
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1970 No. 294

MERCHANT SHIPPING

MASTERS AND SEAMEN

**The Merchant Shipping (Certificates of
Competency As A.B.) Regulations 1970**

Made - - - - 12th February 1970

Coming into Operation 16th March 1970

The Board of Trade in exercise of their powers under section 5 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1948 as having effect by virtue of the Transfer of Functions (Shipping and Construction of Ships) Order 1965⁽¹⁾ and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf hereby make the following Regulations:

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Operation and citation

1. These Regulations shall come into operation on 16th March 1970 and may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Certificates of Competency as A.B.) Regulations 1970.

Interpretation and Revocation

2.—(1) The Interpretation Act 1889 shall apply to the interpretation of these Regulations as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament and as if these Regulations and the Regulations hereby revoked were Acts of Parliament.

(2) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires—

“the 1948 Act” means the Merchant Shipping Act 1948;

“the Board” means the Board of Trade;

“major ship” means a ship having in the case of a sailing ship a gross tonnage of 40 tons or more and in the case of any other ship a gross tonnage of 100 tons or more;

“minor ship” means a ship (not being a ship having a gross tonnage of less than 15 tons) having in the case of a sailing ship a gross tonnage of less than 40 tons and in the case of any other ship a gross tonnage of less than 100 tons;

“the principal Act” means the Merchant Shipping Act 1894;

“the Registrar General” means the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen;

“responsible authority” means in relation to a school or course the person in charge of that school or course as the case may be; and

“satisfactorily” means to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

(3) The Merchant Shipping (Certificates of Competency as A.B.) Regulations 1959(2), as amended(3), are hereby revoked.

Prescribed dates

3. The prescribed dates for the purposes of section 5(1), (5) and (6) of the 1948 Act shall continue to be the dates prescribed by Regulation 2 of the Merchant Shipping (Certificates of Competency as A.B.) Regulations 1952(4), namely, the 30th April 1953, the 30th April 1953, and the 1st May 1953, respectively.

Conditions for the grant of certificates of competency

4. A certificate of competency shall not be granted to any person unless either—

- (a) (1) (a) he has attained the age of 18 years, and
- (b) has performed the appropriate qualifying service at sea specified for the purpose of this Regulation in Regulations 8 and 9 of these Regulations, and
- (c) has passed an examination in the subjects specified in the syllabus set out in Schedule 1 to these Regulations, and
- (d) is the holder of a certificate of efficiency as lifeboatman issued under the rules for life-saving appliances, and
- (e) has, otherwise than for the purpose of receiving instruction therein taken turns at the wheel in steering a major ship, not being a fishing boat, for periods totalling not less than 10 hours; or

(2) he was on or before the 1st May 1952 serving in the rating of A.B. or in an equivalent or superior deck rating in a ship for which an agreement with the crew was required under Part II of the principal Act.

Application for examination

5. Subject to the following Regulation—

(1) a person shall not be eligible to take the examination referred to in condition (1)(c) of the preceding Regulation unless he has either—

- (a) (i) attained the age of 18 years, and
- (ii) otherwise than for the purpose of receiving instruction therein, taken turns at the wheel in steering a major ship, not being a fishing boat, for periods totalling not less than 10 hours, and
- (iii) performed the appropriate qualifying service at sea specified for the purpose of this Regulation in Regulations 8 and 9 of these Regulations; or
- (b) served at sea in an engine room rating and satisfactorily completed a conversion course approved by the Board providing training in the duties of a deck rating for persons who have served in an engine room rating.

(2) (1959 I, p. 1687).

(3) S.I. 1962/579, 1964/952, 1967/1620 (1962 I, p. 557; 1964 II, p. 2151; 1967 III, p. 4464).

(4) (1952 II, p. 1712).

- (2) Application to take the examination may be made at any Mercantile Marine Office.
- (3) Every such application shall be in such form as the Board may sanction and shall, except in cases to which paragraph (6) of this Regulation applies, be accompanied by—
- (a) in the case of an applicant complying with the requirements of paragraph (1)(a) of this Regulation—
- (i) certificates of discharge, and such other certificates signed by the masters of ships in which the applicant has served, as may be necessary to establish to the satisfaction of the Superintendent that the applicant has performed the necessary qualifying service, and also, in any case in which any reduction in the period of such qualifying service is claimed under the provisions of Regulation 9, the certificate or certificates therein referred to; and
- (ii) a certificate or certificates showing that the applicant has complied with the requirements of paragraph (1)(a)(ii) of this Regulation (steering experience);
- (b) in the case of an applicant complying with the requirements of paragraph 1(b) of this Regulation, such certificates or other evidence as may be necessary to establish to the satisfaction of the Superintendent that the applicant has served at sea in an engine room rating and has satisfactorily completed the conversion course therein referred to.
- (4) Every such application duly completed shall be lodged with the Superintendent who shall, if satisfied that the applicant is eligible to take the examination, ensure that the applicant is notified in due course of the arrangements made for his examination, or, if not so satisfied, inform the applicant in writing that his application is refused stating the reasons.
- (5) On completion of every examination, the examiner shall inform the applicant of the result thereof and shall record the result on his form of application and return the form to the Superintendent.
- (6) A person who has complied with conditions (1)(a), (b), (d) and (e) of Regulation 4 may when applying to take the examination apply also for the grant, should he pass the examination, of a certificate of competency, in which case—
- (a) the application shall be accompanied by the documents described in Regulation 7(2);
- (b) paragraphs (4) and (5) of this Regulation shall apply; and
- (c) the Superintendent shall, on being notified that the applicant has passed the examination and if he is satisfied that the applicant is entitled to the grant of a certificate of competency, cause such a certificate to be issued to the applicant, or, if not so satisfied, inform the applicant in writing that his application for the certificate is refused stating the reasons.
- 6.** The examination referred to in condition (1)(c) of Regulation 4 may, in the case of a person undergoing a course of pre-sea training at a nautical training school specified in Part 1 of Schedule 2 to these Regulations and marked therein with an asterisk, be taken by that person at that school in stages during that course in accordance with arrangements made by the authority responsible for the school and approved by the Board.

Application for certificates of competency

7.—(1) Without prejudice to the provisions of Regulation 5(6), a person who has complied with the requirements of Regulation 4 of these Regulations may apply at any Mercantile Marine Office for the grant of a certificate of competency.

(2) Every such application shall be in such form as the Board may sanction and shall be accompanied—

- (a) in the case of an applicant who has complied with the requirements of Regulation 4(1), by—
- (i) certificates of discharge, and such other certificates signed by the masters of ships in which the applicant has served, as may be necessary to establish to the satisfaction of the Superintendent that the applicant has performed the necessary qualifying service, and also, in any case in which any reduction in the period of such qualifying service is claimed under provisions of Regulation 9, the certificate or certificates therein referred to;
 - (ii) a certificate of efficiency as a lifeboatman issued under the rules for life-saving appliances; and
 - (iii) certificates showing to the satisfaction of the Superintendent that the applicant has complied with conditions (1)(c) and (e) of Regulation 4;
- (b) in the case of an applicant who claims to be qualified by virtue of the provisions of Regulation 4(2), by certificates of discharge or a certificate of service issued by the Registrar General sufficient to establish to the satisfaction of the Superintendent that the applicant is so qualified.
- (3) Every such application duly completed shall be lodged with the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office who shall if satisfied that the applicant is entitled to the grant of a certificate of competency cause such a certificate to be issued to the applicant, or, if not so satisfied, inform the applicant in writing that his application is refused stating the reasons.

Qualifying service at sea

- 8.—(1) Qualifying service at sea for the purposes of Regulations 4(1) and 5(1)(a) of these Regulations shall be either—
- (a) service in a deck rating in a ship other than a ship having a general purpose or integrated crew (referred to in this Regulation as “service in a deck rating”), or
 - (b) service in a general purpose rating in a ship having a general purpose or integrated crew (referred to in this Regulation as “service in a general purpose rating”), or
 - (c) service partly in the one and partly in the other of the above mentioned ratings (referred to in this Regulation as “mixed service”).
- (2) Subject to the following provisions of this Regulation and the provisions of Regulation 9, the period of qualifying service shall be as follows:—
- (a) for the purposes of Regulation 5(1)(a)—
 - (i) in the case of service in a deck rating, 12 months;
 - (ii) in the case of service in a general purpose rating, 18 months;
 - (iii) in the case of mixed service, a period of between 12 and 18 months such that the component periods of service in a deck rating and in a general purpose rating respectively, expressed as percentages of the periods prescribed in relation thereto in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii), total 100 per cent;
 - (b) for the purposes of Regulation 4(1), in the case of each type of service the period specified in relation thereto in sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph plus a further period of 2 years.
- (3) In calculating the length of periods of qualifying service for the purpose of paragraph (2) of this Regulation—
- (a) a period of service in a minor ship shall count as one half of the period actually so served;
 - (b) service in a ship having a gross tonnage of less than 15 tons shall be disregarded;

- (c) every day by which a period of actual service in a ship exceeds the number of months comprised in that period, and every day of such service comprised in a period of actual service of less than one month, shall be treated as 1/30th of a month of actual service;
 - (d) the length of every period of actual service in a ship shall be calculated separately from the date of its commencement to the date of its termination.
- (4) Every period of qualifying service shall include a proportion of service in major ships other than fishing boats, amounting to not less than 25 per cent.

Reduction of qualifying service at sea

9.—(1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) of this Regulation, a person producing a certificate given by the responsible authority showing that he has satisfactorily completed or passed—

- (a) a course of pre-sea training at a nautical training school specified in Part I of Schedule 2 to these Regulations, shall be entitled to a reduction—
 - (i) in the period of qualifying service required under Regulation 8(2)(a) of 4 weeks;
 - (ii) in the period of qualifying service required under Regulation 8(2)(b), of one month for each period of 4 weeks attendance and training on that course, less any reduction made pursuant to sub-paragraph (i);
- (b) both a course described in sub-paragraph (a) and a course of pre-sea training at a training school specified in Part 2 of the said Schedule, shall be entitled to a reduction in the period of qualifying service required under Regulation 8(2)(b) of one month for each period of 4 weeks attendance and training on each of the two courses specified;
- (c) as a member of the Sea Cadet Corps the pre-sea training course for Cadet Petty Officers sponsored by that Corps, shall be entitled to a reduction in the period of qualifying service required under Regulation 8(2)(b) of 3 months.

(2) A person who has served at sea in an engine room rating and has satisfactorily completed a conversion course approved by the Board providing training in the duties of a deck rating for persons who have served in an engine room rating shall on producing satisfactory evidence of such service and a certificate given by the responsible authority that he has satisfactorily completed the conversion course be entitled to a reduction in the period of qualifying service required under Regulation 8(2)(b) of—

- (a) one week for every complete week's attendance and training on the conversion course subject to a maximum of 4 weeks, and
- (b) 50 per cent of the total length of his service at sea in an engine room rating subject to a maximum of 6 months.

(3) No person shall be entitled by virtue of the provisions of paragraph (1) of this Regulation to a reduction or reductions of qualifying service exceeding a total of 6 months, or by virtue of the provisions of sub-paragraphs (a) or (b) of that paragraph to a reduction or reductions of qualifying service exceeding the maximum reduction specified in relation to the school attended in the third column of Schedule 2.

Lost or destroyed certificates

10.—(1) If a certificate of competency is lost or destroyed, the holder thereof shall forthwith notify the Registrar General who shall if satisfied that it has been so lost or destroyed issue a copy of the certificate of competency (so marked) which shall have the same effect as the certificate of competency originally issued.

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(2) Any certificate notified as aforesaid as lost or destroyed shall if subsequently recovered be delivered forthwith to the Registrar General.

Forgery of certificates

11. The provisions of section 104 of the principal Act (which relates to forgery and other offences relating to certificates of competency of ships' officers granted under that Act) shall apply in relation to certificates of competency granted under these Regulations as they apply in relation to certificates of competency of ships' officers granted under the principal Act.

Fees

12. The fees specified in Schedule 3 to these Regulations shall be payable in respect of the matters specified in relation thereto in that Schedule.

12th February 1970

R.F. Prosser
An Under-Secretary of the Board of Trade

SCHEDULE 1

SYLLABUS FOR EXAMINATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY AS A.B

Nautical knowledge

1. The meaning of common nautical terms.
2. The names and functions of various parts of a ship, for example decks, compartments, ballast tanks, bilges, air pipes, strum boxes.
3. Knowledge of the compass card 0° to 360°. Ability to report the approximate bearing of an object in degrees or points on the bow.
4. Reading, streaming and handing a patent log.
5. Markings on a hand lead line, taking a case of the hand lead and correctly reporting the sounding obtained.
6. Marking of the anchor cable.
7. Understanding helm orders.
8. The use of lifesaving and fire fighting appliances.

Practical work

Tested as far as possible by practical demonstration.

9. Knots, hitches and bends in common use:—

Reef knot	Bowline and bowline on the bight
Timber hitch	Sheet bend, double and single
Clovehitch	Sheepshank
Rolling hitch	Round turn and two half hitches
Figure of eight	Marlinspike hitch
Wall and crown	

To whip a rope's end using plain or palm and needle whipping. To put a seizing on rope and wire. To put a stopper on a rope or wire hawser, and derrick lift.

10. Splicing plaited and multi-strand manila and synthetic fibre rope, eye splice, short splice and back splice. Splicing wire rope, eye splice using a locking tuck. Care in use of rope and wire.

11. Slinging a stage, rigging a bosun's chair and pilot ladder.

12. Rigging a derrick. Driving a winch, general precautions to be taken before and during the operation of a winch whether used for working cargo or for warping.

13. The use and operation of a windlass in anchor work and in warping. Safe handling of moorings with particular reference to synthetic-fibre ropes and self tensioning winches. Precautions to be taken in the stowage of chain cable and securing the anchors for sea.

14. A knowledge of the gear used in cargo work and an understanding of its uses. General maintenance with particular reference to wires, blocks and shackles.

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15. The safe handling of hatch covers including mechanical hatch covers; battening down and securing hatches and tank lids.

16. If no lifeboatman's certificate is held, a candidate will be required to satisfy the examiner that:—

- (a) he understands the general principles of boat management and can carry out orders relating to lifeboat launching and operation and the handling of a boat under sail;
- (b) he is familiar with a lifeboat and its equipment and the starting and running of the engines of a power boat;
- (c) he is familiar with the various methods of launching liferafts, the precautions to be taken before and during launching, methods of boarding and survival procedure.

SCHEDULE 2

TRAINING SCHOOLS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

PART I

NAUTICAL TRAINING SCHOOLS

Place	Name of School	Maximum period of reduction of qualifying service
Aberdeen	Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology	6 months
Anglesey	H.M.S. "Conway" Merchant Navy Cadet School	6 months
Belfast	City of Belfast College of Technology	6 months
Blyth	Wellesley Nautical School	6 months
Bristol (Portishead)	Incorporated National Nautical School	6 months
Buckie	Buckie High School	3 months
Cardiff	National Sea Training School	3 months
Cardiff	Reardon Smith Nautical College	6 months
Dover	Prince of Wales Sea Training School	6 months
Elgin	Gordonstoun School (Nautical Department)	6 months
Fleetwood	Nautical College (Cadet Course)	6 months
	(Junior Course)	3 months
* Gravesend	National Sea Training School	3 months
Greenock	Watt Memorial College	6 months
Hull	Kingston-upon-Hull High School for Nautical Training	6 months
Hull	Kingston-upon-Hull Nautical College	6 months

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Place	Name of School	Maximum period of reduction of qualifying service
Hull	Trinity House Navigation Schools	6 months
Leith	Leith Nautical College	6 months
Leith	Leith Nautical College (T.S. Dolphin)	3 months
Liverpool	Riversdale Technical College	6 months
Liverpool	The Indefatigable and National Sea Training School for Boys	6 months
London	Merchant Navy College	6 months
London	London Nautical School	6 months
Pangbourne	The Nautical College	6 months
Plymouth	Plymouth College of Technology	6 months
Southampton	School of Navigation, University of Southampton, Warsash	6 months
South Shields	South Shields Marine & Technical College	6 months
South Shields	National Sea Training School	3 months
Stornoway	Lews Castle College (Cadet Course)	6 months
	(Junior Course)	3 months
Yarmouth (I.O.W.)	St. Swithins Nautical School	6 months

PART 2 TRAINING SCHOOLS

Barrow-in-Furness	Holker County Secondary School	6 months
Dovercourt	Sir Anthony Dean, County Secondary School	6 months
Falmouth	Falmouth Technical College	6 months
Grimsby	Grimsby College of Further Education	6 months
Lowestoft	Technical College	6 months
Morpeth	Amble County Secondary School	6 months
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Blakelaw School	6 months
Sunderland	Hylton Red House Comprehensive School	6 months
Whitehaven	Kells Secondary School	6 months

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SCHEDULE 3

FEES

	<i>£ s. d.</i>
1. For sitting the examination specified in Regulation 4(1)(c), except in cases to which paragraph 3 of this Schedule applies	9 0
2. For the grant of a certificate of competency, except in cases to which paragraph 3 of this Schedule applies	9 0
3. For sitting the said examination and for the grant of a certificate of competency in the case of a person making application therefor under Regulation 5(6) and passing the examination	9 0
4. For a copy of a certificate of competency issued pursuant to Regulation 10, except where the loss or destruction of the original certificate was occasioned by the wreck or loss of a ship or by a fire on board ship, in which case no fee shall be payable	5 6

EXPLANATORY NOTE

These Regulations prescribe requirements for the grant to seamen of certificates of competency as A.B. They revoke and replace, with amendments, the Merchant Shipping (Certificates of Competency as A.B.) Regulations 1959 as amended.

The principal changes are:—

- (1) Service at sea reckonable as qualifying service for the grant of a certificate will now include, in addition to service in a deck rating, service in a general purpose rating in ships having general purpose or integrated crews (Regulation 8).
- (2) The extent to which prescribed periods of qualifying service may be reduced in the case of persons who have undergone courses of pre-sea training at prescribed training schools and establishments is altered, and new provisions are made for such reduction in the case of persons who have served at sea in an engine room rating and undergone a course of training in the duties of a deck rating (Regulation 9 and Schedule 2).
- (3) The requirements relating to the examination to be taken for the grant of a certificate, including the qualifications of applicants, the syllabus and the manner in which the examination may be taken have been revised (Regulations 5 and 6 and Schedule 1).