

Diving Operations

Any diving carried out as part of a work activity (i.e. a "diving project") is subject to the Diving at Work Regulations 1997. These Regulations require formal risk assessment and diving management arrangements by way of diving project plans and records and the appointment of competent diving supervisors. Written notification to the Health and Safety Executive of the details of "Diving Contractors" is required. There are some relaxations relating to work as part of diver training, recreation and activities carried out in a swimming pool or similar.

Diving in pursuance of the activities of the University, such as fieldwork activities and student projects that include diving to obtain samples or to study underwater systems etc., would be subject to these requirements. Although limited to operations within Great Britain and its territorial waters the Regulations provide a sound framework that should be applied to diving projects elsewhere unless adequately covered by other local legislation.

The Safety Office must be notified in advance of any proposal for a University activity involving diving to ensure that necessary notifications are made and satisfactory arrangements are in place. Please allow a minimum of 3 months notice for this.

Each diving project must be controlled by a single person (the "Diving Contractor") who is responsible for planning, managing and conducting the work safely. A diving project plan (in effect a written risk assessment covering all the various operations, identification of supervisors and describing the information and instructions given to the divers) must be prepared before diving commences and kept up to date. A competent, formally qualified "Diving Supervisor" must be appointed to supervise those operations that they are responsible for. There must only be one Diving Supervisor for each diving operation and they must not participate in the dive.

The individual divers must be formally qualified and possess a certificate of medical fitness to dive as issued by an HSE approved medical practitioner (this can be arranged through Occupational Health). Divers must keep a record of each dive in a logbook, which must be retained for at least 2 years after the last entry.

Further information can be obtained from the Safety Office at request.