

Melbourne University Underwater Club - FAQs

Q) Can I be a member if I don't know how to dive?

A) Yes. Everyone is welcome to join the club, including those who have never dived before. In fact, one of the club's central activities is teaching people to dive. This is because it is a requirement of scuba diving that you have an accreditation through PADI or an equivalent body. The club offers PADI Open Water courses, at very competitive prices, throughout the year. For more information see www.muuc.org.au/courses.php .

Q) What if I don't have any scuba gear?

A) Not a problem. The club hires all the essential gear you need to scuba dive. A list of prices can be found here. (<http://www.muuc.org.au/documents/Hiring%20Costs.pdf>) We do recommend, however, that if you're expecting to dive regularly you should invest in your own booties and gloves (which the club does not provide), and your own wetsuit, weight-belt, mask and fins (which the club can provide, but which are more comfortable to own).

Q) Do you do boat dives?

A) Yes. The club owns two boats, which get taken out on a regular basis. Most dives happen in and around the bay, and cover all levels of expertise, from Open Water dives at Pope's Eye and Castle Rock, to deep wreck dives outside the heads. On weekends and holidays, we venture further afield, to Philip Island, Wilson's Promontory, the Otways, or interstate.

Q) I don't have a car. Can I still go diving?

A) Yes. Diving involves transporting a lot of heavy gear, so cars are a necessity. But there are almost always people diving who are happy to offer lifts, in exchange for splitting petrol costs. This will often be arranged at Thursday meetings or, for boat dives, at the shed on the morning of departure.

Q) Where do you meet?

A) The Clyde. We meet there every Thursday at 8pm for a social drink and to organise the weekend diving. The Clyde is on the corner of Elgin and Cardigan Sts

Q) How do I hire gear?

A) Come to the shed. Gear can be hired from our shed in Tin Alley (in the underpass next to the university gym) every Thursday from 9-10pm. Please note that gear can only be hired for use on a club dive.

Q) What's the deal with the deposit?

A) We require a \$50 deposit before any diving gear can be hired. This is to cover the cost of any potential repairs or loss of gear. You can either get your deposit back each time you return gear, or leave the same deposit for the duration of your membership. Be sure to keep your receipt, though – you'll need it to get your deposit back.

Q) How do I get on a club dive?

A) Sign up. Most weekend diving gets sorted out at the pub on Thursdays. Interested divers decide on a location, then an email then gets sent out on Friday morning showing who is diving where. If you can't make it to the pub, don't worry. Dives also get organised on the message board (link), or you can email the dive co-ordinator who will put you in touch with the weekend divers.

Q) How much is it to join the club?

A) \$40 for students, \$130 for eligible non-students. Membership runs from March 1 – February 28, in line with Sports Union insurance policies.

Q) I'm only here for a semester – can I get a half-yearly membership?

A) No. We do not offer pro-rata memberships. Even if you only intend to dive with the club a couple of times, though, it will still be significantly cheaper than diving with a charter.

Q) I have asthma/diabetes. Can I still go diving?

A) Maybe. While in the past asthma or diabetes automatically excluded a person from scuba diving, the community in recent years acknowledged that - if managed properly and carefully - a person still can dive safely and enjoy the sport despite those conditions. Australia requires everyone who wants to learn to dive to undergo a dive medical (www.divemedicals.com.au) carried out by qualified physician. The final decision will be made by your doctor after assessing the severity of the condition and ensuring you are well informed about the involved risks.

Q) Do you go to the Great Barrier Reef?

A) Sometimes. The club organises interstate trips for most of the university holidays. In recent years, we have spent a week on an island on the Great Barrier Reef; dived with sharks at South-West Rocks in northern NSW; explored the kelp forests in Tasmania; and much more. For a look at some of our photos, see www.muuc.org.au/gallery.php. Trips can be organised by anyone in the club – if there is somewhere you've always wanted to dive, make it a club trip!