

RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Exams in Antigua.

Dear Candidate,

Please read these notes carefully before considering taking your exam. They are provided to help you prepare for the exam & to ensure that you have the necessary sea-time, qualifications & documentation.

Please note that you are not eligible to take the exam if you do not have a valid first aid certificate, a VHF radio certificate & the necessary qualifying sea time.

It is a common (& mistaken!) belief that if you have just undertaken the RYA Yachtmaster Shorebased theory course, followed by the preparation week & are now doing the exam, then a satisfactory exam result is a foregone conclusion. This is not the case! The examiner is there to examine you on behalf of the RYA not the sea school.

RYA Yachtmaster Coastal.

The RYA Yachtmaster Coastal has the knowledge needed to skipper a sailing yacht / motor cruiser on coastal cruises but does not necessarily have the experience needed to undertake longer passages.

Full details of the exam syllabus and requirements are shown in the RYA's Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus & Logbook (Code G158) available from the RYA online shop or any RYA Training Centre.

RYA Yachtmaster Coastal practical exams can be taken under sail or power and your certificate will be endorsed accordingly. The candidate or a training centre provides the boat and the RYA provides an examiner.

There is no formal training course leading up to the exam, but those who have not previously taken RYA courses often find it useful to book themselves in for some informal training at an RYA centre prior to their exam. This training can be tailor-made to your specific needs and helps to fill any gaps in your knowledge that may become apparent.

The RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Certificate of Competence may be commercially endorsed to allow holders to work on vessels used for sport or recreation on a commercial basis. To obtain this endorsement you must obtain a Medical Fitness Certificate, a Professional Practices & Responsibilities Certificate, an RYA or equivalent First Aid Certificate and attend a Basic Sea Survival Course.

Further information about Commercial Endorsements can be found here:

[Commercial Endorsements](#)

RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Pre-exam Requirements.

Minimum seetime.

Documented minimum sea time completed on a seagoing sailing or motor yacht (as appropriate) in the last 10 years:

- 30 days at sea on vessels less than 24m LOA, which may be reduced to 12 days at sea on vessels less than 24m LOA or substituted with 30 days at sea on yachts under 500gt if an RYA Coastal Skipper Practical course completion certificate is held.
- 2 days as skipper on vessels less than 24m LOA.
- 800 miles, which may be reduced to 400 miles on vessels less than 24m LOA or substituted with 800 miles at sea on yachts under 500gt if an RYA Coastal Skipper Practical course completion certificate is held.
- 12 night hours.

Note: At least half the qualifying sea time must have been accrued in tidal waters and all seetime must be on vessels of the same discipline as the exam to be taken, i.e. sail or power.

Contact training@rya.org.uk if your sea time is on a yacht greater than 24m and 500gt.

Before the start of an exam the examiner must verify the candidate's claim to have the specified sea time / experience. All candidates must complete and sign the exam application form, which includes a statement of qualifying experience.

If there is any doubt as to whether or not the necessary sea time has been completed the examiner should point this out to the candidate and give them the opportunity to withdraw their application.

Certification required:

- A GMDSS compliant Marine Radio Operator's Certificate such as the RYA Short Range Certificate or higher.
- An RYA First Aid Certificate or another valid first aid certificate.
- RYA Coastal Skipper Practical course completion certificate (either sail or power, as appropriate) **ONLY** if claiming reduced sea time as detailed above.

Accepted First Aid certificates can be found here: [Accepted RYA First Aid Certificates](#)

Note: First Aid certificates must be refreshed or renewed every 3 years, other than the STCW Elementary First Aid certificates which are valid for 5 years.

Candidates must be a minimum of 17 years old at the time of examination.

Conduct of RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Exams.

The content of the exam is set by the syllabus in the RYA publication Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus & Logbook (Code G158). There are two general principles which should be taken as an overall guide:

- It is the examiner's task to give the candidate the opportunity to show that they are a competent skipper.
- At the end of the exam the candidate should feel, whatever the outcome, that they have had a full, fair and searching test.

Candidates will be set tasks to allow them to demonstrate their ability as skipper of an offshore cruising yacht / motor cruiser and will also be asked questions on any part of the syllabus for all practical and shorebased courses up to RYA Yachtmaster Coastal level.

The exam will include a thorough practical assessment of the candidate's skippering skills, boat handling under power and sail, general seamanship, chartwork & navigation including tidal considerations, safety awareness and knowledge of the IRPCS, meteorology and signals.

In RYA Yachtmaster Coastal exams the candidate will be expected to demonstrate understanding but may not have had the opportunity to practice all aspects of the syllabus under a range of different weather conditions.

Exam Duration.

The exam will take about 6 - 10 hours for one candidate and between 8 - 14 hours for 2 candidates. No more than two candidates may be examined in any 24 hour period and no more than four candidates can be on the vessel at any given time.

The Boat.

You may use your own boat, a boat that you have chartered or borrowed or a vessel provided by an RYA Training Centre. You will be responsible for ensuring the boat is seaworthy and suitable for the area in which the exam takes place and equipped as shown below.

The boat used must be between 7m (23ft) and 18m (59ft) LOA and be in sound, seaworthy condition, equipped to the standard set out in the RYA Boat Safety Handbook 2nd Edition (code G103). The boat must be equipped with a full up to date set of charts and navigational publications along with working instruments and either plotter or GPS. In addition to the candidate there should be a minimum of two crew on board as the examiner will not take part in the management of the boat during the exam.

There may be vessels that will meet the guidelines outlined above but by virtue of their layout, construction, handling characteristics or other factors may be unsuitable for use for an RYA Yachtmaster Practical examination. The RYA reserves the right to refuse an exam on a vessel that, in the view of the RYA Chief Examiner, will not allow the examiner to conduct an examination to the standard required by the RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Qualification Panel.

Booking.

Before you book your exam please check that you:

- Have completed the minimum seetime outlined above. Be honest with yourself!
- Hold the required certification. (We can book you in for STCW Elementary First Aid and RYA Short Range Certificate prior to your exam if required).
- Have read the RYA Yachtmaster Coastal exam syllabus in the RYA Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus & Logbook (Code G158).
- Have read and comply with the pre-requisites above.

Payment of exam fee.

The exam fee is payable by the candidate to the RYA. Examiners must ensure that the exam report is accompanied by the appropriate fee. Examiners may not accept any payment from candidates for expenses incurred in connection with an exam. The current fee for the RYA Yachtmaster Coastal exam is £200.00.

And finally....

Be honest with yourself with regard to your experience on small yachts & the amount of skippering you have done. Although you may have accrued thousands of miles on superyachts as crew, if you have limited or no experience as skipper, then this will quickly become apparent to the examiner.

Although not mandatory, it is recommended that you attend the preparation week immediately prior to your exam. This will help familiarise and get you used to the vessel and crew that you will take the exam on. The preparation week is not an instructional week and has no formal syllabus. Its purpose is to polish and brush up on existing skills, nothing should be new to you. Again, look at the syllabus in the Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus & Logbook and be honest with yourself. If you need formal training in any of these areas please consider the RYA courses we have to offer prior to attempting your exam.

I would recommend reading this excellent article by Tom Cunliffe: [How to pass your Yachtmaster exam](#).

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us here at Ondeck Maritime Training.