

Draft Port Agent Apprenticeship Standard

Role Profile

As an island nation over 95% of trade by volume goes by vessel through over 100 ports around the United Kingdom. UK ports employ around 118,000 people across a wide range of port types and activities; from container and bulk cargo ports to passenger terminals to leisure and marinas.

The Port Agent is appointed as the representative of vessel operators / owners to facilitate the safe and efficient arrival, working, and departure of their vessels in a port. They will need to understand the different characteristics of each type of vessel and the various cargoes, along with national and international legislation and regulations governing ships and cargoes. They must understand the role of all the participants in the process and be able to complete all the required documentation. The Port Agent has to have sufficient knowledge of vessel operations and cargoes to be able to manage any unforeseen challenges and changes. They may work alone at times and as a member of a team and the role will likely involve working unsociable hours.

This is a responsible position representing the interests of a vessel owner / operator whilst their vessel and crew may be engaged in a voyage to or from any part of the world. Contact between nominated 'arrival' Port Agent and vessel will take place as early as possible, perhaps before departure from the previous port, to ensure responsibility for all interests in cargo, vessel and crew are made clear to all parties. This required to ensure timely completion of all documentation prior to arrival and in the event of anything occurring en route that may affect the 'maritime adventure'.

Successful completion of this apprenticeship could lead to specialist and senior roles within the port industry including but not limited to: port management, marine pilot, vessel operator, hydrographer, vessel traffic services.

Main duties may include:-

- Booking of marine pilots / tugboat services.
- Confirming locking / berthing times and mooring services.
- Completion of customs / immigration documentation.
- Maintaining an overview of cargo loading or discharging operations
- Arranging provision of stores, fuel, spare parts or drinking water.
- Providing 'cash to Master'.
- Continually updating all interested parties on progress of vessel / operations.

Duration

This apprenticeship will require wide ranging rigorous and substantial training, typically of around 18 – 24 months, depending on experience and qualifications at entry.

Skills and Knowledge

Skills:

- Ensuring comprehensive and organised, administration, record keeping and management / staff liaison
- Competency in completing Consolidated European Reporting System (CERS) documentation
- Can complete and / or verify all information required on International Maritime Organisation vessel / voyage information forms
- Competent in the use of the National Maritime Single Window on-line portal to accurately provide the UK Department for Transport with information required on International Maritime Organisation vessel / voyage information forms
- Negotiating with and influencing stakeholders to ensure all requirements surrounding any vessel under your agency are provided for as efficiently and effectively as possible
- Preparing / creating disbursement accounts, statements of fact and formal pro-forma documents or quotations
- Proficient in the use of customer IT software systems and local port information systems
- Comply fully with employer and port / harbour / terminal specific health, safety and security procedures and practice

Knowledge of:

- Local agencies, regulatory authorities and their roles and potential requirements
- Local customs clearance procedures, immigration processes and required documentation for vessel leavers / joiners
- Local specialist roles such as Appointed Person, PFSO, mooring services, health professionals and marine / cargo surveyors so that timely contact can be made to minimise chances of unnecessary delays being incurred
- Local suppliers such as engineers, chandlers, ministers, taxis, mobile communications to ensure any demand made can be satisfied without undue delay or costs
- Local Port / harbour authority specific on-line vessel / port information systems and required (or expected) time frames of information requests (or flows)
- Type of Charter Party and terms relevant to each vessel and / or port visit
- Local / preferred banking procedures, cash availability, currency exchange rates, proof of receipt of payments and letters of credit
- Bills of lading, their function and importance in transactions
- Company policies and procedures regarding quotations, pro-forma documents and invoicing
- Statutory powers of the Port State, their responsibilities, duties and codes
- Charges, terms and conditions of subject port / harbour authority of each vessel call
- Ship types, cargo types, stevedoring operations, applicable regulations and vessel class
- Relevant health, safety and security regulations covered by The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and The International Ship and Port Facility Security Code; and how this is applied to local ports, facilities, harbours, terminal areas and berths
- The eight main “Data Protection Principles” regarding the use and storage of information as prescribed by the UK Government

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Behaviours - a Port Agent is expected to:

- Strive to achieve the best results in all they do; maintain a positive attitude and approach to their work even when priorities and working patterns change in time with the weather
- Take responsibility for their own and others' health, safety and security at all times, on land and aboard vessels
- Demonstrate integrity, credibility, honesty and personal drive; embody the organisation's values, a belief in the services it offers and an interest in international seaborne trade
- Be a supportive team member, to colleagues or a ship's crew you have yet to meet, and be confident when working alone
- Take ownership of own performance, professional maritime development and training, be an autonomous learner
- As ambassador of the UK's maritime trade, be professional and respectful in all situations

Entry requirements:

Individual employers will determine their own entry requirements; but due to the nature of the role requiring periods of physical exertion, safe travel to and within ports, it is expected that candidates will meet certain medical standards of physical health and hold a standard drivers licence.

Qualification – Apprentices without a full driving licence will need to achieve this prior to taking their end point assessment.

Apprentices without Level 2 English and Maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking their end point assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and Maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3 and British Sign Language qualification are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this is their primary language.

Level – this is a Level 3 apprenticeship

Review - this standard will be reviewed in 3 years