

## GUIDE TO THE YACHTMASTER QUALIFICATION: COASTAL and OFFSHORE

This guide has been prepared by Aigua Sea School based on information provided by the Royal Yachting Association.

### Pre requisite experience:

- A minimum of 50 days at sea for YACHTMASTER OFFSHORE or 30 days at sea for YACHTMASTER COASTAL
- 2,500 logged miles for YACHTMASTER OFFSHORE or 800 logged miles for YACHTMASTER COASTAL
- OFFSHORE: At least five passages over 60 miles measured along the rhumb line from the port of departure to the destination and five days experience as skipper
- OFFSHORE: Acting as skipper for at least two of these passages (please see the 'definition of passage' below) and including two which have involved overnight passages
- COASTAL: two days as skipper and 12 night hours
- At least half the mileage and passages must be in tidal waters

### Definition of passage

1. Qualifying passages for Yachtmaster Ocean and Offshore should be non stop by the shortest navigable route with no change of skipper. Passages such as recognised races which may not comply exactly with these requirements may be submitted to the RYA for approval before the voyage.

### Yachtmaster Offshore and Yachtmaster Coastal Syllabus

Candidates will be given the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge or competence in the areas listed below. During each exercise the examiner will expect to see the candidate take full responsibility for the management of the yacht and crew. The candidate will be expected to demonstrate competence based on broad experience.

#### 1. INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS FOR PREVENTING COLLISIONS AT SEA

Questions will be confined to the international regulations and although candidates must be aware of the existence of local regulations, they will not be expected to memorise specific local regulations.

- General rules (1-3)
- Steering and sailing rules (4-19)
- Lights and shapes (20-31)
- Sound and light signals (32-37)
- Signals for vessels fishing in close proximity (annex II)
- Distress signals (annex IV)

#### 2. SAFETY

Candidates will be expected to know what safety equipment should be carried onboard a yacht. In particular, candidates must know the responsibilities of a skipper in relation to:

- Safety harnesses
- Life jackets
- Distress flares
- Fire prevention and fighting
- Life rafts and abandonment
- Knowledge of rescue procedures
- Helicopter rescue
- Man overboard: recovery, especially in short handed situations

#### 3. BOAT HANDLING

Candidates will be expected to answer questions or demonstrate ability with a high level of expertise.

- Coming to and weighing anchor under power or sail in various conditions
- Berthing and un-berthing situations in various conditions
- Recovery of man overboard
- Towing under open sea conditions and in confined areas
- Boat handling in confined areas under sail or motor
- Boat handling in heavy weather (ensure reefing procedures are practised if under sail)
- Helmsmanship and sail trim to sail to best advantage
- Use of warps for securing in an alongside berth and for shifting berth or winding

4. GENERAL SEAMANSHIP, INCLUDING MAINTENANCE
  - Properties, use and care of synthetic fibre ropes
  - Knots
  - General deck work at sea and in harbour
  - Engine operations and routine checks: bleeding the engine; changing impeller; sea cocks
  - Improvisation of jury rigs following gear failure (if sailing)
  - Use of emergency tiller
  
5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SKIPPER
  - Can skipper a yacht and manage the crew
  - Communication with crew
  - Delegation of responsibility and watch-keeping organisation
  - Preparing yacht for sea and for adverse weather
  - Tactics for heavy weather and restricted visibility
  - Emergency and distress situations
  - Victualling for a cruise and feeding at sea
  - Awareness of local conditions: heat, hydration, skin protection etc
  - Customs procedures
  - Standards of behaviour and courtesy
  
6. NAVIGATION
  - Charts, navigational publications and sources of navigational information
  - Chartwork including position fixing and shaping course to allow for tidal stream and leeway
  - Tide and tidal stream calculations
  - Buoyage and visual aids to navigation
  - Instruments including compasses, logs, echo sounders, radio nav aids and chartwork instruments
  - Knowledge of radar
  - Passage planning and navigational tactics
  - Pilotage techniques
  - Navigational records
  - Limits of navigational accuracy and margins of safety
  - Lee shore dangers
  - Use of electronic navigation aids for passage planning and passage navigation
  - Use of waypoints and electronic routing
  - Blind navigation
  
7. METEOROLOGY
  - Definition of terms
  - Sources of weather forecasts
  - Weather systems and local weather effects
  - Interpretation of weather forecasts, barometric trends and visible phenomena
  - Ability to make passage planning decisions based on forecast information
  
8. PASSAGE PLAN
  - Each candidate will present a passage plan for discussion with the examiner

**In summary, before booking your exam please check the following:**

You have completed the required mileage and experience as skipper

You hold a VHF Radio Operators licence or Short Range Certificate

You hold a valid First Aid certificate. You hold an in-date MCA approved medical report, eg: ENG1 or your country's equivalent.

You have read the syllabus in RYA publications: G15 (sail) or G18 (motor)

You have read and comply with the eligibility requirements for this exam

**I have had the syllabus of the RYA /MCA Yachtmaster examination and the pre-exam experience requirements explained to me.**

**I agree that I have the required experience and knowledge to undertake the examination.**

**Signed**

**Date**