2.1.3 Recreational Diver Level 1

2.1.3.1 Course Outcomes

GUE's Recreational Diver Level 1 course is designed to provide non-divers with sufficient knowledge, skill, and experience to dive within the limits of similarly qualified scuba divers. Qualified GUE Recreational Diver Level 1 divers are able to dive under conditions equal to or better than those in which they were trained with appropriate surface support and with individuals holding the same or a higher level of certification while using nitrox 32 or air within minimum decompression limits.

The Recreational Diver Level 1 diver who has not yet reached the age of 15 years is required to dive under the direct supervision of an adult who has, as a minimum, an autonomous scuba diver certification.

2.1.3.2 Prerequisites

Applicants for a Recreational Diver Level 1 course must:

a. Submit a completed Course Registration Form, Medical History Form, and Liability Release Form to GUE HQ.
b. Be included in an insurance program that specifically covers diving emergencies.
c. Be physically and mentally fit.
d. Be a nonsmoker.
e. Obtain a physician's prior written authorization for use of prescription drugs, except for birth control, or for any medical condition that may pose a risk while diving.
f. Be a minimum of 14 years of age. Documented parental or legal guardian consent must be submitted to GUE HQ when the participant is a minor.

2.1.3.3 Course Content

The Recreational Diver Level 1 course is normally conducted over five days. It requires a minimum of ten confined water sessions, six open water dives, and at least forty hours of instruction, encompassing classroom lectures, land drills, and in-water work.

At the instructor's discretion, Recreational Supervised Divers may have a portion of their training counted toward Recreational Diver Level 1 qualification if they wish to dive without leadership supervision.

2.1.3.4 Recreational Diver Level 1 Specific Training Standards

a. Student-to-instructor ratio is not to exceed 6:1 during land drills or surface exercises; it cannot exceed 3:1 during any in-water training.
b. Can be run with one trainee
c. All in-water activities must be conducted in daylight conditions.
d. All in-water drills must be introduced in confined water.
e. Maximum depth of 70 ft/21 m
f. No overhead diving
g. All dives must be within minimum decompression limits (MDLs), i.e., no required stops.

2.1.3.5 Required Training Materials

GUE training materials and recommended reading as determined by the course study package received via online download after GUE course registration.

2.1.3.6 Academic Topics

a. Introduction: GUE organization and course overview (objectives, limits, training requirements)
b. Diving physics supporting knowledge and ability to safely manage:
    i. Breathing underwater
    ii. Equalization and avoidance of barotraumas including DCI
    iii. Buoyancy, trim, and balance; ascending, descending, and underwater propulsion
c. Physical and mental stress while diving
d. Scuba diving equipment overview and operation
e. Breathing gas dynamics
f. Decompression theory, including decompression sickness (DCS, AGE)
g. Planning, including gas management, dive preparation, and pre-dive evaluation
h. Nitrox diving and importance of gas analysis
i. Team diving and underwater communication
j. Environmental considerations while diving
k. Conservation-minded diving techniques

2.1.3.7 Land Drills and Topics

The following land drills must be used to familiarize students with important skills before they are practiced underwater.

a. Equipment fit, assembly and disassembly
b. Propulsion and maneuvering techniques
c. Gas analysis
d. GUE EDGE and pre-dive checks
e. Basic 5 scuba skills
f. SPG check
g. S-drill
h. Valve operation
i. Connect and disconnect LP inflation hose from BC (and drysuit, if used)
j. Oral inflation of BC
k. SMB deployment utilizing a spool
l. Basic compass navigation
m. Basic 5 rescue skills

2.1.3.8 Required Dive Skills and Drills

Students must demonstrate competence in the following skills to be certified as a GUE Recreational Diver Level 1 diver:

a. Must be able to swim at least 300 yds/275 m in less than 14 minutes without stopping. This test should be conducted in a swimsuit and, where necessary, appropriate thermal protection.
b. Must be able to swim a distance of at least 50 ft/15 m on a breath hold while submerged.

c. Demonstrate proficiency in safe diving techniques, including pre-dive preparation, in-water activity, and post-dive assessment.
d. Demonstrate awareness of team member location and a concern for safety, responding quickly to visual indications and dive partner needs.
e. Efficiently and comfortably demonstrate how to donate gas to an out-of-gas diver followed by an ascent to the surface utilizing minimum decompression ascent profile.
f. Comfortably demonstrate at least two propulsion techniques that would be appropriate in delicate and/or silty environments.
g. Demonstrate a safe and responsible demeanor throughout all training.
h. Demonstrate good buoyancy and trim, i.e., approximate reference is a maximum of 30 degrees off horizontal while remaining within 5 ft/1.5 m of a target depth.
i. Demonstrate proficiency in underwater communication.
j. Demonstrate basic equipment proficiency and an understanding of the GUE equipment configuration.
k. Demonstrate aptitude in the following open water skills: mask clearing, mask removal and replacement, regulator removal and exchange, long hose deployment.
l. Demonstrate a comfortable demeanor while swimming without a mask in touch contact, followed by a switch to the backup mask.
m. Demonstrate safe ascent and descent procedures.
n. Demonstrate comprehension of the components necessary for a successful backward kick.
o. Demonstrate proficiency in basic underwater compass navigation.
p. Demonstrate proficiency in the Basic 5 rescue skills.
q. Demonstrate reasonable proficiency in the ability to deploy a surface marker buoy while utilizing a spool.

2.1.3.9 Equipment Requirements

GUE base equipment configuration as outlined in Appendix A, plus:

a. Snorkel, simple in design, with no purge valves

Prior to the commencement of the class, students should consult with a GUE representative to verify equipment requirements and appropriateness of any selected equipment.

Appendix A - GUE Base Equipment Configuration

The GUE base equipment configuration is comprised of:

a. Tanks/cylinders: Students may use a single tank/cylinder with a single- or dual-outlet valve. Students may also use dual tanks/cylinders connected with a dual-outlet isolator manifold, which allows for the use of two first stages. Dual tanks/cylinders connected with a dual-outlet, non-isolator manifold can be used, but only in recreational (no decompression) diving, and are considered an alternative for a single tank/cylinder. Consult course-specific standards and your instructor to verify size requirements.
b. Regulators:

i. Single tank: The first stage must supply a primary second stage via a 5 to 7 ft/1.5 to 2 m hose. A backup second stage must be necklaced and supplied via a short hose. The first stage must also supply an analog pressure gauge, inflation for the buoyancy compensator (BC), and (when applicable) inflation for a drysuit.
ii. Double tank: One first stage must supply a primary second stage via a 5 to 7 ft/1.5 to 2 m hose (7 ft/2 m hose is required for all cave classes), and inflation for the buoyancy compensator (BC). The other first stage must supply a necklaced backup second stage via a short hose, an analog pressure gauge, and (when applicable) inflation for a drysuit.

c. Backplate system:
   i. Is held to the diver by one continuous piece of webbing. This webbing is adjustable and uses a buckle to secure the system at the waist.
   ii. A crotch strap is attached and looped through the waistband to prevent the system from riding up a diver's back.
   iii. The continuous webbing must support five D-rings;
      1. The first placed at the left hip
      2. The second placed in line with a diver's right collarbone
      3. The third placed in line with the diver's left collarbone
      4. The fourth and fifth are placed on the front and back of the crotch strap when divers plan to use advanced equipment such as DPVs.
   iv. The harness below the diver's arms has small restrictive bands to allow for the placement of backup lights. The webbing and system retains a minimalist approach.
d. Buoyancy compensation device (BC):
   i. A diver's BC is back-mounted and minimalist in nature.
   ii. It is free of extraneous strings, tabs, or other material.
   iii. There are no restrictive bands or restrictive elastic affixed to the buoyancy cell.
   iv. Wing size and shape is appropriate to the cylinder size(s) employed for training.
e. At least one time/depth measuring device
f. Wrist-mounted compass
g. Mask and fins: Mask is low-volume; fins are rigid, non-split.
h. Backup mask
i. At least one cutting device
j. Wetnotes with pencils
k. Surface marker buoy (SMB) with spool: when required, the SMB should be appropriate for environmental conditions and deployed using a spool with at least 100 ft/30 m of line.
l. Exposure suit appropriate for the duration of exposure

Additional Course-Specific Equipment

a. Where required, back gas and stage cylinders are marked in accordance with the GUE General Training Standards, Policies, and Procedures document and configured in line with GUE protocols.
b. When drysuit inflation systems are applicable, they should be sized appropriately for the environment; small tanks are placed on the left side of the backplate with larger supplies affixed to the diver's left back gas tank.

c. Underwater lights:
    i. When required, backup lights should be powered by alkaline batteries (not rechargeable) and stowed on the D-rings at a diver's chest.
    ii. Backup lights should have a minimal amount of protrusions and a single attachment at the rear.
    iii. The primary light should consist of a rechargeable battery pack and be fitted with a Goodman-style light handle.
    iv. When burn time requirements create the need for an external battery pack, it should reside in a canister mounted on the diver's right hip.
d. Guideline devices, as required during cave diving activities:
    i. A primary reel is required for all cave diving and provides a minimalist form factor with a handle designed to support a Goodman or "hands free" handle operation. The primary reel must contain at least 150 ft/45 m of line.
    ii. A safety spool is required for each diver while cave diving and must contain at least 150 ft/45 m of line.
    iii. A jump or gap spool is required during Cave 2 diving and must contain at least 75 ft/23 m of line.