



Maritime &  
Coastguard  
Agency

# Application for a UK Discharge Book and / or a British Seaman's Card

**IMPORTANT** – Before you begin, please read all the Guidance on pages 7 to 11 and use the checklist. We cannot process your application without all required information, or if the information provided is unclear. Please send the original, 'wet' signed application to the address provided. Photocopies or scans cannot be accepted. The document will be produced from the information contained in this application.

Please clearly mark all boxes that are relevant to your application:

UK Discharge Book		British Seaman's Card		Delivery	
First Issue		First Issue		UK Delivery	
Continuation Issue *		Renewal Issue		International Delivery (Payments Note 9)	
Replacement Issue *		Replacement Issue			

\* Please enter the document number of your existing UK Discharge Book here: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part A: Personal Details

Title <i>(not compulsory)</i> :		Date of birth:	DD / MM / YYYY
Surname:			
Forename(s) <i>(include middle names)</i> :			
Previous names <i>(if applicable)</i> :			
Place of Birth <i>(town or city)</i> :			
Height in Metres: (conversion chart page 10)		Country of Birth:	
Colour of Eyes:		Nationality <i>(British Nationality Act 1981)</i> :	
National Insurance Number <i>(mandatory for BSCs)</i> :			
Distinguishing Marks <i>(20 characters maximum)</i> :			

		Full Home Address	Address for return of documents <i>(if different from Home Address)</i>	
Address				
Town / City				
Postcode				
Country				
Contact Telephone Number(s)				
Email Address				
Next of Kin	Full Name		Relationship to you	
	Their address			

## Part B: Declaration for a UK Discharge Book

I wish to apply for a UK Discharge Book. I confirm the personal details provided in Part A are correct and I am aware that I may be required to supply supporting evidence.

I declare that (\* delete as applicable):

- a. I am employed / have been offered employment\* on a United Kingdom registered vessel,

**OR**

- b. I am a United Kingdom seafarer with the Right of Abode in the UK and am employed / have been offered employment\* on a non-United Kingdom registered vessel and I am unable to obtain a discharge book from the Flag State of that vessel for the following reason(s) **(please provide full details)**:

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- c. I have not at any time held a seaman's document containing the same information as a UK Discharge Book issued by one of the Governments listed in Note 3,

**OR**

- d. I am applying for replacement of my existing UK Discharge Book (note: if your existing UK Discharge Book is full, please submit it with this application or enclose clear copies of the pages which include your personal details and your latest service entries. If, however, your UK Discharge Book has been lost or damaged, a full explanation of the circumstances should be provided in Part F),

**AND (applicable to all applicants)**

- e. I am aware that it is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in order to obtain a UK Discharge Book and hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the details provided in this application are correct.

Signature:		Date:	DD / MM / YYYY
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## Part C: Declaration for a British Seaman's Card

I wish to apply for a British Seaman's Card. I confirm the personal details provided in Part A are correct and I am aware that I may be required to supply supporting evidence.

I declare that:

- a. I am a British citizen with the Right of Abode in the United Kingdom,

**AND**

- b. I am currently employed as a seafarer and am applying for the first issue of a British Seaman's Card and do not already hold a seaman's identity document issued by the United Kingdom Government or any of the Governments listed in Note 4,

**OR**

- c. I am applying for replacement of my British Seaman's Card (note – if your existing British Seaman's Card has expired, it should be submitted with this application. If, however, your British Seaman's Card has been lost or damaged, a full explanation of the circumstances should be provided in Part F),

**AND (applicable to all applicants)**

- d. I am aware that it is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in order to obtain a British Seaman's Card and hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the details provided in this application are correct.

Signature:		Date:	DD / MM / YYYY
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**Part D: Vessel Owners Declaration for a UK Discharge Book (Required for new applications and Continuations or Replacements where last entry is over 3 years old)**

**IMPORTANT** – This **MUST** be completed by your current or prospective vessel owner in block capitals, with original, ‘wet’ signatures and stamps, selecting **either** Option 1 **or** Option 2 as appropriate. Please ensure signatories (if not vessel owner) provide Letters of Authorisation from the vessel owners confirming they are eligible to sign on their behalf (\*Delete as appropriate).

I am the \*owner /authorised signatory of the vessel declared below and confirm the applicant (full name)..... in the role of ....., holds a MLC contract of employment and STCW-PSSR certificate (see guidance notes), is integral to the operations of the vessel and,

**1.** is serving/will serve on the following UK registered vessel:  
 Name of Vessel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Registered port: \_\_\_\_\_ Official Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

**2.** is a United Kingdom seafarer with the Right of Abode in the United Kingdom and will serve on the following non-United Kingdom registered vessel, but is unable to obtain a Discharge book from or acceptable to, the Flag State of the vessel for the following reason(s): **(please provide full details)**

Name of Vessel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Registered port: \_\_\_\_\_ Official Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country of Registration \_\_\_\_\_

**AND**

I understand that it is an offence to knowingly make a false statement in order to obtain a UK Discharge Book and hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the details provided in this application are correct.

Declarant full name		Declarant Role	
Signature of Declarant		Date	DD / MM / YYYY
Declarant email			

**Please note:** if a company or vessel does not have a seal or stamp, they must provide an original letter on company headed paper confirming this.

Vessel / Owners Company Name	Ship / Owners Company Seal

**Part E: Employers Declaration for a British Seaman's Card  
(Required for new applications and renewal applications if expiry is over 3 years ago)**

**IMPORTANT** – This **MUST** be completed by your current or prospective vessel owner in block capitals, with original, 'wet' signatures and stamps. Please ensure signatories (if not vessel owner) provide Letters of Authorisation from the vessel owners confirming they are eligible to sign on their behalf.

I am the \*owner /authorised signatory of the vessel declared below and confirm the applicant (full name)..... in the role of ....., is a United Kingdom seafarer with the Right of Abode in the United Kingdom, holds a MLC contract of employment and Safety Training Certificate and Watchkeeping (STCW), and is serving:

on the vessel (vessel name): \_\_\_\_\_

**at sea**, in the role of: \_\_\_\_\_.

I understand that it is an offence to knowingly make a false statement in order to obtain a British Seaman's Card and hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the details provided in this application are correct.

Declarant full name		Declarant Role	
Signature of Declarant		Date	DD / MM / YYYY
Declarant email			

**Please note:** if a company or vessel does not have a seal or stamp, they must provide an original letter on company headed paper confirming this.

Vessel / Employers / Company Name	Ship / Company Seal

**Part F: Replacement of a UK Discharge Book or British Seaman’s Card**

Please explain what happened to your previous DB/BSC, indicating how it was lost or damaged (where applicable, please include Police Incident numbers & enclose copies of any such reports):

If you hold a copy of the lost document, please include a copy with your application.

**Part G: Counter Signatory (all applicants)**

**IMPORTANT** – To be completed by a British Citizen, of appropriate standing (see Guidance Note 6) who has known you for at least two years. This person must also counter sign one of your photographs, by adding their name, signature and the following statement to the reverse of this: “I certify this is a true likeness of (your full name)”.

I, (Name of Declarant) \_\_\_\_\_ am a British Citizen, in the profession of \_\_\_\_\_, and I certify that this applicant has been known to me for \_\_\_\_\_ years, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the details provided in this application are true and correct.

Signature of declarant:		
Date:	DD / MM / YYYY	Office Stamp (if available):
Address:		

**Please note:**

- Please ensure that two identical colour passport-style photographs are submitted **per** document sought (i.e. four identical photographs for a DB & BSC).
- If you cannot provide a Counter Signature, please supply a certified colour copy of your passport.
- **Please do not forward your original passport to our offices.**

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**OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

(Do not throw away)

Photograph	Office of Issue, Date and Stamp	Cashier's Stamp and Receipt Number

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**Part H: Privacy Notice (all applicants)**

We collect your personal information to enable us to carry out our official duties and ensure that our services meet your needs. Once your payment has been processed, all the financial details you have provided are securely destroyed.

For more information on how we use your personal information and your rights to access the details we hold, please see the full privacy statement on our website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency>

**This is to confirm that I give my permission for the MCA to contact my employer direct on my behalf for any information/documentation that may be missing from my application and to act directly for me:**

Signature:		Date:	DD / MM / YYYY
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# Guidance Notes

## 1. Accepted Formats

- (a) Please note that photocopied or electronic versions of the application form **cannot be accepted**. The application **must** be submitted in its original paper format and contain original, 'wet' signatures and stamps/seals.
- (b) If a stamp/seal cannot be provided for the relevant Declaration(s), please provide a letter from the vessel owner (Part D), vessel owner (Part E), on company-headed paper, which confirms that this is not available.

## 2. General Eligibility (all applicants)

- (a) Please do not apply for a Discharge Book or British Seaman's Card if you are not a seafarer. For further information, including roles excluded from the definition of this term, please consult [MGN 471](#) (especially Annex 1 and 2).
- (b) Evidence must be provided by way of Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) personal safety and social responsibility training (PSSR) and a seafarer employment agreement or equivalent terms and conditions of employment plus letter from shipowner attesting you are engaged to work onboard. Section D can be signed by authorized representative on proof (First Issue only)
- (c) We reserve the right to ask applicants to provide further information from their employer, in order to establish if they are a seafarer.
- (d) Further eligibility information specific to Discharge Books and British Seaman's Card can be found in Note 3 and 4, respectively.

## 3. A Discharge Book will NOT be issued if you:

- (a) are employed on a vessel which is not registered with any Flag State.
- (b) are a non-UK seafarer employed on a vessel that is registered outside of the UK.
- (c) are employed as Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel.
- (d) are employed on a vessel which does not go to sea.
- (e) are employed on a pleasure vessel but do not receive any wages for your employment.
- (f) are employed on a vessel engaged in coastal voyages around the UK solely for the purpose of trials of the vessel, its machinery or equipment, where you are not ordinarily employed as a master or seafarer.
- (g) are employed by the Crown and are not ordinarily employed as a master or seafarer.
- (h) are employed on a vessel solely in connection with its construction, alteration, repair or testing.
- (i) already hold a UK Discharge Book (unless your book is full, and you are applying for a continuation).
- (j) If you already hold a document containing substantially the same information as a UK Discharge Book issued by one of the Governments listed below:

Bangladesh	Barbados	Canada	Falkland Islands	Fiji
Ghana	Guyana	Hong Kong	India	Republic of Ireland
Isle of Man	Jamaica	Kenya	Kiribati	Malaysia
Malta	Mauritius	Nigeria	Pakistan	Papua New Guinea
Saint Lucia	Seychelles	Sierra Leone	Singapore	South Africa
Sri Lanka	Tanzania	Tonga	Trinidad & Tobago	Tuvalu
Western Samoa	Zambia			

**A UK Discharge Book is not a travel document please refer to MGN 685 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mgn-685-mf-issue-of-discharge-books-to-seafarers> for the latest guidance on eligibility**

#### 4. A British Seamans Card will NOT be issued if you:

- (a) are employed on a ship belonging to a general lighthouse authority.
- (b) receive little or no wages (unless you are a cadet).
- (c) are not a citizen of the United Kingdom or a British Protected Person employed on a ship registered outside of the United Kingdom, Channel Isles, the Isle of Man, or any colony, protectorate, protected state or associated state.
- (d) you hold a valid seaman's identity document issued by one of the Governments listed below:

Antigua & Barbuda	Australia	Bahamas	Bangladesh	Barbados
Belize	Botswana	Canada	Republic of Cyprus	Dominica
Falkland Islands	Fiji	Gambia	Ghana	Grenada
Guyana	Hong Kong	India	Republic of Ireland	Isle of Man
Jamaica	Kenya	Kiribati	Lesotho	Malawi
Malta	Mauritius	Nauru	New Zealand	Nigeria
Pakistan	Papua New Guinea	Saint Lucia	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	Seychelles
Sierra Leone	Singapore	Solomon Islands	Sri Lanka	Swaziland
Tanzania	Tonga	Trinidad & Tobago	Tuvalu	Uganda
Vanuatu	Western Samoa	Zambia	Zimbabwe	

Eligibility for a British Seaman's Card guidance can be found in MGN 686 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mgn-686-mf-eligibility-for-british-seamans-card/mgn-686-mf-eligibility-for-british-seamans-card>

#### 5. Photographs

- (a) You will need to supply **two** identical colour passport-sized photographs for **each** document that you are applying for. They should not be cut-down versions of a larger picture. Note these photos will be 'cropped' by this office to 35mm high 25mm wide to fit the respective document.
- (b) These must be printed to a professional standard, be clear and in focus; they must show a close-up of your full head and shoulders; they must contain no other objects or people and you must appear in clear contrast to the background.
- (c) Your photographs must:
  - i. Show you facing forwards and looking straight at the camera
  - ii. You must have a plain expression and your mouth must be closed
  - iii. Your eyes must be open and visible and not have hair in front of your eyes
  - iv. You must not have a head covering (unless it is for medical or religious purposes)
  - v. You must not have anything covering your face; you must not be wearing sunglasses or tinted glasses (you can be wearing ordinary glasses if necessary)
  - vi. Your eyes must be clearly visible without any glare or reflection).
- (d) One of your photographs must be countersigned by the same person who has countersigned the application at Part G. Please see Note 6 for further information.



## 6. Counter Signatory

- (a) Part G must be completed only by a British Citizen of appropriate standing, who has known you for two years or more.
- (b) This person must not be a member of your family.
- (c) Examples of appropriate standing for your counter signatory include medical or legal practitioners, civil servants, bank or public officials, police officers, MPs, Justices of the Peace, religious ministers, senior officials of shipping companies, trade union officials or any other person of similar standing.
- (d) The counter signatory must write their name and signature on the back of one of your photographs, along with the statement:

*"I certify this is a true likeness of (applicant's full name)."*

- (e) If you are unable to provide this, please provide a copy of your passport. Please see Note 7 for further information.

## 7. Passport Copies

- (a) A copy of your passport will be required if you are applying for a British Seaman's Card (UK passports **only**).
- (b) If you are applying for a Discharge Book but cannot provide a counter signatory, then a copy of your passport will also be required (non-UK passports accepted for applicants aboard UK-registered vessels).
- (c) For your own security, please **do not** post your physical passport to us.

## GDPR Compliance

**For GDPR compliance we are unable to contact your employer direct on your behalf for missing information/documentation unless we have your express permission to do so. Please read 'SECTION H' and sign and date if you agree.**

## 8. Postal Address

All postal applications should be submitted to the following address:

**REGISTRY OF SHIPPING AND SEAMEN  
Anchor Court,  
Keen Road  
CARDIFF, CF24 5JW**

**TEL: 0203 908 5200**

**E-mail:**

**[Seafarers.registry@mcqa.gov.uk](mailto:Seafarers.registry@mcqa.gov.uk)**

## 9. Payment

Please use the secure Gov Pay payment site to pay the fee. Links for the options are as follows:

**a. Discharge Book- £55.00**

<https://www.gov.uk/payments/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/discharge-book>

**b. British Seamans Card- £55.00**

<https://www.gov.uk/payments/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/british-seamans-card>

**c. Discharge Book and BSC- £110.00**

<https://www.gov.uk/payments/maritime-and-coastguard-agency-rss/discharge-book-and-bsc>

**d. Courier- £35.00 (this only applies to documents being sent outside the UK)**

<https://www.gov.uk/payments/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/courier>

### Service levels available

- (a) For a postal application for a first issue, continuation or replacement Discharge Book and/or British Seaman's Card, completed applications will usually be processed within **ten working days**, but this is subject to change.
- (b) An emergency counter service is available at selective offices by appointment only, and is subject to certain criteria being met. This incurs additional fees. Contact details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/about/access-and-opening>

### Examples Height Conversion Chart (feet to metres)

4ft 9"	1.45m
4ft 10"	1.47m
4ft 11"	1.50m
5ft 0"	1.52m
5ft 1"	1.55m

5ft 2"	1.57m
5ft 3"	1.60m
5ft 4"	1.63m
5ft 5"	1.65m
5ft 6"	1.68m

5ft 7"	1.70m
5ft 8"	1.73m
5ft 9"	1.75m
5ft 10"	1.78m
5ft 11"	1.80m

6ft 0"	1.83m
6ft 1"	1.85m
6ft 2"	1.88m
6ft 3"	1.90m
6ft 4"	1.93m

## CHECKLIST

### 10. Documents required if applying for a:

First Issue Discharge Book and/or British Seaman's Card:

Item	✓/X
Application MSF4509 (specifically Parts A, B and/or C, D and/or E, and G).	
x2 passport style photographs, per document applied for (see Note 5).	
Payment of the requisite fee.	
If seeking a BSC a copy of your UK passport, certified as <i>a true copy of the original document</i> will also be required (see Note 7).	
Evidence of STCW personal safety and social responsibility training (PSSR)	
A Seafarer employment agreement or equivalent terms and conditions of employment	

Continuation Issue Discharge Book and/or British Seaman's Card:

Item	✓/X
Application MSF4509 (specifically Parts A, B and/or C, and G. If your last voyage is over 3 years or your BSC has expired over 3 years ago you will need new Parts D and/or E. We reserve the right to request Part D/E for periods less than 3 years.	
x2 passport style photographs, per document applied for (see Note 5).	
Payment of the requisite fee.	
For a DB we require sight of your original existing book or copies of photograph/information page and last page of entries demonstrating that this is complete. For a BSC we require the original existing document for cancellation. All original documents supplied will be returned to you	

Replacement Issue Discharge Book and/or British Seaman's Card:

Item	✓/X
Application MSF4509 (specifically Parts A, B and/or C, F and G. We reserve the right to request Part D/E for periods less than 3 years.	
x2 passport style photographs, per document applied for (see Note 5)	
Payment of the requisite fee	
If your document(s) were stolen, please provide Police Incident numbers & enclose copies of any such reports	
If you are seeking an alteration to your existing document(s) (e.g. if you have changed your name), please return the original document with relevant certified copies of the supporting documents (e.g. deed poll, passport, marriage/divorce certificates or gender realignment certificate)	