



# MSN 1860 (M) Amendment 1

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## Training & Certification Guidance: UK Requirements For Electro-technical Officers

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

*This notice updates and replaces MSN 1860 (M)*

*This Notice includes guidance for seafarers. It also contains 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.*

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### Summary

This Merchant Shipping Notice (MSN) sets out and explains the regulatory requirements regarding the implementation of training elements applicable under Chapter III/6, of the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Convention and Code. It outlines the examination and training requirements for Merchant Navy Electro-technical Officer (ETO).

The certification system provides a route for trainee officers, those with electrical or electronic engineer qualifications, experienced ETOs and ratings entering the industry to achieve an ETO Certificate of Competency (CoC).

### This MSN covers:

1. Introduction
2. Certificate Structure
3. Requirements for the Issue of an ETO, Regulation III/6, Certificate of Competency
4. Seagoing Service Requirements for an ETO Certificate of Competency
5. Senior Electro-technical Officer (SETO) Endorsement
6. Seagoing Service Definition and Requirements
7. Ancillary Technical and Safety Course Certification
8. Approved Education and Training Schemes
9. Medical Fitness and Eyesight Standards
10. Application Procedure
11. Notice of Eligibility (NOE)
12. MCA Oral Examination
13. The Issue of your Certificate of Competency
14. 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.** Sea Service Testimonial (\*Trainee Electro-technical Officer/Electro-technical Rating/electrical engineer/electrician/other)
- B.** Approval of Education and Training Programmes

## **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 Electro-technical Officers (ETOs), 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 requirements;
- Complete the minimum period of seagoing service and workshop skills;
- Meet the minimum vocational and academic standard including an oral examination conducted by an Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) examiner;
- Undertake ancillary technical and safety training;
- Meet medical and eyesight standards.

**1.3 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 9 of this Notice.**

1.4 Prior to joining your first vessel you will need to hold the following certificates<sup>2</sup>;

- 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>.

<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

<sup>3</sup> See section 9 for further details. Details of MCA-Approved Medical Certificates are available from our website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “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) (Insert Link).



**All references to Certificates of Competency in this notice pertain to those issued by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), unless otherwise stated.**

- 1.5 It is not compulsory for a ship to carry an ETO unless it has been agreed between the owner/operator and the Flag Administration (the MCA in the case of UK-registered ships). This should then be stated on the ship's Safe Manning Document (SMD).

If you are employed on a ship as an ETO, you must hold an STCW ETO CoC whether or not an ETO is listed on the SMD. However, paragraph 5 of STCW Reg. III/6 states that you are permitted to carry out certain functions of an ETO, providing you are suitably qualified, even if you do not hold an STCW ETO CoC. This means you may be employed on a ship in a position such as Electrician or Systems Engineer, which may or may not be part of the Safe Manning requirement. Whether you are filling a position on the SMD or not, it is the ship's owner / operator's responsibility to define the competencies required, taking into account the duties which you are expected to perform, and ensure that you have the necessary competences to carry out these duties.

## 2. Certificate Structure

| CoC                | Area limitation | Tonnage limitation | STCW Convention Regulation |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| ETO                | Unlimited       | Unlimited          | III/6                      |
| SETO (endorsement) | Unlimited       | Unlimited          | N/A                        |

ETO Certificates of Competency will permit the following STCW functions at the operational level:

- Controlling the operation of the ship and care for persons on board (function 3);
- Electrical, electronic and control engineering (function 5);
- Maintenance and repair (function 6).

## 3. Requirements for the Issue of an ETO, STCW Convention Regulation III/6, Certificate of Competency

- 3.1 If you have met the requirements and have been accepted onto an MCA approved UK Cadetship or MCA approved cadetship<sup>5</sup> 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 ETO, III/1, CoC. This programme will permit you to follow the reduced seagoing service route detailed in section 3.2.

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 ETO, III/1, CoC. This programme will permit you to follow the reduced seagoing service route detailed in section 3.2.

To be issued with an ETO CoC you must follow either route 3.2, 3.3, or 3.4 and be at least 18 years of age.

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

<sup>6</sup> The requirements for approval are listed in MSN 1856 (Amendment 1) **Annex G**.



3.2 If you follow an MCA approved UK Cadetship training programme, an MCA approved cadetship programme or an MCA-approved overseas collaborative programme (“one plus one scheme”), you must:

(a) Complete at least 12 months’ combined seagoing service and workshop skills training while following an MCA approved Foundation Degree or HND/Advanced Diploma. This must include at least:

- 6 months’ seagoing service on merchant ships with a propulsion power of at least 750 kW, which incorporates onboard training that meets the requirements of section A-III/6 of the STCW Code and is documented in an approved Training Record Book; **and**
- 3 months’ approved workshop skills training;

(b) Successfully complete an approved education and training programme meeting the standards of competency specified in section A-III/6 of the STCW Code, as listed in section 8;

(c) Hold the applicable ancillary course certificates listed in section 7;

(d) Complete an MCA-approved High Voltage (management level) course;

(e) Hold a valid ENG1 medical fitness certificate or accepted equivalent;

(f) Pass the MCA oral examination ‘STCW Regulation III/6 Electro-technical Officer’<sup>7</sup>.

3.3 If you do not follow an MCA approved UK Cadetship training programme, an MCA approved cadetship training programme or an MCA-approved overseas collaborative programme (“one plus one scheme”), you must complete:

(a) The relevant modules from the MCA-approved Electrical and Electronic Engineering HND/Advanced Diploma allowing you to meet the ETO standard, as detailed in section 8;

(b) All of the training, examinations, and medical fitness listed in 3.2 (c) to (f) above;

(c) Seagoing service as detailed in section 4 of this Notice;

(d) Approved workshop skills training.

3.3.1 If you have one of the following qualifications or experience you may be able to demonstrate that you have met the required standard and be exempt from the requirements:

- A degree in Electrical Engineering or Electrical and Electronic Engineering<sup>8</sup>;
- A foundation degree, HND/Advanced Diploma, HNC/Advanced Certificate or equivalent qualification in Electrical Engineering or Electronic Engineering issued under the authority of an EU member state;
- An EU based apprenticeship in Electrical Engineering or Electronic Engineering (at or equivalent to NVQ level 3 or above);
- An STCW Engineering CoC issued by the MCA or by an administration that the MCA accepts for the issue of Flag State Endorsement (FSE)/Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CEC);
- Are an experienced and qualified Royal Navy (RN) ETO Officer or Rating.

<sup>7</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).

<sup>8</sup> If you have a degree issued from outside the UK you will need to get your degree assessed by ENIC, for further information please visit their website: <https://www.ecctis.com/>.



You will need to apply directly to the MCA or the MCA approved appointed body on behalf of the MCA<sup>9</sup> who will complete an assessment of your academic education. You will then need to apply to an MCA-approved nautical college who will assess your workshop skills training and provide you with an action plan to meet the ETO standard. This will:

- Detail the academic route you must follow;
- Stipulate the amount of seagoing service and workshop skills training you are required to complete.

If you can demonstrate that you have met the standard required for the Principles of Electronics, ENEM, or Radio Maintenance course, you may be exempt from completing the courses. You will also need to apply to the MCA or the MCA approved appointed body on behalf of the MCA<sup>10</sup>.

**If applicable, you must include your college action plan and/or professional examinations letter that exempts you from the requirements of the courses and/or examinations with your ETO application to the MCA.**

3.4 If you are an existing ETO or are working in a similar capacity, with 12 months' seagoing service as an ETO or 12 months' seagoing service carrying out similar duties, you must:

- (a) Pass the MCA Chief Engineer Electro-technology professional examination;
- (b) Pass the MCA approved Electronic Principles professional exam;
- (c) Complete an MCA approved Officer Competency Record Book for ETOs;
- (d) Hold the applicable ancillary course certificates listed in section 7;
- (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- (f) Pass the MCA oral examination for ETO Officers<sup>11</sup>;

You may also complete:

- (g) Complete an MCA approved Electronic Navigation Equipment Maintenance (ENEM) course (section 7);
- (h) Complete an MCA approved GMDSS Radio Maintenance course (see section 7);
- (i) Complete an MCA approved High Voltage management level course (see section 7).

3.4.1 If you do not complete the course specified in points (g) and/or (h) and/or (i) listed above your CoC will include the applicable limitations. Please refer to section 7.

3.4.2 Seagoing service, record book and workshop requirements for existing ETOs:

- (a) For existing ETOs only, the MCA Officer Competency Record Book tasks may be signed off retrospectively, providing the signatory has personal knowledge that the task was completed. Tasks must be signed off by a Chief Engineer or Superintendent who holds a UK CoC or FSE/CEC;
- (b) Existing ETOs with 12 months' or more seagoing service will have demonstrated that they have met the required standard and be exempt from completing the workshop training.

3.4.3 **The route for existing ETOs ended on 1 January 2020.** Existing ETOs must follow the route detailed in section 3.3.

<sup>9</sup> Currently the appointed body is the International Association of Maritime Institutions (IAMI), who can be contacted through: [exemption@iami.org.uk](mailto:exemption@iami.org.uk).

<sup>10</sup> Currently the appointed body is the International Association of Maritime Institutions (IAMI), who can be contacted through: [exemption@iami.org.uk](mailto:exemption@iami.org.uk).

<sup>11</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).



If you can demonstrate that you have met the required standard for the MCA Chief Engineer Electro-technology, Principles of Electronics, ENEM, or GMDSS Radio Maintenance professional examinations, you may be exempt from completing the examinations. You will need to apply to the MCA, or the MCA approved appointed body on behalf of the MCA<sup>12</sup>.

### 3.5 Guidance:

The following certificates will demonstrate that you have met the required standard and grant you the following exemptions:

- The Department of Transport or Marine Safety Agency (MSA) certificates for Maintenance of Radar Equipment on Merchant Ships will exempt you from the GMDSS Radio Maintenance certificate requirements; and
- The Department of Transport or Marine Safety Agency (MSA) certificates for Maintenance of Electronic Navigational Equipment will exempt you from the MCA approved Electronic Principles professional examination and the ENEM certificate requirements.

To apply, you must submit these certificates to the MCA or the MCA approved appointed body on behalf of the MCA<sup>13</sup>.

## 4. Seagoing Service Requirements for an ETO Certificate of Competency

- 4.1 If you are following an MCA approved UK cadetship training programme, an MCA approved cadetship programme or an MCA-approved overseas collaborative programme (“one plus one scheme”) (route 3.2), you will require a minimum of 12 months of combined seagoing service and approved workshop skills training. This must include a minimum of 6 months’ seagoing service and 3 months’ workshop skills time.
- 4.2 If you are following the route outlined in section 3.2 your seagoing service will be decided by the MCA or the MCA approved appointed body on behalf of the MCA on a case by case basis. The required seagoing service will be at least 6 months, but no more than 33 months, and may include a minimum period of workshop training. Qualified RN personnel will require a minimum of 12 months’ service in the RN while qualified, and will require a further 3 months in a merchant vessel before being issued with an ETO CoC.
- 4.3 If you are an Electro-technical Rating without an academic qualification listed in 3.3.1 you must complete 36 months of combined seagoing service and workshop skills training course given by an MCA approved training provider. This must include a minimum of 30 months’ seagoing service and 3 months’ workshop time.
- 4.4 If you are an existing ETO (route 3.4) you must prove a minimum of 12 months’ seagoing service while working on board ship as an ETO or undertaking equivalent duties.

## 5. Senior Electro-technical Officer (SETO) Endorsement

### 5.1 Guidance:

<sup>12</sup> Currently the appointed body is the International Association of Maritime Institutions (IAMI), who can be contacted through: [exemption@iami.org.uk](mailto:exemption@iami.org.uk).

<sup>13</sup> Currently the appointed body is the International Association of Maritime Institutions (IAMI), who can be contacted through: [exemption@iami.org.uk](mailto:exemption@iami.org.uk).



The term 'Senior Electro-technical Officer' (SETO) is not recognised by the STCW Convention. However, the UK is using the term to indicate an ETO who has exceeded the STCW requirements, both in terms of academic standard and service.

To obtain a SETO endorsement in your Certificate of Competency you must:

- (a) Hold a UK ETO CoC;
- (b) Have successfully completed a HND/Advanced Diploma, Foundation Degree or Degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering;
- (c) Meet the seagoing service requirements listed in section 5.2;
- (d) Hold an HELM management course completion certificate given by an MCA approved training provider;
- (e) Hold an High Voltage management certificate given by an MCA approved training provider;
- (f) Pass a SETO MCA examination.

## 5.2 Seagoing service requirement for SETO

Before being issued with a SETO endorsement the following seagoing service is required:

- (a) Complete 12 months' seagoing service as an ETO after being issued with an ETO CoC;
- (b) For existing ETOs only (see section 3.4), a total of 24 months' seagoing service as an ETO or carrying out similar duties<sup>14</sup>.

## 6. Seagoing Service Definitions and Requirements

- 6.1 Seagoing service is defined as time spent on board a ship, relevant to the issue of the certificate or other qualification being applied for. Seagoing service must be in the engineering department in the capacity of an ETO officer on seagoing ships of at least 750 kW in propulsion power. Service is calculated from the date of engagement to the date of discharge.
- 6.2 A month is defined as a calendar month or 30 days if made up of periods less than one month.
- 6.3 At least 6 months of the qualifying seagoing service must have been performed within the 5 years immediately preceding the issue of your CoC.
- 6.4 Seagoing service may be performed on vessels of any flag.
- 6.5 Seagoing service must be performed in merchant ships proceeding to sea. Proceeding to sea means, beyond the categorised waters around the coast of the UK or beyond the harbour limits for waters outside the UK.
- 6.6 If the ship you are serving on is in lay-up, at maintenance berth, extended anchorage or dry dock you may count up to 25% of this service or 3 months (whichever is the least) towards your qualifying service.
- 6.7 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

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<sup>14</sup> The route for existing ETOs ended on 1 January 2020. Existing ETOs should refer to your action plan for your SETO seagoing service requirements or complete the additional 12 months' seagoing service as an ETO after being issued with an ETO Certificate of Competency.



Navy discharge book entries or certificates of discharge. Entries must be supported by testimonials from the Master or Chief Engineer. The testimonials must cover your conduct and ability. Examples of seagoing service testimonials can be found in **Annex A**.

6.8 Seagoing service and shipboard training is an integral part of an MCA “approved training programme” and must be attained during the time permitted to complete the programme. If you fail to produce satisfactory evidence that you have followed a training programme approved by the MCA, required by the MCA, the approved appointed body on behalf of the MCA in your action plan, or you fail to satisfactorily complete your training record book, then, at the discretion of an MCA examiner, you may be required to complete additional seagoing service before being considered eligible for the issue of a CoC.

6.9 Before being considered for an MCA oral examination you are required to provide evidence of having completed the full amount of qualifying seagoing service and workshops skills training.

## 7. Ancillary Technical and Safety Course Certification

7.1 The ancillary technical 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).

7.2 The ancillary technical courses form part of the education and training specified in section A-III/6, of the STCW Code. The safety courses form part of the mandatory training for; emergency, occupational safety, security, medical care and survival functions specified in chapter A-VI of the STCW Code.

7.3 You must successfully complete **all** the required ancillary technical and safety training applicable to the regulation of your CoC.

| Ancillary Course Certificate   | Existing ETO (3.4) for an ETO CoC III/6 | ETO CoC III/6 | SETO CoC III/6 | 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 other than Fast 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            |                   |
| High Voltage (Management) <sup>c</sup>   | Optional                                | Yes           | Yes            | A-III/2             |                   |
| HELM (Operational)   | Yes                                     | Yes           |                | A-III/6             |                   |





|  |          |     |     |         |
|--|----------|-----|-----|---------|
| <b>HELM (Management)</b>                                 |          |     | Yes | A-III/2 |
| <b>MCA approved GMDSS Radio Maintenance <sup>d</sup></b> | Optional | Yes | Yes | N/A     |
| <b>MCA approved ENEM <sup>d</sup></b>                    | Optional | Yes | Yes | N/A     |

- 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 Certificates of Competency 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 please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1).<sup>15</sup>
- 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>16</sup>
- c – Certificates must be MCA-approved.
- d – Certificates must be MCA-approved.

#### 7.4 High Voltage

The High Voltage course forms part of the education and training required to obtain a UK CoC. A high voltage system (over 1000V) is where voltage is generated and distributed at high voltage or transformed to and distributed at high voltage. It does not include systems where high voltage is utilised locally e.g. ignition systems, radio transmission, radar and other navigational equipment.

If you are an existing ETO or are working in a similar capacity, qualifying under section 3.4, this course is optional. If you do not submit a course completion certificate for a High Voltage course at the management level, your CoC will not be valid for service on ships fitted with high voltage (over 1000V) systems.

#### 7.5 Electronic Navigation Equipment Maintenance (ENEM)

This training will provide you with the necessary knowledge and skill to maintain ships electronic navigation equipment.

If you are an existing ETO or are working in a similar capacity, qualifying under section 3.4, this course is optional. If you do not submit evidence of completing MCA accepted ENEM training, your CoC will contain the following limitation:

“not permitted to carry out maintenance on Navigational Systems”

If you have undertaken an MCA approved Foundation Degree or HND/Advanced Diploma, your course completion letter will provide you with the evidence that you have met this requirement, for the purposes of the CoC application procedure. However, your nautical college should still issue you with an ENEM course completion certificate.

You should carry the ENEM course completion certificate onboard the vessel you are serving on.

#### 7.6 The Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) Radio Maintenance

<sup>15</sup> Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1) (Insert Link).

<sup>16</sup> For further details please refer to MIN 643 (Insert Link).



This training will provide you with the requisite basic knowledge in electronics and radio engineering to enable you to maintain a ships radio communications equipment.

If you are an existing ETO or are working in a similar capacity, qualifying under section 3.4, this course is optional. If you do not submit evidence of completing MCA accepted GMDSS Radio Maintenance training, your CoC will contain the following limitation:

“not permitted to carry out maintenance on Radio Equipment”.

If you have undertaken an MCA approved Foundation Degree or HND/Advanced Diploma, your course completion letter will provide you with evidence that you have met this requirement, for the purposes of the CoC application procedure. However, your nautical college should still issue you with an GMDSS Radio Maintenance course completion certificate.

You should carry your GMDSS Radio Maintenance course completion certificate onboard the vessel you are serving on.

In the United Kingdom the issue, approval and monitoring of Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) certification is currently delegated to an associated body on behalf of the MCA. Further details are published in MIN 643.<sup>17</sup>

## 7.7 Human Element and Leadership Management (HELM) operational level

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 programme or MCA approved Cadetship training programme leading to the issue of an ETO CoC no additional training is required and you will not need to submit a course completion certificate. All other candidates will need to complete a standalone HELM Operational course given by an MCA approved training provider.

HELM Management is a standalone course. You must submit a course completion certificate, given by an MCA approved training provider, regardless of the education and training route you have followed.

## 8. Approved Education and Training Schemes

8.1 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 nautical colleges that offer training and education leading to the issue of an STCW CoC. Details of the approval process are contained in **Annex B**.

8.2 Approved ETO programmes of education and training consist of courses leading either to an MCA approved Foundation Degree or Higher National Diploma (HND)/Advanced Diploma. These are run by MCA approved colleges and consist of alternating periods of seagoing service and college time. At the end of the course you will be issued with a qualification from the awarding body and a course completion letter from your college. This letter must be submitted to the MCA with your other documentation when applying for the issue of a CoC.

8.3 If you are not following an approved ETO programme, you will need to apply to an MCA approved nautical college who will issue you with an action plan that will identify the

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<sup>17</sup> For further details please refer to MIN 643 (Insert Link).



HND/Advanced Diploma modules you need to complete in order to meet the ETO standard. Once you have successfully completed the modules and examinations identified in your action plan you will be issued with a certificate of achievement and a course completion letter by the college. This letter must be submitted to the MCA with your other documentation when applying for the issue of a CoC.

- 8.4 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.
- 8.5 Contact details for nautical colleges offering MCA-approved Foundation Degrees or MCA approved HND/Advanced Diploma schemes are available from the MCA website: search [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for “nautical colleges”.

## 9. Medical Fitness and Eyesight Standards

- 9.1 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>18</sup>. Details on the application of those regulations are found in MSN 1886, or any subsequent amendments.<sup>19</sup>
- 9.2 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 have 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).
- 9.3 For any CoC you must produce a valid medical fitness certificate, either:
- (a) The UK medical fitness certificate, currently known as an ENG1, 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 ENG1.

Updated lists are available from the MCA website.<sup>20</sup>

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

## 10. Application Procedure

- 10.1 The application form, MSF 4259, details the procedure and fee to obtain an ETO CoC. You must complete this and submit it to the MCA with the relevant fee and documents listed on the form.

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<sup>18</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>19</sup> Details of MCA Approved Medical Certificates are available from: [www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates](http://www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates).

<sup>20</sup> Please see the MCA’s Seafarer Medical Certificate guidance for further information regarding MCA-approved medical practitioners and recognised equivalent certificates: [www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates](http://www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates).



10.2 The application form can be found on our website: go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “MSF 4259”.<sup>21</sup>

10.3 If you meet the requirements specified in the application form you will be issued with a Notice of Eligibility (NOE).

## 11. Notice of Eligibility (NOE)

11.1 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 examination.

11.2 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>22</sup>;
- An attested copy of your passport;
- The required photos for your CoC (see application form);
- Proof of the required seagoing service applicable to the CoC being applied for;
- 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);
- A completed Training Record Book;
- A letter from the college confirming your attendance on the ETO programme;
- If applicable, your MCA action plan and/or MCA approved course(s) letter that exempts you from the requirements of the courses and/or examinations.

11.3 **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>23</sup>

## 12. MCA Oral Examination

12.1 If you are undertaking the ETO oral examination, prior to the exam you must be able to provide your MCA Training Record Book to the MCA on request.

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

12.3 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.

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<sup>21</sup> MSF 4259: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/certificate-of-competency-electro-technical-officer-msf-4259](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/certificate-of-competency-electro-technical-officer-msf-4259)

<sup>22</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>23</sup> If you do not pass your oral exam within this timescale, your application will be rejected and the appropriate fee will be taken.



- 12.4 The MCA examiner will record the result of your oral examination.
- 12.5 **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.
- 12.6 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.
- 12.7 If a candidate fails an oral examination re-sits may be taken at the following intervals:
- **Second attempt** – at 2 weeks after the initial examination;
  - **Third attempt** – at least 2 weeks after the second attempt;
  - **Subsequent attempts** – at least 3 months after the previous attempt.
- 12.8 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>24</sup>
- 12.9 The oral examination syllabus can be found on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).<sup>25</sup>

### 13. The issue of your Certificate of Competency

- 13.1 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 of the documentary evidence confirming you have met the required standard.
- 13.2 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 equivalent) must be valid at the time we issue your CoC. Any outstanding fees will need to have been received by the MCA before an NOE or CoC can be issued.
- 13.3 **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.**
- 13.4 Further information and guidance is available from our website go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search “MCA ETO”.

### 14. Fraudulent Certificates and Seagoing Service

- 14.1 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;
  - Check and verify ancillary and safety course certificates;

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<sup>24</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).

<sup>25</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).



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

14.2 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.

14.3 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: [engineering@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:engineering@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: [infoline@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:infoline@mcga.gov.uk)

Published: October 2022  
Please note that all addresses and telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing

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***Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas***



**Sea Service Testimonial**

(\*Trainee Electro-technical Officer/Electro-technical Rating/electrical engineer/electrician/other please state.....)  
.....)

**Company Address/Contact Details**

Company Name: .....

Address: .....  
.....  
.....

Contact Details: Tel: ..... Fax: .....  
E-mail: .....

**PART 1 – OPERATIONAL SERVICE**

**This is to certify that:**

Full name of Candidate .....

Date of Birth .....

Discharge Book Number .....

Has served on:

Name of ship ..... IMO Number.....

From ..... To .....(Dates)

Total propulsion power (MCR) ..... kW

Type and make of propelling machinery .....

Type and make of Generators .....

Distribution voltages .....

During this period the above-named candidate:

- a) Regularly carried out duties in connection assisting in the monitoring and maintenance of the ships electrical systems
- b) Was granted no leave of absence\*
- c) Was granted leave of absence as follows\*:

.....

\*Delete as appropriate



**PART 2 – TESTIMONIAL**

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

Ability: .....

.....

.....

Conduct: .....

.....

.....

.....

General comments: .....

.....

.....

.....

**OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT**

**Name (block letters) of Chief Engineer Officer:** .....

**Certificate Grade, Number, Expiry Date, and Issuing Country:** .....

**Signature of Chief Engineer Officer:** .....

**Ship's/Company stamp and date:**

**In exceptional circumstances this testimonial may be signed by a responsible official of the Company, who holds an engineer officer Certificate of Competency and has knowledge of the candidate's sea experience.**





## **Approval of Education and Training Programmes**

In accordance with regulation 48 of the 2022 Regulations, all training providers planning to offer education and training leading to the issue of a CoC will need to obtain MCA approval. The requirements for that approval in relation to training for Yacht Masters and officers are set out in this Annex. All training, assessment and examinations must be taken at an MCA approved training provider. Details of who is approved by MCA to deliver training modules and short course training programmes are available from MCA Marine Offices or the MCA Seafarer Services Branch.

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.

In accordance with STCW Convention Regulation I/6 and I/8 and in accordance with the provisions of section A-I/6 and A-I/8 of the STCW Code, as implemented in the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2022, Statutory Instrument 2022 No. XXX. Training providers wishing to gain MCA approval to deliver training must have in place a recognised Quality Management System (**QMS**) with appropriate auditing and accreditation. An initial approach to the MCA should be made before expending time and resources developing courses. Please note that even when the MCA visits a training establishment, the issue of a Course Approval Certificate is not foregone conclusion.

### **MCA Approved Cadetship (UK Cadet Training)**

In addition to MCA approval, all colleges wishing to offer UK cadet training programmes need to gain additional approval in order to qualify for the current funding available from The Government Support for Maritime Training Scheme (SMarT). Details of which are available in MGN 455 or any subsequent publication.

### **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 between the college and a sponsoring company to ensure adequate sea berths<sup>26</sup> for cadets on appropriate vessels (refer to section 4 of MSN 1857 (Amendment 1) and MSN 1857 (Amendment 1) **Annexes F and G**). Attending these MCA programmes run by MCA approved training providers will allow for a reduced rate of seagoing service as detailed in section 3.2 of MSN 1857 (Amendment 1).

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<sup>26</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.



## **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 in 3.2 of MSN 1857 (Amendment 1).

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 4 of MSN 1857 (Amendment 1) and MSN 1857 (Amendment 1) **Annex F**).

## **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 8 of this Notice and the applicable Terms of Reference detailed in MSN 1857 (Amendment 1) 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 42(2)(a) in the 2022 regulations).**

Nautical colleges will need to develop an education and training programme that incorporates the requirement for delivering the underpinning knowledge and training required for STCW Electro-Technical Officers.

For non-MCA approved cadetships, they will also receive separate Terms and Conditions subject to approval. Terms of Reference for 'Overseas Collaborative Programmes' and 'MCA-Approved Cadetships Programmes' will be agreed upon between the MCA and the parent college. For guidance, examples of these are included in MSN 1857 (Amendment 1) **Annexes D to H**. 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.

## **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 8 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 CoC);
- 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.

The introduction of any new course that is developed by an MCA approved training provider leading to the issue of a CoC or 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.

### **Seagoing 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. 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.

