



# SHIP SAFE TRAINING GROUP LTD

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## **Cadet Training Handbook**

This handbook contains important information that every SSTG cadet should familiarise themselves with prior to commencing training. If you would prefer an electronic copy it can be downloaded here.

The contents are covered in three separate sections, namely Administration, College and Sea.

### **Administration:**

#### **Bank Details:**

Where the SSTG is responsible for the payment of your training allowance, expenses or the reimbursement of any other training costs, these will be paid by BACS transfer directly into a UK bank account of your choice. Should you decide for any reason to change banks, the Trainee must notify the SSTG by providing at least 5 working days notice. SSTG will not be liable for the late payment or loss of funds where such notice has not been provided.

#### **Contacting The SSTG:**

Most of the forms required by SSTG can be scanned and returned as an e-mail attachment (apart from the training agreement). If you return items by post please ensure that you use the correct postage as any items that do not have sufficient postage will not be delivered (a standard 1<sup>st</sup> class stamp will not cover the cost of postage sent in an A4 sized envelope which is now classed as 'Large'). Please remember, when contacting SSTG you must quote your SSTG identification number.

#### **Data Protection Act:**

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the Officer Trainee consents to the processing of all their personal data (in manual, electronic or any other form), by the SSTG and their

Sponsor and/or any agent or third party or any Government department or agency or grant funding administrator. Processing includes but is not limited to obtaining, recording, using and holding data and includes the transfer of data to any country either inside or outside the EEA for the purposes of monitoring completion of the Training Programme being undertaken and meeting any Government reporting requirements.

#### **Drug and Alcohol Policy:**

Before commencing training, SSTG will ask you to sign a sponsorship agreement covering your terms and conditions whilst under training. As part of this agreement you will be asked to comply with the SSTG's random drug and alcohol testing policy. In line with this you may be asked to undergo random drug and alcohol tests either during your college phases or when you are at sea. Any positive result will instigate disciplinary action in line with our policy, which may include immediate termination of your sponsorship.

#### **Expense Claims:**

Where you are required to pay any specified training costs upfront please remember to retain all receipts as you will not be reimbursed unless you are able to submit these with your expense claim.

All claims must be submitted **promptly** (within three weeks of the expenditure being incurred) and contain all the required information.

All correctly completed expense claims, submitted on the required form and supported by receipts will be processed in accordance with our normal procedure for reimbursing expenses and authorised payments processed within 5 working days of receipt. Please note, payments by BACS usually take 3 working days after processing by SSTG before receipt in your nominated bank account.

### **Financial Matters:**

It is your own responsibility to take care of your own financial matters. All your tuition and examination fees and many other training expenses will be met directly by the SSTG and you will not need to worry about these.

The largest single expense you may need to organise is the payment of accommodation whilst at college. This may need good organisation on your part and careful budgeting, particularly during college phase. Please note the SSTG will not make any advances against future training allowances.

It is often possible to get cash advances onboard ship with subsequent arrangements being made for the advance to be deducted from your training allowance. However, you should be aware that this is not always possible; particularly when you are gaining experience on another company's vessel then you may be required to pay for any cash advance by personal cheque. The SSTG will take a very serious view of any reports of a trainee not being in a position to repay a cash advance previously requested.

### **Government Grants:**

Various grants to support your training are claimed by your sponsoring company to help in offsetting the considerable cost of your training. You are required to assist in claiming any such available funding and you must follow any specific instructions given to you.

### **Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures:**

The SSTG has a written Code of Conduct and Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures which will apply to circumstances relating directly to Officer Trainees.

The disciplinary rules that apply to the Officer Trainee whilst onboard are the Shipowners' Code of Conduct.

The Grievance Procedure may be invoked by an Officer Trainee where they are not satisfied with action taken to resolve a grievance with the SSTG or to raise a grievance in the first instance.

The Disciplinary Procedures may be invoked by the SSTG when an Officer Trainee fails to meet responsibilities and conditions as outlined in the applicable Code of Conduct or Disciplinary Procedure.

The Officer Trainee should familiarize himself with the Ship Owners' Onboard Complaints Procedure.

### **Health and Hygiene:**

It is your responsibility to look after yourself whilst living and working away from home, whilst at college and onboard ship. You should consider trying to eat sensibly and take regular exercise. Whilst studying at college, particularly during stressful periods prior to exams, it is essential to take breaks from time to time.

### **Insurance:**

Whilst attending college it is your responsibility to keep your personal possessions and valuables safe at all times. It is often a sensible precaution to insure your goods whilst attending college and this is your responsibility to organise.

At sea, the vessels operator will be responsible for organising health insurance which will vary from vessel to vessel and from company to company.

### **Jewellery:**

Whilst living and working on-board ship, and whilst training under simulated conditions ashore, care must be taken not to wear any clothing or accessories that might cause a hazard. Any instructions given by ship's officers and college lecturers in this respect **MUST** be adhered to.

### **Leave:**

As an Officer Trainee your leave periods will be incorporated around your college and other training commitments. You must appreciate that the college periods are usually fixed and often the dates are known well in advance and the SSTG will provide you with details of these throughout your training. However, occasionally the dates may need to be altered by the college for a number of reasons, or your own personal circumstances may necessitate you undertaking a different course or college phase. Where this occurs the SSTG will make you aware of the revised arrangements as soon as practical.

### **Luggage and Personal Effects:**

Seafarers should note that space on some vessels may be limited and you should not therefore take excessive quantities of unnecessary personal effects and other luggage.

Please note that personal property is not covered by insurance, and if lost or damaged will be to your own account and not the responsibility of the SSTG.

### **Medical Certificates (ENG 1):**

Whilst you are serving on board any ship, it is a requirement that you hold a valid Seafarers Medical Certificate (ENG 1).

You will have been provided with details on how to obtain a medical certificate by the SSTG as part of the induction process prior to commencing training. Throughout your time at sea it

is your responsibility to ensure that you make arrangements to take a further medical prior to the expiry of the previous certificate. You will be reimbursed for the cost of undertaking the examination provided the general principles of submitting expense claims are followed.

You should keep the original certificate yourself but a copy should always be sent to your company and the SSTG for our records.

Occasionally you may be given further specific instructions by your company that must be followed.

### **Nautilus UK:**

NAUTILUS UK is the union for maritime professionals both at sea and ashore.

They don't only campaign for better terms and conditions but also speak up on behalf of seafarers' and endeavour to protect their interests.

For further information on the full range of services available to members and for details on how to join please refer to their website which can be found at: [www.nautilusuk.org](http://www.nautilusuk.org).

### **Onboard Deductions and Purchases:**

By signing the SSTG sponsorship agreement, the Officer Trainee agrees that the cost of any personal onboard cash advances, purchases, telephone calls or any other expenditure whatsoever will be deducted from any allowance, expenses or any other sums due to the Officer Trainee at the first opportunity. It must be understood that accounting systems vary from ship to ship and that such deductions may not occur until some considerable time after the original transaction.

If the amount due exceeds any allowances due to the Officer Trainee, the Officer Trainee shall be liable to repay the full amount due on request.

If the Officer Trainees Sponsorship Agreement is terminated before repayment of any amounts due, the Officer Trainee shall remain liable for repayment of the full amount due on request.

The Trainee Officer shall not purchase or obtain any items that the Trainee Officer may not be legally allowed to purchase or obtain in the UK and abide by the rules of any country you may be visiting.

### **At College:**

#### **Arriving At College:**

The college will provide full details, including the time and location, of where you must meet on the first day. For many, you will be unfamiliar with the college so make sure you find out where you must be and allow plenty of time to get there. In due course you will be issued with a full time table which will confirm all lectures and other compulsory elements of the course.

#### **College Absence:**

If an Officer Trainee finds that they are unable to attend college due to sickness or for any other unforeseen reason they must telephone the SSTG on the first day of absence and any subsequent days prior to 10:00. They must also contact the college to ensure they are informed of the situation.

Unauthorised absence during college phases will result in the loss of 1 days' Training Allowance for each day of absence. This will be deducted by the SSTG from any amounts due to the Officer Trainee by the SSTG at the first available opportunity.

### **College Halls of Residence:**

You will be responsible for meeting the cost of your accommodation directly with the college. Please note that some colleges require that all first phase trainees must reside in the college halls of residence.

### **Commencing Training:**

When you commence Phase 1 (First College Phase) of your training you will find yourself part of a group comprising of individuals of varying backgrounds, experience and ages but with one thing in common – you have all decided to go to sea, albeit each for different reasons. For many this will be a very big step and, perhaps, the first time away from home other than for holidays and similar activities. You may find it lonely and confusing, but do not worry – this is perfectly natural and it will take a little while for you to settle down and get used to your new existence. This will also apply when you join your first ship. Please remember that all concerned, college staff, company ship and shore staff, and SSTG staff are only too willing to provide any necessary support, guidance and encouragement. If you have a problem, are unhappy or uncertain about anything, ask for assistance. In the vast majority of cases what is a seemingly insurmountable difficulty when kept to one's self can be solved quite easily when shared.

### **Mobile Phones:**

As a matter of courtesy and good manners towards lecturers and fellow students you should always turn off your mobile whilst attending lectures at college.

### **Resit Policy:**

If you fail to reach the required standard in any examination, assessment or assignment, you will normally be advised by your lecturer who will confirm the options and procedures for the situation to be remedied. In some cases you may be allowed a subsequent attempt, at no further cost, subject to certain rules e.g. a resit must be undertaken within a certain time scale, etc.

Where a resit fee is payable, you will usually be required to meet the cost of this yourself.

### **Smoking:**

In the UK smoking is not allowed in any public place. Whilst attending college and any other establishments where this may be the case it is your responsibility to find out what the rules are and abide by them at all times. It is expected by the SSTG that a breach of any such rules will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

### **Travel To College:**

You must make your own travel arrangements to arrive at college on the date previously advised. In most cases this will usually be the day before the college phase commences. Please remember that however you will be travelling whether on the roads or by rail, delays can occur, so leave in plenty of time so that you arrive on time. Reasonable travel costs will be reimbursed but you must retain all receipts for the cost of travel incurred.

### **Sponsorship:**

The sponsorship you have been offered includes the payment of a wide range of specific training costs which are ultimately funded by your sponsoring company. These include the following:

- **Training Allowance:** This will usually be a monthly allowance and will be paid to you by credit transfer, normally monthly in arrears, to a UK bank of your choice, by either your sponsoring company or the SSTG.
- **Tuition Fees:** These will normally be paid by the SSTG direct to the training establishment attended. You should not pay any such fees yourself unless specifically asked in writing to do so by the SSTG. We will be unable to refund any such fees incorrectly paid by you. Your sponsorship only covers the first attempt at each course or college module. If you do not reach the required standard in any college phase and are required to retake the entire phase, this will be entirely at your own expense and your sponsorship suspended. There will be no guarantee that your sponsorship will be resumed once you have retaken the phase even if you are successful.
- **Examination Costs:** These will normally be paid by the SSTG to the training establishment you are attending or directly to the awarding body. Your sponsorship only covers the first attempt at each examination or assessment and any retake costs will be at your own expense. This will include any college administration charges applied in addition to the examination cost.
- **Travel Costs:** You will often be reimbursed for certain travel costs. For example when travelling between home and college at the start and end of each phase or between home and any vessel you may be appointed to. The SSTG and your company have very extensive and detailed rules covering what journeys will be paid for and how any sum to be paid will be calculated.
- **Miscellaneous Specified Training Costs:** A range of other specified ancillary training costs will be paid throughout your training and specific details will be provided at the time.

The sponsorship package you have been awarded is very valuable and your training will be costing your company in excess of £ 50,000. This investment is not made lightly and you are expected to maintain a very high standard of commitment to your training at all times throughout your training.

### **Training Officer:**

All SSTG Officer Trainees will be appointed one of its Training Officers to oversee their training. Make sure you have their contact details, including their e-mail address, direct dial telephone number and for more urgent matters their mobile telephone number. In most

instances this individual will be your first point of contact and you should contact them if you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of your training.

If you have concerns at any time, or are unsure what is expected of you, ask for clarification.

### **Training Programme:**

Most new entrant Officer Trainees follow a training programme approved by the MNTB (Merchant Navy Training Board) and the MCA (Maritime & Coastguard Agency) referred to as an Approved Training Programme (ATP). Such structured programmes include all the necessary elements required for the issue of a Certificate of Competency.

The education and training for various certificates is usually delivered in the form of Foundation Degrees, Scottish Professional Diplomas, Higher National Diplomas and Certificates, plus short courses and ancillary training as required. The most common entry route are programmes based on Foundation Degrees in England and Scottish Professional Diploma programme's in Scotland.

Following the substantial increase in university tuition fees that occurred in September 2012, very few companies sponsor candidates to follow a degree programme from the outset. However, candidates who successfully complete a Foundation Degree, Scottish Professional Diploma or Higher National Diploma can subsequently undertake additional studies and qualify for a Degree qualification.

The main difference between the FD/SPD, HND and HNC is the amount of contact time that Officer Trainees receive; typically FD/SPD students will have less timetabled lectures to attend and more periods of time for "self-study". The general approach to learning is different with students on the FD and Scottish Professional Diploma programme expected to undertake a considerable amount of learning by carrying out their own research into subject matter as opposed to being "taught".

HND and HNC students are required to sit external SQA or IAMI examinations. This is not currently a requirement for candidates enrolled on FD/SPD programmes. FD/SPD students are required to undertake work based learning assignments which are specific projects set by the college/university which must be completed at sea.

All students are required to complete an MNTB Training Record Book (TRB) and produce a workbook in an approved format.

### **Travelling:**

When travelling you will often be required to make your own arrangements and you will usually be required to purchase your own ticket and meet any incidental travel expenses. You should check timetables carefully and allow plenty of time for possible delays. You will be expected to identify the most economical route and take any steps to ensure the cheapest available fare is obtained. Travel outside the UK will usually be organised by the SSTG, your sponsoring company or the ship owner of the vessel you will be sailing on. However, it will normally be your responsibility to make your own arrangements for travel within the UK or to the designated airport.

The seafarer will be required to join and leave ships at a variety of different ports, some in out of the way locations and occasionally at short notice. Remember to carry your discharge book and passport with you at all times. The transport system is complex and can be daunting

to those not familiar with it, particularly where changes and across city connections have to be made. Always plan your journey before you start and seek advice from SSTG or a travel centre where necessary. Wherever possible public transport should be used, but it is recognised that in some ports there is no alternative but to take a taxi to and from the ship. If paying your own fare (for reclaiming later) always ask for the most economical fare available and retain receipts to attach to your expense claim.

### **Uniform and Working Clothing:**

Whilst at college you will be required to wear a basic uniform and you must arrive at the college with all the items required. Please see further information [here](#).

### **Website:**

The SSTG website contains a wealth of background information relating to a wide range of marine training topics. In addition to the information highlighted by your Training Officer, that you must familiarise yourself with you, will also find a wealth of additional information available to you. This can be accessed using the following details:

- [www.sstg.org](http://www.sstg.org)

This website includes a wealth of important information and will be invaluable as a reference tool throughout your training. Where you are required to refer to specific information this will be highlighted as follows {[www.sstg.org/PageTitle](http://www.sstg.org/PageTitle)}. This will provide the specific page on the website to refer to where relevant information will be found.

### **AT Sea:**

#### **Designated Shipboard Training Officer (DSTO):**

You will be allocated a 'Designated Shipboard Training Officer' (DSTO) on each vessel you serve on who will co-ordinate your time onboard. If at any time whilst onboard you are unsure what you should be doing in the first instance talk to the DSTO. If they are not available talk to the Duty Officer or other appropriate senior crew member.

#### **MNTB Training Record Book (TRB):**

During the time onboard your training will focus around your Training Record Book. It is important that you take responsibility for your own training. Keep an eye open for any activities around the ship that you need to complete and where suitable opportunities arise ask the DSTO if you can observe, get involved or undertake the task yourself as appropriate. Remember, you don't get the opportunity to see some things very often so it is important to make the most of such opportunities when they occur.

The TRB will be reviewed and endorsed at regular intervals by your DSTO and the Master or Chief Engineer. Periodically, it will also be reviewed by your Training Officer, College Lecturers and the MCA. Please remember it is an important part of your training and its proper completion is an integral part of the programme you are following.

### **Official Documentation:**

When you join a ship there is a considerable list of documentation that you may be required to take with you. Without some of these documents it is possible that the ship you are serving



on could face unnecessary delays, or even worse, detention. Pay particular attention to any specific company instructions that you may be given with respect to what you must be required to have with you when joining any specific vessel.

The following should serve as a starting point of the list of documentation you should have with you at all times:

- Discharge Book.
- Flag State Identity Papers.
- Passport.
- Visas as may be required.
- Employment, Sponsorship or Training agreement.
- Valid ENG 1 Medical certificate (sufficient for the full duration of the voyage).
- Vaccination certificates/documentation.
- Short course certificates (including Basic Fire Fighting, Personal Survival Techniques, Elementary First Aid, Personal Safety and Social Responsibility and Security awareness).
- Training Record Book and workbooks.

Remember, you will be required to carry the original documentation with you; photocopies will not be acceptable. Take particular care whilst travelling and ensure you have a photocopy at home for reference should you need to refer to it in case of loss of the original.

If you do mislay or lose any important documents report the fact to the Master straight away. There may be little that can be done to find or retrieve it but it may help the Master to know that it has been mislaid or is not available. Remember, in some cases it may be a requirement to report the loss of certain documents to the relevant authorities.

Obtaining a duplicate document may be impossible in certain cases. However, it will nearly always be easier to start the process of applying for a replacement as soon as possible as any delay is likely to involve more checks being made or reference to archive material before any progress can be made.

Also bear in mind that obtaining a replacement document could involve a significant fee which your company, or the SSTG may have paid in the first instance. You are unlikely to be reimbursed a second time. So the cost may be down to **YOU**.

Occasionally, you will be required to send such documentation to your company, the MCA or the SSTG. Please follow the following guidelines listed below when doing so:

- Always take photocopies before sending off any original documentation.

- Make detailed notes of what is sent and the date.
- Always use a secure form of postage.
- Check that mail is delivered and signed for. In many cases this can now be done on-line.
- Obtain a clear understanding of when to expect the return of the original documents.
- Follow up promptly if documents are not returned within the expected time-scale.

### **Revalidation and Updating Certification:**

It is every seafarer's responsibility to ensure that all certification that needs revalidating or updating is done so at the required time. Examples include:

- ENG 1 medical certificate.
- Certificate of Competency.
- GMDSS (If required).
- Basic certification (Including Personal Survival Techniques and Basic Fire Fighting) (Only required from 01 January 2017).
- Advanced certification (Including Advanced Fire Fighting, Proficiency in Survival Craft & Rescue Boats Other Than Fast Rescue Boats) (Only required from 01 January 2017).  
Fast Rescue Craft Boatman (If held).
- Medical Care (There is no requirement to complete any refresher training for Medical Care training for revalidation of a CoC under STCW. However, for service on EU Member State flagged vessel, in accordance with Council Directive 92/29/EEC, the Captain, and any person delegated to use the medical type A supplies, must receive special training updated at least every five years).

### **Vaccinations:**

To facilitate travel to all parts of the world it is often essential for cadets to be vaccinated against common conditions, and these **MUST** be kept up to date.

The SSTG or your company will reimburse the costs of any vaccinations that you are required to have.

You should obtain confirmation of any vaccinations that you have, and this must be carried with you at all times as it may be required on entry to certain countries around the world.

The SSTG will provide you with details of the particular vaccinations you must have. Often the simplest way to obtain these is for you to ask your own GP to make arrangements. Some

may be obtained at your own surgery whilst others may only be available at certain medical centres. If you incur any difficulties please seek advice from your Training Officer at the SSTG.

**Working Hours:**

The working hours you will be expected to follow whilst at sea will vary from ship to ship, and be very dependent on the individual ship's routine, but also the requirements of your training programme.

By the time you complete the required sea service, you should expect to have spent some time involved with all aspects of the ship's routine but towards the end you will find yourself concentrating on duties associated with watchkeeping.

**Updated: 09 June 2015.**