Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete two (2) Freediving Specialty programs including Training Techniques.
- Log 24 freediving sessions.

Note | Only two (2) specialties from another certification agency may be credited toward the Progressive Freediver rating. All non-SSI certifications must be entered into MySSI for the student to receive credit.

Master Freediver

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.
- Have an SSI Performance Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete three (3) freediving specialty programs, including Training Techniques and No-Fins Freediving Pool or Monofin Freediving Pool.
- Log 50 freediving sessions.

Note / Only two (2) specialties from another certification agency may be credited toward the Master Freediver rating. All non-SSI certifications must be entered into MySSI for the student to receive credit.

Century Freediver/Bronze Freediver/Silver Freediver/Gold Freediver/Platinum Freediver

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Have an SSI Basic Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Requirements For Completion

- Century Freediver – provide proof of 100 logged freediving sessions to an SSI Training Center.
- Bronze Freediver – provide proof of 200 logged freediving sessions to an SSI Training Center.
- Silver Freediver – provide proof of 300 logged freediving sessions to an SSI Training Center.
- Gold Freediver – provide proof of 500 logged freediving sessions to an SSI Training Center.
- Platinum Freediver – provide proof of 1000 logged freediving sessions to an SSI Training Center.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Snorkel Diver and Higher

Snorkel Diver students or higher may register for the following programs:

- Coral Identification
- Fish Identification
- Manta Ray Ecology
- Marine Ecology
- Marine Invertebrate Ecology
- Marine Mammal Ecology
- Sea Turtle Ecology
- Shark Ecology
- React Right

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 6 years old.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Basic Freediver and Higher

Students with a Basic Freediver certification or higher may register for the following programs:

- Photo & Video Freediving

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 10 years old.
- Have an SSI Basic Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Pool Freediver and Higher

Students with a Pool Freediver certification or higher may register for the following programs:

- Monofin Pool
- No-Fins Freediving Pool
- Training Techniques
- Free Immersion
- Basic Spearfishing

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Have an SSI Pool Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Depth Limitations

- Free Immersion: For students with a Pool Freediver certification, the maximum open water depth is 66 feet.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Freediver and Higher

Students with a Freediver certification or higher may register for the following programs:

- Monofin
- Spearfishing Safety & Training

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.
- Have an SSI Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Advanced Freediver and Higher

Students with an Advanced Freediver certification or higher may register for the following programs:

- Variable Weight
- No-Fins Freediving

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 15 years old.
- Have an SSI Advanced Freediver certification or equivalent from a recognized training agency.

Depth Limitations

- For Variable Weight: The maximum allowed depth is 33 feet deeper than the student's current certification limit.

Professional Programs

Snorkel Instructor (ISO 13970)

Intent

The SSI Snorkel Instructor program provides candidates with the knowledge and training necessary to conduct entry-level snorkeling programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Active Status SSI Freediving Professionals are automatically certified as Snorkel Instructors.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Instructor may conduct the Snorkel Instructor program.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 6-10.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum open water depth limit: 30 feet.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is at the discretion of the instructor.

Supervision

- An active status Basic Freediving Instructor or higher may act as a certified assistant for the open water portion of the Snorkel Instructor program.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete and pass all requirements and evaluations listed in the instructor manual for Snorkel Instructor.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Snorkel Instructor program send the candidate's professional application form with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- The candidate will be certified as an SSI Snorkel Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

Active status SSI Snorkel Instructors may teach, supervise and issue recognition cards for the following program:

- Snorkel Diver

Active status SSI Snorkel Instructors may also:

- Guide snorkelers on excursions in open water environments.

Professional Programs

SSI Explorer Instructor

Intent

The SSI Explorer Instructor Online Upgrade provides qualified SSI Professionals with the knowledge and experience necessary to conduct the SSI Explorers program.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Snorkel Instructor to qualify for Snorkel Explorer Instructor
- Mermaid Instructor to qualify for Mermaid Explorer Instructor
- Basic Freediving Instructor to qualify for Freediving Explorer Instructor
- Assistant Instructor to qualify for Scuba Explorer Instructor

Certification

Complete the Explorer Online Upgrade.

Once all requirements are met, the candidate will be automatically issued the applicable Explorer Instructor certification(s) and may conduct all applicable Explorer specialty experiences.

Note | Some SSI Service Centers may have additional requirements for working with minors that must be completed before issuing the recognition card. Contact the responsible SSI Service Center for more information.

Active Status Qualifications

Active status Explorer Instructors may teach, supervise, and issue recognition cards for the following programs:

Snorkel Explorer Instructor

- Snorkel Explorer

Mermaid Explorer Instructor

- Snorkel Explorer
- Mermaid Explorer

Freediving Explorer Instructor

- Snorkel Explorer
- Freediving Explorer

Scuba Explorer Instructor

- Snorkel Explorer
- Scuba Explorer

Freediving Professional Programs

Basic Freediving Instructor

Intent

The SSI Basic Freediving Instructor Training Course provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to conduct the Basic Freediver program in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer may conduct the Basic Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Have the following SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Scuba Assistant Instructor

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 8-12.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum depth limit: 15 feet.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Note | See General Training Standards > Conducting SSI Programs > Using Certified Assistants for the certified assistant requirements for this program.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, confined/pool and open water sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete and pass all requirements for Basic Freediving Instructor.
- Complete the program's final exam.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Basic Freediving Instructor Training Course, send the candidate's Training Record with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- The candidate will be certified as a Basic Freediving Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

Active status Basic Freediving Instructors may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Try Freediving
- Basic Freediver

Freediving Professional Programs

Freediving Assistant Instructor

Intent

The SSI Freediving Assistant Instructor Training Course provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to conduct the Pool Freediver program and Training Techniques specialty program in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer may conduct the Freediving Assistant Instructor Training Course.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Option 1

- Have logged at least 50 in-water freediving sessions.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Freediver
- Training Techniques

Option 2

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Training Techniques

Have the following active status SSI certifications or an equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Basic Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 25 Basic Freediver certifications

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 45-50.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Note / See General Training Standards > Conducting SSI Programs > Using Certified Assistants for the certified assistant requirements for this program.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Advanced Freediving Instructor may directly supervise all performance requirements under the indirect supervision of the Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer conducting the program.
- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water, and open water training sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Read and complete Sections 1-6, including reviews and assessments, of the Freediving Instructor Training Course digital learning.
- Complete Academic Sessions 1-6 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards if it has been more than six months since the candidate has been evaluated.
- Pass all requirements and evaluations for Practical Application Sessions 1-8 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Note / If the candidate is an active status SSI recreational scuba Assistant Instructor or higher, they do not need to complete the portions of the FITC that are equivalent to the SSI recreational scuba Instructor Training Course content.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Freediving Instructor Training Course, send the candidate's Training Record with all required documents to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- Candidate will be certified as an SSI Freediving Assistant Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

Active status Freediving Assistant Instructors may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Try Freediving
- Basic Freediver
- Pool Freediver

Active status Freediving Assistant Instructors may also:

- Act as a certified assistant in open water sessions for Freediver programs.
- Act as a certified assistant in pool/confined water sessions for Advanced and Performance Freediver programs.
- Act as a certified assistant for Basic Freediving Instructor programs.
- Directly supervise all in-water performance requirements for the Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar under the indirect supervision of an active status Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer.
- Register to become a Specialty Instructor for some SSI specialty programs.

Freediving Assistant Instructors must not:

- Issue Freediver or higher certifications.
- Independently conduct open water sessions for Freediver programs or higher.

Upgrade

Prerequisites

- Have logged at least 100 in-water freediving sessions.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Advanced Freediver

Sequence

To upgrade to the Freediving Instructor certification, active status Freediving Assistant Instructors must complete a Freediving Instructor Upgrade, including:

- Read and complete Sections 7 and 8, including reviews and assessments, of the Freediving Instructor Training Course digital learning.
- Complete Academic Sessions 7 and 8 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI Training Standards if it has been more than six months since the candidate has been evaluated.
- Pass all requirements and evaluations for Practical Application Sessions 2 and 8–10 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Freediving Professional Programs

Freediving Instructor

Intent

The SSI Freediving Instructor Training Course provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to conduct the Freediver program, and the Free Immersion and Training Techniques specialty programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer may conduct the Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Option 1

- Have logged at least 100 in-water freediving sessions.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Advanced Freediver
- Training Techniques

Option 2

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Advanced Freediver
- Training Techniques

Have the following active status SSI certifications or an equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Basic Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 25 Basic Freediver certifications

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 70-85.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum open water depth limit: 99 feet.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Advanced Freediving Instructor may directly supervise all performance requirements under the indirect supervision of the Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer conducting the program.
- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water, and open water training sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Read and complete Sections 1-8, including reviews and assessments, of the Freediving Instructor Training Course digital learning.
- Complete Academic Sessions 1-8 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards if it has been more than six months since the candidate has been evaluated.
- Pass all requirements and evaluations for Practical Application Sessions 1-10 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Note / If the candidate is an active status SSI recreational scuba Assistant Instructor or higher, they do not need to complete the portions of the FITC that are equivalent to the SSI recreational scuba Instructor Training Course content.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Instructor Training Course, send the candidate's Training Record with all required documents to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- Candidate will be certified as an SSI Freediving Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

In addition to the programs taught by Freediving Assistant Instructors, active status Freediving Instructors may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Freediver
- Free Immersion
- Training Techniques
- Snorkel Instructor

Active status Freediving Instructors may also:

- Act as a certified assistant for Advanced Freediver programs.
- Act as a certified assistant in pool/confined water sessions for Performance Freediver programs.

Upgrade

Prerequisites

Option 1

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Performance Freediver

Option 2

Have issued at least:

- 10 Freediver certifications
- 5 Training Techniques certifications

Sequence

To upgrade to the Advanced Freediving Instructor certification, active status Freediving Instructors must complete an Advanced Freediving Instructor Upgrade program, including:

- Read and complete Section 9, including reviews and assessments, of the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course digital learning.
- Complete Academic Session 9 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI Training Standards if it has been more than six months since the candidate has been evaluated.
- Pass all requirements and evaluations for Practical Application Sessions 2 and 6–10 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Freediving Professional Programs

Advanced Freediving Instructor

Intent

The SSI Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to conduct Advanced Freediver programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer may conduct the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Option 1

- Have logged at least 100 in-water freediving sessions.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Performance Freediver
- Training Techniques

Option 2

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Performance Freediver

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Freediving Instructor

Option 3

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 10 Freediver certifications
- 5 Training Technique certifications

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 85-100.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum open water depth limit: 132 feet.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Note / See General Training Standards > Conducting SSI Programs > Using Certified Assistants for the certified assistant requirements for this program.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Performance Freediving Instructor may directly supervise all performance requirements under the indirect supervision of the Freediving Instructor Trainer conducting the program.
- An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water, and open water training sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Read and complete Sections 1-9, including reviews and assessments, of the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course digital learning.
- Complete Academic Sessions 1-9 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards if it has been more than six months since the candidate has been evaluated.
- Pass all requirements and evaluations for Practical Application Sessions 1-10 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Course.

Note / If the candidate is an active status SSI recreational scuba Assistant Instructor or higher, they do not need to complete the portions of the FITC that are equivalent to the SSI recreational scuba Instructor Training Course content.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Instructor Training Course, send the candidate's Training Record with all required documents to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- Candidate will be certified as an SSI Advanced Freediving Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

In addition to the programs taught by Freediving Instructors, active status Advanced Freediving Instructors may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following program:

- Advanced Freediver

Active status Advanced Freediving Instructors may also:

- Act as a certified assistant for Performance Freediver programs.
- Directly supervise all in-water performance requirements for the Freediving Instructor Training Course under the indirect supervision of an active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer.

Freediving Professional Programs

Performance Freediving

Instructor

Intent

The SSI Performance Freediving Instructor Upgrade program provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to conduct the Freediver, Advanced Freediver, and Performance Freediver programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer may conduct the Performance Freediving Instructor Upgrade program.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Performance Freediver

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Advanced Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 30 Basic Freediver, Pool Freediver, and/or Freediver certifications
- 10 Advanced Freediver certifications
- 5 Training Techniques certifications

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 24-32.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet
- Maximum depth limit: 132 Feet.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Performance Freediving Instructor may directly supervise all performance requirements under the indirect supervision of the Freediving Instructor Trainer conducting the program.
- An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water, and open water training sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Read and complete Section 10, including reviews and assessments, of the Performance Freediving Instructor Training Course digital learning.
- Complete Academic Session 10 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Performance Freediving Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards if it has been more than six months since the candidate has been evaluated.
- Pass all requirements and evaluations for Practical Application Sessions 2 and 6–12 as outlined in the instructor manual for the Performance Instructor Training Course.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Instructor Upgrade, send the candidate's Training Record with all required documents to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- Candidate will be certified as an SSI Performance Freediving Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

In addition to the programs taught by Advanced Freediving Instructors, active status Performance Freediving Instructors may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following program:

- Performance Freediver

Active status Performance Freediving Instructors may also:

- Act as a certified assistant for freediving instructor-level training courses.
- Directly supervise all in-water performance requirements for Freediving Assistant Instructor through Advanced Freediving Instructor Training Courses.

Freediving Professional Programs

Freediving Specialty Instructor

Intent

The SSI Freediving Specialty Instructor program provides candidates with the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to conduct SSI Freediving Specialty programs.

There are two ways to become certified to teach SSI Freediving Specialty programs:

- Specialty Instructor Seminar
- Co-Teaching

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.
- Be an active status SSI Freediving Professional with the minimum required professional certifications.

Certification

Once all requirements are met, verify that the candidate's training record and required documentation are complete, and process the candidate's certification in MySSI.

If the co-teaching method is used, send the candidate's Training Completion Record with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.

The candidate will be certified as a Freediving Specialty Instructor.

If digital learning materials do not currently exist for the program, the SSI Training Center will process the certification, and maintain all required paperwork (See General Training Standards>Administration>Certification Procedures).

Active Status Qualifications

Freediving Specialty Instructors may only conduct specialties that they are qualified to teach, and may not teach specialties above their level of training.

Basic Freediving Instructors, Mermaid Instructors, and higher may qualify to teach the following programs:

- Photo & Video Freediving
- Fish Identification
- Marine Ecology
- Coral Identification
- Sea Turtle Ecology
- Shark Ecology
- Manta Ray Ecology
- Marine Invertebrate Ecology
- Marine Mammal Ecology

Note / Active status SSI recreational scuba Assistant Instructors with the Basic Freediving Instructor certification will be automatically upgraded to Freediving Specialty Instructor for the programs they are certified to teach.

Freediving Assistant Instructors or higher may qualify to teach the following programs:

- Training Techniques
- Monofin Pool
- No-Fins Pool Freediving

Freediving Assistant Instructors with the Monofin Specialty Instructor rating may also teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Try Mermaid

Freediving Instructors or higher may qualify to teach the following programs:

- Monofin
- Basic Spearfishing
- Spearfishing Safety & Training

Freediving Instructors with the Monofin Specialty Instructor rating may also teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Try Mermaid
- Mermaid
- Ocean Mermaid

Advanced Freediving Instructors or higher may qualify to teach the following programs:

- Variable Weight
- No-Fins Freediving

Seminar

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer, certified as an instructor in the applicable specialty, may conduct the seminar.

Requirements For Completion

- Successfully complete the Specialty Freediving Instructor Seminar.

Note / No proof of logged sessions is required for this method.

Co-Teaching

Minimum Instructor Rating

The candidate may only co-teach the following freediving specialty programs with an active status Freediving Specialty Instructor who is certified to teach that specialty:

- Photo & Video Freediving
- All Ecology Specialty programs
- React Right
- Training Techniques

Requirements For Completion

- Co-teach at least one complete program of the applicable freediving specialty.
- Have the Training Center QMS Manager of the affiliated SSI Training Center sign off the applicable Training Completion Record.

Note / The responsible SSI Service Center may have additional completion requirements based on local laws and regulations.

Freediving Professional Programs

Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer

Intent

The SSI Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to conduct the Basic Freediving Instructor program.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer may conduct the Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Option 1

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 25 Basic Freediver or higher certifications

Option 2

Have the following SSI certifications or equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Freediver

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Scuba Instructor Trainer

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 8-12.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 8:2 with one (1) certified assistant.

Note | See General Training Standards > Conducting SSI Programs > Using Certified Assistants for the certified assistant requirements for this program.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic and pool/confined water activities.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete and pass all requirements and evaluations for Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer.
- Display leadership behaviors and skill levels.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards.
- Complete the performance requirements for the applicable level as outlined in the SSI Training Standards.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar, send the candidate's Training Record with all required documents to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- Candidate will be certified as an SSI Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer.

Active Status Qualifications

An active status Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following program:

- Basic Freediving Instructor

Freediving Professional Programs

Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer

Intent

The SSI Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Seminar provides candidates with the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to certify Freediving Assistant Instructors and Freediving Instructors, and to assist in teaching freediving instructor-level training courses.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer who is authorized by SSI International may conduct the Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Seminar.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Advanced Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 50 total freediving certifications
- 30 Pool Freediver or Freediver certifications
- 10 Advanced Freediver certifications
- 5 Training Techniques certifications

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 50-64.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum depth limit: 66 feet.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer who is authorized by SSI International must directly supervise all academic and in-water activities.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete and pass all requirements for Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards.
- Complete the applicable performance requirements as outlined in the SSI Training Standards.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Seminar, send the candidate's training record with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- The candidate will be certified as a Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer.

Active Status Requirements

- Exemplify the SSI philosophy and display competence in applying the SSI Business System.
- Attend all applicable mandatory updates scheduled by SSI International.
- Conduct at least one (1) complete freediving instructor-level training course every 24 months. Or, if SSI International offers a mandatory update, complete at least one (1) within 24 months.
- If this time period is exceeded, they may extend their active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer certification by attending a remedial training session coordinated by SSI International and an International Training Director. They will remain in retired status until the remedial training session is completed.
- SSI Professionals are responsible for the quality of their training. If a significant number of their candidates fail due to inadequate training quality (for example, bad organization or planning), a Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer may be required to complete another Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Seminar or revert to the highest professional certification that they meet the minimum active status requirements for.

Active Status Qualifications

In addition to the programs taught by active status Advanced Freediving Instructors, active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainers may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Freediving Assistant Instructor
- Freediving Instructor
- Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer
- Specialty Instructor Seminar (if they have the applicable Specialty Instructor certification)

Active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainers may also:

- Assist a Freediving Instructor Trainer in conducting freediving instructor-level training courses.
- Conduct Freediving Professional Crossover programs up to the Freediving Instructor level.

Freediving Professional Programs

Freediving Instructor Trainer

Intent

The SSI Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar provides individuals with instructor-level knowledge and skills, and evaluates their ability to conduct Freediving Instructor programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Note | Instructor Trainer Seminars are conducted by SSI Service Centers, and candidates are selected through an application process.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Freediving International Training Director may conduct the Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar when appointed by the responsible SSI Service Center.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 21 years old.
- Have no QMS Cases that result in a compliance action in the previous twelve (12) months.
- Submit a written application to the responsible Freediving International Training Director for approval.

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Performance Freediving Instructor

Have issued at least:

- 80 total freediving certifications
- 40 Pool Freediver or Freediver certifications
- 15 Advanced Freediver certifications
- 5 Performance Freediver certifications
- 10 Training Techniques certifications

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 70-80.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum depth limit: 83 Feet.

Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 12:2 with a Freediving International Training Director (requires written approval from the SSI International).

Note | A Freediving Instructor Trainer may assist with the Instructor Trainer Seminar as part of their own training without affecting ratios.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving International Training Director must directly supervise all academic, confined/pool and open water sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete all academic sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar.
- Complete and pass all requirements and evaluations listed in the instructor manual for the Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards.
- Complete the applicable performance requirements as outlined in the SSI Training Standards.
- Display leadership behaviors and skill levels.

Active Status Requirements

- Exclusively use the SSI Total Teaching System for all levels and issue only SSI certifications. Only those programs that SSI does not provide materials for can be conducted through another agency.
- Exemplify the SSI philosophy and display competence in applying the SSI Business System.
- Attend all applicable mandatory updates scheduled by SSI International.
- Conduct at least one (1) complete freediving instructor-level training course every 24 months. Or, if SSI International offers a mandatory update, complete at least one (1) within 24 months.
- If this time period is exceeded, they may extend their active status Freediving Instructor Trainer certification by attending a remedial training session coordinated by SSI International and an International Training Director. They will remain in retired status until the remedial training session is completed.
- SSI Professionals are responsible for the quality of their training. If a significant number of their candidates fail due to inadequate training quality (for example, bad organization or planning), a Freediving Instructor Trainer may be required to complete another Freediving Instructor Trainer Seminar or revert to the highest professional certification that they meet the minimum active status requirements for.

Active Status Qualifications

In addition to the programs taught by active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainers, active status Freediving Instructor Trainers may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Advanced Freediving Instructor
- Performance Freediving Instructor
- Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer

Note | Only Freediving Instructor Trainers who have been authorized by SSI International may conduct the Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer Seminar.

Freediving Professional Programs

Freediving Professional Crossover

Intent

The SSI Freediving Instructor Crossover program provides freediving instructors from recognized training agencies an orientation to SSI philosophies and procedures.

It provides the knowledge and skills needed to conduct SSI Freediving programs equivalent to their existing qualifications in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Professionals from Recognized Training Agencies

Professionals certified by any SSI-recognized training agency or federation may attend an SSI Professional Crossover program.

Professionals from Non-Recognized Training Agencies

Freediving professional candidates certified by a non-SSI recognized training agency or federation may attend an SSI Professional Crossover with the approval of the responsible Freediving International Training Director. Their Freediving Instructor Trainer is responsible for reviewing and submitting the candidate's qualifications prior to applying for the program.

The Freediving International Training Director will review the candidate's application and provide a list of requirements and eligible certifications for the candidate.

Minimum Instructor Rating

- An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer may conduct Freediving Professional Crossover programs for all SSI Freediving Professional certifications.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.
- Must have held an equivalent certification from a recognized training agency within the last two (2) years.
- Professionals from other agencies who have been inactive for greater than two (2) years must follow the Returning to Active Status standards.
- The candidate should not be currently involved in a quality compliance case with another training agency. If they are part of an active quality compliance case, they must disclose all information about the case with SSI prior to attending the crossover.
- Any candidate who has been expelled from another training agency is automatically disqualified from attending an SSI Professional Crossover.

Note | If the candidate does not inform SSI of their role in an active quality compliance case, is placed in expelled status by another training agency after completing the SSI Professional Crossover, or does not inform SSI of their previous expelled status with another agency, SSI may decertify the candidate or even place them in expelled status as well.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 32-40.

Depth Limitations

- All freediving training sessions must be conducted at the depths listed in the applicable Freediving Instructor Standards.

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water and open water training during Freediving Instructor crossovers.
- An active status Freediving Instructor Trainer must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water and open water training during all other crossovers.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete and pass all requirements and evaluations for the Freediving Professional Crossover program.
- Complete the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI Training Standards if it has been greater than six (6) months since the last successful completion.
- Complete the final exam for the highest level being applied for with a passing score of at least 90%.
- Complete the performance requirements for each level as outlined in the SSI Training Standards.

Certification

- Upon completion of the program, send the candidate's training record with all required documents to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- Candidate will be certified as an SSI Professional at the appropriate level.

Mermaid Professional Programs

Mermaid Instructor

Intent

The SSI Mermaid Instructor program provides candidates with the knowledge and training necessary to conduct SSI Mermaid programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

There are two certification methods for the Mermaid Instructor program:

- Mermaid Instructor Training Course
- Co-Teaching

Note / The co-teaching option may not be available, depending on local or regional requirements. Please see the Regional Addendums section of these standards, or contact your SSI Service Center to determine whether the option is available.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Mermaid Instructor Trainer may conduct the Mermaid Instructor Training Course.

For co-teaching option:

An active status Mermaid Instructor may conduct the co-teaching certification option.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Have the following active status SSI certifications or an equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Mermaid
- Snorkel Instructor

For co-teaching option:

Have the following active status SSI certifications (no equivalency permitted):

- Snorkel Instructor

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: Mermaid ITC: 24-32, co-teaching 8-12.

Note / If an introduction into Monofin swimming is required, the duration must be extended.

Depth Limitations

- Maximum pool/confined water depth limit: 15 feet

In-Water Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is at the discretion of the instructor.

Requirements For Completion

- Successfully complete all academic and practical application sessions as outlined in the instructor manual for the Mermaid Instructor Training Course.
- Complete the program's final exam.
- Complete the SSI Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation as outlined in the SSI General Training Standards.

For co-teaching option:

- Successfully co-teach at least one complete Ocean Mermaid program.
- Have the Training Center QMS Manager of the affiliated SSI Training Center sign off the Training Completion Record.

Certification

- Send the candidate's training record with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- The candidate will be certified as an SSI Mermaid Instructor.

Active Status Qualifications

Active status Mermaid Instructors may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Try Mermaid
- Mermaid
- Ocean Mermaid
- Mermaid Model Specialty
- Snorkel Diver

Mermaid Professional Programs

Mermaid Specialty Instructor

Intent

The SSI Mermaid Specialty Instructor program provides candidates with the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to conduct SSI Specialty programs using specialized mermaid equipment and techniques.

There are two ways to become certified to teach SSI Specialty programs:

- Specialty Instructor Seminar
- Co-Teaching

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Have the following active status SSI certifications or an equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Mermaid Instructor

Certification

Once all requirements are met, send the candidate's professional application form with all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.

The candidate will be certified as a Mermaid Specialty Instructor.

If digital learning materials do not currently exist for the program, the SSI Training Center will process the certification, and maintain all required paperwork (See General Training Standards>Administration>Certification Procedures).

Active Status Qualifications

Active status Mermaid Instructors may qualify as Mermaid Specialty Instructors for the SSI Ecology programs and SSI Explorers program.

Seminar

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status Assistant Instructor Trainer or Mermaid Instructor Trainer, certified as an instructor in the applicable specialty, may conduct the seminar.

Requirements For Completion

- Successfully complete the Specialty Instructor Seminar.

Note / No proof of logged sessions is required for this method.

Co-Teaching

Minimum Instructor Rating

The candidate may co-teach the applicable specialty program with an active status Specialty Instructor who is certified to teach that specialty.

Requirements For Completion

- Co-teach at least one complete specialty program.
- Have at least ten (10) logged dives in the applicable specialty.
- Have the Training Center QMS Manager of the affiliated SSI Training Center sign off the applicable Training Completion Records.

Mermaid Professional Programs

Mermaid Instructor Trainer

Intent

The SSI Mermaid Instructor Trainer Seminar provides candidates with the knowledge and training necessary to organize and conduct SSI mermaid instructor-level training courses.

Note | Instructor Trainer Seminars are conducted by SSI Service Centers, and candidates are selected through an application process.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 21 years old.
- Have no QMS Cases that result in a compliance action in the previous twelve (12) months.

Have the following active status SSI certifications or an equivalent from a recognized training agency:

- Mermaid Instructor

Option 1

Provide written proof of having issued 100 Mermaid certifications and assisted with at least one (1) Mermaid Instructor Training Course with an active status Mermaid Instructor Trainer.

Option 2

Active status SSI Instructor Trainers may automatically upgrade to Mermaid Instructor Trainer after meeting the following prerequisites.

Have issued at least:

- 10 total Mermaid certifications
- 2 Ocean Mermaid certifications

The candidate must submit a request to an International Training Director for approval.

Duration

- Recommended hours for completion: 48–56.

Depth Limitations

- All in-water training must be conducted at depths between fifteen (15) and thirty (30) feet.

Ratios

- The candidate-to-instructor ratio is 6:1.
- The ratio may increase to 12:2 with a Mermaid International Training Director (requires written approval from the SSI International).

Note | A Mermaid Instructor Trainer may assist with the Instructor Trainer Seminar as part of their own training without affecting ratios.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status International Training Director must directly supervise all academic, pool/confined water and open water activities.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete and pass all requirements and evaluations listed in the Instructor Trainer Seminar Manual.

Certification

- Upon completion of the Instructor Trainer Seminar, send all required documentation to the responsible SSI Service Center.
- The candidate will be certified as an SSI Mermaid Instructor Trainer.

Active Status Requirements

- Exemplify the SSI philosophy and display competence in applying the SSI Business System.
- Conduct at least one (1) complete Mermaid Instructor Training Course every 24 months. If this time period is exceeded, the Instructor Trainer may attend a remedial training session or maintain inactive status until remedial training is complete.
- Attend all applicable mandatory updates scheduled by SSI International.
- Instructor Trainers will be held responsible for the quality of education.

Active Status Qualifications

Active status Mermaid Instructor Trainers may teach, supervise and issue certifications for the following programs:

- Mermaid Instructor Training Course
- Snorkel Instructor
- Mermaid Crossover for candidates from other recognized training agencies

Recognition Ratings

Professional Recognition Ratings

Intent

SSI recognizes its Dive Professionals when they meet certain levels of training and experience.

- Century Instructor
- Bronze Instructor
- Silver 300 Instructor
- Gold 500 Instructor
- Platinum 1000 Instructor
- Platinum Pro 5000 Instructor

Requirements For Completion

- For Century Instructor – Provide proof of 100 Experience Points as outlined in MySSI.
- For Bronze Instructor - Provide proof of 200 Experience Points as outlined in MySSI.
- For Silver 300 Instructor – Provide proof of 300 Experience Points as outlined in MySSI.
- For Gold 500 Instructor – Provide proof of 500 Experience Points as outlined in MySSI.
- For Platinum 1000 Instructor – Provide proof of 1000 Experience Points as outlined in MySSI.
- For Platinum Pro 5000 Instructor – Provide proof for 5000 Experience Points as outlined in MySSI.

Note / No additional training beyond Assistant Instructor is needed to achieve the Platinum Pro 5000 rating.

Issuing a Recognition Card

- Once all requirements are complete and the candidate's profile is updated in MySSI, the digital recognition card is automatically issued at no charge.

React Right Programs

Student-Level Programs

React Right

Intent

The SSI React Right program provides students with the knowledge and training to act as a first responder and provide first aid and CPR, administer oxygen and/or provide Automated External Defibrillator (AED) support in a medical emergency.

Each portion of the React Right program (First Aid and CPR, Oxygen Provider, and AED Provider) may be taught individually or in any combination of the three sections.

Minimum Instructor Rating

An active status React Right Instructor may conduct the React Right program.

Student Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 12 years old.

Duration

Recommended hours for completion: 8-12.

- First Aid and CPR: 5 hours
- AED Provider: 1 hour
- Oxygen Provider: 2 hours

Materials And Equipment

- React Right students must train using current and appropriate first aid and CPR, oxygen administration and AED equipment.

Ratios

- There is no maximum student-to-instructor ratio for the React Right program.
- The instructor must have sufficient training aids available and the ability to control and supervise all of the program's participants.

Minimum Supervision

- An active status React Right Instructor must directly supervise all academic and practical training sessions.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete academic and practical training scenarios as outlined in the instructor manual for React Right for the portions of the program they are completing.
- Complete a React Right final exam with a passing score for each of the portions of the program they are completing.

Certification

- Upon completion of all academic and practical training scenario requirements, an SSI React Right Instructor may issue the program's digital certification card.
- SSI React Right certification qualifies the holder to act as a first responder in medical emergencies similar to their training for a period of two years after the certification is issued.
- Certified React Right divers may use the React Right certification to fulfill the prerequisites for the SSI Diver Stress & Rescue certification, and all SSI professional training programs.

Credit

Students with a certification from a recognized training agency may upgrade to the React Right certification by:

- Purchasing the React Right digital learning.
- Completing a React Right Update for each applicable certification.
- Completing a final exam for each applicable certification.

React Right Programs

React Right Update Procedure

Intent

The initial React Right certification is valid for two years from the certification date. By participating in the React Right Update, students can extend their certification for an additional two years.

Students with CPR, First Aid, AED Provider, or Oxygen Provider certifications from another agency can participate in a React Right Update and receive an equivalent React Right certification.

Student Prerequisites

- Have an SSI React Right certification or equivalent certification from a recognized training agency.
- Have access to the React Right digital learning.

Requirements For Completion

- The update must be at least two (2) hours long, and must include at least one (1) complete skill circuit for each applicable certification as outlined in the instructor manual for React Right .
- Complete a final exam for each applicable certification.

Certification

- Upon completion of the React Right Update, the responsible SSI Training Center must process the student in MySSI using the "Upgrade Certification" feature.
- The student will receive the digital certification card for the portions of the React Right program they have completed.

Professional Programs

React Right Instructor

There are two ways to become certified to teach the React Right program:

- Specialty Instructor Seminar
- Co-Teaching

Note / Non-SSI Professionals may only become a React Right Instructor by completing the Specialty Instructor Seminar.

Minimum Instructor Rating

Seminar

- An active status Assistant Instructor Trainer, certified as a React Right Specialty Instructor, may conduct the seminar.

Co-Teaching

- The candidate may co-teach the applicable specialty program with an active status React Right Specialty Instructor.

Candidate Prerequisites

- Minimum age: 18 years old.

Materials And Equipment

- React Right Instructor candidates must train using current and appropriate first aid and CPR, oxygen administration, and AED equipment.

Ratios

- There is no maximum candidate-to-instructor ratio for the React Right Instructor Seminar.
- The instructor must have sufficient training aids available and the ability to control and supervise all of the candidates at all times.

Requirements For Completion

- Complete the Specialty Instructor Seminar or co-teaching requirements as outlined in the instructor manual for the Specialty Instructor Seminar.
- Complete a React Right final exam with a passing score for each of the portions of the program they are completing.
- Active status and current first aid and CPR, oxygen provider, and AED provider instructors with a recognized training agency may submit an application for an equivalent React Right Instructor certification.

Active Status Requirements

- Teach a minimum of one (1) React Right program every 24 months.

Note / There is no additional charge for React Right when renewing SSI Professional annual dues.

React Right Instructor Update

If more than 24 months elapse, the React Right Instructor certification will become inactive.

The instructor may return to active status by co-teaching at least one complete React Right program or by completing a React Right Specialty Instructor Seminar.

Appendix

Equivalency Chart

Student Programs

Recognized Training Agencies and Federations

SSI	AIDA	Apnea Academy	PADI	CMAS (vary by country)	Fii	PFI	RAID
Basic Freediver	AIDA *					Intro Freediver	
Pool Freediver	AIDA ** Pool	Level 1		APNOE* or SK1	Level 1 Pool	Basic Freediver	Basic Freediver
Freediver	AIDA **	Level 2	Freediver / Advanced	APNOE** or SK1+SK2	Level 1 & Junior		Freediver
Advanced Freediver	AIDA ***	Level 3	Master	APNOE***	Level 2	Intermediate Freediver	Advanced
Performance Freediver	AIDA ****			APNOE****	Level 3	Advanced Freediver	Master

Appendix

Equivalency Chart

Professional Programs

Recognized Training Agencies and Federations

SSI	AIDA	Apnea Academy	PADI	CMAS (vary by country)	FII	PFI	RAID
Basic Freediving Instructor							
Freediving Assistant Instructor	Pool Instructor		Freediving Instructor		Assistant Instructor	Assistant Instructor	
Freediving Instructor			Advanced Instructor	VDST *-*** & SK1 & SK2	Level 1 Instructor	Instructor	Instructor
Advanced Freediving Instructor	Instructor	Instructor	Master Instructor	CMAS/VDSTTL with finished VDST **** Course	Level 2 Instructor	Intermediate Instructor	Advanced Instructor
Performance Freediving Instructor	Master Instructor				Level 3 Instructor	Advanced Instructor	Master Instructor

Freediving Change Log

Changes Effective November 22, 2023

General Training Standards

Privacy Forms and Training Records

- Edited requirements for the Diver Medical Participant Questionnaire to clarify when a signed Physician's Approval to Dive form is required.

Certification Procedures

- Added clarification text about who is the certifying instructor.
- Added clarification text about uploading documents when processing professional certifications.
- Added clarification text about uploading documents into the MySSI System.

Program Duration and Time Limits

- Information about the number of classes, hours, and sessions has moved from each Professional Standard to the General Training Standards.

Using Certified Assistants

- Using certified assistants has split into recreational- and professional-level training.
- Using certified assistants in Mermaid programs has been added.

Conducting SSI Programs

- The description of Indoor Diving has changed to include outdoor artificial diving facilities that meet this definition.

Water Fitness Evaluations

- All Water Fitness Evaluations have moved to the General Training Standards.
- The Freediving Candidate Water Fitness Performance Requirements has been edited.
- The equipment used in the Surface Swim as part of the Mermaid Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation has been edited.

Recreational Programs

- Equivalency charts moved to the appendix.

Continuing Education

- React Right Standards have moved to their own section.

Freediving Specialty Programs

- Marine Invertebrate Ecology added to the list of available Ecology specialty programs.

Professional Programs

- Equivalency charts moved to the appendix.

Snorkel Instructor

- Updated active status qualifications.

Explorer Instructor

- Updated candidate prerequisites.

Freediving Professional Programs

Performance Freediving Instructor

- Updated candidate prerequisites.
- Updated depth limitations.

Freediving Specialty Instructor

- Updated active status qualifications.

Freediving Instructor Trainer

- Updated candidate prerequisites.
- Updated ratios.

Mermaid Professional Programs

Mermaid Instructor Trainer

- Updated ratios.

React Right Programs

- Have moved to their own section.

React Right Instructor

- Added clarification text about how non-SSI Professionals can complete training.
- Updated candidate prerequisites.

Appendix

- Equivalency charts added.
- Most recent change log added.

Freediving Change Log

Changes Effective 12 June, 2023

Experience Programs

Basic Freediving

- Change of program name to Basic Freediver.

Recreational Freediving Programs

Pool Freediving

- Change of program name to Pool Freediver.

Freediver

- Change of program name to Freediver.

Freediving Level 2

- Change of program name to Advanced Freediver.

Freediving Level 3

- Change of program name to Performance Freediver.

Continuing Education

Freediving Recognition Ratings

- Advanced Freediver name changed to Progressive Freediver.

Freediving Professional Programs

Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation

- Updated Basic Freediving Instructor requirements.

Freediving Level 1 Instructor

- Change of program name to Freediving Instructor.

Freediving Instructor Level 2

- Change of program name to Advanced Freediving Instructor.

Freediving Instructor Level 3

- Change of program name to Performance Freediving Instructor.

Freediving Instructor Trainer

- Added clarification about the conduct and candidate selection of an Instructor Trainer Seminar.

Freediving Professional Crossover

- Updated Minimum Instructor Rating.
- Updated Minimum Supervision.

Freediving Change Log

Changes Effective 14 November, 2022

Global Changes

- Reorganized the Freediving and Mermaid Training Standards to eliminate duplication and to make it easier to determine which programs are available for both categories.

General Training Standards

Certification Procedures

- Added clarification about how junior certifications are upgraded to adult certifications.

SSI Professional Status

- Added clarification about retired status.

Returning to Active Status

- Updated requirements for completion for Freediving Level 1 and 2 update.
- Updated requirements for completion for Freediving Level 3 update.
- Updated requirements for completion for Assistant Instructor Trainer update.
- Updated requirements for completion for Instructor Trainer update.

Experience Programs

SSI Explorers

- Added new program standard.

Recreational Freediving Programs

Freediving Level 3

- Updated the program sequence.

Recreational Mermaid Programs

Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation

- Updated swim assessment distance.
- Updated survival float duration.

Mermaid

- Added the requirement for the Water Fitness Text.

Ocean Mermaid

- Added the requirement for the Water Fitness Text.

Mermaid Explorers

- The Mermaid Explorers program has been replaced by the SSI Explorers program. Mermaid Explorer Instructor candidates must complete the free online upgrade for Explorer Instructor.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Snorkel Diver and Higher

- Added Marine Mammal Ecology.

Professional Programs

SSI Explorer Instructor

- Added new program standard.

Freediving Professional Programs

Snorkel Instructor

- Updated supervision requirements.

Freediving Specialty Instructor

- Added Marine Mammal Ecology to active status qualifications.
- Added Mermaid programs to active status qualifications.

Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer

- Updated active status requirements.

Freediving Instructor Trainer

- Updated prerequisites.
- Updated active status requirements.

Mermaid Professional Programs

Mermaid Instructor

- Updated active status qualifications.

Mermaid Specialty Instructor

- Updated active status qualifications.

Mermaid Instructor Trainer

- Updated prerequisites.
- Added alternate candidate prerequisites.
- Updated program duration.

FD Change Log

Changes Effective 15 May, 2022

General Training Standards

Privacy Forms and Training Records

- Removed requirement for Medical Participant Questionnaire.

SSI Professional Status

- Removed requirement for uploading documents to MySSI. This requirement is found in the SSI Professional Agreement.

Ethical Standards

- Updated Ethical Standards.

Conducting SSI Programs

Using Certified Assistants

- Updated certified assistant definition for Freediving Assistant Instructor.
- Updated certified assistant definition for Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer.
- Updated certified assistant definition for Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer.

Entry-Level Freediving Programs

Try Freediving

- Updated In-water ratios.

Basic Freediving

- Updated In-water ratios.
- Added proximity section.

Pool Freediving

- Updated In-water ratios.
- Added proximity section.

Freediver

- Updated In-water ratios.
- Added proximity section.
- Added recommended depth limit after certification.

Freediving Level 2

- Added proximity section.
- Updated the sequence section for open water sessions.
- Added recommended depth limit after certification.

Freediving Level 3

- Added proximity section.
- Updated the sequence section for open water sessions.

Freediving Specialty Programs

General Training Standards

- Updated pool in-water ratios for different age groups.

Freediving Level 2 and Higher

- Removed in-water ratios.

Freediving Professional Programs

Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation and Performance Requirements

- Updated Surface Swim (Unassisted) and Surface Swim (Mask/Fins/Snorkel) as alternative evaluations to each other.
- Updated the static performance requirement for Freediving Level 1 Instructor to 3:00 minutes.

Snorkel Instructor

- Updated minimum instructor rating to teach/certify Snorkel Instructor to Freediving Level 1 Instructor.
- (Freediving Level 1 Instructors can teach and certify Snorkel instructor Level)

Basic Freediving Instructor

- Updated in-water ratios for teaching with a certified assistant.

Freediving Assistant Instructor

- Updated active status qualifications.
- Updated upgrade options.

Freediving Level 1 Instructor

- Updated minimum supervision requirements of direct and indirect supervision.
- Updated active status qualifications.

Freediving Instructor Level 2

- Updated in-water ratios for teaching with a certified assistant.
- Updated active status qualifications.

Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer

- Updated in-water ratios for teaching with a certified assistant.

Freediving Professional Crossover

- Added prerequisite regarding candidate's status with other agencies.

Professional Recognition Ratings

- Changed requirements for Platinum Pro 5000 Instructor.

FD Change Log

Changes Effective 1 November, 2021

General Changes

- Pool Freediving Instructor title is changed to Freediving Assistant Instructor.

Freediving Professional Programs

- Updated the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation and Performance Requirements to cover all Freediving Professional programs.

Candidate Water Fitness and Performance Requirements

- Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation is simplified into three categories: Snorkel Instructor, Basic Freediving Instructor, and Freediving Assistant Instructor and higher.
- The dynamic rescue performance requirement for Freediving Assistant Instructor is updated with a note to remove the victim's weight before starting the tow.
- Added performance requirements for Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer, Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer, and Freediving Instructor Trainer.

FD Change Log

Changes Effective 1 May, 2021

Global Standards Revisions

- Made the Training Center Standards their own document.
- Added distance learning explanation in General Training Standards under “Supervision.”

Freediving Instructor Trainer

- Decreased the time permitted between Instructor Training Courses from 36 months to 24 months to align with other SSI Trainer programs.

FD Change Log

Changes Effective 1 September, 2020

Freediving General Training Standards

Privacy Forms and Training Records

- Removed incorrect text from Registration Form.
- Added clarification text to clarify the requirements for the Responsible Diver code.
- Added example for Medical Participant Questionnaire.
- Added requirements and guidelines for programs that have online exams.

Certification Procedures

- Added recommendation to complete training records at the end of each session or training day.

SSI Professional Status

- Added text to clarify the requirements for SSI Professionals in inactive status.

Returning to Active Status

- Added text to clarify the process for returning to active status.

Assessing Knowledge and Skill

- Added requirements and guidelines for programs that have online exams.

Overhead Environments

- Changed the example to make the limits for overhead environments more clear.

Entry-Level Freediving Programs

Try Freediving

- Added clarification text to Requirements for Completion.

Freediving Specialty Programs

Snorkel Diver and Higher

- Moved React Right to the list of available Snorkel Diver and higher programs.

Freediving Recognition Ratings

- Added new Ecology Recognition ratings.

Professional Programs

- Updated Freediving Professional programs with “no equivalency permitted.” Candidates are required to be SSI Freediving Professionals.

Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation and Performance Requirements

- Added Snorkel Instructor requirements for the Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation.
- Removed 5 x CWT requirement for Freediving Assistant Instructor.
- Updated Blackout Rescue requirement for Freediving Level 1 Instructor.
- Updated CWT requirement for Freediving Level 2 Instructor.
- Added note regarding the 40m CWT for Freediving Level 2 Instructors without the Freediving Level 3 student certification.

Freediving Assistant Instructor

- Added new text regarding prerequisites and sequence for completing the program.

Freediving Level 1 Instructor

- Added new text regarding prerequisites and sequence for completing the program.

FD Change Log

Changes Effective 2020

Freediving General Training Standards

General Changes

- Removed all text that is not specific to recreational freediving training (i.e. Swim, Scuba, and XR-related content).
- Added new page for Privacy Forms and Training Records. This page replaces the 2019 page Liability and Risk Awareness.
- Split Administration into two sections, Administration and Professional Duties to differentiate between administrative requirements for teaching and the administrative requirements for being an SSI Professional.

Administration

Participation Criteria

- Added text so that a student can register for a program at any time, but may not begin their training prior to reaching the minimum age required by the specific program standard.
- Added requirements for logging a freediving experience session that will be counted for training or recognition cards.

Medical History

- Updated terminology on this page to reflect the new name of the medical form.

Privacy Forms and Training Records

- This page replaces the 2019 page Liability and Risk Awareness. It describes the forms required to register and certify a student, how long the forms are valid for, and when they must be completed.

Certification Procedures

- Added text clarifying that 100% completion of the digital learning is not required to complete the training program.
- Added text clarifying that if a written exam is not required, the certifying professional is still responsible for verifying the student's level of understanding is sufficient.

SSI Professional Duties

Equivalent Certifications

Under "Dive Professionals from Recognized Training Agencies"

- Removed all text relating to who may participate in a Dive Professional Crossover. This content was duplicated in the Dive Professional Crossover standard, and is specific to scuba. Please see Dive Professional Programs>SSI Dive Professional Crossover for this information.

Professional Liability Requirements

- This is a new page describing the requirements for professional liability insurance required for SSI Professionals.

SSI Professional Status

- Reformatted text to make the requirements for maintaining active status more clear.

Expelled Status

- Added text describing how individuals from other agencies may apply to gain SSI active status.

Retired Status

- New text.

Returning to Active Status

- Updated name of kit required to complete the update.
- Added new requirements for SSI Freediving Professionals to return to active status.

SSI Quality Management

- Renamed from 2019 standards SSI Grievance Resolution.
- New pages explaining the procedures for monitoring quality management.

Equipment Definitions

Equipment Definitions

- Removed Scuba, Swim, and XR equipment definitions from all pages in this section. This information is now found in the applicable discipline's General Training Standards.
- Reformatted Total Freediving System requirements.

Conducting SSI Programs

Assessing Knowledge and Skill

- Added text explaining the requirements for expert-level and demonstration-level quality.

Program Duration and Time Limits

- Added requirements for training session durations.

Using Certified Assistants

- Added a definition for professional-level certified assistants.

Supervision

- Updated definition of supervision to account for small, hands-free cameras that do not interfere with training or safety.

Environmental Definitions

- Added example for Excursion Dives.
- Added clarification for teaching freediving programs in indoor diving facilities.

Training Environments and Depth Limits

- Merged two pages ("Pool, Confined Water, and Open Water" and "Depth Limits") into one new page.
- Reorganized depths into a more logical sequence.
- Added recommended depth limits for freediving certifications.

Overhead Environments

- Added a line of text explaining the requirements to conduct swim-throughs with freediving students during training.

Entry-Level Freediving Programs

- Removed the 'Administrative Requirements' text from all standards. This information is now found in the General Training Standards—Administration—Privacy Forms and Training Records.
- Added recommended Student Water Fitness Evaluation for freediving training. This content was originally found in each program's standard.
- Added ratios for pool/confined water/open water ratios.

Snorkel Diver

- Added to 2020 Freediving Standards.
- Updated program name to align with certification card.
- Reduced Depth Limit to 15 feet to align with breath-hold training programs.

Basic Freediving

- Added requirements for upgrading from Basic Freediving to Pool Freediving and Freediving Level 1.

Pool Freediving

- Added sequence requirements - in-water training may only occur after applicable topics are covered in the academic sessions.

Freediving Level 3

- Adjusted Recommended program duration.

Experienced Diver Test

- New for 2020.
- Provides an opportunity for experienced freedivers to earn an entry-level SSI freediving certification without retaking the Freediving Level 1 program.

Equivalency Chart

- Updated PFI equivalences.

Entry-Level Mermaid Programs

- Moved into Freediving standards, since mermaid programs are breath-hold programs.
- Added Mermaid Water Fitness Evaluation to SSI Training Standards.

Freediving Specialty Programs

General Training Standards

- Reformatted to include in-water ratios and depth limits for freediving and mermaid students completing specialties.
- Moved Unique Recognition Programs to the end of Specialty Program Standards.
- Added category for Snorkel Diver and higher that includes Ecology Specialty programs with no in-water requirements.

Pool Freediving and Higher

- Added React Right and the complete React Right standard.

Ecology Programs

- Merged all Ecology Specialty programs into one generic standard.
- Ecology programs will require a final exam, effective January 1st, 2020.
- Added Manta And Ray Ecology.

Under Student Prerequisites, Depth Limitations, and Ratios

- Modified text to account for snorkeling students. Set new prerequisites, depth limits, and age-based in-water ratios for snorkeling students completing in-water training.

Unique Recognition Specialty Program Standards

- New for 2020.
- Created an outline for SSI Professionals who want to create a non-sanctioned recognition program.

Professional Programs

- Freediving Level 1/2/3 Instructor standards are separated into their own standards. Upgrades to the next instructor level are listed at the end of each standard.
- Minimum Supervision levels have changed for 2020.
- Re-organized order of professional program standards into a more logical sequence.
- Replaced the Universal Application form with the program-specific Completion Record.

Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation

- Added Dynamic Rescue requirement
- Updated Performance Requirements for all professional programs to align with new Freediving Instructor Training Course materials.

Snorkel Instructor

- New for 2020.

Basic Freediving Instructor

- Changed Minimum Supervision to Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer.
- Added Basic Freediving Instructor Final Exam, effective January 1st, 2020.

Freediving Specialty Instructor

- Corrected error in prerequisites—candidate must be at least a Basic Freediving Instructor.

Basic Freediving Instructor Trainer

- Formerly named "Freediving Specialist Instructor." Renamed to reduce confusion with Freediving Specialty Instructor.

Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer

New program for 2020.

Freediving Instructor Trainer.

- Raised minimum age requirement to 21.
- New standard for 2020 to align with Freediving Assistant Instructor Trainer.

Dive Professional Crossover

Under Intent

- Moved text about professionals from other agencies that was formerly kept in General Training Standards.
- Moved returning from active status requirements to General Training Standards.
- Added Certification text.

Professional Equivalency Chart

- Updated PFI equivalences.

Mermaid Professional Programs

Candidate Water Fitness Evaluation

- Added clarifying note for alternative swim option.

Mermaid Instructor

- Updated Candidate Prerequisites.

Training Center Standards

Active Status Requirements

- Updated terminology for SSI Training Record forms.

Performance-Based Ratings

- Updated requirements for earning the SSI Diamond Center and SSI Instructor Training Center statuses.
- SSI Diamond Instructor Training Center renamed to SSI Career Center to reduce confusion with SSI Diamond Centers.
- Mission Deep Blue Center renamed to Blue Oceans Center.

