



CAREERS AT SEA

A TASTE FOR ADVENTURE

A CAREER AT SEA

The British Shipping industry can offer you an adventurous lifestyle packed with exciting career prospects. Sailing the world's oceans is not a job for the faint hearted. To succeed you'll need to combine technical skill with a range of robust personal qualities.

BRITISH SHIPPING

To become a merchant seafarer in the UK you need to embark upon an education and training course to achieve professional seafaring certification and educational qualifications. This takes place at sea – onboard shipping companies' vessels – and in specialist colleges and universities throughout the UK. All programmes are sponsored, with course fees paid, living costs and other allowances provided.

Ships are a 'University of the Sea', and during your course you will develop your seafaring skills and knowledge to enable you to fulfill your potential. You can enjoy a full career on board commercial ships, or you can move ashore and put your skills to use in the maritime sector. If you're keen to gain academic and professional qualifications, experience a unique lifestyle – and satisfy your taste for adventure – a career in British shipping could be just what you're looking for.

Ships carry over 80% of world trade and sea-borne trade is forecast to increase substantially by 2015. The 'Merchant Navy' is the collective term for the commercial shipping industry.

The British merchant fleet operates worldwide and includes:

- **Some of the most prestigious cruise companies in the world**
- **Containerships carrying a variety of cargo**
- **Modern and high-tech ferries carrying 40 million passengers per year**
- **High-quality oil, gas and chemical tankers of all sizes**
- **Modern bulk carriers carrying ores, grain and coal**
- **Specialised vessels, including support for the offshore oil and gas industry.**



“EVERY SHIP HAS ITS OWN ATMOSPHERE, BUT YOU ALWAYS FEEL PART OF THE TEAM - LIKE YOU BELONG - AND THAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT.”





“The technology on board is incredible. We have satellite navigation equipment to monitor the ships’ position and can access computerised information about the ships systems, speed and fuel. Everyday we calculate navigational changes and check weather reports. We have satellite communication with ships, ports and offices worldwide.”



“My target is to become a fully qualified engineer, and with the kind of training I’m getting there’s nothing to hold me back.”

“New Technology interests me and I want a career that provides daily challenges.”



OPPORTUNITIES AT SEA

NAVIGATION (DECK) OFFICER

As a deck officer you'll be a vital member of the ship's management team, and with the prospect of sophisticated and expensive vessels, valuable cargo or passengers in your charge, it's a big responsibility.

While on duty (called a 'watch'), it will be down to you to make decisions on steering and manoeuvring the ship, controlling navigation and communications. Using the latest technological systems, you'll have control at your fingertips. In port you'll be responsible for cargo handling and ship stability. As a senior navigation (deck) officer, you'll be a leading member of a small team of skilled, professional seafarers. You'll direct and supervise the work of your team – maintaining the ship and its equipment at optimum efficiency.

What qualities will you need?

You'll need to be decisive, calm and able to inspire confidence in others. You'll be a good team member with an interest in technology, mathematical ability and good written and verbal communication skills. Beyond this, confidence, enthusiasm and self-reliance are essential attributes.

What are the entry routes?

DEGREE COURSES	TITLE	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
Foundation degree or Scottish Professional diploma (3 years)	FD Nautical Science or Marine Operations or SPD Marine Operations	120 UCAS points in unspecified A levels or Scottish Highers plus GCSE grades at A or B/Scottish Standard Grades at Credit level in English, Maths and a Science Based subject
Honours degree (4 years)	BSc (Hons) Nautical Science or BSc (Hons) Merchant Vessel Operations or BSc (Hons) Marine Studies (Merchant Shipping)	Entry is in accordance with the requirements of sponsoring companies and the admission requirements of the universities concerned, and will usually require Maths and/or a Science A level/Scottish Higher
OTHER COURSES	TITLE	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
HNC/HND (3/3½ years)	Nautical Science	GCSE grades A-C/Scottish Standard Grades at Levels 1-3 in English, Maths, a Science based subject and at least one other subject

ALL ENTRY ROUTES INCLUDE PROFESSIONAL SEAFARER CERTIFICATION WHICH QUALIFIES YOU AS A NAVIGATION (DECK) OFFICER

PLEASE NOTE THAT INDIVIDUAL SPONSORING COMPANIES MAY ALSO HAVE THEIR OWN ENTRY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

If you have seafaring experience and/or qualifications from the Royal Navy or fishing industry, you may be able to gain exemptions from some of the academic and practical aspects of training, resulting in a quicker route to qualification as a navigation (deck) officer. Sponsoring companies will provide relevant details.

ENGINEER OFFICER

As an engineer officer, you'll operate and maintain all the mechanical and electrical equipment throughout the ship. You'll be responsible for power generation and distribution systems and for other equipment such as lifts, refrigeration plant and pumping and ventilation systems. Via a bank of high-tech instrumentation, you'll monitor mechanical, electrical, hydraulic and control equipment, and have charge of computer controlled engine management systems. You'll overhaul and maintain equipment throughout the ship, where your engineering problem-solving skills will be your greatest asset. At sea, if equipment goes wrong you can't just pull in to the nearest garage! It will be up to you to diagnose the fault, get the equipment dismantled, repaired and reassembled and back into operation. As a senior engineer officer, you'll lead a team of professional engineering personnel and supervise their work at sea and in port.

What qualities will you need?

You'll need to be practical, resourceful and have a real interest in mechanical, electrical and electronic systems. Like deck officers, you'll be decisive, calm and able to inspire confidence in others. Good written and verbal communication skills are required. Beyond this you'll need to be prepared to learn about new technology and adapt your skills to its use.

What are the entry routes?

DEGREE COURSES	TITLE	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
Foundation degree or Scottish Professional diploma (3 years)	FD Marine Engineering or SPD Marine Engineering	120 UCAS points in unspecified A levels or Scottish Highers plus GCSE grades at A or B/Scottish Standard Grades at Credit level in English, Maths and a Science based subject
Honours degree (4 years)	BEng (Hons) Mechanical and Power Plant Systems or BEng (Hons) Mechanical and Marine Engineering or BSc (Hons) Marine Engineering	Entry is in accordance with the requirements of sponsoring companies and the admission requirements of the universities concerned, and will usually require Maths and/or a Science A level/Scottish Higher
OTHER COURSES	TITLE	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
HNC/HND (3/3¼ years)	Marine Engineering	GCSE grades A-C/Scottish Standard Grades at Levels 1-3 in English, Maths, a Science based subject and at least one other subject

ALL ENTRY ROUTES INCLUDE PROFESSIONAL SEAFARER CERTIFICATION WHICH QUALIFIES YOU AS AN ENGINEER OFFICER

PLEASE NOTE THAT INDIVIDUAL SPONSORING COMPANIES MAY ALSO HAVE THEIR OWN ENTRY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

If you have a relevant engineering degree/apprenticeship and/or seafaring experience and/or qualifications from the Royal Navy or fishing industry, you may be able to gain exemptions from some of the academic and practical aspects of training, resulting in a quicker route to qualification as an engineer officer. Sponsoring companies will provide relevant details.

ELECTRO-TECHNICAL OFFICER

As Electro-Technical Officer (ETO) you'll ensure that the wide range of electronic and electrical equipment onboard is maintained and in optimum working order.

This role will ensure your problem solving skills will be utilised on equipment as diverse as the main propulsion motors and communication systems. The complexity and variety on vessels with various electronic equipment will ensure a fresh technical challenge each week.

As well as your maintenance skills, this role will require you to monitor all electrical equipment on board to maximise the operational safety and efficiency of the vessel.

What qualities will you need?

You'll need to be practical, resourceful and have an interest in electrical and electronic control and power systems. Good mathematical, written and verbal communication skills are required along with practical trouble shooting and good team working skills.

What are the entry routes?

DEGREE COURSES	TITLE	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
Foundation degree (3 years)	FD Marine Electrical Systems	120 UCAS points in unspecified A levels or Scottish Highers plus GCSE grades at A or B/Scottish Standard Grades at Credit level in English, Maths and a Science based subject



OPPORTUNITIES

AT SEA Continued

RATINGS

Ratings are the support staff on board who work under the guidance of the officers in operating the ship. They are skilled seafarers who work in both the deck and engine departments and form an important part of the team. Other ratings work in the catering department involved in a variety of catering services onboard, including preparing and serving food for the crew or, in passenger ships, for both passengers and crew. Some ships also employ ratings in communications jobs on board.

As a **Deck rating** you'll assist with the operation and maintenance of the deck equipment such as the winches for the mooring ropes and the cargo cranes. You'll undertake the "fabric maintenance" of the ship ensuring that it not only looks smart but is also protected against the wear and tear effects of the weather. In port you'll be involved with the cargo operations – loading and unloading the ship. As a Deck rating you are also part of the mooring operations team. Once at sea as a suitably qualified rating you will steer the ship and also act as look out on the bridge.

As an **Engineering rating** you'll work on the day to day monitoring and maintenance of the equipment in the engine room and also anywhere else on the ship, such as the steering gear. You'll be involved in cleaning, lubricating and assisting with stripping, repairing and fitting new or refurbished parts under direction by engineer officers.

As a **Catering rating** you'll perform a variety of jobs as well as being cook or cook/steward – such as forming part of emergency response teams involved in firefighting, security and passenger control or rescue duties.

What do I need to do to become a rating?

To train as a rating you will need to be over 16, in good health and able to meet the seafarers medical and eyesight requirements. There are no set minimum academic requirements for entry, however to progress in your career you will need to have the potential to obtain your professional rating qualifications and would be expected to have 3 GCSE's/Scottish Standard Grades.

If you have the ambition and ability it is possible to progress from rating to officer rank by undertaking further training. Only a small number of companies offer places for rating training so there are relatively fewer opportunities to use this as a route of entry to the industry.

Which qualifications will I get?

Deck Ratings

To become a Deck rating Grade 2 you will need to undertake safety and professional training, serve the required seetime and obtain your Navigational Watch Rating certificate. With further seetime you may then sail as a Deck rating Grade 1. Once you have sufficient sea service you may also take the Efficient Deck Hand examination and the Certificate of Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats and may then be awarded an Able Seaman Certificate.

Engineer Ratings

Engineer ratings can obtain the Engine-Room Watch Rating Certificate after undertaking the required seetime, professional and safety training.

Catering Ratings

Cooks can obtain the MCA Certificate of Competency as Ship's Cook. Other qualifications are non marine and are those associated with the preparation, cooking and serving of food as issued by the catering industry in general.



"I'm seeing the world first-class. It's more than a job - it's a way of life."



HOTEL AND CATERING, HOSPITALITY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Modern cruise ships and passenger ferries are run on the lines of a large hotel, so a whole range of hotel and catering, hospitality and support services is needed on board. There are jobs for pursers/receptionists, restaurant and bar staff, housekeepers, cruise directors, entertainers, hairdressers, beauticians, photographers, retail and childcare staff, to name just a few.

In all these functions you'll be providing services to passengers on a daily basis. You'll need a bright personality, an efficient manner and a sincere commitment to providing top quality customer service.

Specific roles vary from company to company but generally prior qualifications and experience in the hotel, catering or hospitality industry are necessary.

You will need to contact the individual cruise or ferry companies direct for further details on entry requirements and application procedures. There is a range of useful books about working on cruise ships in particular – check out your local library or do an internet search.



"There are vast career opportunities across the whole Maritime Sector."



OPPORTUNITIES

ASHORE

British seafarer standards are highly regarded throughout the world and your qualifications are internationally recognised, so there need be no limit to your ambitions. Many seafarers spend their whole career at sea whilst others choose to advance their career ashore either in shipping companies or in a host of other marine industries or sectors where their skills and experience are in great demand.

Typical shore-based work includes:

- ship management and fleet operations
- surveying ships to check seaworthiness
- ports and harbour management, and pilotage
- lecturers in colleges - training the seafarers of the future

- maritime regulatory authorities
- ship repair and marine equipment production management
- marine insurance
- ship broking and finance
- ship classification
- maritime law and arbitration
- a range of opportunities in offshore exploration.

COURSES & SPONSORSHIP



OFFICER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

All courses start with a residential phase at a nautical college or university. This is designed to enable you to work safely at sea. The next phase is at sea. As a trainee navigation (deck) officer, you'll be developing practical navigation, seamanship and other ship operation skills. In the engineering department, qualified engineering officers will help you put your college theory into practice. After this, you will alternate between shore-based studies and work at sea, where you'll be given greater responsibility as your course progresses. The course typically lasts between three/ four years. Further training and experience as a qualified deck or engineer officer will enable you to achieve the qualifications needed to sail as Captain (i.e. Master, in overall command) or as Chief Engineer Officer (in overall charge of engineering and technical services). Typically these top-level qualifications take around a further five to six years to achieve, although promotion will depend upon the company you work for and the types of ship it operates.



RATINGS

Initial training will enable you to operate safely on board. Then you'll join your first ship to gain practical sea-going experience. Allowing for leave, it will take some 12 to 18 months to complete the training and achieve ratings' qualifications. You can progress from rating to officer status through a "conversion" course to gain the Officer of the Watch Certificate of Competency.



SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship for the courses is widely available from shipping and training companies. Your course fees will be paid and you will receive a training allowance. You'll need to apply direct to shipping companies or training organisations for details of recruitment and the availability of sponsorship. See www.careersatsea.org for the list of sponsoring organisations.

"I'm gaining new skills all the time, both at college and at sea. Some of the training is challenging, but that's one of the reasons I came into the industry."

WHERE YOU'LL TRAIN

The nautical colleges and universities that provide the courses are listed below, with website links so that you can check out which courses they offer (not all courses are available at all locations and some colleges don't offer initial officer education & training programmes). You can also check out www.ucas.co.uk for information on all maritime related degrees.

Colleges and Universities

- **Banff & Buchan College**
www.banff-buchan.ac.uk
- **Blackpool and the Fylde College (Fleetwood Nautical Campus)**
www.blackpool.ac.uk
- **Glasgow College of Nautical Studies**
www.gcns.ac.uk
- **Lews Castle College**
www.lews.uhi.ac.uk
- **Liverpool John Moores University (Lairdsid Maritime Centre)**
www.ljmu.ac.uk/lairdsidmaritimecentre
- **Lowestoft College**
www.lowestoft.ac.uk
- **Maritime Training (Plymouth)**
www.mtplymouth.co.uk
- **North West Kent College**
www.nwkclege.ac.uk
- **Orkney College**
www.orkney.uhi.ac.uk
- **Shetland School of Nautical Studies**
www.nafc.ac.uk
- **South Tyneside College**
www.stc.ac.uk
- **University of Plymouth**
www.plymouth.ac.uk
- **Southampton Solent University (Warsash Maritime Academy)**
www.warsashacademy.co.uk
www.solent.ac.uk





“I spent my last holiday backpacking around Australia. I had two months off, so I was in no rush to get home.”

LIFESTYLE

AT SEA



The first thing to realise is that you're about to embark on a world-class programme. You will develop professional and management skills that will be of value throughout your working life. No matter what kind of vessel you join you're about to experience life in a completely different way. So where could you work?

The British shipping industry comprises some 1500 ships that trade worldwide. Once qualified you could work aboard any type of ship, anywhere in the world, from a small coastal vessel to a huge passenger ship, roll-on roll-off ferry, cargo vessel, offshore support vessel or supertanker, or aboard a Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel supporting the Royal Navy at sea.

Ships operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. On board your daily working routine will usually be four hours on duty (which is called being 'on watch') and eight hours 'off.' Your lifestyle at sea will depend on the type and trading pattern of your ship. But whatever type of ship you are on, you'll have the opportunity to study, pursue leisure interests and socialise with your colleagues on board. Your living conditions are clearly very important.

You'll find the food and accommodation on board is excellent, and some ships have single cabins and en-suite facilities. Off duty activities vary depending on the type of vessel, but many ships have various leisure facilities – and they're all free. Holidays, pay, welfare and benefits vary from company to company, but are generally very good. For example, after a voyage lasting four months, you could get two months holiday or more.



HOW TO APPLY

Trainee Officers

All Officer candidates should apply direct to shipping companies for details of recruitment and training and for the availability of sponsorship. Please see the accompanying list of sponsoring companies. The list is also available at www.careersatsea.org/apply

You may apply to more than one company to check out different offers and seek sponsorship. You do not need to wait for your academic results before applying as recruitment may be possible anything up to one year in advance of your beginning the course and there are usually two entry dates August/September and January.

The sponsoring company will arrange your college or university admission

and you do not need to apply for your degree course through UCAS. If you do gain entry through UCAS you will then need to apply to the shipping and training companies for sponsorship.

Ratings

All Ratings candidates should apply direct to shipping companies for details of recruitment and training, however the opportunities for Ratings are limited.

All candidates must be at least 16 years old.

All seafarers are required by law to meet standards of medical fitness and eyesight laid down by the Department for Transport (DfT) and must pass a medical examination carried out by a doctor

approved by the DfT in order to obtain a certificate attesting to their fitness. Details of the medical examination and a list of approved doctors can be found on the MCA website:

<http://www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga07-home/workingatsea/mcga-medicalcertandadvice.htm>

Hotel and catering, Hospitality and Support Services

You will need to contact individual cruise or ferry companies direct for further details on entry requirements and application procedures. Specific roles vary from company to company but generally prior qualifications and experience in hotel, catering or hospitality work are necessary.

FURTHER INFO

Shipping Companies:
www.careersatsea.org/apply for list of sponsoring companies.

Maritime related degrees:
www.ucas.co.uk

Careers Information:
Careers at Sea, 12 Carthusian Street, London EC1M 6EZ.
Tel: 0800 085 0973
www.careersatsea.org

Wider Maritime Sector
www.seavisionuk.org

Careers at Sea Ambassadors
If you would like to find out more about the Merchant Navy and all of the fantastic opportunities that it provides then you can request a Careers at Sea Ambassador to come and visit your school or youth group. If you would like to find out more about Careers at Sea Ambassadors or to see if there is one in your area please go to www.mntb.org.uk.

To watch video clips about life on board and training go to www.careersatsea.org.



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