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Hello All,

We are just over 4 weeks away from the course now, so please find attached the latest outline of the course for the two weeks and, if you haven't already, please make yourself familiar with it. This timetable is approximate and might change in terms of timings/locations due to operational reasons, but as it stands the first week is at Cromhall Quarry and the second week is split between Cromhall, Plymouth (DDRC), Portland (Boat Dives) and Vobster Quay.

One quick reminder regarding accommodation. All students will need to provide their own accommodation for the overnight stay in Portland, Weymouth on Tuesday 1st March for the early ropes off on Wednesday 2nd. If you have not booked yet then we advise doing so, sooner rather than later. We recommend either The Bunker (<https://www.thebunkerportland.com/>) or The Aqua (<https://hotelaqua.co.uk/>).

Going back to general information and just stating the obvious really, keep an eye on the forecast in the week before the course starts. If it's forecast to be cold bring plenty of warm clothes and lagging, if it's forecast to be wet: waterproofs. You would be amazed at how many people on the course forget! It's also wise to bring a dry change of drysuit thermals if you have them in case you get a small leak, or, you will be standing around all day getting colder. **Sturdy footwear (i.e. work boots/steel toe boots) is recommended**, and trainers discouraged. You will be handling ropes all day so your hands *will* get cold and wet. **We recommend a good pair of insulated, waterproof gloves** such as SealSkinz.

During the course, we will provide endless tea & coffee, but, alas, no food. So if you want to eat, **please bring your own lunch** as there will not be food available at any of our locations.

Focusing on Covid safety practices, although many restrictions have been lifted we ask that you comply with the policies of the locations that we are in and face coverings and social distancing are encouraged where possible. Hand washing/sanitising stations are available on site and appropriate disinfectant resources will be available for diving equipment. If you show any signs and symptoms of Covid 19, please follow government guidance.

For the safety of both yourself, other students and our staff, we ask that everyone must bring and complete a Lateral Flow Test upon arrival on the first day of the course. You must also complete another test on site at the start of week 2 and you will require a third test to be completed on site at DDRC on Tuesday 1st March. You will need to provide these and LFT Test kits can be ordered online or obtained from your local pharmacy.

Currently, government advice is that persons who have received both doses of the Covid-19 Vaccination do not have to self-isolate should they come into contact with an individual who tests positive for Covid-19. So it is in everyone's interest to be at least double vaccinated. In the event you are not double vaccinated and have to self-isolate, should someone prove positive to whom you've been in contact with, you will unfortunately be unable to complete the course. We have no contingencies in place for this. Although in your best interest, we strongly advise that you do all that is reasonably practical to reduce your chance of exposure in the run up to and duration of the course.

Many of you have now sent us all required prerequisite documentation, however if any is outstanding please endeavour to get this to us as soon as possible. Listed below are the required documentation and items you need to provide either before or during the course.

A quick checklist of things you must bring with you:

- Your Drysuit, Drysuit Hose (if a non-standard fitting) and Undersuit.
- Half mask, Hood, Gloves and Fins (we can provide fins if needed).
- **Form of ID (Passport or Driver's License) - BRING ON FIRST DAY.**
- **2 x Passport Photos - BRING ON FIRST DAY.**

If you haven't already, we must receive the following paperwork in advance:

- **Booking Form.**
- **Dive Qualification.**
- **In Date (no more than 3 years old) O2 Administration Certificate** (unless you are taking the course with us).
- **In Date (no more than 3 years old) First Aid at Work Certificate.**
- **In Date HSE Dive Medical (Front Page).**

Other prerequisites that you must have completed:

- **4 Dives in the past 3 months leading up to the course. Please provide logbook or dive computer evidence.**
- **Competent and Confident in a drysuit.**

This prerequisite criteria is set by the HSE. Not us. We must have all of the above from each student to start the course, so please make sure you send it to us beforehand or bring it on the 1st day appropriately. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN YOU NOT BEING ABLE TO PARTICIPATE AS THESE ARE A HSE REQUIREMENT.

For the course, and future reference, please go to this repository (Google Drive):

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13Ww2ViZWgF841mi3pfUXOFBAbn6y31VN?usp=sharing>

It contains everything you would expect, regulations, diving information safety notices, medical information, equipment user manuals, ACoPs and up to date diving manuals etc. etc. We also provide paper copies of the Media ACoP and Scientific and Archaeological ACoPs for the duration of course.

At the end of the course there are 3 exams set electronically by the HSE that you are expected to sit. They are testing your theory and application of SCUBA diving, Diving at work, and Dive Tables. It's about 4 hours of exams. Between our instruction and your input/effort, we can get you through the exams. We have, so far, had a 100% success rate. *However*, you have to help us with the prior knowledge and skills that you will have gained, sometimes many moons ago.

The HSE are giving you credit for the previous diver training you will have done to get this far. This is not a "learn to dive" course. You are expected to be a competent diver and we are adding to this by showing you new methods and applications of the skills you should already have. With that said, **you are *strongly* reminded to review your practical skills AND your previously learnt theory skills such as Boyle's law, Dalton's law, and gas calculations in particular**, plus any nitrox training you may have done. From our experience many candidates attend the course having not addressed their existing competency which has a detrimental effect on our assessment of them *and* it lets the rest of their fellow team members down. Don't be that person!

On Monday 21st February can you be at **SOUTH WEST MARITIME ACADEMY** at Cromhall Quarry (here: <https://www.southwestmaritimeacademy.com/contact-us/>) **for 08:30** please, so Imogen can get all the paperwork sorted out and we can start on time at **09:00**. Traffic can be quite bad in this area (M5), so please leave plenty of time to get there.

Addresses and postcodes of the dive sites are listed below:

South West Maritime Academy / Cromhall Quarry

<https://www.southwestmaritimeacademy.com/contact-us/>

Vobster Quay

<https://www.vobster.com/>

DDRC

<https://www.ddrc.org/contact-us/>

Portland (Skin Deep)

<https://skindeepdiving.co.uk/contact-2/>

Bristol Channel Diving

<https://www.bristolchanneldiving.co.uk/about>

If anyone is running late any day, please advise me ASAP on 07778 315892 (Neil) or 07912687155 (Imogen)

We appreciate that the course is a big investment for most people, so if something is not working for you, or you are having any problems such as medical issues, car troubles, soaking undersuit etc., please let us know and we will do our best to help out. If anyone needs any help or to talk anything through on the phone or email now is the time!

Finally, the remaining balance is due no later than Monday 24th January. We appreciate timely payment as we have external providers to pay in advance of the course. If you have any problems please let us know ASAP.

Best regards,



Neil Brock

Bristol Channel Diving Services Ltd