

Certificate of qualification Boatman

(nl: matroos)

Study guide

Version 2026-02 | 21 juli 2026

Accreditaties en erkenningen

Accreditations and recognitions



www.eikcertificering.nl

www.cbr.nl

www.ilent.nl

www.cesni.eu

www.crkbo.nl



Rijkswaterstaat
Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu



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1. To become a boatman *NL: matroos*

To work on an inland waterway vessel as a boatman *NL: matroos* in Europe, you must meet the competence standards (at the operational level) of Directive (EU) 2017/2397.



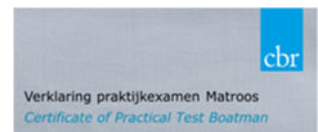
In the Netherlands, the CBR is the competent authority to issue a deckhand certificate which allows you to comply with the Directive.



CBR approved training providers will provide the training program and examination to comply with the competence standards. Edumar is CBR approved for the training and examination of boatman *NL: matroos* based on the competence standards of Directive (EU) 2017/2397.



After successfully completing the course and exam at Edumar, you will receive a boatman *NL: matroos* certificate from the CBR.



1.1 Twee routes

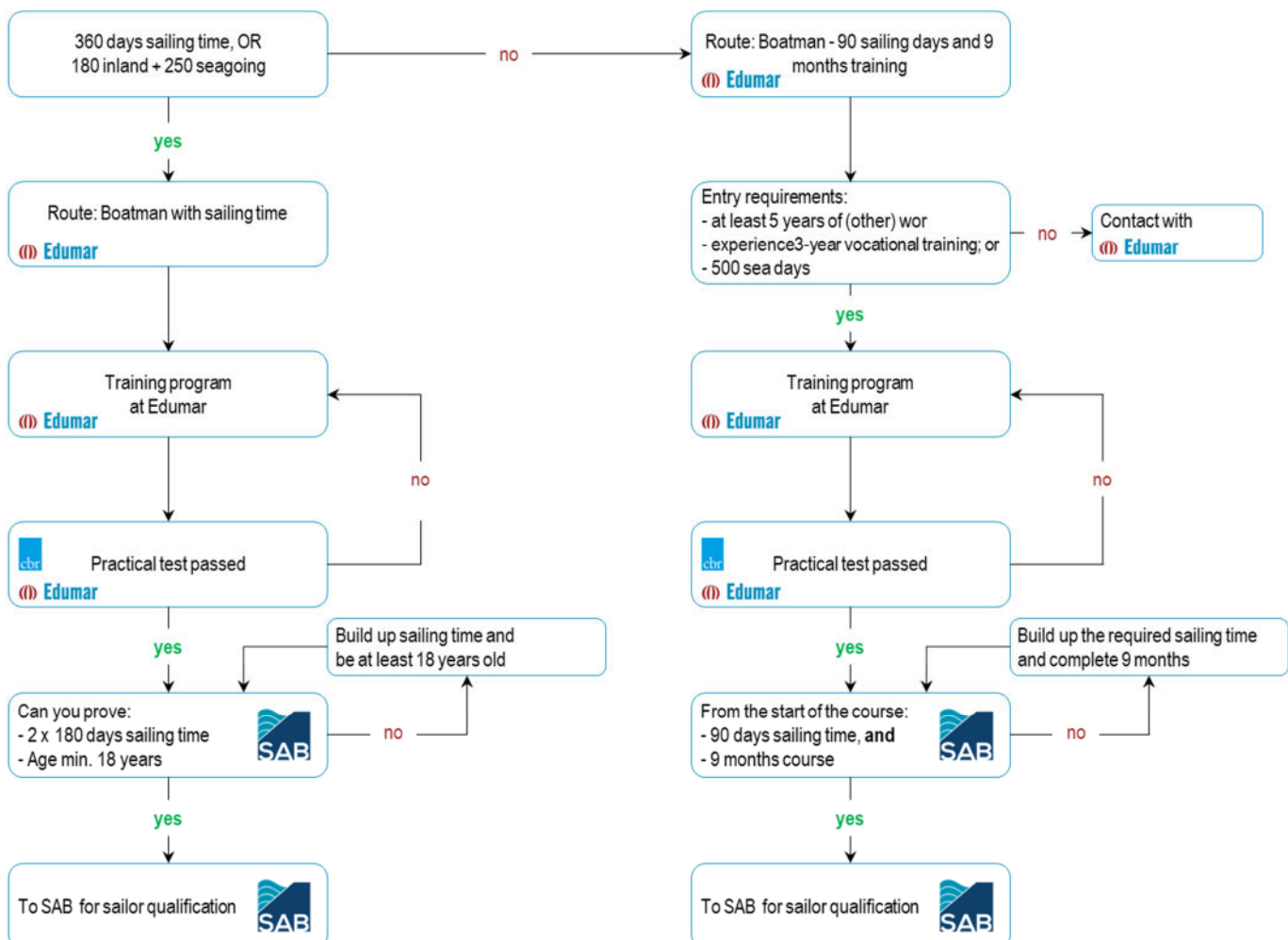
There are two ways to become a boatman:

Route 1: Boatman *NL: matroos* – 90 sailing days and 9 months

You do portfolio tasks and a practical exam.

Route 2: Boatman *NL: matroos* with sailing time

You do portfolio tasks and a practical exam to show your skills as a boatman.



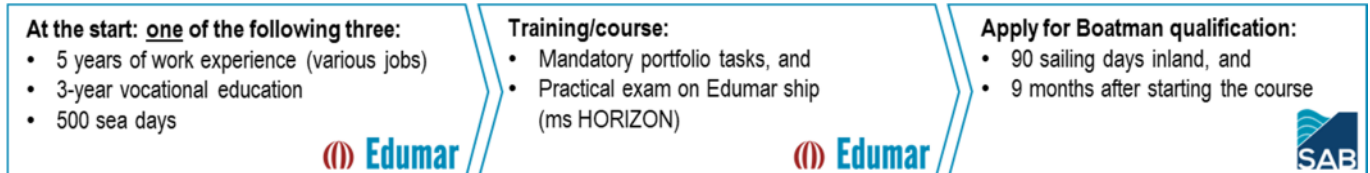
2. Conditions

2.1 Sign up for the Boatman – 90 sailing days and 9 months

You can start the boatman [NL: matroos](#) training if you meet one of the following conditions:

- 5 years of work experience (various jobs)
- 3-year vocational education, for example:
- 500 sea days as deck crew on a seagoing ship

You also need an inland shipping service record book.
This book shows your sailing days and trips.



2.2 Sign up for Boatman based on sailing time (360 sailing days)

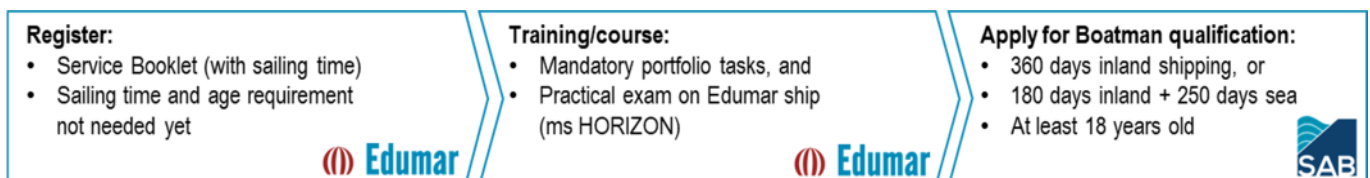
This route is for candidates who already work on an inland ship and have gained sailing time and experience over time.

To start, you need:

- a service booklet [NL: dienstboekje](#) for inland shipping with sailing time
- optional: a seaman's book with sailing time from sea, coastal or fishing ships

At the end of the training, when you want to get the Boatman [NL: matroos](#) qualification, you must show this to SAB:

- 360 days sailing time on inland ships, or
- 180 days inland + 250 days sea service
- you are at least 18 years old



3. General information Service Booklet (nl: dienstboekje)

A Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* is a personal document for crew members working on board an inland vessel.

Except for the skipper (in possession of a certificate of competency), every member of the crew must have a valid Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje*.

The Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* is for demonstrating sailing time and ship journeys in inland shipping.

The Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* contains:

- Personal details
- Physical and mental fitness
- EU qualification
- Details of the ships on which the vessel has sailed
- Days of sailing and sailing routes

The Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* is only valid if it is provided with the official notes. A Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* without these official entries is invalid.

The holder of a Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* is the person in whose name the Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* has been issued.

Since April 1, 2023, it is no longer necessary to have your Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* stamped annually. Any competent authority can affix its stamp to validate the information regarding the completed journeys (maximum 15 months old at the time of submission).

This procedure officially establishes the number of years in which the holder has acquired sailing experience and allows the holder to claim a certain competence.

In the Netherlands, the SAB (<https://sabni.nl>) is the competent authority.



3.1 First Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje*

If you have never been in possession of a Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje* and you want to apply for a Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje*, you need the following for the application:

1. Basic Safety Training Statement **or** a learning agreement Boatman;
2. You are at least 16 years old at the time of application;
3. A fully completed application form, see <https://sabni.nl>;
4. A recent passport photo;
5. A (copy of) valid proof of identity;
6. An original medical certificate for Rhine and inland navigation not older than 3 months (see: <https://www.ilent.nl/onderwerpen/medische-zaken-binnenvaart/adres-keursartsen>).
 - If you are in possession of a sailing license, an inspection is not necessary.
 - A seagoing inspection is unfortunately not valid.
7. Possibly a seaman's book:
However, a maximum of 2 years of sailing time from sea, coastal and fishing vessels can be included, whereby 250 sea days count as one year of sailing time.

When you apply for your first Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje*, it will be determined which function applies to you.

In order to determine the position, the following documents may be important:

- (copies of) inland navigation and shipping diplomas.

3.2 Sticker Light Boatman and service record book

Candidates who register with Edumar for the training Boatman – 90 sailing days and 9 months will receive a learning agreement and an Apprentice Boatman *NL: lichtmatroos* sticker from Edumar.

With the registration paper, the Apprentice Boatman sticker, and a medical certificate from an approved doctor, the candidate can apply for a new (first) Service Booklet *NL: dienstboekje*.

Because the candidate registers for the route Boatman – 90 sailing days and 9 months, the SAB will issue a service record book with the qualification Apprentice Boatman *NL: lichtmatroos*.

Important:

Candidates who follow the route Boatman *NL: matroos* based on sailing time do not get an Apprentice Boatman *NL: lichtmatroos*.

Edumar is not allowed to give this sticker for this route, because it is not a training, but a competence check.

3.3 Basic Safety training for Deckhands

The Basic Safety Training for Deckhands *NL: deksman* is a required part of the practical boatman course, unless you have an exemption.

You must do this training as soon as possible after you start the practical training.

Without this Basic Safety Training or an exemption, you cannot take the practical boatman exam!

Do you have an exemption?

You do not have to do this training if you meet one of these conditions:

- Your first service book is from before April 1, 2023?
- You have a valid STCW Basic Safety certificate (seagoing), not older than 5 years?
- You already did the Deckhand training with another school?

Note: Other certificates do not give you an exemption.

No exemption?

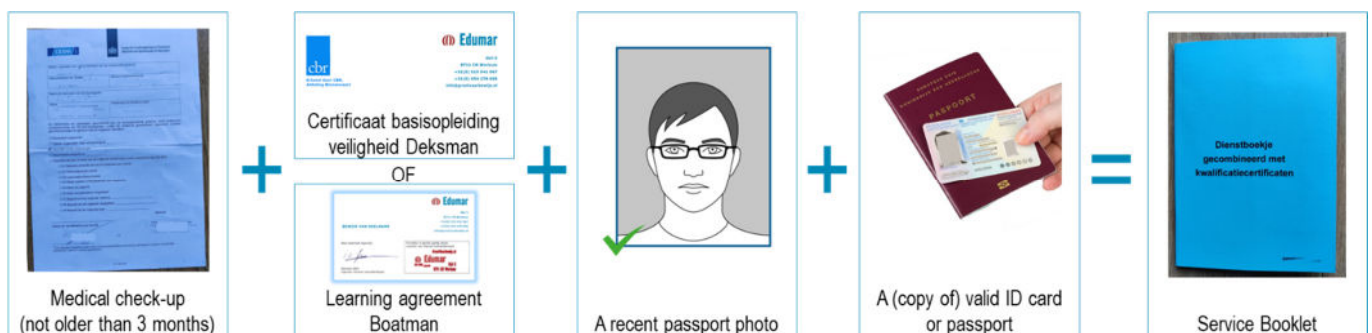
Then you must do the Basic Safety Training for Deckhands at Edumar.

The cost of this training is not included in the practical boatman training.

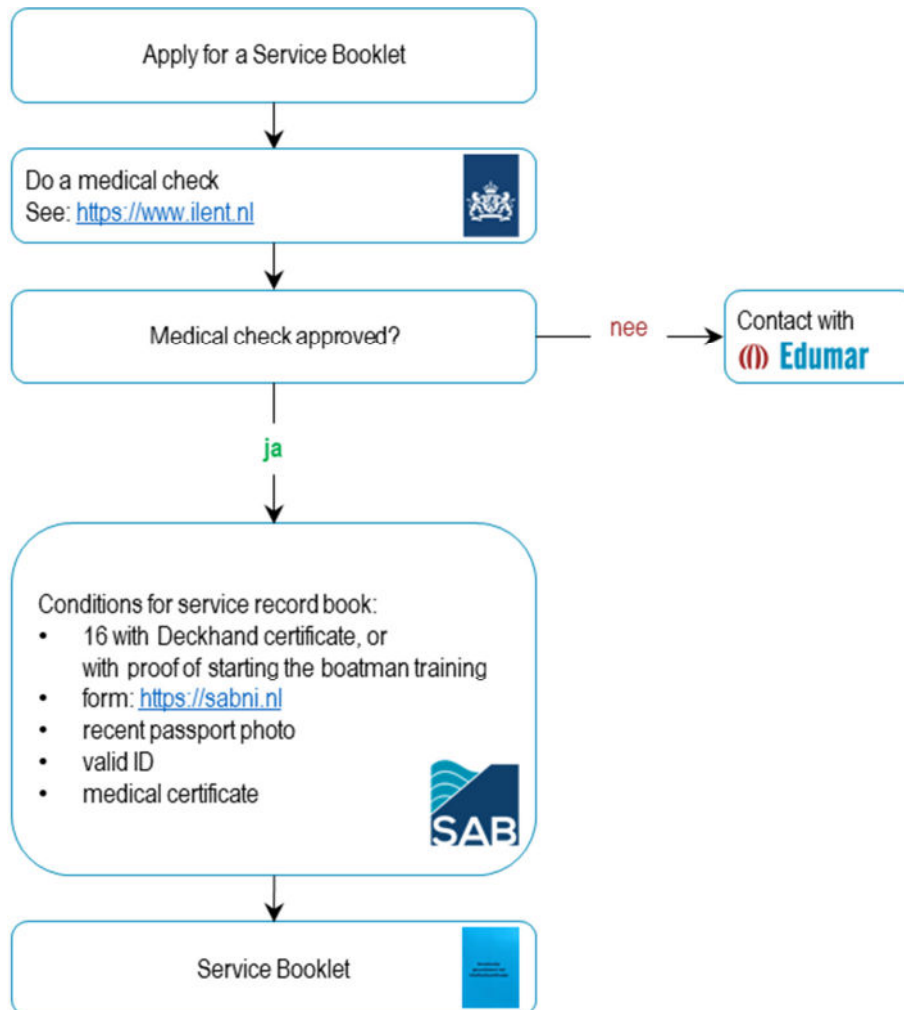
The training has:

- Two days of self-study in the Edumar online learning environment
- One day of practical training on the training ship ms Horizon

More information about the Deckhands training and the Deckhands study guide is on www.GrootVaarbewijs.nl.



3.4 How do you get a Service Booklet? (visual overview)



Medical check:

<https://www.ilent.nl/onderwerpen/scheepvaart-algemeen/medische-keuring-scheepvaart/keuringsartsen>

Register for training Deckhands: NL: deksman

<https://grootvaarbewijs.nl/inschrijven/opleiding-deksman/>

Register for course Boatman: NL: matroos

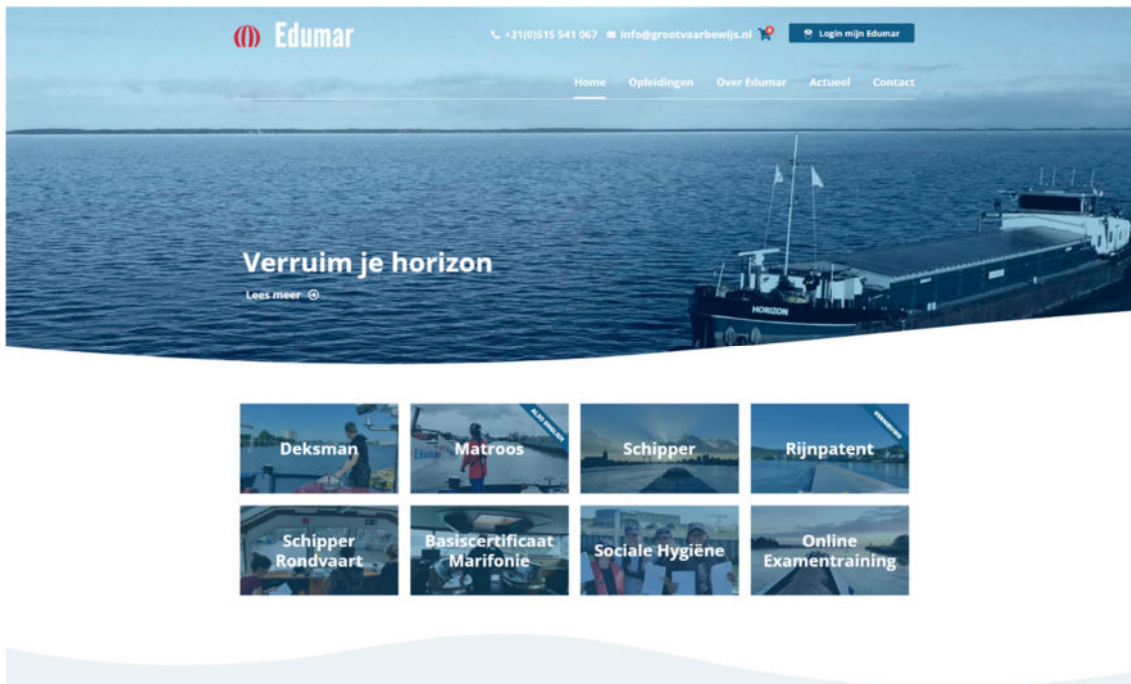
<https://grootvaarbewijs.nl/inschrijven/boatman/>

Apply for service record book: NL: dienstboekje

<https://sabni.nl/vaardocumenten/dienstboekjes/eerste-afgifte/>

4. Registration

You can register for the sailor training on the Edumar website.
www.GrootVaarBewijs.nl



On the website, you find the same information as in this study guide.
 You can also download this study guide there.



The website is in Dutch and English.

Do you want a personal talk about registration first?
 Then contact Edumar without any obligation.

When you register, Edumar processes your personal data.
 This is done following the rules of the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

4.1 Costs

The costs for the Sailor training are:

Boatman – 90 sailing days and 9 months:	€ 1.145,-
Boatman based on sailing time (360 sailing days):	€ 1.145,-
Extension course Boatman (after one year):	€ 250,-
Retake exam Boatman (1 exam included):	€ 525,-

Edumar is registered as a vocational training institute with the CRKBO. www.crkbo.nl
 Therefore, all courses are exempt from VAT.
 The listed prices are the actual amounts you pay.

5. The training program

5.1 The Study Materials

During the training, you use different types of study materials:

1. **Online platform**

In the online platform, you find:

- information about the training
- the required portfolio assignments
- explanations and information about the practical exam
- the option to register for the practical exam

2. **Workbook**

You also get a paper workbook.

This workbook has almost the same information as the online platform.

This way, you can study even if you have no or poor internet.

3. **Reader**

The reader is a book with extra explanation about the practice.

It explains what is important on board, per topic.

The explanation is clear and simple.

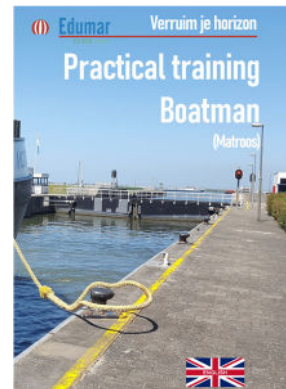
You can also find much of this explanation in the online platform.

The reader is part of the study materials.

You use these materials to make the required portfolio assignments.

Edumar improves the study materials regularly.

This keeps the materials good and useful for the work of a trainee boatman.



5.2 Portfolio Assignments

The portfolio assignments are mandatory for both training routes:

- Boatman – 90 sailing days and 9 months
- Boatman with sailing time

They help you learn better how to work on an inland vessel. They show you have enough knowledge and skills to work as a boatman. You may do the assignments in any order.

There are two types of portfolio assignments:

1. **Paper portfolio assignments**

- You can download and print these assignments.
- They are also in the workbook you got.
- You discuss each assignment with the captain or instructor.
- Then you do the assignment.
- The captain checks your work and signs it.
- When all assignments are done and signed, you upload them all at once in your online platform.

2. **Online portfolio assignments**

- Open the chapter of the assignment you want to do.
- Each assignment starts with an explanation about the topic.
- Then you make a test.
- You must do the test and get a passing score.

You may only take the practical exam when all portfolio assignments are finished and approved!

The assignments are about:

1. Navigation
2. Operating the vessel
3. Cargo handling, stowing, and passenger transport
4. Ship machinery, electricity, electronics, control and measuring
5. Maintenance and repair
6. Communication
7. Health, safety, passenger rights, and environmental protection

5.3 Learning on Board

It is important that you get good help on board.

The captain or skipper, the mate, the boatmen, and sometimes the engineer must help you learn the work.

Talk about this in advance with the captain, skipper, or owner.

This way you know what they expect from you and what you can expect from your colleagues.

Practice plan:

1. A colleague explains the work and shows how to do it.
2. You do it yourself, with supervision. The colleague watches and gives tips.
3. You work more and more independently. The colleague checks sometimes.
4. You do the work independently.

Tasks

Usually, you start with deck work, such as:

- mooring and unmooring the vessel
- maintenance
- helping with loading and unloading

Later, you also help in the engine room. You learn things like:

- checking the engines
- checking the batteries
- and more work in and around the engine room

The part 'sailing under supervision' usually comes later.

A boatman must be able to sail a short distance in simple conditions, but this is not the main task of a boatman.

5.4 Personal guidance

The practical training takes place on board the ship where you work and sail. On board, you have a practical supervisor or instructor (usually the skipper) who teaches you the boatman's work.

The candidate and the supervisor/skipper can always contact the Edumar contact person for questions about the training or organization. The contact details are in the workbook and also easy to find in the online platform.

Contact with the Edumar contact person is easy and informal, as usual!

At Edumar, you have a personal contact person for questions and guidance.

You find the contact details in your workbook and online platform.



Contact information in the workbook.

6. The practical test

The practical exam takes minimum 2 hours and maximum 3.5 hours.

The exam is on board the Edumar training vessel, ms Horizon.

There are two exam rounds each day:

- In the morning from 9:00 to 12:00 (be there at 8:30)
- In the afternoon from 13:00 to 16:00 (be there at 12:30)

The exam is done by Edumar examiners. It is a practical exam. On board, you do different tasks.

You show what you can do and explain what you are doing. The examiner (assessor) checks your skills and knowledge.

6.1 How are you tested?

Each exam round has 3 to 4 candidates.

Each candidate is tested individually by different assessors.

The examiners use an assessment form. Each part of the exam has criteria. Each criterion is marked as sufficient (pass) or insufficient (fail).

You pass a part if 80% of the criteria are sufficient.

You must pass all parts to pass the full exam.

Some criteria are in bold. These are knock-out criteria. These must always be sufficient, or you fail that part.

The assessors write the results on the form.

If you get an insufficient, the assessor will always write a short explanation. You get this explanation at the end of the exam, during the result.

At the end of the exam, the examiners decide if you passed or failed.

You get a letter with the result and more information.

Exam parts

The practical exam has five parts.

Each part is equal and must be passed.

The five exam parts are:

1. Deck
2. Engine room
3. Mooring, unmooring and anchoring
4. Wheelhouse
5. General



6.2.1 Entrance requirements for the boatman (NL: matroos) – 90 sailing days and 9 months

You may take the practical exam if you meet the following conditions:

1. All online portfolio tasks are finished with a pass.
2. The paper portfolio tasks are signed by the skipper and uploaded to the online system.
3. You have been in the deckhand training for at least 6 months.
4. You have a Deck Rating safety training certificate, or you have an exemption for this.

6.2.2 Entrance requirements for boatman exam based on sailing time (360 sailing days)

You may take the practical exam if you meet the following conditions:

1. All online portfolio tasks are finished with a pass.
2. The paper portfolio tasks are signed by the skipper and uploaded to the online system.

6.2 Examination time requirements

Edumar ensures that:

- exams take place on Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 22:00;
- the candidate has received a final invitation with reservation form CBR no later than 1 week before the desired exam date;
- the practical exam is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the CBR framework with regard to the content and preconditions of the exam, the sailing area and the exam vessel; and
- at the start of the practical exam, the accompanying portfolio assignments have been completed satisfactorily.

6.3 Exam ship requirements

The practical test is taken on Edumar's training ship, the ms HORIZON.

The ms Horizon meets the minimum requirements set by the CBR for examination ships:

- meets the Standard S2 requirements, as stated in ES-TRIN chapter 31, art. 31.03.
- is at least 40 meters long.
- has a room in which at least the candidate, the skipper, the assessor/examiner and a sample taker can conduct an introductory and concluding discussion.
- has a wheelhouse in which at least the candidate, the skipper, the assessor and a sampler can be present during the practical examination.
- is exclusively available for the exams during the exams.



ms HORIZON, Edumar's training ship.



Left: Engine Room

Middle: Wheelhouse

Right: Foredeck with Anchor Winch

6.4 Location of the Practical Exam

The practical exam is done in a sailing area chosen by Edumar and approved before the exam by the CBR.

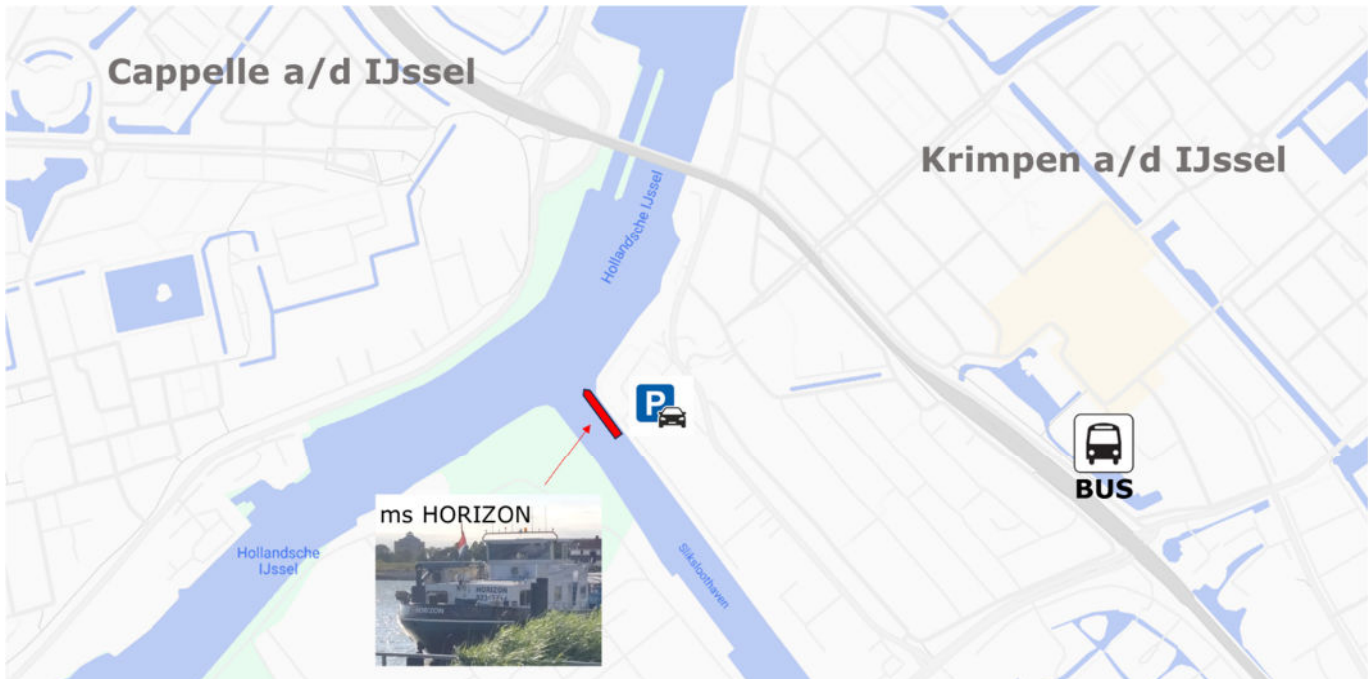
CBR rules for the sailing area:

- It is in the Netherlands.
- It has everything needed to test all exam subjects.

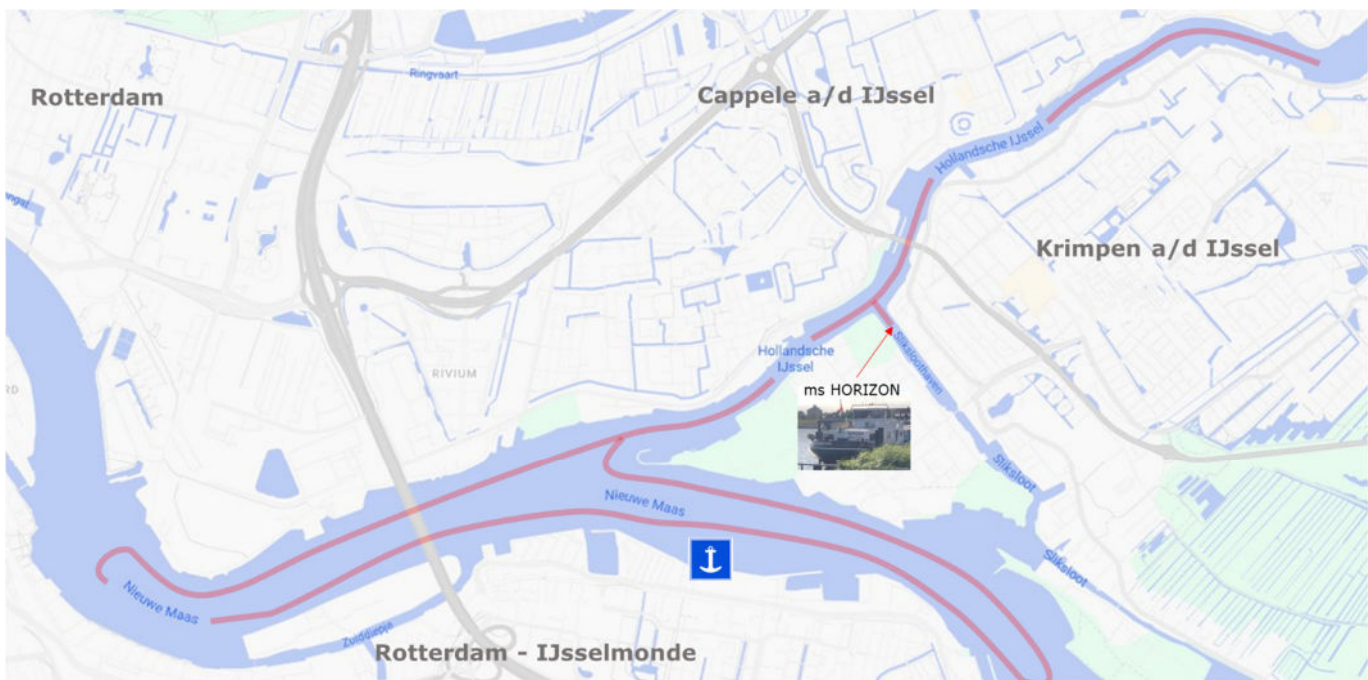
The location Krimpen aan den IJssel is approved by the CBR for the boatman exam.

The exam starts from the Sliksloothaven.

The sailing area is the Hollandse IJssel and the Nieuwe Maas, near Krimpen aan den IJssel.



The training ship ms Horizon is moored in the Sliksloothaven in Krimpen aan den IJssel.



The sailing area during the exam is the Hollandse IJssel and the Nieuwe Maas, near Krimpen. We anchor on the Rotterdam IJsselmonde side.

6.5 Examiners during the practical exam

Edumar thinks it is important that candidates are tested by people from the job. Our examiners are skippers. They know how it really works on board. They understand people and know how to test a candidate in a calm and fair way.

An examiner at Edumar:

- has a valid EU skipper's certificate (before: groot vaarbewijs);
- works as a skipper in inland shipping;
- has good communication skills;
- speaks and understands enough (nautical) English to test English-speaking candidates;
- can possibly speak German, to examine German-speaking candidates if needed;
- understands people and can test different kinds of candidates;
- stays professional and keeps enough distance from the candidate;
- helps the candidate feel calm, without coming too close;
- stays calm, even when things get busy on board;
- knows what to look for and checks the CBR exam requirements;
- gives clear instructions and explanations when needed.

Our examiners are skilled. They do not test by feeling, but by facts.



The candidate shows the skills and does the tasks. The examiner checks and asks questions.

New examiners

New examiners get a good introduction at Edumar.

The requirements for new examiners are first discussed with the candidate-examiner. The candidate-examiner also receives all needed information and papers.

Then, the candidate-examiner joins one or more exams as an extra examiner (called a "meekijker"), next to experienced examiners.

This way, both sides can see if the job is a good match.

If both are positive, the new examiner will start. In the beginning, he always works together with an experienced examiner.

This way, he can get used to the job step by step.

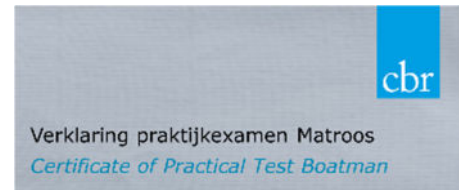
7. Applying for EU qualification Boatman

If you passed the practical exam for boatman, you finished the practical training.

Right after you pass the exam, Edumar sends your result to the CBR.

Then you will receive a Statement of Practical Exam Boatman from the CBR.

The CBR sends this statement within five working days after the exam to your home address or the address you gave.



Please note: Do you live outside the Netherlands? Then it can take longer to receive the statement.

Questions about your statement?

If you have questions about your certificate, contact the CBR.

Keep your candidate number ready. You can find this on your exam invitation.

CBR customer service phone number:

+31 (0)88 227 77 00

7.1 You are not officially boatman yet

Please note: Even if you passed the exam and received the statement from the CBR, you are not officially boatman yet in the crew requirements.

You count as boatman only when the qualification is written in your service record book.

You must go to the SAB in Rotterdam for this.

7.2 SAB – What to bring?

To write your boatman qualification in your service book, take the following with you to the SAB:

- The Statement of Practical Exam Boatman from the CBR
- Your proof of enrolment in the boatman training
- A valid medical check (only if you need a new service book; this is for books from before 1 April 2023)
- At the SAB you must also show your sailing time

7.2.1 You followed the training route: Boatman – 90 sailing days and 9 months

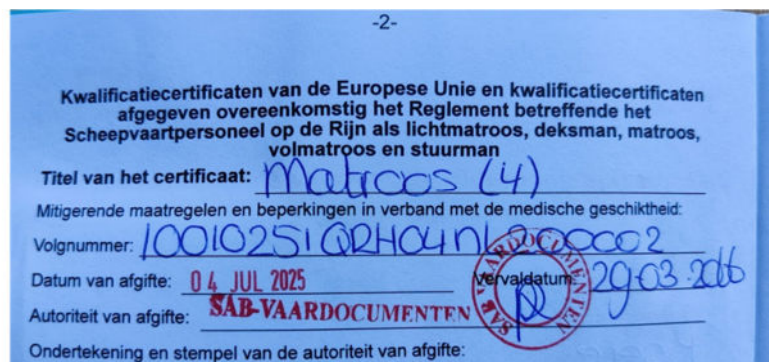
You show that you:

- Have at least 90 sailing days
- Did at least 9 months of training from the start
- Proof: enrolment proof and/or the 'light boatman' sticker you received from Edumar

7.2.2 You followed the route: Boatman with sailing time (360 days)

You show that you:

- Have at least 90 sailing days
- Did at least 9 months of training from the start
- Proof: enrolment proof and/or the 'light boatman' sticker you received from Edumar



8. Boatman competencies

The boatman training has the following competences:

1. Navigation
2. Operation of the craft
3. Cargo handling, stowage and passenger transport
4. Marine engineering, electrical, electronic and control engineering
5. Maintenance and repairs
6. Communication
7. Health and safety, passenger rights and environmental protection

There is a difference in the way of testing. For example, there are competencies that are tested during the final test (practical exam). These are mainly practical skills and practical knowledge components.

Other competencies are required to be tested prior to the final test (practical exam). The competencies that are tested and assessed in advance are tested with portfolio assignments.

The latest version of the exam requirements for the sailor practical test is on the CBR website. You can find it through the link below.

<https://www.cbr.nl/nl/service/nl/artikel/exameneisen-praktijkttoets-matroos-4>

9. Quality controls UWV, CRKBO, Certiked and ILenT

Since June 2014, Edumar is certified according to the ISO 9001 system. An audit by EIK Certification shows that Edumar fully meets the international rules for quality. This means our work is well organized, and we keep working to improve.

Edumar is certified by the CBR for different practical courses in inland shipping. Edumar is also registered at CESNI as a recognized training provider for the Boatman course. CESNI is a European organization that makes rules for inland shipping, including training.

Edumar is also registered at the CRKBO (Central Register for Short Vocational Education). This is a register for schools that give vocational training and are not paid by the government. Because of this registration, all Edumar courses are free from VAT.

Since 2014, Edumar is also approved by the Dutch Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate.

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These organizations set high standards for the quality of the services Edumar gives. Before approval, Edumar was checked on many points, like:

- careful way of working
- reliable information
- protecting the interests of students
- qualified staff
- teacher support
- clear and good learning material
- good study support
- clear study guides
- good link with the exams
- honest advertising
- clear and public complaints procedure