



Apprenticeship in Sea Fishing

Apprenticeships provide training and development for young people aged 16 - 24 years, (to start before their 25th birthday) who wish to enter the catching sector of the fishing industry.

Apprenticeships are based on achievement and not time being served. Therefore at the commencement of an apprenticeship an Individual Learning Plan will be agreed with each apprentice and the School. This plan will specify a duration that will allow the apprentice a reasonable prospect of successful completion of the programme. The Learning plan will be reviewed at regular intervals.

The apprenticeship is aimed at those newly entering the industry and aspiring to reach the first milestone on a fishing vessel, i.e. to become a competent deckhand. As a deckhand, the job requires a range of individual and team responsibilities.

A typical job role may include being:

- a member of one of the bridge watch teams – steering, lookout, contributing to safe navigation
- a member of the deck team – operating and maintaining deck and fishing gear, handling and stowing the catch, operating deck machinery
- responsible for the care and control of the catch
- member of the emergency services team.

The Apprenticeship will lead to:

- Level 2 Diploma in Maritime Studies (Sea Fishing pathway)
- Functional Skills Level 1, or if you already hold these or an equivalent, Level 2 may be undertaken
- Seafish Industry Authority Certificates in First Aid, Fire Fighting, Sea Survival and Health & Safety for New Entrants, Safety Awareness and Risk Assessment
- Short Range VHF Radio Operators Certificate
- Where possible, several other extra curricular courses such as Care of the Catch, Vessel Stability, Diesel Engine Maintenance. etc.

A **training allowance** is available for apprentices and is payable on a weekly basis. Subsistence and/or travelling allowances are also payable in appropriate cases. Learners living away from home will have their bed, breakfast and evening meal paid directly to their landlady/landlord.

Together with the skippers, the school runs an **Incentive Scheme** to encourage apprentices to work hard and complete their qualification. Basically, once an apprentice is at sea and begins to learn the necessary skills, the skipper, who cannot pay the apprentice (as he/she will be training under non-employed status) will send a cheque to the school on behalf of the apprentice. This will be saved on his behalf and will be presented to the apprentice once he/she has completed his apprenticeship in full.

The scheme is designed to suit the requirements of the apprentice and as such they are given an appropriate length of time to complete in which time they will be expected to complete a Training Record Book, undertake Technical Certificate examinations and also provide evidence for either Key Skills or Functional Skills qualifications.

Off the job training

Full time attendance at the school from 09.00 hrs to 16.00 hrs (30 hours per week) is required during this time for a period of approximately two months, although the learner may have a number of trips out on vessels to familiarise them with the sea environment.

The apprentice will undertake various lessons around knowledge based and competence based units:

Mandatory units:

- Survival in the water during maritime emergencies
- Emergency first aid in response to maritime accidents or medical emergencies
- Maritime fire prevention and fire actions
- Maintain your own work practice
- Maritime security
- Communicate using equipment and visual means
- Maritime sector overview
- Maritime employment, environmental health and safety practice
- Vessel ropework and anchoring and mooring operations
- Securing a vessel for passage
- Assist with a vessel's navigational watch
- Vessel's construction and stability

Fishing pathway units:

- Assemble, operate and maintain fishing gear
- Receiving handling and stowing the catch on a fishing vessel

Functional Skills will be introduced at an early stage in the first period and will be expected to be completed by the end of the classroom period in order that sea duty is not interrupted.

On the job Training

During this period of time (approximately 9 months), the learner will spend the majority of their time on a working fishing vessel with the remaining time attending the school to undertake progression reviews, examinations and assessments.

Assessment

Assessment will take place regularly during the classroom training, and results held on file. At the end of classroom training, the majority of units will be assessed by multiple choice examination papers, the results of which may require variations to the apprentices' Individual Apprenticeship Plan to be made.

When completing the sea duty training, apprentices are required to complete sections of a Training Record Book, and when progressing and have become competent, this will be signed off by the skipper or first mate.

Final assessment will take the form of inspection of all of the evidence achieved by the apprentice, and will require submission of Functional Skills Certificates, Training Record Book completed in full, and examination papers. Once the submission has been verified, the apprentice will have achieved the full qualification.

Achievement

The successful apprentice will receive an Intermediate Apprenticeship Certificate. This is separate from and in addition to those certificates awarded for the achievement of the individual components, e.g. units exams, Training Record Book and functional skills.

Then, the newly qualified deck hand can expect to enter the world of work with approx 12/13 certificates – and has become extremely employable.

Progression

The mandatory unit qualifications and safety certificates are identical in all parts of the United Kingdom. As such, opportunities exist for apprentices to transfer to other parts of the UK and apply their competence. The units that make up the fishing qualifications have been developed as part of a common framework covering the Merchant Navy Training Board and the British Tug Owners Association. Some units are therefore shared and identical to those used in other maritime occupational qualifications. Those completing the Apprenticeship will therefore have recognisable skills and competences that are required in a wide range of maritime-based occupations.

All the qualifications have a direct link into Maritime and Coastguard Agency statutory certification system. For the Level 2 apprentice, the next step could be, via the level 3 or Advanced Apprenticeship, to the MCA Class 2 Deck Officer (Fishing Vessel) certificate and thereafter, to the MCA Class 1 Deck Officer (Fishing Vessel) certificate. For the Level 3 apprenticeships, the next steps could be the Class 2 Deck Officer (Fishing Vessel) and then the Class 1 Deck Officer (Fishing Vessel) certificates.