

Dear Examiner,

I trust this note finds you and your families safe and well in these extremely challenging times.

I am pleased to say that we are now finding ourselves at a point where in many locations around the world we can begin to venture back out on the water in some form or another. It is appropriate therefore for us to be starting to conduct RYA Yachtmaster Coastal, Offshore and Advanced Power Boat Exams once again (from 4th July onwards in England). Clearly the circumstances in each country and indeed in regions within each country differ. It is therefore essential that before considering any examination you must determine whether the regulations in the country in question will permit it to occur.

It is also extremely important to be aware that by no means are we in a situation where we would be considered to be “back to normal”. For that reason I have outlined below some guiding principles that I would ask you to consider and follow prior to undertaking any examinations.

First and foremost, your safety and that of your candidates and their crew must not be placed at risk. If you or your candidates / crew are exhibiting or have recently exhibited any Covid – 19 symptoms then the exam must not proceed. Similarly, if any of you have knowingly been in contact with anyone who has Covid – 19 or its symptoms in the preceding 14 days the exam must not proceed.

There are some other points for you to consider:

- There must be no overnight stays on board and therefore each exam session must be limited to two candidates with all concerned leaving the boat at the end of the night session. If there are more than two candidates to be examined a separate session will need to be arranged.
- There should be no more than 4 persons on board the exam vessel (examiner, 2 candidates and a crew member) in order to facilitate social distancing).
- As the examiner you will need to manage the movement of people around the boat and avoid the congregation of people in pinch points such as companionways, fly bridges and below decks. You may need to modify the way you would normally examine in order to maintain appropriate social distancing.
- Every effort must be made by all on board to maintain 2 metres distance apart at all times. Where that is not possible consideration should be given to the use of face masks.

Whilst in many locations it is possible to conduct RYA Yachtmaster exams, the reality is that any exams that involve international travel probably remain out of reach at this stage. Travel restrictions, lack of availability of flights and the need for quarantine in many cases means that it simply is not feasible for most examiners at this stage to be travelling internationally to examine. Having looked carefully at the issue I can confirm that examiners do not qualify as those who may be exempt from quarantine restrictions at this stage in the UK.

The decision as to when you feel comfortable to start conducting exams again is entirely yours and in addition to any local restrictions that remain in place will also need to take into account your own circumstances and those of your family, and any associated risk factors.

With this letter you will also find a document that I suggest you modify to suit your own needs and share with candidates in advance of exams for the duration of the Covid – 19 pandemic.

Yachtmaster Ocean Oral exams

Again, as of the 4th of July in England RYA Yachtmaster Ocean oral exams can take place in England, providing appropriate safety measures are in place. In other locations they may be run subject to local restrictions. Appropriate social distancing should be maintained and folios should be provided by candidates in advance to minimize the amount of contact time.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of the RYA Training team if you have questions.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Falk', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Richard Falk

Director of Training And Qualifications