



## AIDA4 MASTER FREEDIVER - COURSE GUIDELINE

### 1.1 PREREQUISITES

To enroll in the AIDA4 Master Freediver Course, an individual must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have completed the AIDA3 Advanced Freediver Course
  - Or have completed the AIDA3 Crossover Evaluation if crossing over from another freedive agency or having other adequate freediving experience
- Have completed the AIDA Medical Form
- Have completed the Liability Release
- Have a qualification in First Aid including CPR, passed within the last two years

### 1.2 COURSE PURPOSE

The AIDA4 Master Freediver Course is the highest level of training attainable within the scope of recreational freediving. Students will be also familiarized with techniques, knowledge and safety procedures for deep freediving that goes beyond recreational freediving, such as FRC diving, mouth-fill equalization and packing. Students will develop their skills within these categories of freediving: Static Apnea, Dynamic Apnea, Constant Weight, Free Immersion and Variable Weight (optional), even though the main focus is on Constant Weight Bifins. Besides the in-water skills, the students will be introduced to full body warm-ups and stretching, specific stretching of breathing muscles, training concepts and diet that will benefit their freediving development. Also, an introduction to packing and reverse packing mainly within vital capacity is part of this course.

Another purpose of this course is to prepare successful candidates for the role as “assistant Instructors”. This includes:

- Leading an appropriate warm-up session for confined and open water freediving
- Supervising students of all course levels during their confined or open water sessions, Whilst being supervised by an Instructor.
- Independently setting up and managing open water equipment: use of appropriate knots and braiding technique, setting the depth on the dive line, safe handling of other additional equipment (bottom plate, torches, lanyards, etc.).

### 1.3 CROSSOVER EVALUATION

If a student has a comparable certification of another agency or adequate freediving experience in knowledge, confined water and open water, the AIDA Instructor may apply the AIDA3 Crossover



Evaluation. The AIDA Instructor will assess the level of the student for every skill as outlined on the AIDA3 Course Completion Form. The Evaluation Sessions are not part of the AIDA4 Course and do not count towards the minimum amount of sessions during the course.

The AIDA3 Crossover Evaluation consists of the following sessions:

- Min. 1 Confined Water Session
- Min. 2 Open Water Session
- Written AIDA2 and AIDA3 Exams, passing rate 75% and discussion of all missed points.

The AIDA Instructor must fill in and sign every passed skill on the AIDA3 Course Completion Form. If the student can demonstrate satisfactory mastery of all required skills as outlined on the form, the AIDA3 Completion Form must be completed and signed at the bottom both by the student and the AIDA Instructor. The student has thus passed the AIDA3 Crossover Evaluation and can:

- Be certified as AIDA3 Freediver (optional)
- Participate in the AIDA4 Master Freediver Course

#### 1.4 KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

The theory sessions will include:

- Introduction to AIDA4
- Failure depth - how to increase VC and decrease RV, FRC Diving
- Mouth-fill Equalization - how and when to use it, benefits and risks
- Lung Packing - how and when to use it, benefits and risks
- Decompression Illness (DCI) - Physics – Dalton's Law, Boyle's Law, Henry's law,
- Advanced Equipment
- Fitness for Freediving - aerobic and anaerobic training, stretching
- Nutrition for Freediving
- The Role of Assistant Instructor
- Freedive code of conduct

##### **Option 1 – Instructor-Led Classroom Sessions**

The knowledge development is conducted using the AIDA4 Slide Set during a minimum of 3 Classroom Sessions (not including written exam and discussion). Students should be provided with an electronic copy of the AIDA4 Advanced Freediver Manual. The minimum duration of the theory sessions is 3 hours.



### Option 2 – Student Self-Study

Students will be given an electronic copy of the AIDA4 Manual to read at their own leisure and complete the Knowledge Reviews. Knowledge Reviews must be checked by the Instructor, who will then discuss missed information using the AIDA4 Slide Set and/or the AIDA4 Manual.

## 1.5 AIDA4 EXAM

Any student wanting to be certified as AIDA4 Freediver must complete the written AIDA4 Master Freediver Exam. The passing rate is 75%.

Full Body Warm-up and Stretching exam:

The intent of this part of the course is to make sure that the student freediver knows how to do a full body warm-up and stretching session, and how to perform and guide specific stretches for the breathing muscles. These sessions should be conducted in a calm environment, with enough space for all students to do extended stretches and the option of sitting and / or lying down.

#### The full body warm-up before a freedive session must include:

- Gentle movements and techniques with low impact physical activity
- General warm-up and mobilization of major muscle groups
- Specific warm-up and mobilization specific for the planned confined water or open water session

#### The stretching session to improve general bodily flexibility must include:

- Stretches of all major muscle groups
- Stretches specifically for freediving

#### The breath control section and specific stretching to reduce RV must include the following techniques:

- Gentle stretching movements on full lungs in sitting or kneeling position. The Instructor must warn students that this can lead to dizziness and advice students to exhale and bend to lower the head immediately in this case.
- Inhaling through packing: Exercise the packing technique to inhale air within the vital capacity of the student, but not past the total lung capacity (TLC)
- Exhaling through reverse packing: Exercise the reverse packing technique mainly within the vital capacity of the student. Not more than 3 reverse packs below residual volume (RV).
- Breath Control Skill: Full breathing cycles, minimum duration of one minute. This exercise must be done in complete relaxation lying down on the back.

By the end of these sessions the student freediver will be able to plan, perform and lead:

- a full body warm-up suitable as preparation before a freediving session
- a safe routine to prepare the breathing muscles for deep freedives and reduce RV over time



- a stretching session to increase overall and freedive-specific bodily flexibility

## 1.6 CONFINED WATER SESSIONS

The intent of this part of the course is performing a Dynamic Apnea training session. It also includes refreshing the existing rescue skills of the student. The sessions should be conducted in a swimming pool or confined water. All skills below have to be included in the course, but the AIDA Instructor can alter the program. The student freedivers should have access to either a floatation device or the side of the pool to support them at the end of every breath-hold.

### Confined Water Sessions (minimum 2)

After these sessions the student freediver will be able to:

- Perform and lead an appropriate warm-up
- Coach a buddy through a static session, including verbal guiding
- Demonstrate the appropriate rescue technique for a freediver experiencing a loss of motor control or blackout during Static Apnea
- Perform a static breath-hold of at least 3 minutes 30 seconds safely with a training buddy
- Perform a dynamic training session that the student has constructed. Including for example: stretching, apnea swimming, technique training, dynamic CO<sub>2</sub> tables with or without fins, swimming to release lactic acid
- Set the right buoyancy considering the different factors that will affect the performance: wetsuit, water salinity
- Perform a dynamic swim of at least 70m in demonstration-level technique
- Act as a safety diver for a buddy performing a maximum dynamic
- Demonstrate the appropriate rescue technique for a freediver experiencing a loss of motor control or blackout during Dynamic Apnea including exting freediver from the pool using a two man lift.



## 1.7 OPEN WATER SESSIONS

The maximum depth of the freedives should be limited to 38m by setting the length of the line at the maximum depth.

The open water training component of this course includes 4 sessions. These should take place over at least two days. All skills below have to be included in the course but the order can alter.

### Open Water Sessions (minimum 4)

After this open water session, the student freediver will be able to:

- Exercise leading a warm-up / stretching session appropriate for open water freediving
- Exercise preparation of the set-up necessary for an open water session: handling bottom-weights and ropes, tie safe knots, set precise depths
- Understand the mechanism of FRC dives and practice them
- Understand the mechanism of the Mouth-fill technique and practice it together with FRC dives
- Remove one fin at the depth of 20m and swim back with only one fin using an appropriate finning technique
- Perform gentle full-lung stretches (no packing) and RV stretches as preparation for the dive session (max. 3 reverse packs below RV)
- Prepare the set-up necessary for an OW dive session
- Continue practicing the Mouth-fill technique in combination with FRC dives
- Rescue a blacked out freediver from 20m
- Ascend from 20m with no mask (with the mask around the neck)
- Perform a total of four VWT dive in a safe manner to a maximum of 38m depth (Optional)
- Perform a dive with a Mouth-fill performed at a depth of around 20m
- Prepare independently the set-up necessary for an OW dive session
- Plan an open water session with FRC dives as part of the warm-up, followed by a target dive
- Perform safely Constant Weight Bifins dives to a depth of at least 32m (28m in water temperatures lower than 12°C at a depth of 10m and below) and maximum 38m while respecting buddy procedures. Mouth-fill technique should be used.



- Rescue a BO freediver from 15m using only one bi-fin as propulsion.
- Tow an unconscious freediver at the surface to shore/boat over a distance of minimum 50m whilst performing rescue breaths.

## 1.8 EQUIPMENT

Additional equipment for the open water sessions:

The use of a lanyard is mandatory.

Assisted freediving disciplines Variable Weight (VWT) dives might be prohibited. Local law and or regulations prevail.

If local law and regulations allow it, the AIDA Instructor can teach VWT with either of the following two set-ups:

- The rope securely attached to the float to stop at the target-depth and the freediver descends with the bottom weight in his/her hand. In this case the slack rope must be securely kept out of the way of the freediver to avoid entanglement.
- With a purpose-built VWT-set-up

## 1.9 INSTRUCTOR SUPERVISION

The AIDA4 Course may be conducted by an active AIDA Master Instructor or Higher. AIDA4 certified freedivers holding a first aid certification not older than two years and current Liability insurance or instructor may act as instructor assistants.

## 1.10 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Freedivers who meet all the performance requirements outlined above and hold a first aid certification not older than 2 years may be certified as an AIDA4 Master Freediver.

## 1.11 KEY STANDARDS

- Prerequisite certifications: AIDA3 Advanced Freediver or successful Crossover Evaluation AIDA3
- Student to Instructor ratios for pool or confined water: 8:1 with a certified assistant 12:1
- Student to Instructor ratios for open water: 4:1 with a certified assistant 6:1
- Current First Aid certification which includes CPR (no older than two years)
- Age: 18 or older
- Minimum Classroom Sessions (if teaching): 3 (minimum 3 hours total)



- Minimum Knowledge Review Session (if self-study): 1 session of min. 90min
- Full Body Warm-up, Stretching and Specific Stretches of the Breathing Muscles
- Minimum Confined Water Sessions: 2
- Max Confined Water depth: 5m
- Minimum Open Water Sessions: 4 over at least 2 days
- Max Open Water depth: 38m
- The course should run over at least 4 days