



# MSN 1856 (M+F) Amendment 1

## Training & Certification Guidance: UK Requirements for Master and Deck Officers

**Notice to all Owners, Masters, Officers, Ratings and those concerned with maritime training.**

*This notice updates and replaces MSN 1856 (M+F).*

*This Notice includes guidance for seafarers in relation to the training and assessment requirements for masters and deck officers, equivalent arrangements for simulator time, and also requirements that training providers must meet for the purposes of approval by the Secretary of State under the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2022.*

### Summary

This Merchant Shipping Notice (MSN) sets out and explains the regulatory requirements regarding the implementation of training elements applicable under Chapter II of the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Convention and Code. It outlines the certification structure and examination and training requirements for Merchant Navy deck officers. The certification system provides a structured progression route for trainee officers and ratings entering the industry to achieve Officer of the Watch (OOW), Chief Mate and Master qualifications.

#### **This MSN covers:**

1. Introduction
2. Deck Merchant Navy Certificate of Competency (CoC) Structure
3. Mandatory Requirements for Masters and Deck Officers (Unlimited)
4. Certification for Masters and Chief Mates on Vessels of less than 3,000 GT, Unlimited Area
5. Near-Coastal Area, Unlimited Tonnage
6. Near-Coastal Area, Ships less than 500 GT
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11. Approved Education and Training Schemes
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13. Conversions to an OOW II/1 Certificate of Competency
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15. Royal Navy Conversions
16. Application Procedure
17. Notice of Eligibility (NOE)
18. MCA Oral Examination
19. The Issue of your Certificate of Competency
20. Fraudulent Certificates and Seagoing Service

Please note that the Revalidation of all Certificates of Competency is covered in MSN 1861 (Amendment 1).



## The Annexes of this MSN cover:

- A. Deck Certificate of Competency Structure to Master Unlimited (Flow chart)
- B. Deck Certificate of Competency Structure to Master Near Coastal (Flow chart)
- C. Holders of a UK Chief Mate unlimited, II/2 Certificate of Competency where the qualifying conditions were met prior to the 1st January 1980, upgrading to a Master unlimited, II/2, Certificate of Competency
- D. Hovercraft Certificate of Competency
- E. Deck Cadet and Rating Seagoing Service Testimonial for Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- F. Seagoing Service on Specialised Ships
- G. Approval of Education and Training Providers
- H. MCA Approved UK Cadetship – Terms of Reference (ToR)
- I. MCA Terms of Reference (ToR) for Approval of UK College training providers engaged in Collaborative Programmes with Overseas Colleges (1+1)
- J. MCA Terms of Reference (ToR) for Cadet (non-UK) Training Providers
- K. MCA Terms of Reference (ToR) for Overseas Colleges

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2022 (“the 2022 Regulations”), implement the requirements of the International Convention and Code on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) 1978,<sup>1</sup> (referred to in this MSN as the ‘STCW Convention’ and ‘STCW Code’ respectively), including the provisions prescribing the mandatory minimum requirements for the certification of Masters and Deck Officers, and a reference in this Notice to the 2022 Regulations is a reference to the Regulations as amended.

1.2 To obtain a United Kingdom (UK) STCW Certificate of Competency (CoC) you must:

- Meet the minimum age requirement;
- Complete the minimum period of seagoing service;
- Undertake ancillary technical and safety training;
- Complete the appropriate programme(s) of education and training meeting the minimum vocational and academic standard;
- Meet medical standards (including eyesight);
- If applicable, pass an oral examination conducted by a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) examiner.

**If you are considering a seagoing career it is strongly advised that you undergo a medical and sight test, which includes testing of colour and visual acuity, before starting training. Please refer to section 12 of this MSN.**

1.3 Prior to joining your first merchant navy ship for your first sea voyage you will need to hold the following certificates<sup>2</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> The 2022 Regulations revoked and replaced the previous regulations, the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/782).

<sup>2</sup> As required by Section A-VI/1 of the STCW Code, if you are employed or engaged in any capacity onboard a ship with designated safety or pollution-prevention duties, before being assigned to any shipboard tasks you will be required to successfully complete those elements of STCW basic training which are appropriate to your duties and functions.



- A valid ENG1<sup>3</sup> (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-1);
- Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-2);
- Elementary First Aid (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-3);
- Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-4);
- Security Awareness (STCW Code Table A-VI/6-1)<sup>4</sup>.

Apart from ENG1, all the certificates listed above are Certificates of Proficiency (CoP) required by the 2022 Regulations.

**All references to Certificates of Competency in this notice mean those issued by the MCA (on behalf of the Secretary of State) unless otherwise stated.**

## 2. Deck Merchant Navy Certificate of Competency (CoC) Structure

2.1 The following CoC requirements are listed in this MSN:

CoC	Area Limitation	Tonnage Limitation	STCW Convention Regulation
Officer of the Watch (OOW)	Near-coastal	Less than 500 GT	II/3
	Unlimited	Unlimited	II/1
Chief Mate	Near-coastal	Unlimited	II/2
	Near-coastal	Less than 3,000 GT	II/2
	Unlimited	Less than 3,000 GT	II/2
	Unlimited	Unlimited	II/2
Master	Near-coastal	Less than 500 GT	II/3
	Specified area	Less than 3,000 GT Domestic Vessels	II/3
	Near-coastal	Unlimited	II/2
	Unlimited	Less than 3,000 GT	II/2
	Unlimited	Unlimited	II/2

2.2 Deck officer Certificates of Competency will state the following STCW functions:

- Navigation (function 1);
- Cargo handling and stowage (function 2);
- Controlling the operation of the ship and care for persons onboard (function 3);
- Radiocommunications (function 7).

<sup>3</sup> See section 12 for further details. Details of MCA Approved Medical Certificates are available from: [www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates](http://www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates).

<sup>4</sup> If you are to serve on ships to which the International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code applies you must hold a Security Awareness certificate (Section A-VI/6, paragraph 4 of the STCW Code, and STCW Code Table A-VI/6-1). If you are assigned designated security duties aboard a vessel you must obtain a Designated Security Duties certificate (Section A-VI/6, paragraphs 6-8 of the STCW Code, and STCW Code Table A-VI/6-2). Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions).



2.3 Certificates of Competency functions will be at the granted STCW capacity level:

- Operational – this will be identified as an “O” on the Certificate of Competency;
- Management– this will be identified as an “M” on the Certificate of Competency.

2.4 The required functions and capacities for each CoC will be:

Function	Applicable CoC	
	OOW	Chief Mate / Master
1	O	M
2	O	M
3	O	M
7	O	O

### 3. Mandatory Requirements for Masters and Deck Officers (Unlimited)

A summary of the unlimited trading areas and Gross Tonnage (GT) for CoC progression can be found in **Annex A**.

#### 3.1 Certification for Officers in charge of a Navigational Watch (OOW) Unlimited, STCW Convention Regulation II/1

If you have met the requirements and have been accepted onto an MCA approved UK cadet<sup>5</sup> or MCA cadet training programme, you must obtain a letter from the college confirming your attendance on the programme. This letter must be submitted when you make your application for an OOW, II/1, CoC.

If you are following an MCA-approved ‘overseas collaborative programme’<sup>6</sup> (“one plus one”) overseen by a UK nautical college, you must obtain a letter from the college confirming your attendance on the programme and the seagoing service requirements applicable to that programme. This letter must be submitted when you make your application for an OOW, II/1, CoC.

If you are able to demonstrate 36 months of acceptable seagoing service, you may be eligible to undertake the MCA-approved ‘experienced seafarer route’. You do not require a college letter for the issue of an NOE. You will need to apply to MCA-approved nautical college for acceptance onto the course.

If you undertake and pass an Honours Degree, Foundation Degree or Scottish Professional Diploma to the required level as part of an MCA approved UK Cadet programme you will have demonstrated that you have met the standard required for the underpinning knowledge for an operational level CoC. Therefore, you may be exempt from the MCA OOW, II/1, safety examinations.

#### 3.2 To qualify for the issue of OOW unlimited Certificate of Competency you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Be at least 18 years of age;
- (b) Since the age of 16, have obtained either;
  - Approved seagoing service of not less than 12 months as part of an MCA or MCA UK approved cadet training programme, which includes onboard training that meets the requirements of section A-II/1 of the STCW Code and is documented

<sup>5</sup> The requirements for approval are listed in **Annex G** of this Notice.

<sup>6</sup> The requirements for approval are listed in **Annex G** of this Notice.



- in an approved Training Record Book. This must include 6 months' seagoing service engaged in bridge watchkeeping duties; **or**
- The approved seagoing service specified on your college letter as part of an MCA-approved 'overseas collaborative programme', which includes onboard training that meets the requirements of section A-II/1 of the STCW Code and is documented in an approved Training Record Book. This must include 6 months' seagoing service engaged in bridge watchkeeping duties; **or**
  - 36 months<sup>7</sup> seagoing service with 6 months engaged in bridge watchkeeping duties ('experienced seafarer route');
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Successfully complete an approved education and training programme meeting the standards of competency specified in section A-II/1 of the STCW Code as listed in section 11;
- (e) Hold a Signals certificate issued in the previous 3 years;
- (f) Pass 'MCA OOW Safety Examinations' at an Exam Centre approved<sup>8</sup> by the MCA in the following subjects:
- Navigation;
  - Stability and operations;
- (g) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (h) Pass the MCA oral examination.

**The MCA OOW Safety examinations and MCA oral examination must be passed within 3 years prior to the date of the issue of your CoC.**

### 3.3 Certification for Chief Mate Unlimited, STCW Convention Regulation II/2

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC;
- (b) Have completed 12 months' watchkeeping service as OOW unlimited, II/1;
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates as listed in section 10;
- (d) Successfully complete an approved education and training programme meeting the standards of competency specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code as listed in section 11;
- (e) Pass MCA 'Chief Mate/Master's Safety Examinations' at an approved MCA exam centre in the following subjects:
- Navigation;
  - Stability and structure;
- (f) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (g) Pass the MCA oral examination.

Candidates who enrolled on an MCA UK Cadetship approved Honours Degree, Foundation Degree or Scottish Professional Diploma prior to 01 September 2015 will not be required to take the MCA Chief Mate Safety examinations up until 1 September 2022<sup>9</sup>. You must obtain

<sup>7</sup> If you are not enrolled on an MCA approved route and have been working as a General Purpose (GP) rating, you must demonstrate 48 months' seagoing service.

<sup>8</sup> Please refer to **Annex G** for Exam Centre approval process.

<sup>9</sup> You must have met the full qualifying conditions for the Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, Certificate of Competency and have submitted required documentary evidence of this to the MCA prior to this date.



a letter from your nautical college confirming your enrolment date and submit this with your Chief Mate CoC application.

**The MCA Chief Mate Safety Examinations and MCA oral examination must be passed within 3 years prior to the date of the issue of your CoC.**

#### **3.4 Certification for Master Unlimited, STCW Convention Regulation II/2<sup>10</sup>**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC by meeting all of the requirements listed in 3.3;
- (b) Have completed 36 months' watchkeeping service as OOW unlimited II/1. This period may be reduced to 24 months if at least 12 months of such seagoing service has been served as Chief Mate while holding a Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC;
- (c) Hold applicable ancillary and safety course certificates as listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (e) Pass the MCA oral examination.

#### **4. Certification for Masters and Chief Mates on Vessels of less than 3,000 GT, Unlimited Area**

##### **4.1 Certification for Chief Mate, less than 3,000 GT, Unlimited Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/2**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC;
- (b) Have completed 6 months' watchkeeping service as OOW unlimited, II/1;
- (c) Hold a Navigation Aids, Equipment and Simulation Training (NAEST) certificate at management level;
- (d) Hold a Human Element, Leadership and Management (HELM) certificate at management level;
- (e) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (f) Hold a valid ENG 1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (g) Pass the MCA oral examination.

##### **4.2 Certification for Master, less than 3000 GT, Unlimited Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/2**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC;
- (b) Have 36 months' watchkeeping service as OOW unlimited, II/1; this may be reduced to a minimum of 24 months if at least 12 months of seagoing service has been served as Chief Mate;
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent.

#### **5. Near-Coastal Area, Unlimited Tonnage**

If you meet the requirements you may obtain a near-coastal CoC. This will allow you to work on vessels in the UK near-coastal area with the maximum size of the vessel specified below.

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<sup>10</sup> If you qualified before 1980 for your UK Chief Mate II/2, unlimited, Certificate of Competency and wish to upgrade, to Master unlimited, II/2, Certificate of Competency you must refer to **Annex C**.





“Near-coastal” means an area of operation restricted to 150 miles from a safe haven on the coast of the UK and 30 miles from Ireland. A summary of the near-coastal CoC progression can be found in **Annex B**.

### **5.1 Certification for Chief Mate, Unlimited Tonnage, Near-Coastal Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/2**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC<sup>11</sup>;
- (b) Have completed 12 months’ watchkeeping service as OOW unlimited, II/1;
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates as listed in section 10;
- (d) Successfully complete an approved education and training programme meeting the standards of competency specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code as applicable to a near-coastal restricted CoC and covered by passing the following MCA Chief Mate Safety examinations at an approved MCA exam centre in the following subjects:
  - Magnetic compass and navigational aids;
  - Ship construction and stability;
  - Shipboard operations;
- (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (f) Pass the MCA oral examination.

**The MCA Chief Mate Safety examinations and MCA oral examination must be passed within 3 years prior to the date of the issue of your CoC.**

### **5.2 Certification for Master, Unlimited Tonnage, Near-Coastal Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/2**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid Chief Mate unlimited GT, near-coastal, II/2, CoC or a Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC;
- (b) Have completed 36 months’ watchkeeping service including at least 18 months’ watchkeeping service performed while holding a Chief Mate unlimited GT, near-coastal, II/2, CoC or a Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC. This may be reduced to 24 months’ watchkeeping service if at least 12 months’ watchkeeping service was carried out in the capacity of Chief Mate while holding a Chief Mate unlimited GT, near-coastal, II/2, CoC or Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC;
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (e) Pass the MCA oral examination.

### **5.3 Certification for Chief Mate, less than 3000 GT, Near-Coastal Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/2**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Hold a valid OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC;
- (b) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness Certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (c) Hold a NAEST Certificate at Management level;
- (d) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;

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<sup>11</sup> Holders of a Master less than 500 GT, near-coastal trading area, regulation II/3 Certificate of Competency are eligible to apply for this Certificate. They must first complete additional academic units required to meet the standard for an OOW unlimited, regulation II/1 standard.



- (e) Pass the MCA oral examination.

The Oral examination will be conducted from the perspective of a Chief Mate on a less than 3,000 GT near-coastal vessel.

## **6. Near-Coastal Area, Ships Less Than 500 GT**

### **6.1 Certification for Officer of the Watch (OOW) less than 500 GT, Near-Coastal Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/3**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Be at least 18 years of age;
- (b) Have (since the age of 16) completed 36 months' seagoing service in the deck department. This may be reduced to 12 months if following an approved training course<sup>12</sup>;
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a Signals certificate issued within the last 3 years;
- (e) Have successfully completed an approved education and training programme meeting the standards of competency specified in section A-II/3 of the STCW Code and passed the following MCA OOW Safety examinations at an approved MCA exam centre in the following subjects:
  - General Ship Knowledge;
  - Chart-work and Coastal Navigation;
  - Meteorology;
- (f) Hold an ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (g) Pass the MCA oral examination.

Officers or ratings from other categories must provide evidence of work on deck in the form of an approved Training Record Book for the stated period of seagoing service, including bridge watchkeeping duties of 6 months.

**The MCA OOW Safety examinations and MCA oral examination must be passed within 3 years prior to the date of the issue of your CoC.**

### **6.2 Certification for Master less than 500 GT, Near-Coastal Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/3**

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Be at least 20 years old;
- (b) Hold a valid OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC or OOW less than 500 GT, near-coastal trading area, II/3, CoC;
- (c) Have completed 12 months' watchkeeping service as OOW regulation II/3 or II/1;
- (d) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (f) Pass the MCA oral examination.

## **7. Certification for Master, Hovercraft, less than 500 GT, Near-Coastal Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/3**

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<sup>12</sup> The sea time may be reduced to 12 months if you have followed an MCA UK Cadetship course given by an MCA approved training provider and complete the relevant academic studies.





To obtain a Master II/3, hovercraft less than 500 GT on near-coastal voyages CoC you must refer to **Annex D**.

## **8. Near-Coastal Specified Trading Area, Ships less than 3,000 GT**

8.1 Specified trading areas is an area defined by the local MCA Marine Office.

### **8.2 Certification for Master, less than 3,000 GT, Specified Trading Area, STCW Convention Regulation II/3**

Regulation 63 of the 2022 Regulations provide for the Secretary of State (in this case, the MCA) to approve alternative training arrangements, which are equivalent to the STCW Convention requirements. The MCA can use equivalencies to allow for the issue of Certificates of Competency for vessels over 500 GT but restricted to a specified trading area. This trading area must be a specific route or set of routes within the UK's near-coastal area that the seafarer will need to demonstrate competency through the MCA oral examination<sup>13</sup>. This should be recommended by the local Marine Office to the Seafarer Services Branch who must approve to route prior to the candidate applying for CoC.

To qualify for the issue of this CoC you must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Be at least 20 old;
- (b) Hold a Master less than 500 GT, II/3, CoC;
- (c) Have completed 12 months' watchkeeping service in the specified area as OOW less than 500 GT, near-coastal, II/3;
- (d) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (f) Pass the MCA oral examination.

## **9. Seagoing Service Requirements**

9.1 Before being considered for an MCA oral examination you are required to provide evidence of having completed the full amount of qualifying seagoing service applicable to the CoC you are applying for.

### **9.2 Calculating Seagoing Service**

Seagoing service is defined as time spent onboard a ship, relevant to the issue of the certificate or other qualification being applied for. Seagoing service must be in the deck department and will be reckoned from the date of engagement to the date of discharge.

At least 6 months of the qualifying seagoing service must have been performed within the 5 years immediately preceding the date your application is received by the MCA.

A month is defined as a calendar month or 30 days if made up of periods of less than one month.

### **9.3 Requirements for Seagoing Service:**

Seagoing service may be performed on vessels of any flag.

Seagoing service must be performed on merchant ships of at least 24 metres in load line length or not less than 80 GT proceeding to sea. Proceeding to sea means beyond the

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<sup>13</sup> For the MCA's published Oral Examination Syllabi, please refer to the following page and navigate to the section titled 'Oral Exam Syllabuses': [www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-seafarer-careers-training-provision-and-information](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-seafarer-careers-training-provision-and-information).



categorised waters around the coast of the UK or beyond the harbour limits for waters outside the UK.

If you are applying for either a Chief Mate or Master CoC you will need to provide proof of watchkeeping service. "Watchkeeping service" is defined as time spent as the duty officer in full charge of a navigational watch for no less than 4 out of every 24 hours while the vessel is engaged on a voyage.

If you are applying for an unlimited area Chief Mate or Master CoC, you must have a minimum of 6 months' seagoing service in a watchkeeping capacity, either on vessels of more than 500 GT or on voyages outside the UK near-coastal area or harbour limits for waters outside the UK.

For Certificates of Competency requiring at least 12 months seagoing service, the MCA may allow one or a combination of the following alternatives for a maximum of 2 months for each CoC specified below:

- For any Certificates of Competency, no more than 2 months' service spent standing-by a new vessel during the final stages of construction, in dry dock, or undergoing repairs can be counted.
- For UK Cadetships first Certificates of Competency, no more than 2 months for training in a full mission bridge simulator will be credited towards the seagoing service requirements of STCW regulations II/1 and section A-II/1 of the Code. Please refer to the conditions set out in **Annex F**. This time cannot be used in lieu of the 6 months' seagoing service engaged in the bridge watchkeeping duties requirement outlined in section 3.2 of this Notice.
- For unlimited Certificates of Competency, up to 1 months' time on vessels operating in categorised C and D waters that are 24 metres or over, or 80 GT or over. Please refer to the conditions set out in **Annex F**.

#### 9.4 Required Documentary Evidence

You will be required to submit documentary evidence of seagoing service for each CoC you apply for. Proof of seagoing service must be documented by either Merchant Navy discharge book entries or certificates of discharge. Entries must be supported by testimonials from the Master. Examples of seagoing testimonials can be found in **Annex E**. The testimonials must cover your conduct and ability and include details of seagoing and watchkeeping service as applicable.

- 9.5 If you are applying for an OOW II/1 CoC you are required to produce a statement from the Master under whom you served, stating that you have performed bridge watchkeeping duties under the supervision of the Master or a qualified officer for a period of not less than 6 months. These duties may include keeping a lookout on the bridge or acting as helmsman.
- 9.6 If you are a trainee deck officer, before being eligible for a reduction from 36 months' to 12 months' seagoing service, you must produce evidence that an MCA approved UK Cadetship or another MCA-approved cadet programme has been followed, and that all service onboard ship was performed in a satisfactory manner. You must complete an MCA Training Record Book (TRB) and obtain a letter from your college confirming the programme you are following.
- 9.7 If you have obtained seagoing service on specialised ships, yachts, tugs, Royal Navy vessels or within categorised waters, you should refer to **Annex F**.

#### 10. Ancillary and Safety Course Certification



- 10.1 The ancillary and safety courses that are required for the issue of each CoC are contained in the table below. On successful completion of the relevant course you will be issued with an STCW Certificate of Proficiency (CoP).
- 10.2 The ancillary technical courses form part of the education and training specified in sections; A-II/1, A-II/2 or A-II/3 of the STCW Code. The safety courses form part of mandatory training for; emergency, occupational safety, security, medical care and survival functions specified in chapter A-VI of the STCW Code.
- 10.3 You must successfully complete **all** the required ancillary technical and safety training applicable to your CoC.

Ancillary/Safety Course Certificate	II/1	II/2	II/3	STCW Code Reference	Updating required
Personal Survival Techniques <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-V1/1-1	●
Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-VI/1-2	●
Elementary First Aid <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-V1/1-3	
Personal Safety and Social Responsibility <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-V1/1-4	
Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats <sup>b</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-V1/2*	●
Advanced Fire Fighting <sup>b</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-VI/3	●
Medical First Aid <sup>b</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-V1/4-1	
Medical Care <sup>b</sup>		Yes		A-VI/4-2	See 10.8
NAEST (Operational) <sup>c</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	A-II/1	
NAEST (Management) <sup>c</sup>		Yes		A-II/2	
Efficient Deck Hand (EDH) <sup>c</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	
HELM (Operational) <sup>c</sup>	Yes		Yes	N/A	
HELM (Management) <sup>c</sup>		Yes		N/A	
GMDSS (GOC) <sup>d</sup>	Yes	Yes		A-IV/2	
GMDSS (ROC) <sup>d</sup>			Yes	A-IV/2	

- You will be required to provide documentary evidence of either completing the training course or updating your training within the preceding 5 years for all CoC applications. To satisfy Port State Control requirements you will need to hold evidence onboard your vessel of completing or updating your training within the last 5 years. For further information relating to STCW course certificates, including their validity, please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1).<sup>14</sup>

For the issue of a Certificate of Competency:

<sup>14</sup> Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions).



- a** – The MCA will accept certificates issued under the authority of any International Maritime Organization (IMO) 'White List' country.
- b** – The MCA will accept certificates issued under the authority of any EU Member State, as well as by any country noted in MIN 643.<sup>15</sup>
- c** – Certificates must be MCA-approved.
- d** – The MCA will accept certificates issued under the authority of any EU Member State and those listed on the approved list available from our website: go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “GMDSS”.

#### 10.4 Human Element and Leadership and Management (HELM)

HELM forms part of the education and training requirements to obtain a UK CoC. HELM aims to provide you with the leadership and managerial skills required by the STCW Code.

If you are following an MCA approved UK Cadetship leading to the issue of an Officer of the Watch CoC you will cover the operational requirements as part of your course and you will not need to submit a course completion certificate. If you are following an MCA-approved 'overseas collaborative' programme (one plus one scheme) you should consult with the UK parent college as separate agreements will be made by each college with the MCA. All standalone HELM Operational Courses must be approved in accordance with MSN 1865 (Amendment 1) **Annex F**.<sup>16</sup>

HELM Management is a standalone course. You must submit a course completion certificate regardless of the education and training route you have followed. All HELM Management Courses must be approved in accordance with MSN 1865 (Amendment 1) **Annex F**.

The following Royal Navy training meets the requirements of HELM (O & M) STCW training and further training will not be required:

- HELM (O) – Royal Navy Navigational Watch Keeping Officers (NWKC), Petty Officers and Ratings who hold First Line Management 'Leadership and Management' (L&M). Royal Navy ratings that have completed 'Royal Navy Senior Ratings' Command Course;
- HELM (M) – Royal Navy CQ1 and CQ2 who hold level 4 L&M (Royal Navy issued).

Evidence of undertaking the courses should be submitted with your application.

#### 10.5 Navigation Aids and Equipment Simulator Training (NAEST)

NAEST forms part of the education and training required to obtain a UK CoC. It will give you the fundamental knowledge and skills required to maintain a safe navigational watch, use electronic navigational aids to determine vessel position and use the equipment for safety of navigation in anti-collision modes. All NAEST Courses must be approved in accordance with MSN 1865 (Amendment 1) **Annex F**.<sup>17</sup>

**NAEST Operational:** Provided you undertook NAEST Operational (formally NARAS Operational) after 1 July 2005, you will have covered the use of Electronic Chart Display

<sup>15</sup> For further details please refer to MIN 643: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/min-643-maritime-and-coastguard-agency-mca-short-course-approval-process-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/min-643-maritime-and-coastguard-agency-mca-short-course-approval-process-guidance).

<sup>16</sup> Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions).

<sup>17</sup> Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions).



Information Systems (ECDIS) required by the STCW Code. If you have not covered the ECDIS requirements, you will need to complete a standalone **MCA-approved** ECDIS course.

**NAEST Management:** If you have not covered the ECDIS requirements, you will need to complete a standalone **MCA-approved** ECDIS course as pre-requisite, before undertaking the NAEST Management course.

Details of MCA-approved EDCIS courses are available from our website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “MCA ATP”.

## 10.6 Efficient Deck Hand (EDH)

EDH forms part of the education and training required to obtain a UK CoC. The EDH course provides an understanding of safe working practices with regard to seamanship, cargo work, anchor procedures, pilot ladders and means of access, shipboard organisation and associated topics. Further information about the course requirements can be found in MSN 1862 (Amendment 1).<sup>18</sup> All EDH Courses must be approved in accordance with MSN 1865 (Amendment 1) **Annex F**.<sup>19</sup>

## 10.7 The Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

Any person operating any radio equipment must be appropriately qualified. The GMDSS course forms part of the education and training required to obtain a UK CoC. To obtain a UK CoC you must hold a valid GMDSS certificate issued by the UK or an administration recognised by the MCA. The certificate must have an STCW endorsement. For further information about the GMDSS including recognised administrations, please refer to MSN 1864 (Amendment 1) or search our website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for “GMDSS”.<sup>20</sup>

## 10.8 Medical Care

The person designated to take charge of medical care and medicines onboard of UK registered vessels must hold an MCA approved or recognised Proficiency in Medical Care (MC) (STCW A-VI/4 paragraph 4-6) certificate (regulation 29(2) of the 2022 Regulations), or an MCA approved Updated Proficiency in Medical Care certificate, issued within the preceding 5 years (regulation 43(6) of the 2022 Regulations). Details are given in MGN 482 (M), or any subsequent amendment.<sup>21</sup>

It is strongly recommended that any Officers working on non-UK registered vessels check the medical care requirements with the Administration, prior to undertaking a role onboard the vessel.

## 10.9 Further Information

Further information about Personal Survival Techniques, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting, Elementary First Aid, Personal Safety and Social Responsibility, Proficiency in

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<sup>18</sup> Please refer to MSN 1862 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1862-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-deck-ratings](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1862-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-deck-ratings).

<sup>19</sup> Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions).

<sup>20</sup> Please refer to MSN 1864 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1864-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-radio-operators](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1864-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-radio-operators).

<sup>21</sup> MGN 482: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mgn-482-m-amendment-1-maritime-labour-convention-2006-medical-care>.



Survival Craft and Rescue Boats, Advanced Fire Fighting, Medical First, Aid Medical Care and other required shipboard courses can be found in MSN 1865 (Amendment 1).<sup>22</sup>

## 11. Approved Education and Training Schemes

11.1 Education and training programmes leading to the issue of Certificates of Competency must be approved by the MCA. The MCA will ensure that each programme meets the STCW regulatory requirements. The MCA will monitor and audit all training providers (including nautical colleges) that offer training and education leading to the issue of an STCW CoC. Details of the approval process are contained in **Annexes G to K**.

11.2 To ensure learning outcomes can be successfully delivered, the MCA requires a classroom attendance rate of at least 80%. Shipping companies and nautical colleges may set a higher rate of attendance.

### 11.3 Honours Degree/Foundation Degree/Scottish Professional Diploma

The Honours Degree (HD)/ Foundation Degree (FD)/ Scottish Professional Diploma (SPD) are routes into the Merchant Navy for officer cadets. The MCA will approve nautical colleges that run these schemes to ensure STCW regulatory requirements for training and competency are met. The HD/FD/SPD consists of alternating periods of seagoing service and college-based work, which encompass the requirements for a CoC.

If you undertake a HD/FD/SPD, you must achieve an overall examination pass average of 50% or more, with a minimum of 65% in 'Navigation' and a minimum of 60% in 'Stability and Operations', to be eligible for the issue of a CoC.

If you do not obtain an examination pass average of 50%, you must retake the exams where 50% was not achieved. You will qualify for exemptions for each subject in which you achieved a 50% pass. If you do not pass or complete the HD/FD/SPD you will not be eligible for any exemptions.

If you complete an MCA-approved HD/FD/SPD programme and meet the minimum pass rates set for assessment you will have demonstrated that you have met the standard required for the underpinning knowledge for an operational level CoC. Therefore, you may be exempt from the requirement to complete the MCA Safety examinations at operational level (OOW).<sup>23</sup> Candidates commencing their HD/FD/SPD programme on or after 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 must complete the MCA Chief Mate's Safety examinations for Navigation and Stability & Structure.

All candidates for a Chief Mate unlimited, STCW Convention regulation II/2, CoC will be required to pass the MCA Safety examinations in Navigation and Stability & Structure.

On successful completion of an MCA approved HD/FD/SPD, you will be issued with a course completion letter and certificate providing you with the evidence that you have successfully completed the education and training programme applicable to the STCW Code.

Once you have obtained your qualification, there is no longer a time restriction on the use of your HD/FD/SPD towards obtaining a UK CoC. Provided that you have reached the standard as detailed in this Notice, your approved qualification can be used towards the applicable CoC indefinitely.

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<sup>22</sup> Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions).

<sup>23</sup> You would need to check this with your nautical college prior to enrolling on your course.





The contact details for the nautical colleges offering MCA-approved schemes are available from the MCA website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “nautical colleges”.

#### 11.4 **Higher National Diploma (HND)/Advanced Diploma/ Higher National Certificate (HNC)/Advanced Certificate Route.**<sup>24</sup>

The National Diploma (HND/Advanced Diploma, HNC/Advanced Certificate or equivalent level) route will enable you to gain the necessary education and training required for the issue of a CoC. The MCA will approve and monitor nautical colleges providing this route to ensure that the STCW regulatory requirements for training and competency are met.

On successful completion of an HNC/Advanced Certificate or HND/Advanced Diploma, you will be issued with a course completion letter and certificate providing you with the evidence that you have successfully completed the education and training programme applicable to the STCW Code.

Once you have obtained your qualification, there is no longer a time restriction on the use of your Higher National Certificate (HNC)/Advanced Certificate or Higher National Diploma (HND)/Advanced Diploma towards obtaining a UK CoC. Provided that you have reached the standard as detailed in this Notice, your approved qualification can be used towards the applicable CoC indefinitely. The qualifying conditions for your OOW Certificate of Competency must be achieved within the timeframe agreed between the MCA and your MCA approved College (training provider).

**HND/Advanced Diploma/ HNC/Advanced Certificate route:** If you undertake an MCA approved HND/Advanced Diploma or HNC/Advanced Certificate programme of education and training, you will be eligible for a reduction in seagoing service from 36 months to 12 months.

**MCA-approved overseas collaborative programme:** If you are following an MCA-approved overseas “one plus one” route overseen by a UK College you will be required to complete all the elements of the HND/Advanced Diploma/ HNC/Advanced Certificate programme and should refer to your college letter for details of your seagoing service requirements.

**Experienced seafarer route:** If you are not on an MCA approved UK Cadetship training course or an MCA approved overseas collaborative programme you will need to be examined in the competencies required by the STCW Code and complete 36 months’ seagoing service. These competencies are assessed by completing a number of HNC/Advanced Certificate/ HND/Advanced Diploma units, the MCA Safety examinations and the appropriate oral examination. If you are not enrolled on an MCA approved UK Cadetship and have been working as a General Purpose (GP) rating you must demonstrate 48 months’ seagoing service.

The contact details for the nautical colleges offering HND/Advanced Diploma/ HNC/Advanced Certificate approved schemes are available from the MCA website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “nautical colleges”.

#### 11.5 **Near Coastal Under 500 GT Diploma (or equivalent)**

This Diploma (or equivalent level) route will enable you to gain the necessary education and training required for the issue of a near-coastal Under 500 GT CoC. The MCA will

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<sup>24</sup> From the 31st December 2021 the HND and HNC qualifications were renamed to Advanced Diploma and Advanced Certificate.



approve and monitor nautical colleges providing this route to ensure that the regulatory requirements for training and competency are met.

## 12. Medical Fitness and Eyesight Standards

- 12.1 For any CoC, you must meet the medical fitness and eyesight standards as required by the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Medical Certification) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 2010/737).<sup>25</sup> Details on the application of those regulations are found in MSN 1886, or any subsequent amendment.<sup>26</sup>
- 12.2 The seafarer medical examination includes a sight test for both colour vision and visual acuity. Failure to meet the statutory requirements will mean that an unrestricted medical certificate cannot be issued. **If you are considering a seagoing career it is strongly advised that you undergo a medical and sight test, which includes testing of both colour and visual acuity, before you start the training.** You can arrange a separate sight test with a local optometrist by taking along an Application for Seafarer Vision Test Form (MSF 4100). The form can be obtained by contacting an MCA Marine Office or the MCA Seafarer Medical Team: [medical@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:medical@mcga.gov.uk).
- 12.3 For any CoC you must produce one of the following as a valid medical fitness certificate:
- (a) The UK medical fitness certificate, currently known as an ENG 1, issued by a MCA-approved medical practitioner; **or**
  - (b) A certificate issued by the administration of any country whose medical fitness certificate is recognised as equivalent to the UK ENG 1.

Updated lists are available from the MCA website.

- 12.4 The medical fitness certificate must specify the date of examination, the period of validity and any restriction applied.

## 13. Conversions to OOW unlimited, STCW Convention Regulation II/1, Certificate of Competency

### 13.1 Class 1 Fishing Certificate of Competency

If you hold a UK-issued Class 1 (Fishing Vessel) CoC, you must meet the following requirements to obtain an OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC:

- (a) Have completed 6 months' seagoing sea service in merchant or fishing vessels of at least 80 GT or 24 m load line length;
- (b) Pass MCA OOW Safety examinations in Stability and Operations **or** complete HNC/Advanced Certificate/ HND/Advanced Diploma units for cargo work and ship stability;
- (c) Hold the applicable (II/1) ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent.

### 13.2 Holders of a Class 2 UK Fishing Certificate of Competency

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<sup>25</sup> These Regulations are amended by the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Medical Certification) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 2018/242). Further details on the required Medical Fitness Standards and Certification are available from: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) and search "Maritime Labour Convention".

<sup>26</sup> Details of MCA Approved Medical Certificates are available from: [www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates](http://www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates).



If you hold a UK Class 2 (Fishing Vessel) CoC you must meet the following requirements to obtain an OOW unlimited, II/1, (STCW), CoC:

- (a) Have completed 6 months' seagoing sea service within the last 5 years of which 3 months' service must be in merchant vessels of at least 80 GT or 24 m load line length;
- (b) Pass MCA OOW Safety examinations at an exam centre approved by the MCA in the following subjects:
  - Navigation;
  - Stability and operations;
- (c) Hold the applicable (II/1) ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a certificate evidencing successful completion of "Underpinning Knowledge for OOW, certification" (HNC/Advanced Certificate) listed in section 11.4;
- (e) Hold a Signals certificate issued within the last 3 years;
- (f) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (g) Pass the MCA oral examination.

If you hold Electronic Navigation Systems (ENS) and Navigational Command and Control (NCC) certificates, you will not be required to obtain an NAEST Operational certificate. Holders of ENS and NCC, who do not hold a NAEST certificate, must complete an MCA-approved ECDIS course.

If you hold an Irish Deck Class 1 or Class 2 Fishing CoC you will be eligible to apply for the UK Fishing Class 1 certificate, provided that you meet the relevant requirements to obtain a UK Class 1 Fishing CoC.

### 13.3 Holders of a Deck OOW, Yacht less than 3000 GT, II/1, Certificate of Competency

If you hold an OOW (yacht less than 3000 GT), II/ 1 CoC you must meet the following requirements to obtain an OOW unlimited, II/1 CoC:

- (a) Complete 36\* months in yachts of more than 24m in load line length or at least 80 GT, with evidence of at least 6 months involved in bridge watchkeeping;
- (b) Hold a certificate evidencing successful completion of "Underpinning Knowledge for OOW, certification" (HNC/Advanced Certificate) listed in section 11.4;
- (c) Hold the applicable ancillary safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (d) Hold a Signals certificate issued within the last 3 years;
- (e) Pass MCA OOW Safety examinations at an MCA approved exam centre in the following subjects:
  - Navigation;
  - Stability and operations;
- (f) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (g) Pass the MCA oral examination).

\*Please refer to **Annex F** for how to count your yacht sea service.

## 14. Conversions from non-UK Certificates of Competency

If you hold a CoC issued by a foreign administration you may be eligible to enter the UK education and training system for certification. The non-UK CoC must be valid (in-date) at the time of the issue of your Notice of Eligibility and UK CoC.



The general requirements are detailed below. If you hold a CoC from a country who we do not issue a Flag State Endorsement (FSE)/Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CEC) against, you must contact the MCA at [exams@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:exams@mcga.gov.uk) prior to starting your studies. For a list of FSE/CEC accepted countries please go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search "FSE/CEC".

If you hold a CoC from a FSE/CEC accepted country, once you have been issued with a Notice of Eligibility you will need to complete:

**For a UK Chief Mate or Master UK-CoC you must:**

- Successfully complete an approved education and training programme meeting the standards of competency specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code, as listed in section 11. This will be the HND/Advanced Diploma (or equivalent) standard;
- Pass the MCA Chief Mate/Masters safety examinations at an exam centre approved by the MCA in the following subjects:
  - Navigation;
  - Stability and Structure;
- Hold the applicable ancillary and technical training listed on your NOE;
- Pass the applicable MCA oral examination.

**14.1 UK Chief Mate Unlimited, STCW Convention Regulation II/2, Certificate of Competency**

To qualify for the issue of UK Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC you must already hold a valid OOW unlimited, II/1, CoC issued under the authority of an administration included in the IMO list of STCW parties (the "White List") and meet the full requirements for Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC listed in paragraph 3.3.

**14.2 UK Master Unlimited, STCW Convention Regulation II/2, Certificate of Competency**

To qualify for the issue of a UK Master unlimited, II/2, CoC, you must already hold a valid Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, or Master unlimited, II/2, CoC issued under the authority of an Administration included in the IMO list of STCW parties (the "White List") and meet the full requirements for Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, and Master unlimited, II/2, as listed in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4. Please note you will only need to pass the MCA oral examination.

**15. Royal Navy Conversions**

15.1 There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Royal Navy and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). The MOU details the requirements for Royal Navy Commanding, Executive and Watchkeeping Officers to be issued with an STCW CoC.

15.2 For further information please contact the MCA: [exams@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:exams@mcga.gov.uk).

**16. Application Procedure**

16.1 The application form, MSF 4274, details the procedure and fee to obtain a CoC. You must complete this and submit it to the MCA with the relevant fee and documents listed on the form.



16.2 The application form can be found on our website, go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “MSF 4274”.<sup>27</sup>

16.3 If you are required to pass an MCA oral examination and you meet the requirements specified on the application form, you will be issued with a Notice of Eligibility (NOE).

## 17. Notice of Eligibility (NOE)

17.1 You will be issued with an NOE once you have met the requirements specified below. The NOE will allow you to book an MCA oral exam.

17.2 At least 6 months of the qualifying seagoing service must have been performed within the 5 years immediately preceding the issue of your NOE.

17.3 Prior to the issue of your NOE you must submit:

- The appropriate fee for the CoC you are applying for;
- An ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent<sup>28</sup>;
- Passport (attested copy);
- The required photos for your CoC (see application form);
- Proof of the required seagoing service applicable to the CoC you are applying for.

17.4 For the OOW II/1 and II/3 CoC you must also submit:

- STCW Basic safety training:
  - Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-1);
  - Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-2);
  - Elementary First Aid (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-3);
  - Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-4);
- Completed Training Record Book (if following an MCA approved cadet route);
- A letter from the college confirming your attendance on the programme.

17.5 **An NOE provides you with the offer of an MCA oral examination and is valid for period of 5 years from the date of issue.** The date of issue will be put on your NOE. After this period has elapsed you will need to make a new application, with the supporting documentation and the appropriate fee, to the MCA so that your current competency can be assessed to ensure you meet the required standards.<sup>29</sup>

## 18. MCA Oral Examination

18.1 If you are undertaking an MCA approved UK Cadetship OOW education and training programme that allows a reduction in seagoing service, prior to the exam you must be able to provide your MCA Training Record Book to the MCA on request.

18.2 You must take your current passport (with visa if applicable) to the oral examination as a means of identification.

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<sup>27</sup> MSF 4274, [www.gov.uk/government/publications/certificate-of-competency-deck-msf-4274](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/certificate-of-competency-deck-msf-4274).

<sup>28</sup> To go to sea you must have obtained a valid medical fitness certificate. Whilst this may have expired when you apply for your NOE, it must be valid at the time when we issue your Certificate of Competency.

<sup>29</sup> If you do not pass your oral examination within this timescale, your application will be rejected and the appropriate fee will be taken.



- 18.3 It is recommended that you complete all of the education and training before attempting the oral examination, as this will provide you with the knowledge on which the examination is based.
- 18.4 The MCA examiner will record the result of your oral examination on your NOE.
- 18.5 **Your oral examination pass is valid for a period of 3 years.** This must be in date at the time of the issue of your CoC. The NOE must be returned to the MCA with any outstanding documentary evidence.
- 18.6 If you fail your oral examination you will need to apply to the MCA for another NOE and pay an additional fee for a re-sit oral examination. Details of how to do this can be found on the NOE.
- 18.7 If a candidate fails an oral examination, re-sits may be taken at the following intervals:
- **Second attempt** – at least two weeks after the initial examination
  - **Third attempt** – at least two weeks after the second attempt
  - **Subsequent attempts** – at least three months after the previous attempt
- 18.8 Time periods between examinations can be reduced at the discretion of the MCA examiner. Where a candidate exhibits a lack of basic competency across the syllabus or makes fundamental errors in areas of safety, the examiner may impose a seagoing service penalty which the candidate must complete before re-sitting the examination.<sup>30</sup>

## 19. The Issue of your Certificate of Competency

- 19.1 At least 6 months of the qualifying seagoing service must have been performed within the 5 years immediately preceding the issue of your CoC. A CoC will not be issued until the MCA has received all the documentary evidence confirming you have met the required standard.
- 19.2 The appropriate CoC will be issued and is valid for a period of 5 years from the date that the qualifying conditions were met. Your ENG1 seafarer medical (or accepted equivalent) must be valid at the time when we issue your CoC. Any outstanding fees must be received by the MCA before an NOE or CoC will be issued.
- 19.3 Your GMDSS certificate should be submitted with your NOE pass so that the STCW endorsement expiry date can be synchronised with your CoC.
- 19.4 **You must check you meet the current regulatory requirements when you make an initial application AND at the time you submit your NOE pass for the issue of your CoC.**
- 19.5 Further information and guidance is available from our website go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “Deck CoC”.

## 20. Fraudulent Certificates and Seagoing Service

- 20.1 The MCA checks that all of the information you submit in support of your application is accurate and true. We can:
- Verify Certificates of Competency and Watchkeeping certificates issued by foreign administrations;

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<sup>30</sup> Further information about the NOE and oral examination syllabus can be found via the following link: [www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-seafarer-careers-training-provision-and-information](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-seafarer-careers-training-provision-and-information).





- Check and verify ancillary and safety course certificates;
- Verify sea service testimonials and discharge book entries;
- Where required, request original course completion, ancillary and safety certificates.

20.2 If you submit fraudulent seagoing service records or certificates we will not allow you to proceed with your application. We may also refer your application to the MCA Enforcement Branch who may decide to proceed against you in court. We reserve the right not to let you apply again until after a period specified by the MCA's Chief Examiner.

20.3 The UK holds a record of all Certificates of Competency issued. The authenticity of a CoC can be verified on request. For more information please email the MCA by email: [exams@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:exams@mcga.gov.uk).

## More Information

Seafarer Services  
Maritime and Coastguard Agency  
Bay 2/11  
Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton  
SO15 1EG

Tel: +44 (0) 203 8172200

e-mail: [deck@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:deck@mcga.gov.uk)

Website Address: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency)

General Enquiries: [info@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:info@mcga.gov.uk)

Published: December 2022

Please note that all addresses and telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing



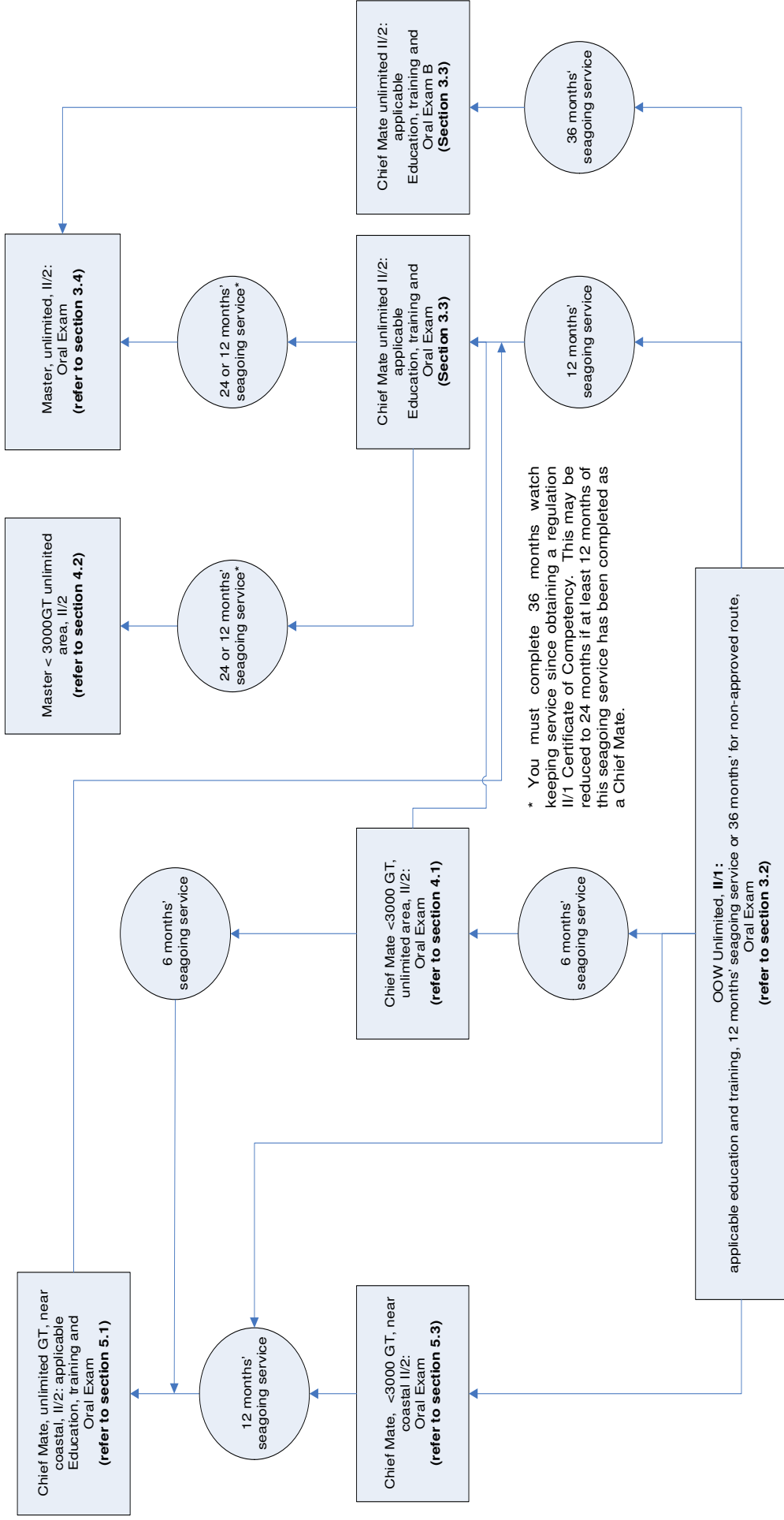
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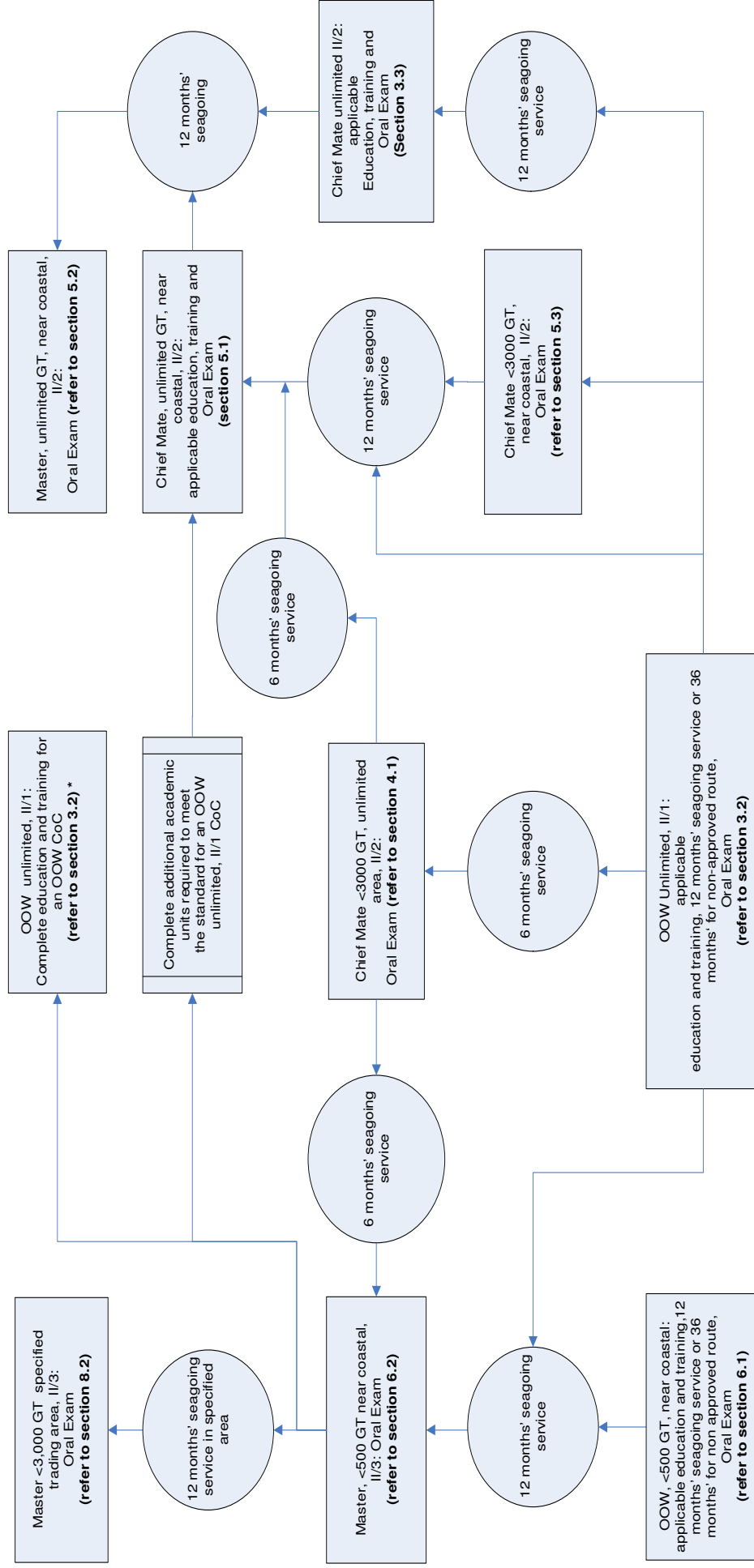
# Annex A

**Summary: Deck Certificate of Competency (CoC) structure to Master unlimited.** This flowchart is to summarise the routes to obtain an unlimited area CoC. To be issued with a CoC you must meet the full requirements listed in the applicable section of this MSN.



# Annex B

**Summary Deck certificate structure to Master near coastal.** This flowchart is to summarise the routes to obtain near coastal endorsements. To be issued with a Competency of Competency (CoC) you must meet the full requirements listed in the applicable section of this MSN.



**Holders of a UK Chief Mate unlimited, II/2 Certificate of Competency where the qualifying conditions were met prior to the 1st January 1980, upgrading to a Master unlimited, II/2, Certificate of Competency,**

In addition to the requirements listed in section 3.4, you must provide documentary evidence of the following:

- (a) A testimonial from an MCA-approved college confirming successful completion of the following MCA approved HND/Advanced Diploma units (or equivalent):
- Management of Bridge Operations;
  - Shipmaster's Business;
  - Shipboard Management;
  - Marine Engineering Systems;
- (b) Passing the following MCA Chief Mate Safety examinations:
- Navigation;
  - Stability & Structure;
- (c) Successful completion of MCA-approved:
- Navigation Control Course (NCC); **or**
  - Navigation, Radar and ARPA Simulator Training (NARAS) Management Level; **or**
  - Navigational Aids and Equipment Simulator Training, Management Level.

If you hold a NCC or NARAS issued before 01 January 2005 you will need to complete an MCA-approved or accepted ECDIS course or undertake the NAEST Management course prior to obtaining a Certificate of Competency (CoC). Details of MCA-approved EDCIS courses are available from our website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search "MCA ATP" or "MCA Approved Training Providers".<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Details of MCA-approved EDCIS courses are available from our website: [www.gov.uk/guidance/mca-approved-training-providers-atp](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/mca-approved-training-providers-atp).



## Hovercraft Certificate of Competency

Holders of appropriate UK qualifications may apply to obtain a hovercraft Certificate of Competency (CoC) for the capacity of Master with the following limitation:

“Hovercraft less than 500 GT on near-coastal voyages only”<sup>32</sup>

The MCA has considered the following factors when prescribing the requirements for this CoC:

- The knowledge required for the safe operation of these vessels being equivalent to STCW regulation II/3 (area of operation and size); and
- The requirements of the Merchant Shipping (High Speed Craft) Regulations 2004.

**If you hold an OOW unlimited, II/1 Certificate of Competency you must meet the following requirements:**

- (a) Hold a valid High Speed Craft (HSC) hovercraft type-rating certificate;
- (b) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (c) Pass the MCA oral examination.

**If you hold an MCA-accepted UK qualification as Master of hovercraft you must meet the following requirements:**

- (a) Hold a valid High Speed Craft (HSC) hovercraft type-rating certificate;
- (b) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (c) Hold a valid GMDSS ROC;
- (d) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (e) Pass the MCA oral examination.

**If you hold a Royal Navy Navigation Watch Certificate (STCW Convention regulation II/1) or a Command Qualification 1 (STCW Convention regulation II/1) you must meet the following requirements:**

- (a) Hold a valid High Speed Craft (HSC) hovercraft type-rating certificate;
- (b) Hold the applicable ancillary and safety course certificates listed in section 10;
- (c) Hold a valid GMDSS ROC;
- (d) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (e) Pass the MCA oral examination.

**If you hold a Chief Mate (II/2 and II/3) or Master (II/2 and II/3) Certificate of Competency you may upgrade without examination, subject to meeting the following requirements:**

- (a) Hold a UK qualification as Master of hovercraft or valid HSC hovercraft type-rating certificate;
- (b) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent.

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<sup>32</sup> If you intended to use a UK Hovercraft Certificate of Competency to operate outside of UK Near-Coastal waters you must check with the relevant Maritime Administration that this certificate can be used and will be accepted in their Waters before operating.





## Deck Cadet and Rating Seagoing Service Testimonial for Maritime and Coastguard Agency

### Company Address/Contact Details

Company Name:		
Address:		
Contact Details:	Tel:	
	E-mail:	

### This is to certify that:

Full name of Trainee/Rating:	
Date of Birth:	
Discharge Book Number:	

### has served on:

Name of Vessel:		IMO Number:	
Type of Vessel:		Gross Tonnage:	
<b>Date of Joining:</b>		<b>Date of Discharge:</b>	

### Please record, below, the actual watchkeeping time undertaken on this voyage.

During this period the above-named trainee/ rating accrued the following bridge watchkeeping duty (under the supervision of a certificated navigation officer) for not less than 4 hours out of every 24 hours while the vessel was engaged on seagoing voyages:

\_\_\_\_\_ Days

In addition the above-named trainee/rating:

- Regularly carried out other duties in connection with the routine and maintenance of the ship\*
- Was granted no leave of absence\*
- Was granted leave of absence as follows:

.....

\*Delete as appropriate



**This section must be completed.**

My report on the service of the above-named trainee/rating, during the period stated, is as follows:

Conduct	
Ability	
General comments	

<b>Type of Tanker:</b>	
During this period the ship carried the following types of cargo(es) (the different types and grades of oil, gas and chemicals should be specified):	
I confirm the above-named trainee/rating has gained experience in carrying out regular cargo handling duties during the period stated:	

**PART 4 – OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT**

<b>Name of Master:</b>	
<b>Certificate Details:</b>	
<b>Number</b>	
<b>Issuing Administration:</b>	
<b>Signature of Master**:</b>	
<b>Email Address:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Ship's/Company stamp:</b>	<b>** In exceptional circumstances this testimonial may be signed by a responsible official of the Company.</b>



## Deck Officer Seagoing Service Testimonial for Maritime and Coastguard Agency

### Company Address/Contact Details

Company Name:		
Address:		
Contact Details:	Tel:	
	E-mail:	

<b>This is to certify that:</b>	
Full name of Officer:	
Date of Birth:	
Discharge Book Number:	

#### has served on:

Name of Vessel:		IMO Number:	
Type of Vessel:		Gross Tonnage:	
<b>Date of Joining:</b>		<b>Date of Discharge:</b>	

#### Please record, below, the actual watchkeeping time undertaken on this voyage.

During this period the above-named officer accrued the following bridge watchkeeping duty (under the supervision of a certificated navigation officer) for not less than 4 hours out of every 24 hours while the vessel was engaged on seagoing voyages:

\_\_\_\_\_ days

In addition the above-named officer:

- a) Was granted no leave of absence\*
- b) Was granted leave of absence as follows:

.....

\*Delete as appropriate



**This section must be completed.**

My report on the service of the above-named officer, during the period stated, is as follows:

Conduct	
Ability	
General comments	

<b>Type of Tanker:</b>	
During this period the ship carried the following types of cargo(es) (the different types and grades of oil, gas and chemicals should be specified):	
I confirm the above-named officer has gained experience in carrying out regular cargo handling duties during the period stated:	

**PART 4 – OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT**

<b>Name of Master:</b>	
<b>Certificate Details:</b>	
<b>Number</b>	
<b>Issuing Administration:</b>	
<b>Signature of Master**:</b>	
<b>Email Address:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Ship's/Company stamp:</b>	<b>** In exceptional circumstances this testimonial may be signed by a responsible official of the Company.</b>



## Seagoing Service on Specialised Ships

Service in the specialised ships listed in the table below will be counted towards the qualifying seagoing service required for a Certificate of Competency (CoC) subject to the conditions stated in section 9.

Type of vessel – Must be at least 24m in load line length or more than 80 GT	Applicable rate	Conditions
FPSOs, FSUs, moored Construction and Support vessels, and MOUs on station in DP mode or anchored. Semi submersibles	0.5	Service can be counted up to a maximum of 50% towards the total required seagoing service.  This cannot be used if you are a cadet or trainee following an MCA approved Cadetship programme <b>unless your company has an agreement with the MCA</b> . If your company has an agreement with the MCA, then you must submit a company letter detailing your company's agreement.
Jack ups with propulsion device	1.0	Deck Cadets on MCA approved cadetship OOW programmes must complete at least 3 months on any other vessel that qualifies under section 9 of this Notice.
		Officers applying for higher level Certificates of Competency working on these vessels must complete at least 25% more than the seagoing service required.
Cable ships, mobile drilling ships, self-propelled MOUs, jack-ups, dredgers, semi-submersibles on passage.  Salvage vessels, navaid tenders, cruising pilot vessels, custom launches and other specialised craft.	1.0	Service will be counted as full provided that two thirds of the time onboard is spent at sea.  Other cases will be treated on a pro-rata basis.  In all cases sea service and the operational patterns and work arrangements of the vessels must be properly documented to support an application.

MOU - Mobile Offshore Unit  
 FPSO - Floating Production Storage Off-take  
 FSU - Floating Storage Units  
 DP - Dynamically Positioned

If you have other types or combinations of seagoing service not included in the table above, details of service together with documentary evidence should be submitted for consideration to the MCA's Chief Examiner.



## **Seagoing Service on Yachts**

Seagoing service on yachts of 24m or more in load line length or 80 GT or more will be counted in full towards the issue of an unlimited regulation II/1 or II/2 CoC using the seagoing service definitions and calculations in section 9 of this Notice.

Seagoing service on yachts will be counted as a combination of actual seagoing service, standby service and yard service where:

- Standby service does not exceed the number of days performed on the previous voyage and in no case exceeds a maximum of 14 days in each period. **Therefore, under no circumstances can you count standby service which exceeds actual sea service.**
- Yard service does not exceed a maximum total of 90 days for OOW and 30 days for Chief Mate or Master.

If you have an OOW unlimited, II/1, or a Chief Mate unlimited, II/2, CoC and are serving on yachts, in order to qualify for a higher CoC you must meet the seagoing service requirements in section 3.3 (for OOW to Chief Mate) or 3.4 (for Chief Mate to Master) and this must include:

- At least 6 months **of the required seagoing service** on yachts of 500 GT or more operating beyond UK categorised water waters or if outside of the UK, beyond the harbour limits; **OR**
- At least 6 months **of the required seagoing service** on vessels of at least 24 metres in load line length, made up of voyages of more than 300 nautical miles.

Yacht service must be submitted on yacht service testimonials and include a breakdown of actual, stand-by-service and yard time. For definitions of yacht service and yacht seagoing service testimonials please refer to MSN 1858 (Amendment 1).<sup>33</sup>

## **Seagoing Service on Tugs**

For unlimited CoCs: Seagoing service on tugs is counted in full on vessels of 24 metres or over in load line length or 80 GT that proceed to sea (taking into account section 9.3). Due to the nature of operations of tugs, applicants for an unlimited Chief Mate or Masters CoC should request their company to approach the MCA for an agreement prior to undertaking seagoing service towards these certificates. The MCA will need to ensure the seagoing service is appropriate to the CoC being applied for.

For near coastal CoCs: Seagoing service in categorised waters will be counted at a rate of 75% and can account towards a maximum 75% of the total seagoing service required. The remaining 25% must be on vessels of at least 24 metres in load line length or 80 GT or over that proceed to sea.

## **Seagoing Service in Categorised Waters (near coastal routes)**

Seagoing service on vessels operating in categorised waters will be counted towards a CoC to allow trainee officers and deck ratings sailing on such vessels to undertake the education, training and examination required for a CoC. The CoC issued will be limited to service in Category 'D' or 'C' waters (as defined in Merchant Shipping Notice 1837 (M) Amendment 2) as appropriate.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Please see MSN 1858 (Amendment 1): [www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1858-mf-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-deck-officers-on-large-yachts-24m-and-over](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1858-mf-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-deck-officers-on-large-yachts-24m-and-over).

<sup>34</sup> Please refer to MSN 1837 (Amendment 2) for further information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1837-m-amendment-2-categorisation-of-waters>.



To remove this limitation you must complete 6 months' seagoing service outside categorised waters as a trainee deck officer, deck rating (including time spent associated with Bridge Watchkeeping duties), supernumerary deck officer or as an officer in seagoing waters within a Specified Area while holding a Reg. II/3 CoC limited to Category 'D' waters. This sea service must be performed on merchant ships of at least 24 metres in length or over in load line length or not less than 80 GT proceeding to sea.

### **Categorised Waters for OOW Cadets (Unlimited II/1) Certificates of Competency**

The MCA will accept up to 1 months' seagoing service in categorised waters (C&D) on commercial vessels of over 24 metres or over in load line length for UK Cadets working towards their first CoC, providing the following criteria is met:

- Relevant development opportunities will exist within a structured training plan approved by the Company Training Officer (CTO) submitted to the MCA for acceptance.
- The request comes endorsed by the CTO.
- The cadet will have already completed two thirds (8 months Deck) of their required seagoing service requirements before undertaking the role on the proposed alternate vessel.
- Any TRB task signing off, must be approved by the MCA prior to being accepted and if accepted, only signed off by an unlimited UK CoC or Flag State Endorsement (FSE)/Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CEC) holder.
- Roles onboard must be in the Deck department.
- Deck Officers would still normally need 11 months' seagoing service outside of categorised waters - however we could accept a maximum of **1 months'** further service spent standing-by a new vessel during the final stages of construction, in dry dock, or undergoing repairs to be counted (see section 9.3 of this Notice).
- A company letter from the vessel operator must be included with each application confirming the length of service and the vessel(s) names and details (name, size, registration numbers etc.) on which that the cadet undertook the service.

### **Categorised Waters for Chief Mate or Master (Unlimited II/2) Certificates of Competency**

The MCA will accept up to 1 months' seagoing service working as an Deck Officer in categorised waters (C&D) on commercial vessels of 24 metres or over in load line length, for OOW (II/1) unlimited and Chief Mate Unlimited (II/2) working towards their next unlimited Certificate of Competency.

### **Royal Navy Sea Service**

Royal Navy Officers holding an RN Navigational Watch Keeper Certificate (NWC) with a minimum of 12 months' seagoing service will be required to complete 3 months' seagoing service on merchant vessels.

### **Simulator Time**

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), has worked with industry to develop and approve a cadet simulator training programme and assessment. The effectiveness of this programme will be measured and assessed as part of a Pilot Project. The training in a full mission bridge simulator will be credited towards the seagoing service requirements contained in STCW regulations II/1 and section A-II/1 of the STCW Code for a maximum of two months of seagoing service. Regulation 63 of the 2022 Regulations provide for the Secretary of State (in this case, the MCA) to approve alternative training arrangements, which are equivalent to the STCW Convention requirements. Such alternative to allowing some simulator, instead of seagoing, time may be approved as follows:





- 5 days in a full mission bridge simulator for 15 days of seagoing service,
- 10 days in a full mission bridge simulator for 30 days of seagoing service,
- 20 day in a full mission bridge for 60 days of seagoing service.

Simulator time will be completed within a structured 'Bridge Watchkeeping Skills Simulator Course'. The course will provide a logical progression of events, experiences, and training, to enhance the experiences a cadet receives onboard a ship. The simulator provides the cadet with a decision-making environment that may not be available on a ship, especially in high traffic density/restricted visibility. The overall aim is to provide trainee seafarers with the necessary underpinning knowledge to familiarise with the bridge watchkeeping duties required by the 2022 Regulations (See the table in STCW Code A-II/1).

Only training providers approved by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (on behalf of the Secretary of State) will be permitted to run Bridge Watchkeeping Skills Simulator Course. All approvals will be carried out by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in accordance with **Annex G** of this notice. Re-approval by the MCA will be carried out within 5 years of the approval or re-approval provided that the training provider continues to comply with the requirements in **Annex G** and receives a satisfactory mid-term audit.

Instructors and assessors are required to be qualified in accordance with the requirements of Regulation I/6 and section A-I/6 of STCW.<sup>35</sup> Training providers seeking approval will need to demonstrate availability of suitable facilities for practical and theoretical instruction, be appropriately equipped with teaching and learning aids and designed to enable each learner to be fully engaged in the learning process. All facilities and equipment must be maintained, inspected and tested in accordance with applicable regulations, current standards and manufacturers recommendations.

All simulators used for the Bridge Watchkeeping Skills Simulator Course, must be approved by the MCA and must comply with the standards as per Regulation I/12 of the STCW Convention, 1978.

The following standards apply to the training and assessment:

- Radar simulation equipment;
- Navigational and watchkeeping simulation equipment;
- ECDIS simulation equipment.

The simulator must be capable of simulating the operational performance capabilities of shipboard navigational equipment appropriate to the performance standards in STCW Regulation I/12 and sections A-I/12 and B-I/12. The full mission simulation equipment must have a valid certificate approved by a recognised organisation.

This will initially be phased in, allowing UK Cadetships to obtain up to 1 months seagoing service towards their first CoC. It is expected that this pilot project will last between 3 and 5 years. The MCA must be fully satisfied that the level of sea-going service, knowledge, experience, and efficiency provided under the above arrangement enhances competency of the seafarer to ensure the safety of themselves, others and the protection of the marine environment at least equivalent to the requirements of the STCW Convention. Therefore, the MCA, based on evidence gathered from the Pilot Project may:

- discontinue acceptance of this time; or
- continue to accept as up to 1 month's time the required seagoing service; or
- allow for up to 2 months of the required seagoing service; and
- consider accepting simulator time in lieu of seagoing service to other routes e.g. 'experienced seafarer'.

<sup>35</sup> Further details are contained within **Annex G**.



## **Approval of Education and Training Providers**

In accordance with regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations, all training providers planning to offer education and training leading to the issue of a Certificate of Competency (CoC) will need to obtain MCA approval. The requirements for that approval in relation to training for masters and deck officers are set out in this Annex, and in **Annexes H to K** as applicable.

Training providers include nautical colleges, and as nautical colleges are the principal providers of courses leading to a CoC, this Annex, and the subsequent Annexes in this notice, refer to them. The requirements in this Annex would equally apply to any other training provider providing such courses. However, a training provider providing such a course would need to be a registered educational body.

Any nautical college<sup>36</sup> that wants to offer the underpinning knowledge and assessment detailed in section 11 must present an award (recognised qualification) that is fit for purpose and meets the requirements of the underpinning knowledge applicable to STCW Code (A-II/1 and/or A-II/2, or A-II/3). All awards must be recognised by a national Higher or Further Educational awarding body. The MCA will work together with the nautical colleges to ensure their award is fit for purpose and covers the requirements of the underpinning knowledge applicable to the STCW Code.

### **UK Cadetship Programme**

For this programme each nautical college must ensure that every entrant/cadet has a sponsoring company, as set out in Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 455. In accordance with the conditions for funding in MGN 455, or any subsequent publication, the sponsoring company will be subject to audit by the MCA or by an appointed *body* on behalf of the MCA to ensure the cadet is supported through their seagoing experiences on appropriate vessels.<sup>37</sup> Through the sponsoring company, each cadet has a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO). Attending this programme will allow for a reduced rate of seagoing service as detailed in section 3.1 of this Notice. If required, the nautical college can check with the MCA to ensure each entrant/cadet is sponsored by emailing [smart@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:smart@mcga.gov.uk).

### **Cadetship Programmes**

Cadetship Programmes are programmes for cadets who undertake the entirety of their classroom education within an approved MCA nautical college and are:

- located within the UK and already approved to run the UK Cadet programme, these programmes typically involve overseas cadets that attend the same classes as UK Cadets); or
- located outside of the UK and have made a direct approach to the MCA for approval.

All cadets attending this programme will be required to have a sponsoring company with a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO). Alternatively, there must be a written agreement

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<sup>36</sup> For the purpose of this notice 'college' is an educational institution or establishment providing higher or further education and is accountable to a national educational department's regulatory requirements and applicable inspection schemes.

<sup>37</sup> All vessels must be approved by the MCA to ensure adequate time is spent on Convention size vessels. This would ensure appropriate seagoing service to ensure the cadet can complete the tasks within the Training Record Book.



between the college and a sponsoring company to ensure adequate sea berths<sup>38</sup> for cadets on appropriate vessels (refer to section 9 of this Notice and **Annexes I and J**). Attending these MCA programmes run by MCA approved training providers will allow for a reduced rate of seagoing service as detailed in section 3.1 of this Notice.

### **Overseas Collaborative Programmes**

These are cadet programmes that are overseen by an MCA-approved UK based nautical college, where some of the classroom education takes place at an overseas partner college. Attending these programmes run by MCA approved providers will allow for a reduced rate of seagoing service as detailed in section 3.1 of this Notice.

For this programme each nautical college must ensure that every entrant/cadet has a sponsoring company with a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO) or that there is a written agreement between the college and a sponsoring company to ensure adequate sea berths for cadets on appropriate vessels (refer to section 9 of this Notice and **Annex I**).

### **Approval Process**

To gain approval to provide a course for certification under the 2022 Regulations, nautical colleges will have to undergo assessment by the MCA to ensure their training standards and course content meet the requirements of the STCW Convention. Nautical colleges wishing to obtain approval must make a written application to the MCA outlining:

- Course title;
- Instructions for creating lesson plans/ schemes of work;
- Course duration;
- Facilities, teaching aids and equipment;
- Staff qualifications and experience;
- Examination and assessment procedures;
- Monitoring of entry requirements;
- Issue, control, authentication and recording of certification; **and**
- Quality management systems and procedures that ensures the educational requirements of Section 11 of this Notice and the applicable Terms of Reference set out in this Notice are adhered to.

**Instructors and assessors are required to be qualified in accordance with the requirements of section A-I/6 of the STCW Code (regulation 48(2) in the 2022 regulations).**

Nautical colleges must develop an education and training programme that incorporates the requirement for delivering the underpinning knowledge and training required for STCW deck officers.

Each programme will receive separate Terms of Reference that will be agreed upon between the MCA and the nautical college. These are included in **Annexes H to K** of this Notice. All programmes will be approved for a maximum of five years before requiring re-approval.

### **Approval**

When the MCA is satisfied that the education and training programme meets the requirements of this Notice, an approval letter will be issued by the MCA to the training provider.

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<sup>38</sup> A sea berth is a post or appointment that will allow a cadet to complete their Training Record Book and watchkeeping requirements while being provided with a room or an apartment to reside in for the duration of each voyage.



## Ongoing Monitoring

**Nautical colleges:** In accordance with regulation 48(12) of the 2022 Regulations, all Nautical colleges that offer education and training leading to the issue of a CoC will be periodically audited by the MCA in accordance with the following requirements:

- Course title;
- Guidance for creating lesson plans/ schemes of work;
- Course duration;
- Facilities, teaching aids and equipment;
- Staff qualifications and experience;
- Examination and assessment procedures;
- Where the completion of the MCA Safety exams are not required, equivalent levels of robust assessment are in place to satisfy the requirements of the STCW Convention and Code;
- Monitoring of entry requirements;
- Issue, control, authentication and recording of certification; **and**
- Quality management systems and procedures that ensure the educational requirements of Section 11 of this Notice are met and that the applicable Terms of Reference set out in this Notice are adhered to.

If there are non-conformities found with the above conditions, the MCA may:

- Assess the non-conformities, including requesting evidence such as photographs, updates to desk instructions, staff qualifications etc. Where the MCA requests such evidence a deadline should be agreed for the nautical college to provide the evidence requested and that deadline should be recorded on the report.
- Request a follow up onsite visit to ensure the nautical college has satisfactorily remedied any non-conformities.
- Alternatively, if satisfied that the non-conformities have been resolved, confirm there is compliance without a further visit.

The MCA will always work with approved Training and Education Providers whose qualifications lead to an MCA CoC to ensure standards are maintained. However, if the MCA identifies major non-conformities the course approval may be altered or cancelled (regulation 48(6) of the 2022 Regulations). If a training provider's approval were cancelled pursuant to regulation 48(6) of the 2022 Regulations, an appeal may be lodged against the decision within 21 days of that decision (pursuant to regulation 50(1) of the 2022 Regulations). Major non-conformities are summarised below (but this is not an exhaustive list):

- Failure of management to implement a QMS system to ensure the required STCW standards set out in the 2022 Regulations and this Notice are met prior to the issue of documentary evidence of a standard being met (critical for an STCW Certificate of Competency);
- Teaching of the wrong practices or delivery of incorrect assessments that could endanger the seafarer while training or working at sea; or
- Fraudulent or illegal activity.

Any changes to course structure or syllabus must be submitted in writing to the MCA.

Cadets who are enrolled on an approved course prior to the removal of an approval would be allowed to complete that course. At the request of the nautical college, the MCA could facilitate their transfer to another MCA approved nautical college.

The introduction of any new course that is developed by an MCA approved training provider leading to the issue of a CoC or Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) must be approved by the MCA.



The MCA will inform nautical colleges of any changes to STCW requirements that will affect the education and training syllabus. When notified, nautical colleges must provide details in writing of how they plan to incorporate such changes into their programmes. Once the MCA is satisfied that the new STCW regulatory requirements have been met, the existing approval will be amended to reflect that the nautical college has successfully incorporated the change into the programme. Prior to the amended approval being granted the MCA may carry out a site visit.

**Approved Examination centre for MCA Safety and Professional Exams:** The exams syllabus is set by the MCA and the exams are moderated by the MCA to ensure compliance with STCW requirements. There is currently a contractual arrangement between the MCA and a service provider to administer and monitor these exams. All centres wishing to offer these exams must first apply to the MCA for approval. The MCA will follow an internal procedure to ensure an exams centre is suitable, prior to deciding on an approval. This procedure is available on request. If the MCA agrees to an exam centre being approved for MCA Safety and/or Professional Exams, then the exams centre can then apply to the MCA contracted 'exams body' who will provide them with the terms and condition for approval and ongoing monitoring.

The contracted service provider must be separate or demonstrate independence from the 'nautical college' offering the underpinning knowledge set out in this section of the Notice.

#### **Blended Learning (a Mix of Online and Classroom Based)**

Any training provider planning to offer a blended learning package must present their proposal to the MCA for approval.



**UK Cadetship – Terms of Reference (ToR)**

The MCA, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State is responsible for approvals and ongoing monitoring procedures for education and training programmes that lead to a UK Certificate of Competency (CoC) for Masters and Deck Officers. The MCA are required to do this in accordance with regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations.

In accordance with regulation 48(1) of the 2022 Regulations, all nautical colleges planning to offer educational training leading to the issue of a CoC are required to obtain MCA approval.

Proposals by a UK based nautical college for a training programme described below must be submitted directly to the MCA as part of the application for training provider approval.

Once approval is granted, all providers will be required to meet the MCA's ongoing monitoring procedures in accordance with regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations and **Annex G** in this Notice. This will involve monitoring in accordance with the requirements of regulation 48(12) and section A-I/8 of the STCW Code, and a periodic audit to ensure training standards meet the requirements of the 2022 Regulations and STCW Convention.

The MCA may consult with industry bodies to ensure the suitability of proposals.

**The Programme**

This programme is for UK cadets who wish to undertake the entirety of their classroom education within an approved nautical college located in the UK. A UK sponsored cadet is defined as an individual who is sponsored by an organisation approved and audited by the MCA, and who completes their sea time on vessels confirmed by the MCA as appropriate to meet the training requirements.<sup>39</sup> This individual will have a structured<sup>40</sup> training programme and be supported by a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO) employed or contracted by the sponsoring company. This individual will complete a structured MCA programme with an approved training provider, allowing them the reduced seagoing route and if agreed by the MCA, may allow them to undertake alternative assessments equivalent to the MCA Safety exams at operation level. These exams would be conducted by the college.

Training providers must ensure that cadets failing to pass the assessment criteria to the MCA standards in this Notice are not permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme.

Seagoing service and shipboard training is an integral part of a training programme given by an approved training provider and must be attained during the time permitted to complete the programme. Candidates who are unable to demonstrate their eligibility to obtain the necessary documents (including medical examination) to go to sea must not be enrolled onto the programme.

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<sup>39</sup> Please refer to MGN 455 or any subsequent publication. All vessels must be confirmed by the MCA as appropriate to the training requirements to ensure adequate time is spent on Convention size vessels. In accordance with regulation 63 of the 2022 Regulations, the MCA may allow for alternative seagoing vessels provided a structured training plan is in place and agreed by the MCA. For those following the Unlimited CoC route (II/1 and/or II/2), time on Convention size vessels should form the majority of the cadet's seagoing service (expected 9 months). This will ensure appropriate seagoing service to enable the cadet to complete the tasks within the Training Record Book. All the six months Bridge Watchkeeping time must be completed on Convention sized vessels.

<sup>40</sup> This will include the agreement of sea phases structured appropriately between periods of educational training and assessment.





## **MCA Safety Examinations**

For further information on these requirements nautical colleges should refer to section 10 of this Notice. Where alternatives are requested within the approval, the training provider must demonstrate a robust assessment and standard equivalent to the MCA's examinations. The MCA is open to proposals for alternative assessments, providing they are robust and ensure the applicable standards of the STCW Code are met by the candidate.

### **The MCA:**

- Will assess each proposal against the criteria set out within this ToR and applicable Marine Notices.
- Will approve the QMS relating to UK cadet training as specified in this Notice.
- Undertakes to consider proposed programmes and, if there is a positive assessment of the proposed programme and on-site assessment, will provide documentary evidence of approval for a period not exceeding five years.
- Undertakes to review agreed programmes at regular intervals not exceeding 5 years.
- May undertake unannounced inspection audits at its own discretion.
- May cancel approval (which decision may be appealed pursuant to regulation 50(1) of the 2022 Regulations) in the following circumstances (which is not an exhaustive list):
  - Failure of management to implement a QMS system to ensure the required STCW standards set out in the 2022 Regulations and this Notice are met prior to the issue of documentary evidence of a standard being met (critical for an STCW Certificate of Competency);
  - Teaching of the wrong practices or delivery of incorrect assessment that could endanger the seafarer whilst training or working at sea; or
  - Evidence of fraud or malpractice.





### **MCA Terms of Reference (ToR) for UK College Collaborative Programmes with Overseas Colleges (1+1)**

The MCA, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, is responsible for approvals and ongoing monitoring procedures of training providers that provide education and training programmes that lead to a UK Certificate of Competency (CoC) for Masters and Deck Officers. The MCA is required to do this under regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations.

In accordance with regulation 48(1) of the 2022 Regulations, all training providers, which include nautical colleges, planning to offer education and training leading to the issue of a CoC will need to obtain MCA approval.

UK based colleges that deliver programmes leading to the issue of a UK CoC in collaboration with an overseas (associate) college must be approved under the 2022 Regulations and in accordance with these ToRs.

After initial discussions have taken place with a potential overseas college, the MCA must be informed to ensure suitability of location. Prior to UK colleges entering into any agreement with an overseas college, the MCA may approve the programme only after a full written submission to the Seafarer Services Branch ([exams@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:exams@mcga.gov.uk)). This proposal must incorporate the requirements outlined in **Annex G** of this notice. **They must also include an audit plan that will need to be agreed prior to the course commencing.**

Once approval is granted, all providers will be required to meet the MCA's ongoing monitoring procedures in accordance with **Annex G**. This will involve a regular audit to ensure training standards meet the requirements of regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations and any terms of agreement that exist between the MCA and the educational facility.

Every nautical college must ensure that all cadets attending this programme have a sponsoring company with a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO) and be in possession of a Letter of Intent issued by the sponsoring company. Alternatively, the cadet may be provided with a berth by a company where there is a written agreement between the college and a sponsoring company.<sup>41</sup> A copy of the written agreement must be included within the programme approval application sent by the nautical college to the MCA. Seagoing service must be on vessels meeting the requirements of these TORs.

All programmes given by an MCA approved training provider must deliver a success rate of 70%. This means that 70% of cadets that enrol on to the course must obtain an MCA CoC. The MCA would be open to the consideration of external factors beyond the control of an approved institute to account for a lower success rate, e.g. economic downturn, improvement strategy for recruitment and retention etc. An improvement action plan must then be implemented. Continued failure to meet the target will result in the cancellation of MCA approval.

#### **Parent College**

- Must have its primary establishment in the UK; and
- Must be currently approved to run the programme in accordance with the MCA approval process.

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<sup>41</sup> The letter of intent should confirm that the cadet will have a nominated CTO and will be provided with a berth on a ship allowing them to meet the seagoing service requirements outlined in this ToR and section 9 of this Notice.



## Associate College

- Must be an established Higher Educational establishment approved by the Government of the country in which it operates.
- Must ensure that all cadets have a nominated CTO prior to Cadet enrolment on to the programme; alternatively, a Cadet may be provided with a suitable berth by a company where there is a written agreement between the college and a sponsoring company.
- Must have permission from the Government or applicable Government Department for MCA programmes to run within their Country. This should be in the form of an official letter.
- Must not be in an area where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against travel.

## Responsibility of the Parent College

- Must ensure that the whole programme, is delivered in accordance with their quality standards.
- Must ensure the programme and the requirements associated with these ToRs are clearly defined in a Quality Management System (QMS) that is approved by the MCA prior to the course commencing.
- Must undertake regular monitoring visits to the associate college, at least twice during the first year of the agreement and at least once each following academic year. Where the programme is subject to an enhanced audit regime these visits may be increased to three per annum. **Audit plans must have been submitted to the MCA prior to initial approval.**
- Must act as External Verifier<sup>42</sup> for the assessment of programmes delivered by the associate college that are intended to meet the academic requirements for a UK CoC (excluding MCA Safety or Professional examinations).
- Must supply a letter to each candidate that states the programme they are following. This letter should be submitted with the candidate's NOE application.
- Must organise supervision of Training Record Books (TRB) and associated workbooks and assess TRBs and associated workbooks to ensure they are completed satisfactorily prior to submission to the MCA.
- Ensure Seagoing Service (cadet berths) agreements are in place with shipping companies allowing the candidate to meet the seagoing service requirements in these ToRs.
- Ensure all MCA Safety or Professional examinations are completed at the parent college.

## The Programme

- The programme, in general terms, must reflect the MCA approved programme already held but may vary the entry requirements and shorten or lengthen the programme as appropriate to reflect this variance.
- The programme must be taught in English in its entirety.
- The training/education delivered by the associate college must be an assessed, integral part of the overall programme.
- The programme must be clearly defined showing the estimated time of each phase of training and state that the overall time in which the programme must be completed (not to exceed 5 years).
- The delivery of Navigation Aids and Equipment Simulator Training (NAEST Operations) must be carried out at the parent college.

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<sup>42</sup> By acting as an external verifier, the parent college will ensure exams are moderated and set at the appropriate standard, exams are robust and marked accurately by the parent college or cross marked by the parent college and that students are provided with a structured support system for student welfare and learning & development.



- All programmes must include the completion of an MCA TRB.
- The sea service requirement must be clearly defined, and course literature must clearly state that an MCA CoC does not guarantee employment.
- The Cadet selection process must be clearly defined and capable of audit and of an equivalent standard to that of a UK cadet.
- Cadets entering and progressing onto various stages of the programme must hold evidence of entry standards that are no less than those required by the equivalent MCA approved programme.
- Reflecting the MCA requirements, Cadets failing to pass the assessment criteria will not be permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme.
- Where programmes delivered by the associate college are intended to contribute towards the academic requirement for a UK CoC, Cadets must meet the requirements of IELTS level 5.5 before the final assessment at the associate college.
- Cadets failing to meet the attendance criteria of 80% will not be permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme.
- The parent college will be responsible for the issue of MCA TRB and to ensure that associated workbooks are duly completed.
- The course literature must clearly state that obtaining an MCA CoC does not guarantee employment.
- Cadets must complete their underpinning qualification (FD, HNC/Advanced Certificate/HND/Advanced Diploma etc.) prior to undertaking their oral examination.

### **Facilities**

All facilities must be well maintained and a routine inspection process must be in place to ensure:

- Classrooms are well lit, air conditioned and allow cadets a comfortable studying environment.
- Cadets have access to drinking water, toilets (male and female) and break out areas.
- Colleges adhere to relevant Health and Safety national legislation. The routine inspection should ensure a safe working environment for cadets broadly equivalent to the UKs standards (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974).

### **Seagoing Service**

Seagoing service and shipboard training is an integral part of a training programme run by an approved training provider and must be attained during the time permitted to complete the programme. Candidates who are unable to demonstrate their eligibility to obtain the necessary documents (including medical examination) to go to sea must not be enrolled onto the programme. Any proposal must demonstrate that suitable sea service training berths are available to accommodate each cohort of Cadets.

The seagoing service element of the programme must be served on a vessel that has an IMO number, is registered to an STCW Signatory Administration, that is operating without UK restrictions and is not blacklisted by any Port State Control MOU. All vessels that a cadet obtains seagoing service on, must be SOLAS compliant (i.e. generally speaking, cargo ships of 500 GT or over and passenger ships).

The sea service requirement must be clearly defined.

### **MCA Safety Examinations**

All candidates for OOW and Chief Mate must complete the applicable MCA Safety or Professional exams. If a candidate fails their first OOW oral exam, they must obtain a pass for their MCA Safety or Professional examinations prior to attempting an oral exam re-sit. The MCA Safety or Professional examination must be incorporated into the programme plan.



## **Failure to Complete a Training Programme**

The candidate will not be considered to have completed a training programme run by an approved training provider, and therefore not eligible for the reduced sea service requirement, if:

- The programme, including the sea time requirement, is not completed in the maximum period allowed; or
- The academic award (HND/Advanced Diploma, HNC/Advanced Certificate or another specified award)<sup>43</sup> of the programme is not attained within this period.

## **The Role of the MCA**

- Will assess each proposal against the criteria within these ToRs and applicable Marine Notices.
- Will approve the QMS relating to the overseas college approval conditions.
- Will undertake an initial onsite audit to establish approval (at the cost of the partner college).
- If after a positive assessment of the proposed programme and on-site audit of the associate college, will provide written approval for a period not exceeding 5 years.
- Undertakes to review, which will include an audit of approved programmes at regular intervals, not exceeding 3 years.
- May undertake unannounced inspection audits at its own discretion (at the cost of the partner college).
- May cancel approval (which decision may be appealed pursuant to regulation 50(1) of the 2022 Regulations) in the following circumstances (which is not an exhaustive list):
  - There is evidence that the programme is not being effectively delivered in accordance with the approval conditions set out in the ToR; or
  - Agreed procedures are not being followed; or
  - There are substantial changes in technology, recognised industry practices or regulatory requirements which are not reflected in amendments to the programme; or
  - Approval of the associate college by the local Maritime Administration is withdrawn;
  - Teaching of the wrong practices or delivery of incorrect assessments that could endanger the seafarer while training or working at sea;
  - Evidence of fraud or malpractice;
  - The Government where the overseas approved college is based request that the MCA withdraw approval;
  - The area of the overseas college is based becomes an area where the FCO advises against travel;
  - The overseas college refuses to accept an MCA audit (announced or unannounced).

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<sup>43</sup> This is in accordance with **Annex G** in this Notice.



## **MCA Terms of Reference (ToR) for Overseas Cadet Training Programmes, based in the UK**

The MCA, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, is responsible for approvals and ongoing monitoring procedures for education and training programmes that lead to a UK Certificate of Competency (CoC) for Masters and Deck Officers. The MCA is required to do this in accordance with regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations.

In accordance with regulation 48(1) of the 2022 Regulations, all training providers, which include nautical colleges, planning to offer education and training leading to the issue of a CoC, will need MCA approval.

Proposals by a UK based nautical college for a training programme described below must be submitted directly to the MCA by a nautical college based within the UK as part of the application for training provider approval.

Once approval is granted, all providers will be required to meet the MCA's ongoing monitoring procedures in accordance with Annex G. This will involve a regular audit to ensure training standards meet the requirements of regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations and any terms of agreement that exist between the MCA and the educational facility.

### **The Programme**

This programme is for non-UK cadets (i.e. those who do not qualify for SMarT funding) that wish to undertake the entirety of their classroom education within an approved nautical college located in the UK. These programmes typically involve overseas cadets that attend the same classes as UK Cadets. Non-UK sponsored cadets are defined as a company sponsored individual that will complete a programme given by an MCA approved training provider, allowing them the reduced seagoing service or route outlined in this Notice.

Nautical colleges must ensure that cadets attending this programme will be required to have a sponsoring company with a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO) and will need to be in possession of Letter of Intent issued by the sponsoring company, or be provided with a berth by a company where there is a written agreement between the college and a sponsoring company.<sup>44</sup> A copy of the written agreement must be included within the programme approval application sent to the MCA. Seagoing service must be on vessels meeting the requirements of these TORs.

All programmes delivered by approved training providers must have a success rate of 70%. This means that 70% of cadets that enrol on to the course must obtain an MCA CoC. The MCA would be open to the consideration of external factors beyond the control of an approved institute to account for a lower success rate, e.g. economic downturn, improvement strategy for recruitment and retention etc. However, an improvement action plan must then be implemented and continued failure to meet the 70% target may result in the MCA cancelling the institute's approval. Students that were already enrolled on a course run by a training provider whose approval had been cancelled, would not be impacted by the removal of this approval.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The letter of intent or written agreement should confirm that the cadet will have a nominated CTO and will be provided with a berth on a ship allowing them to meet the seagoing service requirements outlined in this ToR and section 9 of this Notice.

<sup>45</sup> The MCA would work with the current training provider and other training providers to map across and ensure the qualifications/requirements were met by the affected students where the training providers approval had been cancelled.



Cadets entering and progressing onto various stages of the programme must provide evidence of meeting entry standards equal to the equivalent MCA programme. The Cadet selection process must be clearly defined, capable of audit and of an equivalent standard to that of a UK Cadet.

Cadets failing to pass the assessment criteria to the MCA standards in this Notice, as the case may be, will not be permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme. Cadets must complete their underpinning qualification (FD, HNC/Advanced Certificate/ HND/Advanced Diploma etc.) prior to undertaking their oral examination.

Cadets must meet the requirement of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level 5.5 before enrolment on to the programme.

Seagoing service and shipboard training is an integral part of a programme given by an approved training provider and must be attained during the time permitted to complete the programme. Candidates who are unable to demonstrate their eligibility to obtain the necessary documents (including medical examination) to go to sea must not be enrolled onto the programme. Any proposal must demonstrate that suitable sea service training berths are available to accommodate each cohort of Cadets.

The seagoing service element of the programme must be served on a vessel that has an IMO number, is registered to an STCW Signatory Administration that is operating without UK restrictions and is not blacklisted by any Port State Control MOU.

The sea service requirement must be clearly defined, and course literature must clearly state that obtaining an MCA CoC does not guarantee employment.

### **Safety Examinations**

All candidates for OOW and Chief Mate must complete the applicable MCA Safety or Professional examinations. If a candidate fails their first OOW oral exam, they must obtain a pass for their MCA Safety or Professional examinations prior to attempting an oral exam re-sit. The examinations must be incorporated into the programme plan.

### **The role of the MCA**

- Will assess each proposal against the criteria set out within this ToR and applicable Marine Notices.
- Will approve the QMS relating to non-UK Cadet training as specified in this Notice and MSN 1857 (Amendment 1).
- Undertakes to give consideration of proposed programmes and, if after a positive assessment of the proposed programme and on-site assessment, will provide written approval for a period not exceeding 5 years.
- Undertakes to review agreed programmes at regular intervals not exceeding 3 years;
- May undertake unannounced inspection audits at its own discretion.
- May cancel approval (which decision may be appealed pursuant to regulation 50(1) of the 2022 Regulations) in the following circumstances (which is not an exhaustive list):
  - There is evidence that the programme is not being effectively delivered in accordance with the approval conditions set out in the ToR; or
  - Agreed procedures are not being followed; or
  - There are substantial changes in technology, recognised industry practices or regulatory requirements which are not reflected in amendments programme; or
  - Teaching of the wrong practices or delivery of incorrect assessment that could endanger the seafarer whilst training or working at sea; or
  - Evidence of fraud or malpractice.





### **MCA Terms of Reference (ToR) for Overseas Colleges**

The MCA, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State is responsible for approvals and ongoing monitoring procedures for education and training programmes that lead to a UK Certificate of Competency (CoC) for Masters and Deck Officers. The MCA is required to do this in accordance with regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations.

In accordance with regulation 48(1) of the 2022 Regulations, all training providers, which include nautical colleges, planning to offer education and training leading to the issue of a CoC will need to obtain MCA approval.

Proposals for the programme described below must be submitted directly to the MCA as part of the approval process. All approaches will need to be cleared at MCA Executive Board considering the strategic need of the partnership and the resource implications to the MCA.

While the college may have links to a UK college or Further Education institute, in terms of support or consultancy services, this approval is for an overseas college and will be based on their systems and processes.

Once approval is granted, all providers will be required to meet the MCA's ongoing monitoring procedures in accordance with **Annex G** in this Notice. This will involve a regular audit to ensure training standards meet the requirements of regulation 48 in the 2022 Regulations and any terms of agreement that exists between the MCA and the educational facility.

### **The Programme**

This programme is for non-UK cadets (i.e. those who do not qualify for SMarT funding) that wish to undertake the entirety of their classroom education within an approved nautical college located outside of the UK. Non-UK sponsored cadets are company sponsored individuals that complete a programme, given by an MCA approved training provider, allowing them the reduced seagoing service or route outlined in this Notice.

Nautical Colleges must ensure that all cadets attending this programme will have a sponsoring company with a nominated Company Training Officer (CTO) and will need to be in possession of a Letter of Intent<sup>46</sup> issued by the sponsoring company, or be provided with a berth on an appropriate ship by a company where there is a written agreement between the college and a sponsoring company. A copy of the written agreement must be included within the programme approval application sent the MCA. Seagoing service must be on vessels meeting the requirements of this ToR.

All programmes given by approved training providers must deliver a success rate of 70%. This means that 70% of cadets that enrol on to the course must obtain an MCA CoC. The MCA would be open to the consideration of external factors beyond the control of an approved institute to account for a lower success rate, e.g. economic downturn, improvement strategy for recruitment and retention etc. However, an improvement action plan must then be implemented and continued failure to meet the 70% target may result in the MCA withdrawing approval from the institute.

Cadets entering and progressing onto various stages of the programme must provide evidence of meeting entry standards that the MCA considers acceptable. The Cadet selection process

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<sup>46</sup> The letter of intent should confirm that the cadet will have a nominated CTO and will be provided with a berth on a ship allowing them to meet the seagoing service requirements outlined in this ToR and section 9 of this Notice.





must be clearly defined, capable of audit and of an equivalent standard to that of a UK cadet. Cadets failing to pass the assessment criteria to the MCA standards in section 11 of this Notice will not be permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme. Cadets must complete their underpinning qualification (FD, HNC/Advanced Certificate/ HND/Advanced Diploma etc.) prior to undertaking their oral examination.

Cadets must meet the requirement of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level 5.5 before enrolment on to the programme.

The seagoing service requirement must be clearly defined.

The course literature must clearly state that obtaining an MCA CoC does not guarantee employment.

### **Sea Service**

Seagoing service and shipboard training is an integral part of an “approved training programme” and must be attained during the time permitted to complete the programme. Candidates who are unable to demonstrate their eligibility to obtain the necessary documents (including medical examination) to go to sea must not be enrolled onto the programme. Any proposal must demonstrate that suitable sea service training berths are available to accommodate each cohort of Cadets.

The seagoing service element of the programme must be served on a vessel that has an IMO number, is registered to an STCW Signatory Administration, is operating without UK restrictions and is not blacklisted by any Port State Control MOU. Sea service may only take place on SOLAS compliant vessels).

The sea service requirement must be clearly defined.

### **The Location of the College**

- Be an established Higher Educational establishment approved by the Government of the country that they operate in. They will be subject to an enhanced audit regime by the MCA.
- Must ensure that all overseas cadets attending a programme will have a sponsoring company with a nominated Company Training Officer prior to student enrolment on to the programme or be provided with a berth by a company where there is a written agreement between the college and a sponsoring company.
- Must have permission from the Government or applicable Government Department for MCA programmes to run within their Country. This should be in the form of an official letter.
- Must not be in an area where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advise against travel.
- Must be in an accessible location.

### **Facilities of the College**

All facilities must be well maintained, and a routine inspection process must be in place to ensure:

- Classrooms should be well lit, air conditioned and allow cadets a comfortable studying environment.
- Cadets must have access to drinking water, toilets (male and female) and break out areas.



- Colleges must adhere to relevant Health and Safety national legislation. The routine inspection should ensure a safe working environment for cadets broadly equivalent to the UK's standards (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974).

### **MCA Safety and Professional Examinations**

All candidates for OOW and Chief Mate must complete the applicable MCA Safety or Professional examinations. If a candidate fails their first OOW oral exam, they must obtain a pass for their MCA Safety or Professional examinations prior to attempting an oral exam re-sit. The examinations must be incorporated into the programme plan. These examinations should be sat in the UK unless there is a strategic reason for the MCA to agree for them to be taken overseas (MCA approved Safety and Professional Exam ToRs).

### **The role of the MCA**

- Will assess each proposal against the criteria outlined within these ToRs and applicable MSNs.
- Will approve the QMS relating to the overseas college approval conditions (see **Annex G**).
- Will undertake an onsite audit to establish approval.
- Undertakes to give consideration of proposed programmes and, if after a positive assessment of the proposed programme and on-site assessment of the associate college, will provide written approval for a period not exceeding 5 years.
- Undertakes to review approved programmes at regular intervals, not exceeding 3 years.
- May implement enhanced monitoring processes if the college fails to meet MCA requirements.
- May undertake unannounced inspection audits at its own discretion.
- May cancel approval (which decision may be appealed pursuant to regulation 50(1) of the 2022 Regulations) in the following circumstances (which is not an exhaustive list):
  - There is evidence that the programme is not being effectively delivered in accordance with the approval conditions outlined in the ToR; or
  - Agreed procedures are not being followed; or
  - There are substantial changes in technology, recognised industry practices or regulatory requirements which are not reflected in amendments to the programme; or
  - Approval of the associate college by the local Educational Administration is withdrawn; or
  - Teaching of the wrong practices or delivery of incorrect assessments that could endanger the seafarer whilst training or working at sea; or
  - Evidence of fraud or malpractice; or
  - The Government where the overseas college is based, request that the MCA cancel approval; or
  - The area in which the overseas college is based becomes an area where the FCO advise against travel to; or
  - The overseas college refuses to accept an MCA audit (announced or unannounced).

