

Sailing ships:

Guidance for requesting certificates of competency and frequently asked questions

(Read this to avoid unnecessary costs and frustration.)

The first step

You can request your Dutch certificate of competency via the KIWA Register application portal:

<https://portal.kiwaregister.nl>.

To perform your application in English, click the button 'taal' at the top right of the page.

To begin the application you need to login (applicants who are registered in the Netherlands should click on the button 'particulier'; applicants who are not, should click on 'KIWA-ID'). Once logged in you should see your personal KIWA page.

On the left is an option menu. Once you have made your selection, the actual application process will begin. You will need to complete a number of pages requiring you to fill-in and upload information.

BE AWARE!

- The KIWA site can be slow; each time you click the whole page will refresh.
- After selecting the correct document using BROUWSE don't forget to click ADD see the example below:



- Your passport photo must adhere to the KIWA requirements (it must be an official passport photo, of recent date and without a white edge. It should be a JPEG file of maximum 5MB in size, a minimum of 709 pixels high and 552 pixels wide. If your passport photo is not accepted, it may be helpful to use a passport photo site to improve the quality.).

The application

Below you will find a description of what should be uploaded for each position. Each type of document is listed and the areas where you should pay particular attention.

We advise you to select all possible ranks, including radio operator, and ranks lower than your maximum request. This is to avoid issues should you be positioned in a lower rank on the crew list than is stated on your certificate of competency.

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position of Rating deck / Rating deck sailing ships

If you are applying for this position by means of a service book (in the case of inland shipping for example) then you can only apply for rating sailing. If your application is based on sailing time at sea, then select both positions (Rating Sailing / Rating Sailing Deck).

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards, submit both front and back sides)
- Proof of 6 month's sailing time (service book / Seaman's Book or declaration from the ship owner)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- A KIWA declaration confirming that the person complies with the requirements according to section A-II/4 of the STCW code.
- Basic Safety Training

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Officer in charge of a navigational watch <500GT

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards submit both front and back sides)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- Certificate of proficiency nautical officer small sailing ships
- Basic Safety Training
- Medical First Aid
- Marcom -> B for limited area (area I, II, IIIA)
 -> A for unlimited area (area III and IV)

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Chief mate sailing ships <500GT area unlimited

It is not possible to apply for a certificate of competency for this position.

According to the statement from the Dutch Shipping Inspectorate, dated 14 January 2015, it is possible to sail as Chief mate on board sailing ships <500GT area unlimited with the certificate of competency 'Officer in charge of a navigational watch <500GT unlimited'. This statement is available here for download:

<https://www.roodbovengroen.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ILenT-verklaring-wachtstuurman-zeilvaart-1.pdf>

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Master sailing ships <500GT limited area

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards submit both front and back sides)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- Certificate of proficiency nautical officer small sailing ships
- Basic Safety Training
- Medical First Aid
- Marcom B
- Proof of sailing time:
 - For areas I and II: Two seasons as officer in charge of a navigational watch on commercially sailing sea ships (this time is allowed to be inland sailing)

- For areas I, II and III: Two seasons as officer in charge of a navigational watch on commercially sailing sea ships (where of, a maximum of one season inland sailing)

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Officer in charge of a navigational watch all sailing ships

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards submit both front and back sides)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- Certificate of proficiency nautical officer large sailing ships
- Basic Safety Training
- Medical First Aid
- Proficiency in Survival Crafts and Rescue Boats (other than fast rescue boats)
- Advanced Fire Fighting
- Marcom A
- Proof of six month's sailing time as rating deck

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Chief mate all sailing ships

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards submit both front and back sides)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- Certificate of proficiency nautical officer large sailing ships
- Basic Safety Training
- Medical First Aid
- Proficiency in Survival Crafts and Rescue Boats (other than fast rescue boats)
- Advanced Fire Fighting
- Marcom A
- Proof of 12 month's sailing time as officer in charge of a navigational watch (may also be on ships <500GT)

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Master all sailing ships

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards submit both front and back sides)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- Certificate of proficiency nautical officer large sailing ships
- Basic Safety Training
- Medical First Aid
- Proficiency in Survival Crafts and Rescue Boats (other than fast rescue boats)
- Advanced Fire Fighting
- Marcom A
- Proof of 12 month's sailing time as Chief mate all sailing ships (sailing time performed as master sailing ships <500GT is permitted)

Applying for a certificate of competency for the position Master all sailing <500G unlimited area

Items required for submission for this application:

- Recent passport photo
- Passport / ID card (For ID cards submit both front and back sides)
- Valid medical fitness certificate for maritime navigation (medical check)
- Certificate of proficiency nautical officer large sailing ships
- Basic Safety Training
- Medical First Aid
- Medical Care
- Marcom A
- Proof of 12 month's sailing time as officer in charge of a navigational watch sailing ships

Document requirements

Proof of sailing time

The sailing time must be attained on commercial, seagoing vessels. (For rating deck sailing ships: commercial sailing inland ships, as proven by means of the Certificate of Investigation (CoI). It is mandatory for KIWA to have proof of this requirement. KIWA can look up IMO numbers. Unfortunately, they cannot access sea letters, foreign ship registrations or CoIs). Particularly for inland ships and foreign ships, it may well be that the applicant has to provide proof themselves!

Do ensure that the Seaman's Book is accurate and filled in truthfully! If the wrong position is applied for, the application may be rejected by KIWA. If you do not have a Seaman's Book then a declaration from the employer is also sufficient.

Medical fitness test

A very important question is: Is the doctor approved?

For an overview of approved doctors in the Netherlands, click here:

<https://www.ilent.nl/onderwerpen/medische-zaken-zeevaart/documenten/publicaties/2017/05/15/aangewezen-artsen-voor-zee--en-binnenvaart-in-nederland>

Regarding approved doctors outside of the Netherlands:

KIWA accepts medical fitness certificates (medical tests) from all approved doctors from:

- The EU
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Iceland
- Lichtenstein
- And, as of 1 October 2019:
- Australia
- Canada
- India
- New Zealand

- Ukraine
- South Africa

In the first instance, KIWA will perform its own research to investigate whether a doctor is approved in a country (i.e. Look through various lists of approved doctors). However, it may be that an applicant is requested to provide proof himself/herself.

A number of working examples:

- France:

<https://www.ecologique-solidaire.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/Liste%20officielle%20des%20m%C3%A9decins%20agr%C3%A9s%20SSGM.pdf>

- Belgian doctors overseas:

https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/Resources/publicaties/scheepvaart/pub_koopvaardij_buitenl_artsen

- Belgian doctors:

https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/Resources/publicaties/scheepvaart/pub_koopvaardij_lijst_belg_artse_n

- Poland: <http://www.ums.gov.pl/dokumenty-marynarzy.html?id=44>

- Norway: <https://www.sdir.no/en/shipping/seafarers/approved-seafarers-doctors/>

- UK approved doctors: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mca-approved-doctors-uk-based>

- UK approved doctors overseas: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mca-approved-doctors-overseas>

Furthermore is it important to pay attention to filling in the test completely: Does the test include a hearing and sight test? Is the box checked indicating that the test was done to include watch duties on the bridge?

Basic safety training

This training covers four STCW codes: A-VI/1-1, A-VI/1-2, A-VI/1-3, A-VI/1-3. If these codes are not shown on the certificate, then it is not useable. In many countries there is one certificate for all four parts; sometimes the training consists of four certificates, one part for each. For the latter, you need to submit all four of the certificate parts.

In many countries, two of the certificates do not need to be refreshed so long as you sail enough. The following certificates do need to be refreshed every 5 years: Personal survival techniques and Fire prevention and firefighting.

If you submit your Basic Safety Training to the KIWA in this way, it will enquire by the issuing country whether the provided proof would be accepted in that country. This can lead to a delay in the application process.

The certificate for a Rating Deck must be issued by an institution that is approved by the maritime authority from an EU member state, EEA/EFTA member, a country with which the Netherlands has an agreement (https://puc.overheid.nl/nsi/doc/PUC_86961_14/) or a country shown on the IMO White List (MSC.1/Circ.1163/Rev.x).

Officers and masters are allowed to have a Basic Safety Training certificate that is issued by a competent authority with which the Netherlands has an agreement.

KIWA declaration

It is advisable to fill in the 'Declaration of competency requirements rating forming part of a navigational watch' in applications for both rating deck and rating deck sailing ships.

These can be downloaded here:

<https://www.roodbovengroen.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/KIWA-verklaring-eisen-van-bekwaamheid-wachtlopend-gezel-2020.pdf>

Certificate of proficiency

The certificate of proficiency is issued by Enkhuizer Sailing School. It will be issued after you have demonstrated sailing days and the tasks in the task book have been signed off. For more information, visit: <https://www.ezs.nl/vaarbevoegdheid.html>

The certificate of proficiency is not allowed to be older than four years when making a first application.

Medical First Aid / Medical Care

Officers and masters are allowed to have a Basic Safety Training certificate that is issued by a competent authority with which the Netherlands has an agreement.

The certificate should be, as a minimum requirement, in English and must include the correct STCW codes.

Be aware! For certificates of competency where you need both a Medical First Aid (MFA) and a Medical Care (MCare) certificate, you need to present both trainings! Some training facilities include the MFA automatically with the MCare. Nevertheless, ask for two certificates. In the case of you having these trainings on one certificate, there is a chance that you will have to demonstrate that the MFA training was included in the Mcare training yourself.

Extending a valid certificate of competency

A valid certificate of competency can be extended if the holder can demonstrate that he/she has sailed a minimum of either, 360 days in the five years prior to the extension request, or 90 days in the six months prior to the extension request. Note: These days must be achieved with a valid certificate of competency.

Renewing an expired certificate of competency

- In the case of a certificate of competency that is less than five years expired.

There are three possible way of getting a valid certificate of competency:

1. Attain a new certificate of proficiency (this is possible, depending on the educational institution and situation, via an APL procedure (Accreditation of Prior Learning).
2. Gain 3 three month's above rank experience during the six months prior to the date of the renewal application.
3. With an official certificate of competency, gain three month's experience, during the six months prior to the renewal application date, in a lower ranking position than the expired certificate of competency.
4. (Be aware that, a master cannot sail with an official certificate of competency as a first mate because a first mate acts as a replacement for the master. An expired

master's certificate of competency sails therefore as an officer in charge of a navigational watch.)

- A certificate of competency that is more than five years expired:
There is only one possibility: Attain a new certificate of proficiency (this is possible, depending on the educational institution and situation, via an APL procedure (Accreditation of Prior Learning)).

Maintaining the validity of a certificate of competency is possible with alternative experience, i.e. Experience not attained as a seafarer. For a list of relevant positions, check the Dutch Seafarer's Regulation (Regeling Zeevarenden) article 10.7 and the Implementation guide - Seafarer's law (Gids Uitvoering Wet Zeevarenden) page 41.

Experience in different industries

A certificate of competency is only valid in one industry (Merchant, seagoing fishing, seagoing sailing, marine). The only way to transfer is by attaining a qualification (=diploma) from an approved educational institution. With a new certificate of proficiency and any necessary training, a long running certificate of competency for the initial competency can be applied for in the usual way. After having gained three month's experience in the new industry (whilst being in possession of the new start-competency), an application for a higher certificate of competency can be applied for, according to the table in the Dutch Seafarer's Law (Wet Zeevarenden). You can make a transfer from, for example; bridge to bridge, mechanical engineer to mechanical engineer or maritime officer to maritime officer. However, it is not possible to go from a bridge position in one industry to a mechanical engineer position in another industry via this route.

When looking to increase the level of your certificate of competency, you are required to have sailed for three months in the industry within which you are looking to increase or extend (and this always within the past five valid years).

See also below, article 10.6, Regeling Zeevarenden.

In the case of foreign (non-Dutch) certificates of competency

Non-Dutch Seaman's Book

It is sufficient for seafarer's with a nationality other than Dutch to have a valid, foreign Seaman's Book that is written (as a minimum) in English.

Foreign certificates of competency

Seafarers in the position of rating deck are able to sail under their foreign certificate of competency as long as; the issuing country appears on the White List from the IMO (International Maritime Organisation), the certificate of competency is written in English and at least STCW code II/4 is included.

For higher positions, approval from the KIWA register is necessary and will only be given if the Netherlands has an agreement with the land in question.

Yacht Master certificates

There are, in principle, two kinds of Yacht Master certificates:

- One issued by the RYA/MCA. This includes a part of the STCW code for the Basic Safety

Training and is not valid as a certificate of competency. You cannot sail in the position of rating deck, and it is therefore also not possible to apply for a certificate of competency using this certificate.

→ A Yacht Master certificate issued by only the MCA, which includes the correct STCW code for master, is STCW worthy and therefore should inevitably be approved by the KIWA.

Getting a foreign certificate of competency approved

You can get your foreign certificate of competency approved. This can be done using the KIWA register portal.

When making an approval request you need to upload the following documents:

- Valid proof of identification
- Recent passport photo
- The original certificate of competency for which the approval is being applied
- GMDSS (if applying for a nautical position)
- Valid medical fitness for sailing declaration
- If it is regarding an officers position: A legislation and public authority certificate (also known as the exam)
- KNVR declaration (KNVR = Royal Union of Dutch Shippers)
(If the certificate of competency for which approval is being applied is regarding the position of master and the person in question does not have EU or EEA nationality)

Be aware of the following:

- KIWA can only approve a certificate of competency for a country with which the Netherlands has an agreement. (https://puc.overheid.nl/nsi/doc/PUC_86961_14/4/)
- The Dutch certificate of competency that you receive after approval is directly linked to the original foreign certificate of competency. The restrictions and the validity date are the same. They must, therefore, be kept together.
- When the original certificate of competency runs out, you have to get an extension and then apply for approval again. In other words: Every approval of an application is a first application.
- For nautical officers, like first mates and masters, it can be that the GMDSS has a shorter end date; in this case the shortest date precedes.

Ranks and their names

STCW name	Dutch name	Alternative name
Master	Kapitein	-
Chief mate	Eerste Stuurman	-
Officer in charge of a navigational watch	Wachtstuurman	2 nd mate, 2 nd officer
Rating forming part of a navigational watch	Wachtlopend gezel	Rating deck
Rating	Leering gezel	Deksman, OS

For more information, see the flowchart at: <https://roodbovengroen.com/vaarbevoegdheden>

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