

CMAS SCIENTIFIC DIVER COURSE

When: 29 April to 10 May 2026

Where: Peniche (3 days) and Berlengas Islands Marine Protected Area (9 days)

Hosted by

Marine and Environmental Research Centre of the Polytechnic University of Leiria (MARE-IPL) in collaboration with CMAS Portugal and supported of the Municipality of Peniche, Institute for Nature Conservation, Portuguese Federation of Underwater Activities, GeoParque Oeste and “Associação Amigos das Berlengas”.

Enrolment Limit: 12 participants | **Application deadline:** 9 March 2026



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Man and
the Biosphere
Programme



Why Join This Course?

- Train in a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
- Gain internationally recognized CMAS Scientific Diver certifications.
- Work with experienced scientific divers and researchers.
- Acquire hands-on field skills directly applicable to marine research.
- Join a full scientific expedition and conduct scientific dives in real research conditions.
- Build an international network of students and early-career scientists.

1. COURSE OVERVIEW

The CMAS International Scientific Diving Course provides comprehensive theoretical and practical training for safe and effective underwater scientific research in line with Scientific Diving international standards.

The programme combines classroom instruction and pool-based safety training in Peniche (3 days) with an intensive, full-time scientific diving expedition based at the [16th-century Fort São João Baptista](#), within the [Berlengas Marine Protected Area, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve](#).

Successful participants receive the CMAS Scientific Diver certification in accordance with CMAS and ISO 24801-1 standards, with the possibility of obtaining ECTS academic credits subject to institutional approval.

ECTS Accreditation

Successful participants are eligible to request the attribution of 3 ECTS under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. The recognition of these credits for MSc or PhD programs depends on the regulations of the host institution.

Who can send the application?

The course is intended for MSc and PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, technicians, and scientists working in aquatic sciences with prior diving experience. Applicants from other relevant fields may be considered, depending on availability.

Travel Grants available

Two travel grants (€500 each) will be awarded by MARE – IPLeiria to eligible student participants, based on the evaluation of their motivation letters.

The grants will be applied as a discount on the course fee.

2. COURSE PROGRAMME

Theory Seminars

Delivered primarily at the Berlengas scientific station, these seminars provide foundational knowledge across the core disciplines of scientific diving, including:

- Scientific diving planning
- Scientific diving risk management & safety protocols
- Underwater navigation & survey methods

Training Phase (Theory + Practice)

Conducted largely in the Berlengas Marine Protected Area, this module develops the operational skills required for scientific diving, such as:

- Scientific sampling techniques
- Underwater navigation and mapping
- Team communication and task coordination
- Equipment handling for research operations

Scientific Tasks & Expedition

In this fully immersive phase, students work collaboratively during a 24/7 scientific training mission, executing real research tasks and producing deliverables under expert supervision.

3. CONDITIONS & FEES

The course fee includes:

- Use of research and diving infrastructure.
- Scientific Diving logistics (Transfers mainland to Berlengas, tanks, weights, boat trips).
- International CMAS Scientific Diver certification fees.
- Personal diving and non-diving accidents insurance.
- Full board (Bed and 3 Meals) in Berlengas for all days of the course.

The course fee does **not include**:

- Participants Equipment (*Personal Equipment, see below*)
- Accommodation and food in Peniche (29 April to 1 of May)

PRICE: The price is 1.300 € per student

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

Submit all the documentation to: scientific.diving@ipleiria.pt and secretaria@cmasportugal.pt

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION: Please provide the registration form (available [here](#)) and a digital photo for your profile.

RECREATIONAL DIVING: The candidate should send the digital certifications attached with the registration form:

- CMAS One Star Diver or an equivalent 24801-2 certification.
- CMAS Advanced Skills Diver or an equivalent certification.
- CMAS Rescue Diver or an equivalent certification.
- First-aid and Basic Life Support certification.
- CMAS Oxygen Administration or an equivalent certification.

For all candidates without the certifications of CMAS Advanced Skills Diver, Rescue Diver, Basic Life Support and O2 Admin, can be organised a special programme a week before the Scientific Diver course start.

LOGBOOK: Logbook a minimum of thirty (30) total dives in the logbook, with a minimum of:

- Eight (8) dives in pool or restricted/confined waters of training buoyancy and trim control, to master domain the locomotion and positioning techniques, and tasks proficiency.
- Ten (10) dives in open water at depths between 15-24 meters and minimum of twenty (20) minutes of dive time.
- Twelve (12) dives in the last 12 months.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND / SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

- The candidate must submit an official declaration confirming that they are a member of the permanent staff, contract staff, research student body, technical staff, or a student of an academic institution.
- Submit a letter of motivation; for student applicants, the letter will also be used to assess eligibility for travel grants, which must be explicitly requested and justified.
- Any supporting documents relevant to eligibility.

5. PARTICIPANTS EQUIPMENT

The participant must bring:

- 2 Masks,
- 1x Regulators set: 1 x First Stage, 2 x 2nd stages, one with 210cm hose, 1 SPG, according DIR configuration,
- Dive suit (wet or drysuit),
- Dive Boots,
- Hood
- Fins (technical),
- BCD (Wing),
- Weight belt,
- 1 SMB orange,
- 1 Torche,
- 1 cutting device.

If you lack equipment, please contact us in advance!

6. INFO & CONTACTS


 ESCOLA SUPERIOR
DE TURISMO E
TECNOLOGIA DO MAR

Web: <https://www.ipleiria.pt/estm>

Email: scientific.diving@ipleiria.pt



Web: <https://cmasportugal.pt>

Email: secretaria@cmasportugal.pt

Course Info: [click here](#)

Berlengas Biosphere Reserve Info: [click here](#)

Whatsapp Info Group: [click here](#)