



Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education

Apprenticeship builder

Draft: proposal to develop an occupational standard for an apprenticeship

This submission

Unique occupational standard reference number:
ST0842

Trailblazer Group Reference Number:
TB0415

Does this standard have core and options?
No

Is this proposal a resubmission?:
No

Would your proposed apprenticeship standard
replace an existing framework?
Yes

Target date:
30/04/2020

Title of Occupation:
Officer of the Watch

Name of Trailblazer Group:
Officer of the Watch

Please specify the name, level and (if appropriate) pathway of the framework:
Maritime Occupations: Level 3: Pathway 3: Officer of the watch on Merchant Vessels of
less than 500 gross tonnage (near coastal) including tugs

Rationale for target date:
It's the earliest realistic date and employers are keen to have this apprenticeship
available.

Occupational profile

This occupation is found in...

This occupation is found in a wide range of specialist vessels, both commercial and military, carrying cargo or passengers, notably Royal Navy landing craft, tugs, fishing boats and workboats. These vessels work close to the shore, in waters designated by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency as “Near Coastal”: “an area of operation restricted to 150 miles from a safe haven on the coast of the UK and 30 miles from Ireland”. Vessels vary considerably in their size, type and use, and therefore an OOW’s responsibilities will also vary between different vessels.

The broad purpose of the occupation is...

An Officer Of the Watch is in charge of a vessel’s safety and navigation while they are taking their watch. During the watch the OOW must make decisions about the safe navigation, collision avoidance and security of the vessel, and to ensure both the safety of anyone working on the outside decks or in the engine room, and for the protection of the environment. They are also responsible for keeping an accurate record of notable events during the watch. They are always subject to the over-riding authority of the Master, who will be available to assist and advise, but is often not present (eg the Master may be resting to comply with hours of work regulations).

Officer Of the Watch is the minimum qualification required for someone to take charge of a watch, recognised by the issue of a Certificate of Competence by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, which applies International Maritime Organization’s rules within the UK; securing that Certificate of Competence will be mandatory for all apprentices. The OOW may be the most junior rank of officer on board a vessel. (The term ‘Officer Of the Watch’ also refers to the officer responsible for taking a watch, who could be of any rank).

The primary purpose of the OOW at sea and in harbour is to ensure, as the Master’s representative, the safety and security of the vessel in all its aspects, but especially from risk of collision and grounding at sea, and the protection of the environment. In any type of organisation, however, an OOW will need to balance those responsibilities with the business priorities of the vessel’s owner, whether they are commercial or other (eg public protection in the case of the Royal Navy).

OOWs can work for several weeks at a time at sea, working at any time of day or night whilst keeping watch. The day is normally split into watches (shifts) of either 4 hours on and 8 hours off in any 24-hour period, or 6 on 6 off, so the OOW will work both day and night at sea and in port seven days a week, in all weathers, and sleeping on board, followed by a similar length of time on leave – though the detail varies a good deal between different types of vessels, and different employers. Even when off watch, an OOW has a responsibility to act during emergencies to ensure the safety of the vessel and those working on board.

In addition to watch keeping responsibilities, and outside the hours keeping a watch, an OOW may also have responsibilities for the maintenance of navigational and safety equipment, and life-saving and fire-fighting appliances.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with...

To fulfil their over-riding responsibility for the safe navigation of their vessel, an employee in this occupation interacts with the Master of the vessel (sometimes known as Captain or Skipper), and other navigational and engineering officers and crew (depending on the size of the vessel) onboard. They may also

interact with other professionals onboard their own vessel who are not members of the crew, such as armed forces on board a Royal Navy landing craft, and also seafarers on board other vessels, including pilots. Aside from onboard colleagues, an OOW may interact with colleagues ashore and on fixed structures at sea (eg oil platforms), including owners and their representatives, organisation senior managers, port and navigational authorities, coastguard officers and other Search and Rescue professionals

[An employee in this occupation will be responsible for...](#)

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for controlling the vessel throughout their watch. That is likely to include the safe embarkation or mooring / anchorage of a vessel, and will include responsibility for the safe handling of a vessel while it is engaged in other tasks, such as towing or pushing other vessels, fishing, or landing military personnel. Successful conduct of a watch includes effective handovers at both the start and end of the duty period.

An OOW may work with a small team on the bridge, and on the rest of the vessel, depending very much on its size and purpose. Though the Master has overall responsibility for the vessel, and another colleague may be directing business operations such as towing, an OOW has delegated Master's authority in their absence to prioritise the safety of the vessel. An OOW would be expected to seek the advice of the Master if circumstances deviated significantly from those which applied when the passage plan was settled, eg a significant deterioration in the weather, or if another vessel appears to be risking a collision. The Master may delegate authority to a senior officer on occasion to supervise an OOW.

An OOW must work with the legal requirements set by a number of international and national bodies, particularly with regard to safety and to protection of the marine environment.

An OOW has particular responsibilities for safety on board, both during normal operations and in emergencies.

[Typical job titles used for this occupation...](#)

Officer Of the Watch, Mate, Second Officer, Tug Officer, Landing craft Master

Duties

Occupation duties

Duty	Days required to complete off the job training for this duty
Duty 1: Take charge of a navigational watch at sea, ensuring the safety of the vessel and its crew by taking decisions on navigation such as avoidance of collision with other vessels, and safe navigation of natural hazards	25
Duty 2: Ensure a proper watch (ie lookout) is kept at all times during the watch	10
Duty 3: Take charge of a watch in harbour, ensuring the safety of the vessel and its crew, including when embarking and disembarking, and loading and unloading stores / equipment / cargo	15
Duty 4: Ensure the vessel maintains a safe course and all orders and directions are carried out effectively	5
Duty 5: Direct operations in addition to navigation and safety, such as cargo operations where the OOW is responsible for delegating duties to pursue these aims and takes responsibility for the actions of the crew	5
Duty 6: Manoeuvre the vessel safely, commonly in busy waters, taking account of weather, sea state and the need to provide effective support to the vessel's business	15
Duty 7: Maintain effective communications with all parties onboard and ashore throughout the watch	5
Duty 8: Comply with all relevant laws and regulations, and with organisational procedures, including completing records as required	10
Duty 9: Monitor crew fatigue throughout the watch and take action to ensure that those on duty are capable of performing their duties	5
Duty 10: Take charge of a response team during an emergency, including communication with emergency services, search and rescue coordinators and crew. Emergency response will ideally be led by the Master but an OOW may need to act on their own initiative if the Master cannot be contacted. Use the Safety Management System processes where instructed	15

Duty 11: Work within the organisation's business constraints, while ensuring the safety of the vessel and its crew	5
Duty 12: Ensure that safety equipment is in good order ready for immediate use, and in compliance with appropriate regulations	15
Duty 13: Prepare to transfer the watch responsibility at handover by briefing the incoming officer to provide them situational awareness and identification of navigational and operational hazards	10
Duty 14: Prepare to accept the watch responsibility at handover by attaining good situational awareness and identification of navigational and operational hazards before formal transfer	10

Additional information

Proposed Route: Transport and Logistics

Typical duration of apprenticeship (months): 36

Proposed occupational Level: 3

Transferability: the Institute expects that being competent in the duties you have listed in this proposal will mean that an individual will be able to undertake the occupation in all relevant types of employer. Please outline the steps you have taken to ensure that this will be the case and upload two examples of job adverts relating to the occupation (please only use this upload facility for this purpose. Any other information uploaded here will not be taken into account when reviewing your submission).

This Standard will prepare candidates to pass the relevant MCA-approved Certificate of Competence (CoC) as an Officer Of the Watch, specifically OOW on Merchant Vessels of less than 500 gross tonnage (Near Coastal). Each CoC would enable them to work on any vessel covered by that CoC. The MCA also specifies pathways to enable someone with one CoC to transfer to an occupation covered by another CoC.

Transferability uploads (if any):

Please estimate the typical number of annual starts on your proposed apprenticeship standard: 160

What is the Standard Occupational Code (SOC) for the occupation? 3513 - Ship and hovercraft officers

Stand alone occupation: please confirm that the proposed apprenticeship relates to a stand alone occupation, and explain how it will fit in with any associated apprenticeship standards and list any further occupations for which you plan to submit proposals (if you have no plans to submit further proposals please say so).

The occupation of Officer Of the Watch is not covered by any existing apprenticeship standard:

- the existing Able Seafarer (Deck) standard (at Level 2) is for the junior grade of 'rating', which is covered by lower level certification from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency;
- the Boatmaster apprenticeship is for inland waterways: very different vessels operating in very different conditions under very different regulations;
- the proposed Small Vessel Engineer apprenticeship is also for officers, but engineering officers; this apprenticeship is for deck officers;
- the Marine Technical Superintendent (Level 7), Marine Surveyor (Level 6), and Marine Pilot (Level 5) standards, are possible future routes for qualified Officers Of the Watch, but they are essentially post-qualification, post-experience routes, whereas OOW is the first step at officer level;
- there is a parallel path to Officer Of the Watch certification through cadetships, but (a) they are not statutory apprenticeships (and cannot be because cadets are not employed); (b) employers covered by this OOW apprenticeship do not have access to the Government's SMarT (Support for Maritime Training) programme.

We have no plans to submit any further proposal after this.

Whilst some overlap of knowledge, skills and behaviours between apprenticeship standards is inevitable, the Institute will not permit the development of new apprenticeship standards relating to occupations already covered by existing standards. This means that the proposed apprenticeship needs to be recognised and to stand alone. To help demonstrate this, you may wish to upload a diagram detailing how the proposed apprenticeship fits in with any related apprenticeships and reference where it fits within the relevant occupational map.

Does professional recognition exist for the occupation? No