

## Professional Qualification Evaluation Frequently Asked Questions

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## Professional Qualification Evaluation Frequently Asked Questions: Questions Arising from Awaiting Information Letters

### **1. I have submitted the additional information requested in my letter; how do I find out if what I submitted meets the requirements?**

There could be multiple reasons why your documentation has not been accepted. It is your responsibility to ensure any additional supporting documentation submitted in response to your letter has been accepted. Please allow 14 days for review of supporting documentation; and then contact the National Maritime Center (NMC) Customer Service Center (CSC) at 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

### **2. I have submitted military sea service. Why has it not been accepted?**

There are multiple reasons why military service may not be accepted as submitted. Service documentation specifics are provided on the [Military Service](#) page of the NMC website.

### **3. The information listed in the Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement (MISLE) database is incorrect; how can I get it updated?**

Per [46 CFR 2.01-5 \(c\)](#): Amending certificates. When, because of a change in the character of the vessel or vessel's route, equipment, etc., the vessel does not comply with the requirements of the Certificate of Inspection previously issued, an amended certificate may be issued at the discretion of the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection, to whom a request is made.

### **4. Why do I have to complete a visual signaling course?**

Per regulations, Coast Guard approved training in visual signaling is required for certain STCW endorsements.

### **5. How do I provide proof of ownership when I own the company which owns the vessel? May I send a letter on letterhead and sign it myself?**

It is acceptable to submit a service letter on letterhead signed by you as long as you provide a copy of the Articles of Incorporation listing you as the owner of the company.

**6. What if I don't have all the required vessel information (vessel tonnage, official numbers, etc.)?**

If the submitted service does not meet the requirements of [46 CFR 10.232](#), it may not be acceptable towards all endorsements. The Coast Guard must be satisfied as to the authenticity and acceptability of all sea service submitted.

**7. How do I get confirmation that the information I faxed to the NMC was received?**

You may call the CSC to verify that a fax has been received. Please allow 48-72 hours after faxing the document to check on its receipt.

**8. The REC accepted my application as complete, why am I getting an Awaiting Information letter from the NMC?**

An application is not considered to be accepted by the Coast Guard until it is forwarded to the NMC, per [46 CFR 10.209](#). The REC reviews incoming applications for specific information such as fees, completed physical and application forms. Once the file reaches the NMC, an evaluation is completed for all professional requirements (sea service, training, assessment).

## Professional Qualification Evaluation Frequently Asked Questions: Questions Regarding Testing

### General

#### 1. May I get an extension on my Approval to Test (ATT) time period?

No, the National Maritime Center (NMC) does not extend ATT periods.

#### 2. Where do I find examination study material? Are you able to mail me the study material?

To get an understanding of the examination modules that may be required, you can view our [Deck and Engineering Examination Guide](#) and the examination topic tables listed in 46 CFR Parts 11 and 12.

The Coast Guard published a sample examination and topic structure for each credential requiring examination under 46 CFR Subpart B. You can access this material on the Examinations webpage by clicking on the [Sample Examinations](#) tab.

A list of reference material used in creating examination questions can be found on the Examinations webpage by clicking on the [Deck or Engine Reference Library](#).

Reference publications and text books used in the development of examination questions and illustrations can be accessed on the Examinations webpage by clicking on the [Taking Examinations](#) tab.

#### 3. How do I know what will be on the examination?

There are maritime schools and training facilities that can help mariners prepare for Coast Guard examinations. The NMC does not provide specific examination content, only general subjects included on examinations with sample questions. You may visit the [Examinations webpage](#) for more information concerning general examination subjects and the examination guide. If you have a specific question on an examination you may contact the NMC Customer Service Center (CSC) by using the [NMC online chat system](#), by e-mailing [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

**4. Are these the correct test modules? I don't think I need to take 'X' module, what should I do?**

Refer to the [Deck and Engineering Examination Guide](#). If you believe there is an error on your ATT letter please contact the NMC CSC by using the [NMC online chat system](#), by e-mailing [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

**5. What materials will be available to me at the REC when I go to test?**

See the list of [Examination Room Materials](#) on the NMC Website.

**6. May I test at a school rather than an REC?**

This depends upon what you are applying for. There are not approved courses for all endorsements. If you find an approved course, verify that it will cover your Coast Guard examination requirements.

**7. May I take a Celestial course in order to get an Oceans endorsement?**

Yes, but be sure to verify that the course covers the Celestial examination module(s) for the specific officer endorsement for which you are applying. A course for a higher officer endorsement may not be acceptable for an endorsement of lesser authority.

**8. Is chart plotting a part of the Navigation module?**

Any examination titled Navigation may or may not contain questions involving chart plotting as chart plotting is part of navigation.

## 9. With whom may I speak about what I consider inappropriate examination questions?

The examiner is not allowed to discuss the validity of examination questions with a mariner.

If an examination module is failed by a single question, an applicant will be given the opportunity to review the module. Prior to leaving the examination room, the applicant may submit a challenge of up to two questions that were scored as incorrect. The applicant must explain why they believe there is something wrong with the question that prevents it from being answered correctly. For example: No correct answer, multiple correct answers, or the question is poorly worded. All calculations for mathematical problems must be included. No references other than those allowed in the examination room, may be used for the purpose of substantiating the challenge.

If an applicant would like to comment on any aspect of the examination process, the examiner will provide a Challenge/Comment form to submit comments. Comments will not affect the applicant's score but will be reviewed in the continuing effort to improve the quality of both the examination questions and the examination process itself. However, open book renewal examinations only allow for Comments to be submitted and an Open Book Renewal Examination Comment sheet will be provided with the open book renewal examination.

## 10. What if I disagree with the result of a challenge?

If a mariner is unsatisfied with the result of their challenge they have the right to request reconsideration of the decision. The instructions for submitting a reconsideration request is detailed on the Challenge Determination letter you receive from the REC.

Any person directly affected by a decision or action of an officer or employee of the NMC involving any of the marine safety functions listed in [46 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) 1.01–15\(c\)](#) may, after requesting reconsideration of the decision or action by the NMC, make a formal appeal of that decision or action, via the NMC, to the Director of Prevention Policy, Commandant (CG–54), in accordance with the procedures contained in [46 CFR 1.03–15](#).

## Retesting

### 1. How long do I have to retest? May I have an extension on this time?

The time frame depends upon which examination is being retaken.

The [retest policy](#) is based on the requirements of 46 CFR 11.217 and 46 CFR 12.205, and can be found in the [Deck and Engineering Examination Guide](#).

Extensions on the retest period may be granted by the Officer in Charge Marine Inspection if the applicant presents discharges or other proof of being underway during the retest period. The retest period will not be extended beyond 7 months from the date of initial examination. The retest period can only be extended day-for-day for actual days underway.

### 2. How many examinations do I need to retake?

You will have to retake any failed modules. If you fail to successfully pass any failed modules within the retest period you will be required to do a full retest of all modules. The [retest policy](#) is based on the requirements of 46 CFR 11.217 and 46 CFR 12.205, and can be found in the [Deck and Engineering Examination Guide](#).

## Renewal/Upgrades

### 1. Do I have to test for my upgrade?

This depends upon what you are upgrading to. You would need to refer to the [Deck and Engineering Examination Guide](#).

### 2. Why do I have to test when I have already taken these examinations to get a previous credential/endorsement?

Refer to the [Deck and Engineering Examination Guide](#). All examinations listed for a specific endorsement must be passed in order to receive that endorsement. Previous examination modules are not credited toward a new examination series.

### **3. How do I receive my Open Book Renewal Examination?**

As of May 1, 2020, open book renewal examinations are no longer sent from the REC or Monitoring Unit (MU). Now, open book renewal examinations are issued from the NMC.

First, you must receive an ATT letter detailing the renewal modules required. ATT letters will: (1) direct you to pay your exam fee at [pay.gov](https://www.pay.gov), and then (2) send an email directly to [NMCRenewalExams@uscg.mil](mailto:NMCRenewalExams@uscg.mil) or contact the NMC CSC by using the [NMC online chat system](#), by e-mailing [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

See the Renewal Examinations webpage for more details.

### **4. What if I have questions regarding an open book renewal examination?**

Send an e-mail directly to [NMCRenewalExams@uscg.mil](mailto:NMCRenewalExams@uscg.mil) or contact the NMC CSC by using the [NMC online chat system](#), by e-mailing [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

### **5. Why do I need to take a Lifeboatman open book examination when I am an Engineer Officer and have submitted Closely Related Service?**

Lifeboatman is a deck rating, and closely related engineer service cannot be used to renew a deck rating. The employment must be in a position closely related to the operation, construction, or repair of vessels, either deck or engineer as appropriate.