

RYA First Aid Requirements

Introduction

The default first aid training required for those holding any RYA instructor qualifications, certificates of competence or commercial endorsements is the RYA First Aid course. This course is widely available and designed for the specific demands of providing first aid afloat on small vessels. It is also accepted by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) for use on board small commercial vessels and by World Sailing for compliance with the Offshore Special Regulations, and covers the requirements of the Health and Safety regulations for the purposes of emergency first aid at work training.

It is recognised that it is not always possible to access an RYA training centre which delivers the RYA First Aid course, and there are also many situations where an individual is required to hold a different first aid qualification by their employer due to the nature of their work or due to other legal requirements. It should be noted that neither the HSE nor the MCA recognise online first aid training courses, so training must therefore be carried out face-to-face.

RYA practical instructors excluding Advanced Powerboat, Cruising and Yachtmaster Instructors

For the purposes of RYA practical instructor qualifications other than Advanced Powerboat, Cruising and Yachtmaster Instructor endorsements, the RYA has opted to match the UK's HSE's practice in allowing RTCs and instructors to use alternative first aid qualifications, providing the course meets the minimum requirements given at the end of this guidance. On RYA Instructor courses the Coach / Trainer will verify that an in date first aid certificate is held.

Commercial endorsement applicants

On vessels certified under the UK's Small Commercial Vessel Codes of Practice up to category 2 area of operation the minimum first aid qualification required is the RYA First Aid, STCW Elementary First Aid or Sea Fish first aid. If an individual is responsible for the first aid on board the first aid course must cover the use of Category C medical stores as detailed in MSN 1768 (M+F). The RYA First Aid course is the preferred option as the use of Category C medical stores forms part of the syllabus.

Applications for new or renewed commercial endorsements will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that they understand their responsibility with regard to holding and maintaining valid medical fitness, first aid and radio operator's certificates and that they may need higher level certification subject to the nature of the vessel on which they work.

RYA Cruising Instructors, Yachtmaster Instructors, Powerboat Advanced Instructors

Cruising and Yachtmaster instructors are required to hold a commercial endorsement for their instructor award to be valid¹. RYA Advanced Powerboat Instructors teaching the advanced course must also hold a valid commercial endorsement. As the first aid requirements for working on vessels operated commercially are set within the regulations under which the vessel is certified, each operator must ensure that suitable first aid qualifications are held by instructors. RTC Principals and Chief Instructors must ensure all instructors teaching Cruising and Advanced Powerboat courses hold a valid first aid certificate which covers the use of Category C stores.

RYA Exam candidates

Candidates for the Advanced Powerboat, Yachtmaster Coastal or Offshore exams must present an in date first aid certificate which meets the RYA's minimum first aid below.

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¹ Note Instructors holding the Australian medical fitness certificates are limited to instruction in Australia and do not have the commercial endorsement added to their certificate.

Minimum first aid requirements for RYA Practical Instructors and exam candidates:

Course duration: 1 day with at least 6 hours instructional time.

Course outcomes:

1. Understand the role of a first aider in regard to:
 - i. The importance of preventing cross infection
 - ii. The need for recording and/or reporting incidents and accidents
 - iii. Assessing a scenario and circumstances to ensure they act safely, promptly and effectively in an emergency
2. Can perform CPR to current protocols, and understand the differential for drowning.
3. Understand the importance of the recovery position and the need to modify it for small spaces.
4. Can administer first aid to those who are unconscious
5. Can identify types of external bleeding and control bleeding
6. Can use appropriate dressings, bandages and other first aid equipment available, including improvised dressings and bandages.
7. Understand the term shock, recognise and treat it
8. Can recognise and understands the treatment for hypothermia following immersion and/or exposure.
9. Recognise the signs of a reduced level of response, with particular reference to serious head injuries.
10. Can administer suitable first aid for:
 - i. Breathing difficulties
 - ii. Choking
 - iii. chest pain
 - iv. seasickness
 - v. diabetic emergency
 - vi. anaphylaxis
 - vii. hyperthermia
 - viii. fractures
 - ix. seizures
 - x. burns, including scalds, chemical and electrical
 - xi. Minor injuries including small cuts, grazes, bruises and small splinters
11. Can choose suitable first aid equipment

Note: First aid certificates should be refreshed or renewed every three years, other than STCW First Aid certificates which may be refreshed up to every 5 years.

Note: Commercial Endorsement holders must maintain a valid first aid certificate in line with the regulations governing their operation. In the UK the minimum qualification for work under the codes of practice for small commercial vessels are either RYA First Aid, STCW Elementary First Aid or higher or Seafish Basic First Aid. Higher certification may be needed subject to the area of operation.

Declaration for non RYA, STCW or Seafish First Aid certificates

Certificate type: _____ **Expiry date:** _____

I _____ declare that I understand that it is my personal responsibility to maintain a valid first aid certificate which meets the requirements detailed in this document for the duration of my RYA certificate and/or commercial endorsement for the intended use of my RYA certificate..

Signature: _____ Date: _____