

CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY
WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS ADMINISTERED BY
THE SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
THE MARITIME AND COASTGUARD AGENCY
REGULATIONS FOR CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

Maritime and Coastguard Agency
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SQA
The Optima Building
58 Robertson Street
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SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Administrative arrangements for written examinations conducted by SQA for and on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

Centres are reminded that these arrangements may be changed from time to time by SQA.

This publication gives details of the administrative arrangements relating to the conduct of written examinations forming part of Certificates of Competency for Deck Officers and Marine Engineer Officers in the Merchant Navy and in Fishing Vessels and Engineer Officer (Yacht).

1 Introduction

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (referred to hereafter as the MCA) is an Executive Agency in the Department for Transport (DfT). One of its responsibilities is the issue of Certificates of Competency for Deck Officers and Marine Engineer Officers in the Merchant Navy, Certificates of Competency for Deck Officers and Marine Engineer Officers for Fishing and Engineer Officer (Yacht/SV) Certificates of Competency.

For details of the above statutory certificates (and others) reference should be made to the appropriate publication(s) issued from time to time by the MCA and available from www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency.

Please note that these publications may be updated/amended from time to time and you should ensure you have the most up to date information.

Approved SQA/MCA centres offer courses leading to examinations for the Certificates of Competency: information on courses will normally be available from these centres.

Written examinations for the Certificates of Competency are administered for and on behalf of the MCA by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). The examinations currently offered by SQA are listed in Appendix A.

The examinations are prepared and moderated by people involved in the industry and/or training, and approved by the MCA.

Correspondence or enquiries regarding the examinations should be directed to:

Contract Operations
SQA
The Optima Building
58 Robertson Street
GLASGOW
G2 8DQ

E-mail: mca@sqa.org.uk
Tel: 0345 213 5976
Website: www.sqa-mcaexams.org.uk

2 Administration of written examinations leading to Certificates of Competency

2.1 *Timetable*

The timetable for examinations is produced by SQA in consultation with the MCA, International Association of Maritime Institutions (IAMI) and the examination centres. Examination dates and times for the twelve month period August to July are generally available in the previous June and published as an MCA Marine Information Note, available from www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency.

The examination timetable is published on the SQA/MCA database.

Yacht/Small Vessel Engineer Officer examinations (excluding 043-11 and 043-12) can be added to the timetable by submitting a request by email to SQA. The request must be submitted a minimum of **15 days** prior to the examination date.

Note: centres will be invoiced for a minimum of FIVE candidates for each additional examination date requested.

2.2 *Eligibility*

General: it is the responsibility of candidates to ensure that they comply with requirements governing entry to courses and examinations **before** embarking on a course of study. Requirements are determined by the MCA and are given in the appropriate publication.

Proof of identity – candidates must produce a discharge book, passport or other acceptable form of identification which includes a photograph before entry to an examination is allowed.

2.3 *Exemptions*

The MCA may grant exemptions from certain examination subjects. Applications for exemptions should be submitted to the MCA, or in the case of non-approved Engineering Diplomas and Degrees to the IAMI engineering sub group secretary, by the candidate and must be supported by appropriate written evidence.

Please note that SQA does NOT have the authority to grant exemptions on behalf of the MCA.

2.4 Applications

Centres should input applications onto the SQA/MCA database before the closing date. The candidate name on the application form must be the same as the name shown their birth certificate or passport. Application forms must be retained securely by centre for a minimum period of one year.

Requests for special assessment arrangements must be submitted in writing to SQA at least 4 weeks prior to the examination date.

Closing date

The closing date for applications will normally be **10 days** prior to the examination date or the date of the first subject examination for EACH course. The closing date for EACH subject is displayed in the Examination Timetable on the SQA/MCA database.

The number of examination papers dispatched to centres is based on the number of enrolments received by the closing date. Enrolments submitted after the closing date will only be accepted if the centre has sufficient examination papers to accommodate the additional late candidates enrolments.

Late Applications

SQA will still accept applications which are entered up to the examination date. In the case of applications made **after the examination date**, SQA may accept such applications provided they are accompanied by an email from the Examinations Officer explaining the circumstances and supporting the candidate's case for application. If the application is accepted, the centre will be invoiced for the applications including the appropriate late fees.

SQA reserves the right to refuse late applications where the above conditions are not complied with.

It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure that SQA is informed, in sufficient time, if additional examination papers are required for late applications.

2.5 Fees

The current fees are shown on the relevant application form. Examination centres will be invoiced monthly for enrolments for examinations that have taken place prior to the 28th of the month.

Examination centres will be notified of any changes to fees before their introduction.

2.6 Transfers

A centre may grant an enrolment fee transfer if the candidate was a non-sit in the specific subject no more than 10 months prior to the examination date the candidate now wishes to enrol on.

If a centre grants an enrolment fee transfer they must tick the transfer "check box" on the database when enrolling the candidate onto the subject. After the diet the centre will be invoiced the transfer fee for each enrolment submitted with the transfer check box ticked. Combined subjects with a single enrolment fee will incur a single transfer fee.

Note – If a centre ticks the transfer check box when the above condition is NOT met, they will be invoiced for the full subject enrolment fee.

2.7 *Candidate number*

A unique candidate number will be allocated by SQA/MCA database. Candidates should retain this unique candidate number for all examinations.

2.8 *Candidate address card*

The Candidate address card shows the individual candidate number, name, DOB and address. The examination results will be sent to the address shown on the card. Amendments to the details held must be notified to SQA within **one week** of the examination date. Candidates who fail to do this and request a change after the issue of results will be charged for replacement results.

Note – Centres can amend a candidate address on the SQA/MCA database, Name and DOB changes must be notified to SQA for amendment

2.9 *Candidate lists*

Before each examination date, centres will be provided with an alphabetical list of candidates enrolled for each subject.

The Examination Officer should ensure that all late enrolments are input on the SQA/MCA database before the examination starts. After the late enrolments have been input an updated Candidate list must be printed from the SQA/MCA database.

After each examination, centres must send on the **same day** the candidate workbooks in alphabetical order and the candidate list to the designated marker. **Where no candidates present themselves for an examination it is still essential that the candidate list is sent to the designated marker, with candidate marked non-sit “N”.**

Note – All candidate workbooks must be sent by Special Delivery or Parcel Force (no more than 48 hour delivery)

2.10 *Examination dates and times*

Candidates must ensure that they are present in the appropriate examination room at their centre at least **15 minutes** before the start of an examination.

Examinations must be taken at the UK times published in the SQA/MCA timetable of examinations, i.e. examinations held outside the UK must be sat at the same time as the UK examinations.

2.11 Duties of Examination Officers

- a) An Examination Officer must be nominated by each examination centre. All examination material will be sent to him/her.
- b) The Examination Officer must notify SQA of any discrepancies on receipt of examination material. The Enrolment Summary Report details the examination materials sent to the centre.
- c) Examination papers are sent to centres in sealed envelopes in advance of each diet and must be kept in secure, lock fast storage. The sealed envelopes must be opened in the examination room by the Examination Officer, the invigilator or other responsible person in the presence of the candidates not more than **five minutes** before the examination starting time. **Where no candidates present themselves for an examination the examination papers must be returned to SQA in their SEALED envelopes.**
- d) Examination rooms should be laid out in such a way as to minimise any possibility of collusion between candidates. Wall charts, maps or any other material on display in the room likely to be of assistance to candidates must be removed.
- e) The Examination Officer should ensure there is a procedure for checking the toilets prior to the start of each examination.
- f) The Examination Officer shall ensure that sufficient properly briefed invigilators (INV/REMIT) are present at each examination. There should be a minimum of two invigilators for up to 30 candidates in one room, plus an additional invigilator for every additional 30 candidates.
- g) The Examination Officer shall ensure that the invigilators appointed must:
 - be independent of the centre department
 - NOT be a close relative of the centre department staff
 - NOT have specific subject knowledge of the examination subject
- h) At the end of each examination, the Examination Officer will collect all completed workbooks from the invigilators and will ensure that these, along with the invigilator's reports and candidate lists, are despatched, in alphabetical order, to the relevant markers without delay.
- i) The Examination Officer should ensure that appropriate examination room and invigilation arrangements are made for candidates granted additional time.

2.12 Conduct of examinations

- a) Centres are responsible for the administration and supervision of examinations. Examinations must be open to inspection at any time by representatives of the MCA and/or SQA.

Note: Where the SQA conducts drop in visits to overseas centres, the centre would be required to pay travel and subsistence expenses, plus the SQA daily rate for staff costs.

- b) No noise or other disturbance to the candidates must be permitted in the vicinity of the examination room.

- c) Entry to the examination room is only to be permitted to:
- candidates
 - invigilators
 - the Examination Officer at the request of SQA
 - representatives of SQA and the MCA
 - centre staff in case of emergency
- d) Before an examination starts, an invigilator will read out the Instructions to Candidates (Form INV1) provided by SQA, making particular reference to the MCA policy on cheating. The Instructions to Candidates are also on the back page of every candidate workbook.
- e) The sealed packages containing examination papers should be opened in the examination room and examination papers distributed in the presence of candidates, not more than **five minutes** before the starting time.
- f) No candidate may enter an examination room more than **30 minutes** after the start of the examination, and no candidate may leave during the first hour, except in the case of illness. **Candidates arriving late must not be allowed any additional time.**
- g) Candidates must not bring any books, notes or other aids into an examination room, other than those specifically mentioned on the front covers of examination papers.
- Mere possession of any unauthorised materials may result in disqualification.**
- h) A candidate who becomes ill during an examination and has to leave the room will be allowed to return to the examination, provided he/she was supervised during the entire period of absence. The examination paper and workbook must remain in the examination room and the candidate must not be allowed additional time.
- i) A candidate who wishes to abandon the examination may leave after the **first hour**, but must **not** remove the examination paper and/or workbook.
- j) If the fire alarm sounds during an examination please refer to SQA's fire alarm evacuation procedure.
- k) Examination papers **MUST** not be removed from the examination room during the period of the examination.
- l) Invigilators should inform candidates when there are **15 minutes** remaining, candidates may not leave the examination room during the last **15 minutes**. Invigilators should inform candidate when there is **5 minutes** remaining in the examination.
- m) To ensure that examination conditions are uniform throughout all centres, no additional information or modification to the examination paper should be issued, except with the agreement of SQA, even in the event of a possible error in the examination paper. Candidates should be instructed to work the examination paper as printed.
- n) All workbooks, used or unused, are the property of SQA and invigilators must ensure that these are handed in before candidates leave the examination room.

2.13 *Irregular behaviour*

- a) Invigilators should pay particular attention to SQA's regulation on unauthorised material being brought into an examination room. Invigilators should be on the alert for candidates suspected of aiding or attempting to aid another candidate, or obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another candidate.
- b) Where appropriate, a list of the materials permitted is shown on the front outer cover of the examination paper.
- c) Where a candidate is found in possession of unauthorised material or is suspected of copying, his/her workbook must be withdrawn and endorsed by the invigilator as having been used prior to the incident. A fresh workbook will be issued and the candidate permitted to continue the examination. The candidate will not be allocated additional time. Any unauthorised material will be confiscated and a full report of the circumstances sent to SQA on the day of the examination, along with all relevant material and workbooks.
- d) For cases of serious disorderly conduct, the invigilator is authorised to discontinue the examination for the candidate(s) concerned, expelling the candidate(s) from the examination room, after taking possession of the examination paper, workbook and any material relating to the irregularity.
- e) Where an irregularity is detected after an examination, full details of the circumstances and all relevant materials must be sent to SQA.
- f) SQA, in consultation with the MCA, will be responsible for conducting an enquiry, reaching a decision and informing the centre and candidate of any action to be taken.
- g) Depending on the severity of the misconduct a candidate may be subject to additional penalties imposed by the MCA. The MCA's decision is final.

The circumstances of reported cases will be considered individually and such consideration may result in the candidate's script(s) being declared null and void and the candidate being barred from sitting any examinations, either for a given specified period or until further satisfactory sea service has been completed by the candidate.

2.14 *Issue of candidate results*

Candidate results are issued Royal Mail 1st Class post, normally **within 8 weeks** of the examination date. Results are sent to the address input on the SQA/MCA database and confirmed on the Candidate address card. (*see 2.8 Candidate address card*)

SQA cannot guarantee the delivery of results to addresses outside the UK. In some instances the overseas postal systems can result in 6-8 weeks delay in receipt of results.

This means that after any specific examination, candidates may not know their results before the next available examination date. Candidates are strongly advised to wait for their results before resubmitting an application for any subject. **No refunds will be made to candidates who enrol without knowing their result.**

SQA will not issue candidates' results by telephone/e-mail in ANY circumstances.

2.15 *Format of results*

Results letters notify candidates of their passes at that diet of examinations and include historical passes. Certificates are issued showing passes attained at the current diet. The candidate forename and surname input on the database and confirmed on the Candidate address card will be reproduced on the certificate. (see 2.8 *Candidate address card*)

2.16 *Certificates of Competency*

Centres are requested to inform candidates that Certificates of Competency are issued by the MCA, **not** by SQA.

2.17 *Timescale for achievement of Certificates of Competency*

Candidates must pass all relevant SQA/MCA written examinations and the MCA oral examination within a 3 years period prior to the date of issue of a certificate of competency. If candidates do not, any passes over 3 years old become invalid and candidates will have to attempt the subjects again.

2.18 *Candidate results statistics*

Centres can access examination subject statistics on the SQA/MCA database.

2.19 *Examination appeals procedures*

- a) **Appeals relating to the standard and/or the content of an examination paper**
Any appeal relating to the standard or content of an examination paper should be referred to IAMI for transmission to SQA/MCA. All such appeals must be made through the Head of Centre/Department or nominated deputy and must be received by SQA **within one month** of the examination.
- b) **Appeals against examination results.**
Prior to their issue, all examination results are scrutinised and approved by an MCA Examiner. **The decision of the MCA Examiner is final.** It is possible for candidates to request an administrative check on their papers. A fee is charged for this service – this is refundable if an error is detected. The request for an administrative check must be received within **eight weeks** of the results being issued.
Examination scripts are exempt from the Data Protection Act (2018) – Requests for access to personal data and will not be released under the terms of this Act.

Note: SQA is responsible only for the administration of examinations for and on behalf of the MCA and is therefore not able to comment on the marking or content of candidates' scripts.

2.20 *Lost certificates*

SQA certificates or results letters which have been lost may be replaced by SQA on payment of an administrative fee. Requests for replacement documents should be made to:

Contract Operations
SQA
The Optima Building
58 Robertson Street
GLASGOW
G2 8DQ E-mail: mca@sqa.org.uk

Appendix A

Certificate of Competency in the Merchant Navy: Deck Officer

STCW 78 (as amended) Chief Mate/Master (Reg II/2) (Unlimited)

- 032-73 Navigation
- 032-74 Stability and Structure

STCW 78 (as amended) Officer in Charge of Navigational Watch (Reg II/I) (Unlimited)

- 034-83 Navigation
- 034-84 Stability and Operations

STCW 78 (as amended) Officer in Charge of Navigational Watch <500gt (Reg II/3) (Near Coastal)

- 035-21 Chartwork and Practical Navigation
- 035-22 General Ship Knowledge
- 035-23 Meteorology

STCW 78 (as amended) Chief Mate (>3000gt) (Reg II/2) (Near Coastal)

- 036-31 Ship Construction and Stability
- 036-32 Magnetic Compass and Navigation Aids
- 037-44 Shipboard Operations

Certificate of Competency for Fishing Vessels: Deck Officer

CLASS 1

- 001-51 Navigation 1
- 001-52 Navigation 2
- 001-53 Ship Construction and Stability
- 001-54 Safety and Management

CLASS 2

- 002-61 Navigation
- 002-62 Chartwork and Pilotage
- 002-63 Meteorology
- 002-64 Safety and Management

Certificate of Competency in the Merchant Navy: Marine Engineer Officer

STCW 78 (as amended) Management Engineer Reg III/2 (Unlimited)

040-12	Engineering Knowledge - General	
040-13	Engineering Knowledge - Motor	
040-14	Engineering Knowledge - Steam	
040-31	Applied Mechanics	}
040-32	Applied Heat	}
040-33	Electrotechnology	} <i>Not subject to the 3 year validity</i>
040-34	Naval Architecture	} <i>rule for application of</i>
040-35	Mathematics	} <i>Certificate of Competency</i>
040-36	Engineering, Systems and Ship's Drawing	}

Certificate of Competency – Small Vessels

058 - Chief Engineer <3000 GT, <9000 kW Unlimited

043-11	General Engineering Science I	}	<i>Not subject to the 3 year validity rule for</i>
043-12	General Engineering Science II	}	<i>application of Certificate of Competency</i>
058-01	Applied Marine Engineering		
059-01	Chief Engineer Statutory and Operational Requirements		
059-02	Auxiliary Equipment Part II		

059 - Chief Engineer <500 GT, <3000 kW Limited

059-01	Chief Engineer Statutory and Operational Requirements	
059-02	Auxiliary Equipment Part II	

060 - Second Engineer <3000 GT, <9000 kW Unlimited

060-01	Marine Diesel Engineering	
060-02	Operational Procedures, Basic Hotel Services and Ship Construction	
060-03	Auxiliary Equipment Part I	

Certificate of Competency – Chief Engineer (Yacht)

062 - Chief Engineer (Yacht 2)

051-02	Chief Engineer Statutory and Operational Requirements		
052-02	Applied Marine Engineering		
054-02	Advanced Hotel Services and Ship Construction		
043-11	General Engineering Science I	}	<i>Not subject to the 3 year validity rule for</i>
043-12	General Engineering Science II	}	<i>application of Certificate of Competency</i>

063 - Chief Engineer (Yacht 3)

051-02	Chief Engineer Statutory and Operational Requirements	
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