



SEAFARERS GUIDE UNITED KINGDOM

Seafarers joining ships in the UK where the 1958 convention applies.

A seaman travelling on duty, who is a visa national (including those in transit through the UK) does not need a visa if he holds a valid seaman's book issued by a country which has ratified the 1958 International Labour Organisation (ILO) seafarers identity documents convention No. 108.

The document must contain a statement confirming that it is issued under ILO108 (or convention of 1958) or ILO185, having previously ratified ILO108 (or convention of 2003).

The countries which fall under the convention are:

Algeria, Anguilla, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bermuda, Brazil, British Virgin Isles, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova (Republic of), Montserrat, Morocco, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Sweden, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom (including the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar), Uruguay.

The document must state that it is issued under the convention. However, the holder does not need to be a national of that country that issued the document, and can also be a stateless person in order to be considered visa exempt.

Note: The crew member will also require a valid Passport.

If the crew member is remaining on board the vessel, they are permitted to move between UK ports without a visa. However, they cannot ordinarily join a vessel that operates routinely within territorial waters. For example, a fishing vessel. If it is the case that the vessel is required to make multiple stops at UK ports throughout its voyage this is permitted within the rules pertaining to their rights as crew under the ILO.

Latest updates from UKBA can be found here:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/carriers/ukvisarequirements.pdf

For None-UK crew members, where the above applies, Inchcape Shipping will raise an 'OK To Board' form accordingly, containing vessel name, crew member information and flight details. The crew should carry this document with them when travelling to the UK, to assist with clearance through check in at the airport of departure, and through local border force / immigration upon arrival in the UK.

Please note – Inchcape Shipping Services will not lodge the “OK To Board” in to the airline systems. This is the responsibility of the crewing operators or travel / booking agent.

Seafarers joining a ship in the UK where the 1958 convention does NOT apply

It is recommended, that any crew not in possession of an ILO 108 ratified seaman's book – apply for a UK Visa for joining a vessel, via the UK Embassy in their home country.

Inchcape Shipping Services can assist with the Visa application by providing a Letter of Invitation, detailing the vessel and crew members details. Please enquire for further information.



Seafarers departing a vessel from the UK.

Since the 01st January 2021, any non-British crew member repatriating from a vessel in the UK requires reporting outwards to the local border and immigration office, prior to disembarkation from the vessel.

In order to receive the permission to disembark, Inchcape Shipping will require the following:

- 1) A copy of the vessel's full arrival crew list (C97 / FAL5).
- 2) A scan copy of the departing crew members Passport and Seamans book.
- 3) Departing crew members flight details.

This information will then be forwarded to the local border force office, in order permission to disembark be granted.

For EU/EEA/Swiss crew – the permission to enter will be returned by the local border force office by email, confirming the crew may disembark accordingly.

For none EU crew members – a repatriation clearance form will be returned from the local border force office. This form will permit the crew member 'leave to enter' for up to 7 days from disembarkation. A copy of the repatriation clearance will be passed to the vessels captain by hand or by email prior to the departing crew members disembarkation. The departing crew member should keep a copy of this form with them.



COVID-19 Information for Seafarers

All national travel rules for vaccinated / non-vaccinated crew will end from 0400hrs UK time on Friday 18th March.

This covers all devolved nations (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland).

There will be no testing or quarantine requirements from the UK government for any crew entering the UK from this date.

However, please note that there may be differences in local rules applied by ports, terminals and health authorities so we recommend that you still reach out on a case by case basis to the local office, as procedures can change quickly.

For example, some terminals still want negative tests prior to crew change taking place, or will permit by launch only.

Please also note that some airlines may still require testing prior to departure, depending on transit routes and final destinations. **It is the responsibility of the manning agent / crewing manager / ship manager to advise Inchcape Shipping of any testing requirements from the airlines.**

We have recently encountered examples where departure requirements were not checked by the travel agent. On this basis, no tests were arranged prior to departure and crew members were subsequently denied boarding when they arrived at the airport. Flights will be missed in these circumstances, as there will then be insufficient time to arrange for tests to be taken and for results to be returned back from the laboratory prior to flight departure.

Please always check departure requirements with the airline and relay back to agent if testing is required.

Seafarers ‘visiting’ and ‘transiting’ the UK

Seafarers who are visa nationals, coming to the UK for 6 months or less for the following reasons, require a visa:

- private visits;
- travelling as passengers;
- signing on ship's articles as supernumeraries at nominal rates of pay; or
- visiting as amateur yachtsmen.

Seafarers passing through the UK to join a ship in a port abroad must be dealt with as visitors in transit. As such, there are some stipulations regarding transit through the UK.

Crew would need valid Passport and holding a valid Seamans book from ILO 108 nation as well as any other documents to authenticate their seafarer status i.e. contract of employment etc.

ALL visa nationals seeking to transit the United Kingdom LANDSIDE without a visa must:

- arrive and depart by air;
- have a confirmed onward flight that departs before 23:59hrs the following day; and
- hold the correct documents for their destination (e.g. a visa for that country if required.)

As per the current government legislation, all crew entering the UK are required to complete the mandatory online passenger locator form, as outlined in the “COVID-19 Information for Seafarers” section above.

If required, Inchcape Shipping can provide a ‘Seafarer Support Letter’, to assist the crew during their transit via the UK. Please enquire for further information.



Seafarers and work permits

Under paragraph 128 of the immigration rules, a seafarer will need a work permit to:

- join ferries operating between two UK ports, including ports in Northern Ireland, but not the Channel Islands or Isle of Man;
- join 'ro-ro' services between UK ports which carry twelve or more lorry drivers;
- join dredgers operating wholly or largely within UK waters; or
- join scheduled domestic freight services between UK ports.

Work permits are not required by the following:

- those joining ferry services to ports outside the UK, including ports in the Channel Islands and Isle of Man;
- those joining ships which will be operating out of a single UK port but where the voyage is primarily outside UK waters, for example, voyages to offshore installations, offshore dredging and dumping operations;
- entertainers, hairdressers and others not strictly crew members who are joining a ship to work on it during its voyage may be treated as contract seamen, that is, not needing work permits, provided you are satisfied that they are due to leave the UK on the ship's next sailing.

Document History

This document will be reviewed at regular intervals and updated accordingly.
The details of the revisions will be identified and recorded.

Revision	Details of Revision/s	By Whom	Date
Version 1.0	New document outlining current UK procedures for crew changes.	David Bennett	02/02/2021
Version 1.1	Seafarers exempt from travel ban as of the 19/03/2021	David Bennett	17/03/2021
Version 1.2	Lateral flow tests mandatory for crew members arriving in the UK.	David Bennett	08/04/2021
Version 1.3	Crew for cruise vessels required to quarantine if arriving from a red listed country. Lateral flow tests no longer required if arriving from a green listed country.	David Bennett	19/05/2021
Version 1.4	Change to Covid-19 Information to Seafarers	Angus Williamson	24/02/2021
Version 1.5	Change to Covid-19 Information to Seafarers	David Bennett	18/03/2021

