Frequently Asked Questions: Courses

1. I need to locate a course approved by the United States Coast Guard (USCG). How do I do this?

   To view courses that are approved by the USCG, visit our [Approved Courses](#) tab of the Training & Assessments webpage. Once there, click on [Approved Courses List](#).

2. How do I know if a course will cover a specific exam?

   To determine if a specific course will cover the exams you are required to take you will need to contact the school directly. To find their contact information, visit our [Approved Courses](#) tab of the Training & Assessments webpage.

3. I took a course through a USCG-approved school/program. When does my course certificate expire?

   Once issued, course certificates taken in lieu of an exam are valid for 1 year. Expiration dates for all other courses are listed below:

   - Course certificates for Automatic Radar Plotting Aids (ARPA), Bridge Resource Management, Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), Officer in Charge of Navigational Watch (OICNW), Medical Care Provider, and Vessel Security Officer (VSO) never expire.

   - Once issued, course certificates for Firefighting, Tankerman, Radar Observer, and Basic Safety Training are valid for 5 years.

   - Once issued, certificates for Flashing Light are valid for 1 year.

4. I received an Approval to Test or Awaiting Information letter; however, I took a course for this. Why was the course not accepted?

   There could be several reasons why the course you provided is not acceptable.

   - The course certificate may have been expired when received by the National Maritime Center (NMC). Please refer to Question 3 of this FAQ list to see what the timeframes are for specific exams. Once expired, the course certificate is no longer accepted by the NMC.
• The course you took may not have covered all exam requirements. Please contact the school you attended to speak with them regarding this issue and, if needed, work with them to have it resolved.

• You may have submitted your application prior to the course being completed or before the course data was submitted.

• The course taken could have been completed during a time that was outside of the course effective dates. This means that the school did not have the appropriate USCG approval.

• If the issue is outside of these reasons or if you are unable to resolve the issue, please contact the NMC’s Customer Service Center.