

MARINE & NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY AT FALMOUTH

WELCOME TO THE BA(HONS) MARINE & NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY AT FALMOUTH.

Your offer

Please remember that if you have been made a conditional offer to study at Falmouth, your place is subject to meeting those conditions. Conditional means that we are waiting to receive your results, or some more information, before your place is finalised. You can see any conditions in [UCAS Track](#). If you have any questions, please contact Cyd Roberts on 01326 213783 or cyd.roberts@falmouth.ac.uk

During the coming weeks you will be emailed important information for new students. If you will be away, please ask someone else to check your emails regularly and reply on your behalf. If you intend being away for any length of time during the next few months, please arrange for your post to be forwarded or opened and replied to on your behalf.

First week of term

Your first day of attendance will be **Monday 14 September 2015**. Please report to the **Exchange Lecture Theatre, Penryn Campus** at **10am**. You will be directed to your first meeting where you will meet staff, student mentors and your first year colleagues.

Your first week at Falmouth will be an induction and orientation week. There will be important inductions for both the Marine & Natural History Photography course and the wider university, in addition to a number of social activities. You will also be given course outlines and timetables.

MyTimetable

<https://mytimetable.falmouth.ac.uk/> available from 1 September 2015

This is the link to MyTimetable, your online academic calendar which shows all scheduled learning activities and your course timetable. It will be available from 1 September 2015, however, timetables can be subject to change. To keep up to date, we recommend that you export the feed to your chosen device (mobile, tablet, laptop or desktop). An induction will be offered on the use of MyTimetable during freshers' week. Students will have access to their individual student timetables, where appropriate, once they have completed their online enrolment and IT induction.

Reading

You will need to bring the following book with you at the start of the course:
Langford, M., 2010. *Basic photography*. Focal Press.

Materials and equipment

You are required to have your own DSLR camera system and all the items listed below. You may need to purchase other items but this will become clear as you progress through the course and tutors give advice where needed. If purchasing new equipment, consider getting Nikon or Canon as we mainly keep lenses and accessories for these systems. This is important, as although you can borrow any of the university equipment, it will only be available during term time. You may also be able to purchase second-hand items from current students.

You are expected to provide most of the photographic materials yourself such as film, printing paper and so on. The actual cost will depend on the amount of work you do, and, of course, wastage. You are advised to allow approximately £300 for materials per term. This is important as you will be required to have your portfolio pictures professionally printed and any written submissions, critical review essays and research journals have to be professionally bound for assessment.

Underwater camera systems are provided by Falmouth for students taking the underwater photography element of the course. **If you wish to be involved with underwater photography, please read the information at the bottom of this email carefully.** This will give you both the entry requirements and the cost of the diving qualifications, as well as the contribution you will need to make to the course.

Field trips

There will be a number of field trips during the course. Normally, two of these will be compulsory, others will be optional. There may be a small cost required if for instance you want to go to the animal capture centre in Launceston, Cornwall and an entrance fee is required.

Photographic equipment list

The course in the first half of the academic year is digital. **Please note the items marked in bold are items you will need in the first week of the course.**

You will need:

- **Digital SLR camera** of reasonable quality **with manual over-ride** to any automatic settings. Nikon or Canon are recommended as they are compatible with University equipment
- **CF and SD memory cards (High Speed) minimum 4Gb, but higher recommended**
- **USB card reader for the above**
- **USB external hard drive, minimum 250Gb recommended**
- Lens hood and UV/Skylight filter for each of your lenses
- DSLR cable release for your camera model
- **Camera equipment holdall** – large enough for extra items you may wish to use/purchase during the course

- **Sturdy tripod**
- Blower brush
- Rechargeable AA batteries and charger
- Lens cleaning cloth
- **16"x12" Print Box** for storing prints and submitting them for assessments. Print boxes can be purchased from 'Silver Print', 'Process Supplies' or similar companies
- **Academic Year Diary**
- In addition, there will be a number of stationery items that you will need to purchase during the course such as notepads, A4 binders, Stanley knife, scissors and so on

The second half of the first year is film (still-images) based.

You will need:

- Film SLR camera (an advantage – please bring it along if you have one)
- SLR camera filters (such as red, green and yellow) may also be useful when you are shooting film
- Patterson's Universal developing tank to take 35mm and 120mm films
- Negative filing system binder (loose leaf type)
- 120 negative filing pages for above binder
- Magnifier – Linen tester or Lupe
- 12 inch cable release to fit an analogue camera (screw thread with lock)
- Pair of white cotton gloves
- Spotting brush - No1 sable
- Black print spotting medium or tube of black water colour or gouache

Essential personal items

By the very nature of the course, you will be expected to work in all sorts of locations and weather conditions. It is therefore essential that you come fully prepared with the right sort of personal clothing to protect yourself from the elements and meet risk assessment requirements. This list is not exclusive, so please use it as a guide:

- Anorak or weather/wind proof jacket
- Warm headgear
- Strong waterproof boots/shoes
- Wellington boots
- Gloves
- Waterproof trousers, as jeans are not always appropriate, particularly in wet weather
- Mobile phone for emergencies
- Binoculars 8x30. These can be purchased in Falmouth from Associated Photography, 01326 319591 or email associatedphotography@btconnect.com
The course has negotiated a discount of 20-30% depending on brand. You will need to show your student ID card (issued when you have enrolled and are on campus).

Underwater photography

You will be aware that underwater photography can form part of the course; it is planned this will start in February. If you wish to undertake this element of the course you are expected to arrive on 14 September **already qualified** to at least **PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) Advanced Open Water** or **BSAC (British Sub-Aqua Association) Sports diver** or equivalent and holding a valid UKSDMC medical. Please read the information below on diving qualifications and underwater photography.

Falmouth is the only university in the UK to offer underwater photography as part of a degree course. However, please remember this is **optional**. There are additional costs involved in the underwater photography programme for which the student pays. These costs are listed below.

Underwater guidance

This guidance has been produced for student reference and is intended to provide guidance on the prerequisites, content and costs of the taught underwater photography course offered to first year Marine & Natural History Photography students. A brief description of the prerequisites for the taught second year course and for conducting independent student projects is also provided. Requirements are summarised at the end.

First year underwater photography course

The first year underwater photography course will take place from February to May 2016 and provides an introduction to the theory and practice of underwater photography, through a combination of classroom and pool sessions and sea dives, using Panasonic GX-1 cameras with Nauticam housings.

First year prerequisites

In order to take part in the first year underwater photography course students must, by October 2015:

- be a certified diver to a minimum of PADI Advanced Open Water Diver or BSAC Sports Diver or CMAS 2 or equivalent
- have a valid UKSDMC certificate of fitness to dive. This is the medical form you will complete if you do BSAC training but is different from that issued by PADI. You can access this medical form at uksdmc.co.uk. Please note that you should check your medical status on this form before undertaking training from either organisation. A PADI medical certificate is not sufficient proof of fitness to dive for the purposes of university diving
- have conducted a dive in UK waters in the previous six months

Dive training

You are strongly advised to commence your dive training now if you have not already done so. If you wish to undertake PADI training you can visit www.padi.com to identify

your nearest PADI dive school. If you wish to undertake BSAC training you can visit www.bsac.com to find your nearest branch. Please note that BSAC training is often scheduled over a longer time period than PADI training and that both PADI and BSAC course completion is subject to delays in bad weather. Don't leave it to the last minute!

You can complete dive training when abroad, but diving in tropical waters does not readily compare to diving in UK waters, so you should ideally do some diving in the UK once qualified. There are local dive training providers here in Falmouth but remember that this option would require you to come to Cornwall ahead of the start of your academic year to complete your dive training and completion cannot be guaranteed if the weather is inclement.

Costs

There is a fee for taking part in the first year underwater photography course. The exact cost depends on the numbers taking part, but in 2015/16 the fee will not exceed £300. This fee includes the provision of:

- all classroom sessions
- tutor-supervised pool and sea dives
- the use of cameras, underwater housings and strobes for all pool and sea dives
- hire of the pool for initial training sessions
- the hire of diving equipment supplied by an external contractor for all pool and sea dives
- the provision of safety divers and shore cover, supplied by an external diving contractor, for all pool and sea dives

Personal diving equipment

Although the core diving equipment is supplied by an external diving contractor, students should acquire some basic diving equipment of their own:

- Timing devices are not supplied by the diving contractor. Priority should therefore be given to acquiring a timing device, either a dive computer or a dive watch. As a minimum, you should have a dive watch with a bezel, to be suitable for diving they should be depth rated to 200m. These can be bought for as cheaply as £20 from outlets such as Argos. Dive computers represent a greater initial investment (Suunto dive computers start at about £180) but provide more information about your dive and are an essential purchase if you are planning to go on diving holidays, conducting multiple dives over multiple days, or conduct boat dives
- Students should acquire their own diving gloves as these are not supplied by the dive contractor. A thickness of 3mm provides some thermal protection while still allowing manual dexterity with the cameras. 5mm gloves will provide more thermal protection but create some loss of dexterity when handling the camera equipment. The approximate price for diving gloves is from £15 upwards

- Students are also very strongly encouraged to acquire their own mask and hood and fins to ensure personal fit and comfort
- Suits are supplied by the diving contractor but to ensure maximum fit and comfort, students are very strongly encouraged to acquire a semi-dry suit (a 5mm under suit and a 5mm over suit is the norm) or a dry suit. If you are a dry suit diver, you should have proof of dry suit training

Personal camera equipment

All camera equipment is supplied by Falmouth University but students must supply:

- Batteries for strobes. You may wish to consider purchasing re-chargeable ones. The strobes function less well on conventional batteries so we recommend Sanyo Eneloop Pros plus the appropriate charger
- SD memory card. A minimum memory size of 4GB is recommended as you will want to shoot in raw format or raw and jpeg format simultaneously

Missed sessions

The first year underwater photography course represents a succession of skills-development through the classroom, pool and sea dives. It is therefore vitally important that students do not miss sessions. If illness or another legitimate reason prevents a student from attending a classroom, pool or sea session, the tutor must be informed as early as possible. Repeatedly missing classroom sessions or dives will lead to failure of the programme. There will be no refund for missed sessions.

Successful completion of the first year underwater photography course

If all elements of the first year underwater photography course are completed to the tutor's satisfaction, the student will receive a pass. Students who pass the first year course may then progress to the taught second year course if they wish to. Please see below.

Second year underwater photography course (September to October 2016)

A taught second year underwater photography course will be offered to further develop your skills in handling the underwater camera systems using Nikon D7000 cameras with Nauticam housings. You will try additional techniques and equipment to further develop your personal portfolio of underwater images. A brief on the aims, content and cost of the taught second year course will be supplied towards the end of the first year course. No additional dive training will be required to take part in the taught second year course, so a PADI Advanced Open Water certificate or BSAC Sports Diver or CMAS 2 or equivalent is the minimum requirement.

In addition to the second year taught course, a two week underwater photography field trip abroad will be offered in 2016/17 (usually December and usually to the Red Sea) to provide a further opportunity to develop your underwater photography and build your portfolio. The total cost of this trip usually runs at around £1500.

Both the second year taught course and the underwater photography field trip are entirely optional. However, you must attend the second year underwater photography taught course in order to join the two week underwater photography field trip to the Red Sea.

Independent student diving projects

At the end of the first year underwater photography course, students will also be assessed as to whether they are competent to use the underwater camera systems without tutor supervision.

In order to conduct **independent** student diving projects with the camera systems in the second and third years, PADI divers must have acquired the **PADI Rescue Diver qualification or equivalent**, produced a project plan and risk assessment and had their project plan and risk assessment approved by the Diving Safety Officer. They must also continue to be medically fit to dive. Tutor support will be available to help with the project plan and risk assessment process. More detailed briefs on the requirements and conduct of student diving projects will be supplied towards the end of the first year underwater photography course.

Further enquiries

We hope you have found this student guidance helpful. If you have any further queries please email Gaynor Bennett M.A. MSc., gaynor.bennett@falmouth.ac.uk Gaynor is our 2nd Year Tutor and Underwater Photography Tutor. She is also a qualified Diving Safety Officer and a PADI Staff Instructor.

First year (Level 4) underwater photography prerequisites and skills development

First year students who wish to take part in the underwater photography course must meet the following Stage 1 prerequisites to attend the underwater photography course and must meet the criteria at Stages 2 and 3 to achieve a pass for the Level 1 underwater photography course.

Stage 1 Prerequisites	Requirement	Purpose	Service Provider	Comments
Dive certification	Students must be qualified to at least PADI Advanced Open Water Diver, BSAC Sports Diver or CMAS 2 or equivalent.	To have acquired formal certification as evidence of a specified level of competence in recreational diving.	Any nationally or internationally approved dive training provider (e.g. PADI, BSAC, CMAS).	Students may have been qualified for many years or have newly qualified for the purposes of joining this award.

Medical fitness	Students must have a valid Certificate of Medical Fitness. As a minimum this must be a UKSDMC medical certificate or it may be an HSE medical certificate.	To ensure fitness to dive for the student's safety and the safety of others.	Medical forms may be sourced from uksdmc.co.uk A GP may be required to sign the medical form. There may be a charge associated with this.	Medicals are valid for 12 months from date of signing and must be refreshed annually. A GP signature will be required if students answer 'yes' to any questions on the medical form.
Scuba review/skills refresher	Students should have conducted at least one dive in the 6 months prior to commencing their pool dives with cameras. If they have not dived within this period they must show evidence of having completed a scuba review/skills refresher.	To refresh both theory and practical dive skills through classroom, pool and sea dive sessions.	Any nationally or internationally approved dive training provider (e.g. PADI, BSAC or CMAS).	The scuba review/skills refresher should be recorded in the student's dive log and signed by the instructor who completed the review.
Orientation dives	Students should have conducted at least one sea dive in UK waters prior to the first sea dive with camera.	To ensure familiarity with: -UK diving.	Approved local provider or student's choice of dive service provider.	Even students who have been qualified for many years and who are familiar with UK diving are advised to ensure a recent dive in UK waters.

Classroom and pool sessions	Requirement	Purpose	Service provider	Comments
Classroom sessions	To attend scheduled classroom theory sessions and dive briefings.	To ensure knowledge of underwater photography and logistical and safety considerations.	Falmouth lecturer.	Classroom sessions immediately prior to pool and sea dives include vital dive logistics and safety briefings.
Camera induction	To attend a camera housing induction.	To ensure familiarity with camera operation and housing preparation and maintenance.	Photography Centre nominated person.	This maximises the opportunity for successful pool and sea dives and reduces risk to camera equipment from flooding.
Pool dives	To attend a supervised pool dive with camera.	To orient to camera use and buoyancy characteristics of camera equipment.	Falmouth lecturer and Photography Centre nominated person.	This maximises the opportunity for successful sea dives and is an essential prerequisite for taking part in the sea dives.

Stage 3 Sea dives, course completion and final approval	Requirement	Purpose	Service provider	Comments
Sea dives	To complete a minimum of four sea dives with camera equipment.	To ensure competence in buoyancy control and camera operation, preparation and post-dive	Falmouth lecturer and dive service provider.	A minimum of four sea dives must be completed in order for students to pass the first year

		maintenance.		underwater photography course.
Fulfil course requirements and achieve a pass	To fulfil attendance requirements and fulfil the requirements of the brief supplied.	To ensure competence and knowledge acquisition.	Falmouth lecturer and student.	The submissions will be assessed and the student will receive a Pass or a Refer. Individual feedback will be recorded on the assessment sheet. If referred, additional work will be set.
Final approval	To be signed off as competent to book out underwater camera equipment independently.	To ensure safety of student and camera equipment.	Falmouth lecturer.	The lecturer's decision as to competence is final.

Optional progressions	Prerequisites	Purpose	Service provider	Comments
Second year (Level 5) underwater photography taught course	A pass at First Year (Level 4) underwater photography. PADI Advanced Open Water Certificate or equivalent. UKSDMC Certificate of Medical Fitness. To have dived in UK waters in the previous six months.	To further develop skills in underwater photography. To try additional techniques. To further develop personal portfolio.	Falmouth lecturer and dive contractor.	Progression to the second year taught course is optional. There will be an additional fee for participation in this course.
Underwater photography field trip abroad	A pass at First Year and continuation to Second Year underwater photography. PADI Advanced Open Water Certificate or equivalent. Certificate of Medical Fitness. To have dived in the previous six months.	To further develop skills in underwater photography and develop personal portfolio.	Falmouth lecturer and tour operator.	Taking part in the underwater photography field trip is optional. The cost of this field trip is met by the student.

Optional progressions	Prerequisites	Purpose	Service provider	Comments
Independent underwater photography student projects	To have achieved a Pass at first year and second year underwater	To ensure safety of the student, those diving with the	The student is responsible for the logistics and costs of their	In addition to underwater photography projects, you may be

	<p>photography. To be signed off as competent to book out underwater camera equipment independently. To be qualified to minimum PADI Rescue Diver or BSAC Sports diver equivalent. To have academic tutor approval for the planned project. To have completed a Project Plan and Risk Assessment with support from and approved by the Diving Safety Officer.</p>	<p>student and the camera equipment used.</p>	<p>independent diving project.</p>	<p>interested in conducting snorkelling projects or 'Splash' photography projects. The latter projects do not require certification to Rescue Diver level but are subject to the need to produce a Project Plan and Risk Assessment with support from the Diving Safety Officer.</p>
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Enjoy the next couple of months and we look forward to seeing you on 14 September.

Yours sincerely

Jim Lowe

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www.falmouth.ac.uk