

Catch! The Wave

3rd Edition

AIGUA SEA SCHOOL



Changes to commercial endorsement: YOUR Duty of Care

The Professional Practices and Responsibilities (PPR) course is in place and compulsory for new and revalidating RYA Commercial Endorsement holders.

The RYA explains it as follows: "Each year approximately 4,500 people apply to the RYA for a commercial endorsement in order to use their RYA qualifications professionally as skipper or crew. You could be doing anything from delivering a new 35' yacht or driving a workboat with lifting and towing gear, to running a Superyacht in the Med.; whatever your job is on board, in the commercial world you are a professional seafarer. As such, you are no different from the captain of a cruise liner: **You have a duty of care to crew, passengers, and other water users, and you will be held to account if things go wrong.**"

The PPR course is an online study and assessment programme and involves reading

a number of MCA guidance notes before being asked general questions and scenario based questions. There are four modules: **COMMERCIAL ENVIRONMENT:** showing how YOU fit into the professional maritime world in your current or future role; **PEOPLE:** this section explains the importance of correct manning, keeping your skills up to date and the safe management of commercial vessels. **VESSEL:** this section teaches about the compulsory carriage and maintenance of safety equipment and how to create and implement risk control and operating procedures; and finally **PURPOSE:** to make sure the vessel you are responsible for is suitable and legal for the work you are carrying out, your obligations in protecting the environment, appropriate planning and situational awareness.

There are three mock assessments before starting the final graded online assessment.

I strongly advise you to take the 'mocks' as you'll be surprised at what you don't know. You must achieve 80% to get through.

It takes a few hours to work through the modules (I can vouch for that having taken it myself) so clear your diary for an afternoon and concentrate. The graded course assessment is split into two sections, each with a time limit of one hour. You see the clock ticking away on the screen, just to add to the pressure. You must pass the assessment in order to achieve the course completion certificate that is to be presented with your commercial endorsement application or revalidation.

As the principal of an RYA Training Centre I applaud the introduction of this course as it is so important to make you aware of YOUR responsibilities at sea. You can't say this doesn't apply to you because if you are working in this industry IT DOES. However, I am concerned at how our international students will fare, as a lot of time is required to find relevant sections of information in order to answer the questions correctly. When English is not your first language it may be a time consuming and frustrating experience.

The Aigua Sea School section of the RYA Interactive website is live and this is where you register to take the course. Over time, the Aigua training team will devise a tuition package, probably as a 'workshop' kind of scenario like we do with the Yachtmaster prep.

Inside ...



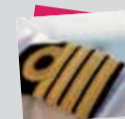
We moved!

To the heart of Santa Catalina



From Stew to Crew:

Inside Out



Important Changes:

The new PPR course



Ocean onboard

Aigua shakes things up a bit



Dr Ken

Can you fail the ENG1?



Sail & Dive

Up and Down: a new venture



Examiner focus

What they look for in YOU



We moved!

The Aigua Sea School office is now in Santa Catalina and we love it! Based on San Magin, (250 footsteps from YCrew and Havanna Bar), you'll find us on the sunny side of the street as you walk up towards the church. Nestled in the row that includes Eden, UMMO and Dale Roda, we have a ground floor place with a warm welcome. Many Aiguanauts helped with the move: Oli, Adam, Alex, Maite and Greg you all played a part and I thank you.

Special thanks to Dan Loftus for so much ... and a particular mention to the SPRAY MAN. Ben Spray, step up and be applauded for creating such amazing artwork on the shutters of the office. Not only has it put Aigua on the map but it has really brightened up the neighbourhood. Ben is the new 'Banksy' and you heard it here first!



Does your Yachtmaster licence cover you driving the tender?

If you hold a Yachtmaster MOTOR certificate of competence the answer is yes. If you hold a Yachtmaster SAIL certificate of competence the answer is no. It can't be clearer than that.

So, step up sailors and take the two-day Powerboat level 2 course. You will receive training in how to handle and operate a powerboat safely. Upon successful completion of the course (you will be assessed during training) you will achieve the level 2 course completion certificate for driving an open boat, RIB or sports boat either for leisure purposes, or commercially to drive the tender of the yacht you are working on. If you require the licence for your work then you can apply for a commercial endorsement (see also the PPR article above).

A powerboat is very different to a sailing yacht; for example boat handling, effect of weather and tides, high speed manoeuvres and safety procedures.

It is important to take a specific tailored course for the type of vessel you wish to skipper and gain a relevant licence.

We are receiving news of people being stopped in foreign waters who fail to present an appropriate licence. Fines of thousands of euros allegedly; just don't let it be you.



Talk to us

There's a new section on our website www.aiguaseaschool.com for feedback. When you train with Aigua your comments are really important to us so that we can continue to build upon the service we provide. Talk to us: tell us what you think. Email your thoughts to training@aiguaseaschool.com ... thank you.

Sail & Dive: Ondine and Aigua's new venture

One thing that unites us, in this wonderful world of yachting, is the sea and our love for it. There are so many aspects to enjoying our water filled lives and a great thing about having so much variety is our ability to combine them.

With this in mind Aigua is teaming up with Ondine Escape, an adventure company run by Aussie Brad Robertson and his Spanish wife, Bea. Ondine are a PADI training centre and take people diving, hiking, canyoning and coastering. The extra benefit in teaming up with Ondine is their passion for, and involvement with, local marine conservation projects.

We both provide the best quality training for our students with our professionally delivered courses. Aigua provides the best sail training on the island; Ondine the best diving.

From September, we will be offering sail and dive training in a seven-day package of training, fun, adventure and experience: learn skills above and below the water and gain certificates of achievement. This is Mallorca's only course-based live-aboard sail and dive experience.

Training to the highest standards with experienced instructors, you will take three dives a day; early morning, lunchtime and evening, enjoy meals prepared for you when you return to the yacht then off you go sailing, working towards gaining certificates of RYA Competent Crew or Day Skipper. Sail to the next dive site where your dive team will be



waiting for you. Marine biologists are on hand to explain the local marine life, thriving within Mallorca's local Marine Reserves. Barracudas, Nudibranchs, Amber Jacks, Octopus and even Sun Fish are just some of the marine life you will encounter.

You will feel comfortable diving with Ondine's top of the range Aqualung equipment; such high quality gear ensures your safety and leads the way on the island, way above the standard usually found in dive schools. Aigua's training yacht is superbly equipped to ensure your comfort and the best sail training experience.

Mallorca is a fine place to learn to sail and is the perfect place to refresh existing dive skills or learn new ones: the sea is typically calm, the water temperature comfortable and there are wondrous things to see.

For more information contact Aigua or Brad at www.OndineEscape.com

Yacht & Captain focus

Aigua Sea School has always been a strong supporter of The Islander magazine, relying on its current news stories, healthy political angle, and industry reviews to keep on top of affairs within the island's nautical industry. The Aigua Sea School quiz is a monthly feature and we contribute training related articles on a regular basis. It's a great way of keeping you updated on latest news from the RYA and MCA.

Last year, we created the Yacht & Captain feature, a whole page that doesn't sell anything but offers a peek into the life onboard of some of the well-known yachts based in Palma and around the Med. We've received some great feedback on the article and have been fortunate to feature yachts as diverse as the 1939 classic 'Cariba' to the famously red 'Aphrodite A' and from Royal favourite 'Leander' to MY 'Charisma'.

The feature provides a captain with the opportunity to recommend local companies, tell us their favourite bars and restaurants around the island, as well as to offer their comments on the industry and talk about their plans for the season. If you would like your yacht featured contact me on 871 230 373 or linda@aiguaseaschool.com.

The Islander magazine has recently had a revamp and is looking great. The editor, Peter Franklin, chose well when he hooked up with Shari and the team at Conectado to update the publication in time for its 15th anniversary. Distribution has increased and it is now available in Monaco, Antibes, Nice, Genoa and Sardinia.



Get onboard with OCEAN

You may already know that we like to shake things up a bit and provide a higher level of training and commitment to you, our students, that is unmatched by others here in Mallorca. Our next step in going above and beyond is to take Ocean onboard.

The Ocean certificate of competence is the jewel in the crown of the RYA: To be a Master of Yachts unlimited by mileage, sail on, dear friend, sail on to the ends of the earth and the Aigua training team will make your journey unforgettable.

Snap any of our training team in two and you'll find RYA written right through us like a stick of Magaluf rock, so you can be certain that we won't be compromising the RYA Ocean syllabus in any way, oh no, just adding to it and making it more real, more practical and more thorough. We're taking it onboard and over six days.

Train with Aigua in the comfortable, spacious training room at the school HQ in Santa Catalina to cover the theory elements of the tightly adhered-to syllabus, but then we step onboard the Aigua training yacht and do it for real. From September you can choose to take a six-day training course with two days (one overnight) spent onboard putting your theoretical skills into practice: taking real sights from a sailing yacht, taking real compass checks as the yacht sails through the day; play with the stars and moon should conditions permit and plotting your global position, onboard, in real conditions.

We aim to make our Ocean exam candidates

the finest in the Med and we believe this course will secure that.

Using the nautical pages for the current year and the present day you will calculate the time of the meridian for your day, here and now; you will take morning sights, noon sights, afternoon sights, moon sights, star sights ... the sextant will feel natural in your hand, the compass checks be clear and uncomplicated; the sight reduction tables not feared but your friend. It will make it all so real and you will be oh so confident in your new skills and that is what we aim for.

It will be an early start and long days, but if a thing is worth doing it is worth doing well. Dinner will be onboard along with all the supporting materials that you need to calculate your position on the surface of our planet. We believe in this approach to Ocean training so we are investing in it: new sextants, copies of SRTs for all students and extra copies of the Daily Pages.

The sights taken on this trip should not be submitted as the sights for your assessment interview, as these must be taken independently by each candidate.

Now, if your view of 'Ocean' is to just get it done so it can appear on your CV then perhaps this is not for you; but if you want to carry the title comfortably on your shoulders and believe you are an Oceanmaster, rather than someone who can just get through the exam then forget all about it, then choose our course above all others because we will be providing you a training course that is above all others.

Interact with Aigua on



The RYA is really enjoying 21st century technology at the moment, with the introduction of online certificate registration, online courses, support materials and RYA Interactive, their training hub in the virtual world.

Register online and gain access to the Aigua Sea School training area where you can receive a taster of the Essential Navigation and Seamanship course; you can practise the CEVNI test for inland waterways regulations and you can participate in a marine radio pre-course knowledge check. This is also where you will take the course and assessment for the new Professional Practices and Responsibilities course now mandatory for all commercial endorsement applications and revalidations.

You also have the opportunity to participate in an online survey that will help shape the future of RYA training.

When you book an Essential Navigation course, or the CEVNI course, with Aigua we will provide you with an enrolment key that will unlock the virtual door to the course support materials online.

You can take the SRC pre course test at any time; it might even be useful to you if you hold the certificate but would like a refresher. The online section contains background reading that is informative too. In the recommended reading section you'll find the G22 course notes that Aigua provides free of charge with every marine radio course.

See you in the virtual world.



Does anyone fail the ENG1?

Occasionally I am asked if anyone ever fails the ENG1 examination. For most yachties it is almost a foregone conclusion that a crisp unrestricted two year ENG1 certificate will materialise at the end of the assessment. This probably leads to a distorted view of the possibilities of restrictions or, even worse, of failure.

Modern medicine has made some chronic diseases much more manageable than in the past, examples such as diabetes and epilepsy spring to mind and I have had a sprinkling of eager potential entrants to yachting who have managed their insulin-dependent diabetes well for years, or their epilepsy has been dormant/controlled for years whilst on regular well-judged medication. Unfortunately both these conditions take on a different hue when held against the risks of seafaring and the opportunities for fitness certification are extremely restricted.

Asthma is a very common condition especially amongst young adults. It is a breathing problem caused by a combination of airways narrowing and airways congestion and both factors obviously lead to shortness of breath. The narrowing airways are relieved by a reliever inhaler, and the inflammatory congestion is prevented by an anti-inflammatory inhaler. The aim is to take just the right number of preventer inhaler each day to avoid needing the reliever on a daily basis. Asthmatics learn to

increase the puffs of preventer before an obvious aggravation such as with a cold or during high pollen count.

MCA medical guidelines from January 2010 tightened up on asthma sufferers and proposed restrictions, like near coastal waters only, for

individuals who used an inhaler more than two days per month. However, this seemed unfair to the significant minority of young yachties who remain exceptionally well but need a daily preventer inhaler with an occasional need for a reliever. Fortunately, the recently revised guidelines (March 2012) are much more sympathetic when asthma is well-controlled with daily use of a preventer inhaler without frequent need for reliever medication.

MCA guidance is intended to maximise safety at sea for everyone onboard and there are circumstances when failure to meet the fitness standard is very clear-cut. On many occasions, such as obesity or raised blood pressure or a recently diagnosed major medical condition, the guidance favours a shorter duration unrestricted certificate to monitor progress or maybe a restricted certificate to minimise risk to the individual or others onboard. Ultimately the guidance is meant to facilitate the safest outcome rather than deprive seafarers of their livelihood.

Dr Ken Prudhoe, Club de Mar Medical, Palma
Ken is an MCA approved doctor undertaking ENG1 certification for seafarers. He and his wife Rosemary are ex-British GPs providing a medical service to the yachting population. Rosemary has a particular interest in women's medicine. They also teach the MCA approved medical courses, Medical First Aid and Medical Care Onboard Ship (Ship Captain's Course).

Sail is for sail, motor for motor

There are many captains out there who are quite happily running motor yachts, blissfully unaware that their Yachtmaster sail licence is not the required ticket for the job in hand.

There are two types of Yachtmaster Offshore licence, sail and motor. Yes, it may state 'Sailing Vessel with Auxiliary Engine' on the endorsements page but that does not cover you as you skipper a big, beautiful motor cruiser. Perhaps it's time for you to convert from sail to motor?

As a general rule, we tend to run more sail to motor conversions. You are already a Yachtmaster so the exam time is reduced to around three to four hours per candidate. We train you for three days on all aspects of the differences between sail and motor yachts, for example boat handling, one engine manoeuvres, radar and high speed navigation. Your knowledge of engines must be thorough. If the examiner is assessing you for a conversion

from motor to sail, it will be your sail handling and trimming that will be thoroughly tested, as well as man overboard drill under sail.

It is essential that time is spent onboard the training vessel to familiarise the candidate with the operational systems onboard, engines, boat handling, safety features and to get to know the other candidates who will, together, be the crew for the assessments.

We highly recommend three days of training. Ask any of the captains we have recently trained and they will tell you the three days are awesome: tricks of the trade, deep radar and electronic navigation work, handling techniques and thorough engine knowledge. Many have told us they feel so much more confident after the training.

As always it is better to meet with the Aigua team to discuss your requirements; we look forward to seeing you.



Personal Watercraft Proficiency Course (PWC)

RYA certification for using Personal Watercraft, (jet skis). They are fast and exciting, but need to be handled with care. A one day course will train you for safe and responsible use. Contact Aigua for details.



Note from the Editor

Welcome to issue 3 of The Wave, published in May 2012. The Wave is a publication written by Linda Revill, principal of Aigua Sea School. All editorial is written in good faith and purely as a base for general information on courses and services provided by the school. There is no advertising in, nor sponsorship of, this publication. The training schedule may be subject to change. We thank you for reading the newsletter and hope you find it of interest.

AIGUA SEA SCHOOL TRAINING SCHEDULE

	May	June		September	October	November	December
Workshops	8-10	5-7		18-20	2-4 & 23-25	27-29	
VHF/DSC Marine Radio	12	16	Courses run on demand in July & August	29	6 & 13	3	8
Yachtmaster Theory	14-18	11-15		24-28	1-5 & 8-12 & 29-2	1-2	3-7
YM Practical: Sail/Motor	19-23	17-21			1-5 & 8-12 & 15-19	5-9	10-14
Yachtmaster Ocean	28-31				22-26	12-16	
Master 200					14-19	5-10	
Day Skipper Combo	4-12			10-18	20-28	17-25	
Powerboat Level II	Courses run regularly and new course dates are added all the time, so please check the website						

This schedule is subject to change as new courses are added according to demand. Please contact the school for current information or check online at www.aiguaseaschool.com



From Stew to Crew: the 'DS Combo'

We believe that one of the real gems in the RYA training scheme is the Day Skipper course. The course provides a syllabus that ensures our

students receive the very best of basic training, and it's for that reason that it is one of our favourite courses to teach. If you are taught properly from the start, your skills will never leave you. Our instructors take great pride in watching our students grow in confidence as the week progresses.

For the leisure sailor, each Day Skipper receives and practices the knowledge and skills to operate a yacht safely in familiar waters and fair weather; to go on and charter with their family and friends with confidence and to maximise the enjoyment of a holiday.

In the professional yachting world, where does the Day Skipper title fit in? The course provides future skippers and captains with a solid foundation from which to continue their studies towards Yachtmaster. It also provides you with the first of your skipper licences.

We particularly want this course to appeal to the interior crew, from 'stew to crew' as we've named this article. Come on interior crew, learn your Day Skipper skills and get up on deck, useful

as crew and as a break from your other duties, and perhaps opening up an opportunity to work as deck crew in the future.

You may be a seasoned deck-hand or stew so life onboard is nothing new, but as part of a Day Skipper training programme you will look at the yacht and your crew in a new light. Taking turns to be the 'skipper' you will learn how to manage a crew; manoeuvre the yacht in close quarters for berthing, anchor or secure to mooring buoys, navigate to lovely places around the coast and to sail (or motor cruise) keeping a safe and happy yacht. You'll run daily engine checks, prepare warps and fenders for mooring (to be a good skipper you have to be a good crew), run through safety equipment and exercises and discuss, then practise, man overboard drills.

The Aigua Approach is to run a concentrated nine-day Day Skipper/Watch Leader course, combining both the theory syllabus with the practical training. The courses start on a Saturday morning for two days of theory; on the Monday morning you will join the yacht for

five days practical training, then return to the classroom to complete the theory syllabus*. You need only five days off work and you complete the full course.

The yacht gains a more competent, more aware member of crew with an ignited interest in the activities onboard and an enhanced understanding of the navigation and handling of a vessel, bridge duties and watch keeping responsibilities

The student gains the first of their commercial skipper licences and a solid foundation to build on for future courses and career development

The G15 sail cruising, and the G18 motor cruising log books, detail the syllabus to be covered and Aigua has a supply in the school office.

*In order to complete the full Day Skipper theory syllabus you will study some exercises during the practical week: for example, sections on safety and parts of the boat. These subjects are much better presented onboard.



What your examiner expects from YOU

Your nerves are tickling your stomach and your mouth has gone dry, your Yachtmaster examination is about to begin and you have to be the best that you can be for a limited amount of time. So, what is your examiner looking for? The Aigua team ask examiner Captain Andy Brennan for his thoughts.

An RYA examiner is an experienced seafarer who is qualified by the RYA to assess candidates during a practical exam. Your examiner will be able to quickly spot those that have gained the 2,500 sea miles by completing one transatlantic crossing as crew with wash leather in hand, compared to those that have been yachting in different areas, on different vessels and have experience of acting as skipper.

First of all, **look like a Yachtmaster**: wear appropriate clothing, boat shoes, have some warm clothing with you for the night work: **be personally prepared**. Make a good first impression by standing up to welcome your examiner onboard, shake their hand and introduce yourself. **Act like a Captain**, because that is what you are hoping to be at the end of this experience.

All candidates' paperwork must be checked by the examiner. Be prepared to hand over your log book or proof of sea miles so your examiner

can be satisfied that you meet the exam requirements. **Ensure your papers are well presented and complete.**

Happy with the paperwork your examiner will start the exam and watch each candidate carefully for command and control. It must be apparent that you can manage your crew effectively in all situations. **Be clear with your instructions.** It is bad form for you to blame a member of your exam crew should something go wrong when you are acting skipper.

Boat handling may well be one of the first tasks of the exam session. The task should be **quiet and well-coordinated**, using your crew to the best advantage. Easy on the power, treat the throttles with respect. Too much power and use of throttle back and forth will indicate lack of confidence. There's no need to shout to a crew for distance off the stern when you could position yourself better at the controls in the flybridge and see for yourself.

Be aware: know where you are at all times, not down to lat/long within 3m but a general idea. If you passed Portals five minutes ago and you're in 50m of water make a mental note so that if asked you could confidently point to the chart. **Communicate to your crew** where your particular exercise will take you. I've heard of

many occasions where the examiner asks the rest of the crew where they're headed only to receive a negative answer.

Examiners are not looking for Olympian sailing skills, but **you must have the skills to sail the yacht well** in all conditions with the correct sail trim. Motor yacht candidates are expected to shape a course for the current wind and sea conditions, and proceed at a suitable speed for the vessel.

MOB exercise mistakes under pressure are frequently made, and may be forgiven, if you can describe exactly what went wrong and you instinctively know how to retrieve the MOB successfully. You will be expected to complete the manoeuvre in full so don't relax, MOB's happen at any time in the real world.

It is expected that you be able to use **all navigational aids and instruments** at your disposal. This will include GPS, chart plotters, radars, as well as traditional methods of paper chart and hand bearing compass.

Be prepared. There is no excuse for not being well-versed on the basics of lights, sound signals, day shapes, colregs and buoyage. Your knowledge does not have to be word for word perfect, but you must have a full understanding of how, when and why the IRPCS rules should

be applied. Can you look at a synoptic chart and make decisions based on the weather trend? Ask yourself this, do you deserve to be a yacht captain if you don't know the basics of navigation safety?

Your examiner will learn much from watching you during all exercises: from correct use of warps and lines during a berthing manoeuvre to the way you tie a fender. It's a lot about basic seamanship skills of all candidates, and their ability to be part of a crew as well as being a leader. So remember **you are always being assessed** by the ever watchful examiner!

Aigua specialises in Yachtmaster training with a success record that is second to none. Join in with our training programmes and benefit from free theory workshops to superb examination preparation.



Aigua 'sunspots'

¿Hola? Living and working in Mallorca but can't speak Spanish? It can be hard if you are working in the international language all day, so Aigua is teaming up with 3Phase Linguagroup to create a 'Yachtie Spanish course'. Run over two days, the course will encourage you to speak Spanish more, to gain confidence and to learn the phrases you know you'll use. Sign up at Aigua if this course is of interest.



Coastal is no consolation prize

The RYA/MCA Yachtmaster certificates of competence are recognised and respected around the world and you strive to achieve this title to secure your place in the professional yacht industry; but don't forget there are two levels of Yachtmaster* achieved through a practical examination, as equally important and valid as each other: Yachtmaster Offshore and Yachtmaster Coastal.

The **Offshore** certificate of competence enables the certificate holder to be the Master of Yachts up to 200grt up to 150 miles from a safe haven, but to meet the RYA/MCA examination requirements for this level you must be able to prove you have over 50 days at sea, 2,500 logged sea miles including at least five passages over 60 miles (measured along the rhumb line from the port of departure to the destination), acting as skipper for at least two of these passages and including two which have involved overnight passages. At least half this mileage and passages must be in tidal waters. You may have logged over 3,000 sea miles on an Atlantic crossing but ask yourself, honestly, does that qualify as tidal mileage and experience? How many times during that passage did you anchor? How many times did you enter a tidal harbour and secure alongside or have to calculate a course to steer to fight a spring tide?

If you don't meet the requirements recommended by the RYA/MCA for Offshore level then be assessed at the level of **Yachtmaster Coastal**, an extremely valuable licence in its own right, and one that will clearly indicate your current level of experience.

You may find the examination entry requirements more realistic to your current

experience: you have to prove over 30 days at sea, with two days acting as skipper, a minimum of 800 sea miles logged and over 12 night hours.

The title of Yachtmaster Coastal is only achievable by taking an assessment. A holder of such a certificate has proven their level of competence to an independent examiner regulated by the RYA/MCA. You will be deemed competent to skipper a yacht, up to 80 grt, by day and night up to 20 miles from a safe haven; the licence can be endorsed and valid for working in the commercial yachting industry.

The following endorsement will be included on your certificate of competence: *Valid for vessels of up to 24 metres in length used for commercial purposes subject to the codes of practice issued by the MCA until (date of expiry, five years from endorsement**).*

According to MCA manning levels, the Yachtmaster Coastal certificate has a valuable role to play in category 1 to 3 waters, even on vessels over 24 metres; indeed even on vessels up to 500 tonnes, a coastal certificate is included in the manning levels in category 2 waters.

Don't rush your certificates. Be comfortable to hold the relevant titles at each stage of your career development. A junior doctor isn't put into surgery on their first day ... you know what I'm saying.

* Yachtmaster OCEAN is a certificate of competence only achievable from Offshore level.

** Revalidation of a commercial endorsement takes place every five years; the process is simple and Aigua is here to assist with all paperwork.



Something to watch: the Aigua training team highly recommend watching the recent three-part

BBC documentary called 'Orbit, Earth's Extraordinary Journey'. An awesome piece of filming, clarity and explanation that mariners will find extremely useful as background knowledge of weather, tides and ocean studies.

Our theory workshops run every month and are free-of-charge to all Aiguanauts, past, present and future. Join in with the relaxed, informal, two-hour bite-size training sessions on 'the basics', chartwork, tidal theory and YM exam prep.



Beyond Yachtmaster

Step up to Master 200, a qualification that allows candidates holding RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Offshore or Yachtmaster Ocean Certificates of Competence to be internationally recognised under the STCW-95 Convention as a Master of vessels up to 200GRT, with no restriction on LOA, or as an Officer of the Watch (OOW) on a vessel up to 500GRT.

The Master 200gt is designed as a bridging qualification between the RYA Yachtmaster and MCA Deck Officer Structure. There are two versions of the Master 200 qualification: The Master 200 (restricted), achievable with a Yachtmaster Offshore title, can operate up to 150NM from a safe haven; the full Master 200 (unrestricted) qualification, achievable if you hold Yachtmaster Ocean, allows you to operate globally. The preparation course and exam for both is essentially the same.

As your Yachtmaster qualification was achieved through an examination process, the same applies to the Master titles, and

candidates will take an oral interview assessment directly with the MCA.

Check your eligibility: Do you hold the full STCW completion certificates? Do you hold an in-date ENG1 medical report? For Master 200 restricted you will require STCW/95 GMDSS Restricted Operator's Certificate (ROC); for unlimited, the GMDSS General Operator's Certificate (GOC).

Once you've met the supporting documentation requirements, visit the dft.gov.uk/mca/ website to apply for a notice of eligibility (MSF 4343) to take the examination. Take time to complete this four-page application as thoroughly as you can. After sending your application form and original certificates to the MCA (including your shorebased course completion certificates) you should allow 28 days for the processing.

Now, just pause for a moment. Are you ready? Before going ahead and meeting with an MCA examiner, candidates find it extremely useful, if not invaluable, to spend a few days

preparing. A preparation course will focus on helping you pass your oral exam.

Over a period of six days, our preparation course will cover all aspects of navigational safety with an emphasis on collision regulations, operational safety, responses to emergencies and pollution control. In a classroom setting, a small group of Master 200 hopefuls will train through example questions and exam scenarios. Course content also includes some aspects of Master Business and Law; meteorology, radar and plotting, passage planning, publications, M-notices, bridge procedures, crew agreements, watch hand-over, emergency procedures, passenger management and more.

The training is based on lectures, mock papers, and tips on how to pass the oral interview. You will be fully supported by training materials that you receive upon booking, and are expected to read before the first day in the training room. Don't expect to be spoon-fed; at this level you should be thinking and acting like a Master. Interaction is key.

You know we always run small groups at Aigua, to ensure our students the very best attention from our highly qualified instructor team, and the classes for MCA 200 prep will be no exception. If the demand is high enough we may be able to fly in an examiner to the island; if not, we will assist you in arranging the examination in the UK. Courses from September onwards, please see our website for dates.

Flying the flag

Flag etiquette is a combination of good manners, tradition and most importantly, law. Ignorance is no excuse and being ill-informed of your obligations could lead you to cause insult by giving a signal you do not intend to give, invite an unwelcome visit from the Guardia, or could even lead to a fine.

The most senior position for a flag is reserved for the Ensign, denoting the nationality of the vessel; it is to be worn as close to the stern of the vessel as possible.

The starboard spreaders are used for signalling. This is where both a national courtesy flag and the Q flag for customs should be flown.

You must not fly any other flag above a national courtesy flag. Be careful if you fly the burgee of your sailing club, or race meet, at the starboard spreaders when sailing in territorial waters of another country. Unless you fly your burgee at the top of the mast you will be contravening one or another element of flag etiquette.

Country flags such as the Union flag or Bundesflagge are primarily land flags and should not be flown at sea.

Having an undersized or faded courtesy flag is worse than having none at all. Treat yourself to a nice bright Spanish courtesy flag for the season.

The Jolly Roger? What do you think?



Beginner's Luck

We are often asked about how to get started in the yachting industry; what courses are required and how best to secure day-work to get you on the ladder. Then we inevitably go into the chicken-and-egg scenario of how to invest in training if you don't have work to earn the money to pay for it?

Never good with the C-and-E scenario, what we can give you, free of charge, is sound advice.

If you want to get started in the yachting industry you won't get far without the basic safety training provided by the STCW modules. Then you need to make yourself as useful as possible onboard. We advise you to secure your tender driving certificate and VHF marine radio licence.

If you can legally drive the yachts' tender you can be the gofer between mother ship and shore: the provisioning run, collecting guests or crew and running errands. If you're out there on the tender you should also hold a Short Range Certificate so you can legally operate the VHF radio.

The courses involve a three-day commitment; two days for powerboat level II, one day for the VHF/DSC marine radio course. The investment in your training will be €695.00 euro, and includes your VHF Short Range Certificate; powerboat photo-card certificate; two course books, fuel on your powerboat course and all the assistance the Aigua team can provide.



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