National
Maritime
Center

Maritime Training Provider Best Practices

Based on observations and questions received during the course and program approval processes, as well as the course oversight process, the National Maritime Center offers the following:

General Information	
6/11/25	Curriculum development and submission requirements for computer-based-training (CBT) are the same as with live instruction.
6/11/25	For CBT, include a non-expiring username, password, and a link to access the course for each CBT course submittal, whether it is an original or renewal.
Cover Letter	
6/11/25	Clearly state the requirements the course is requested to satisfy.
6/11/25	Clearly state all course delivery and assessment methods requested.
6/11/25	Providers requesting CBT should also review NVIC 03-14 (Encl 5), for discussion regarding course navigation, interactivity, progress checks, etc.
Course Outline	
6/11/25	All topics and sub-topics covered in the outline should also be covered in the Detailed Teaching Syllabus (DTS), Lesson Plan (LP), and Instructor Notes (IN).
Course Schedule	
6/11/25	Schedules, regardless of format, should contain the items in 46 CFR 10.402 and describe the days and times of curriculum delivery.
6/11/25	Submission of multiple alternate schedules is encouraged as needed.
6/11/25	Training days should not exceed 8 contact hours, including delivery of multiple courses on any given day.
6/11/25	Minor, "one-time" schedule deviations for weather, facilities, class size, etc., should be documented in the course convening record.
6/11/25	Repeated, consistent schedule deviations should be documented in a modification request and/or the record of change, depending on the significance.
6/11/25	The duration of instruction should be consistent throughout the curriculum.

Detailed Teaching Syllabus	
6/11/25	Learning objectives describe actions the student should be able to do after training when aboard a vessel. Unless strictly knowledge-based, this should not be to "discuss", "describe", "understand", "explain", or similar.
Lesson Plan	
6/11/25	A Main Element Learning Objective is the primary purpose or goal of a lesson, based on the topic/sub-topics within the lesson. Where the DTS requires no further breakdown, this may be the same as the DTS; however, when splitting a DTS topic into multiple lesson plans, it should reflect the objective of the specific lesson.
6/11/25	Training outcomes are the specific knowledge and practical skills that students gain and display during the course, to demonstrate completion of the associated learning objective(s).
6/11/25	Training outcomes are the building block used within the course to achieve the learning objective(s) and should not repeat the DTS learning objective(s).
Instructor Notes	
6/11/25	Providers are accountable to ensure instructors follow the approved curriculum. IN are key to ensuring instructors meet the training provider's expectations for course delivery.
6/11/25	If including IN in the LP, ensure all elements from both 46 CFR 10.402(b)(5) & (6) are included.
Evaluations	
6/11/25	Assessments of competency are not training. Instructors should not be coaching students. If an assessment is interrupted for remedial training or safety concerns, it should be repeated in accordance with the approved Evaluation Plan (EP). Each student must successfully demonstrate the performance standards for each task. Review the Assessors Manual for Conducting Mariner Assessments included in NVIC 19-14.
6/11/25	If final written examinations consisting of multiple modules requiring multiple days to complete, they should be administered on consecutive days within the same business week. A defined maximum time period for completion of retesting, if allowed, should be stated.
6/11/25	Provide in the submittal, all final examinations, quizzes, practice questions, exercises, end of lesson/chapter questions, etc., contained in the course to allow for evaluation.

	Evaluations (continued)
6/11/25	Written examinations should be protected from compromise. It is not appropriate to allow students to use/have smartphones or any other similar electronic device(s) during written examinations.
6/11/25	Reference material available for use in written examinations should be described in the EP. Review the Coast Guard Examination Room Materials for guidance.
6/11/25	Courses delivered remotely or through CBT should state the length of time given to schedule/complete final written examinations and/or assessments. Given that examinations and assessments are completed following instruction for in-person training, this should be a reasonable time frame, i.e., within 30 days of completion.
	Course Certificates
6/11/25	Training providers who issue electronic course completion certificates to students should do so in PDF Flat File format. This removes the layered content you can't see on screen, such as fillable fields. This will mitigate the potential for modification of the certificate and help prevent document corruption. Providing the certificate in this format will aid the student in submitting the document with their credential application. If unfamiliar with how to flatten a PDF file, we recommend an internet search for instructions.
	Renewal Requests
6/11/25	Review the entire curriculum and references to ensure all content is updated to the current regulations, policies, and industry standards.
6/11/25	Review the entire curriculum to ensure it is free from contradictions. For example, having lesson duration differences between the course schedule, DTS and LP.
	Extension Requests
6/11/25	All extension requests should be sent to NMCCourses@uscg.mil. Include Course or AI extension in the subject line and the Application Tracking Identification Number (ATID) in the body of the e-mail.
6/11/25	Requests for extension of course expiration(s) and AI responses are separate, individual transactions and should be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the expiration/due date.
6/11/25	Extension requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. Timely submissions of renewal requests and comprehensive responses to AI requests will not be the only determining factor for extension decisions. Larger programmatic discussions will be entertained at any time. For example, a request to shift upcoming expiration dates to spread the workload out.

Extension Requests (continued)	
6/11/25	Providers are responsible for ensuring enrolled students successfully complete all the course requirements prior to the course expiration date. All renewal requests need to be submitted at least 90 days prior to expiration. The increase in CBT has highlighted this issue. This will generally not be considered a valid reason for granting a course extension after the fact.
Communication	
6/11/25	Please direct all communication to the National Maritime Center Mariner Training and Assessment Division (MTAD) Course Approval Branch to NMCCourses@uscg.mil.
6/11/25	When communicating with the MTAD Course Approval Branch regarding an active course/program request, be sure to include the ATID in your correspondence.
6/11/25	We welcome and encourage you to send feedback and improvement suggestions regarding this document to NMCCourses@uscg.mil.
6/11/25	For communication regarding Course Oversight matters, e-mail ComplianceAudits@uscg.mil.
Additional Resources	
6/11/25	The National Maritime Center Course Approval Submittal Guide provides additional clarity regarding course submissions.