

# Yachtmaster Offshore Exam Syllabus

**Previous Experience Required:** 50 days aboard, 5 days as skipper, 2500 miles logged, 5 passages of over 60 miles including 2 overnight and 2 as skipper (Half the qualifying seetime must have been conducted in tidal waters). VHF radio operators certificate and a valid first aid certificate

**Course Overview:** Preparation and brush up for the RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Offshore Certificate of Competence. Revision of advanced skippering techniques, close quarters handling under power and sail, navigation and pilotage by day and night, man overboard recovery and overall yacht management skills

Candidates may be given the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of competence in the areas listed below. In each section the examiner will expect to see the candidate take full responsibility for the management of the yacht and crew. In Yachtmaster Offshore exams the candidate will be expected to demonstrate competence based on broad experience.

## 1. International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea

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

- a. General rules (1-3)
- b. Steering and sailing rules (4-19)
- c. Lights and shapes (20-31)
- d. Sound and light signals (32-37)
- e. Signals for vessels fishing in close proximity (Annex II)
- f. Distress signals (Annex IV)

## 2. Safety

Candidates will be expected to know what safety equipment should be carried on board a yacht, based either on the recommendations in the RYA Boat Safety Handbook (C8), the ISAF Special Regulations or the Codes of Practice for the safety of Small Commercial Vessels. In particular, candidates must know the responsibilities of a skipper in relation:

- a. Safety harnesses
- b. Lifejackets
- c. Distress flares
- d. Fire prevention and fighting
- e. Liferrafts
- f. Knowledge of rescue procedures
- g. Helicopter rescue

## 3. Boat Handling

Candidates for Coastal Skipper examinations will be expected to answer questions or demonstrate ability in simple situations only. Candidates for Yachtmaster Offshore will be expected to answer questions or demonstrate ability in more complex situations and will also be expected to show a higher level of expertise:

- a. Coming to and weighing anchor under power or sail in various conditions of wind and tide
- b. All berthing and unberthing situations in various conditions of wind and tide
- c. Recovery of man overboard
- d. Towing under open sea conditions and in confined areas
- e. Boat handling in confined areas under sail
- f. Boat handling in heavy weather
- g. Helmsmanship and sail trim to sail to best advantage
- h. Use of warps for securing in an alongside berth and for shifting berth or winding

## 4. General Seamanship, including maintenance

- a. Properties, use and care of synthetic fibre ropes
- b. Knots
- c. General deck-work at sea and in harbour
- d. Engine operations and routine checks
- e. Improvisation of jury rigs following gear failure

## 5. Responsibilities of skipper

- a. Can skipper a yacht and manage the crew

- b. Communication with crew
- c. Delegation of responsibility and watch-keeping organisation
- d. Preparing yacht for sea and for adverse weather
- e. Tactics for heavy weather and restricted visibility
- f. Emergency and distress situations
- g. Victualling for a cruise and feeding at sea
- h. Customs procedures
- i. Standards of behaviour and courtesy

## **6. Navigation**

- a. Charts, navigational publications and sources of navigational information
- b. Chartwork including position fixing and shaping course to allow for tidal stream and leeway
- c. Tide and tidal stream calculations
- d. Buoyage and visual aids to navigation
- e. Instruments including compasses, logs, echo sounders, radio nav aids and chartwork instruments
- f. Passage planning and navigational tactics
- g. Pilotage techniques
- h. Navigational records
- i. Limits of navigational accuracy and margins of safety
- j. Lee shore dangers
- k. Use of electronic navigation aids for passage planning and passage navigation
- l. Use of waypoints and electronic routing

## **7. Meteorology**

- a. Definition of terms
- b. Sources of weather forecasts
- c. Weather systems and local weather effects
- d. Interpretation of weather forecasts, barometric trends and visible phenomena
- e. Ability to make passage planning decisions based on forecast information

## **8. Signals**

- a. Candidates for Yachtmaster Offshore and Coastal Skipper must hold the Restricted (VHF only) Certificate of Competence in radiotelephony or a higher grade of certificate in radio telephony.