

The Pre-Entry Assessment is the first step on the Instructor Pathway and is a personal skills assessment. It is one of the few 'formal' evaluations within the Irish Sailing training framework and its sole purpose is to ensure Irish Sailing Instructor candidates have the required sailing and background skill standards.

The Pre-Entry Assessment should not be seen as 'the next step' or a natural progression from the SBSS sailor syllabus.

Becoming an Instructor is a commitment—one that requires strong sailing ability, maturity and a genuine interest in teaching and supporting others. Instructorship offers an opportunity to develop your own experiences, introduce new people to sailing and help grow our sport, it is not also the right path for everyone.

Candidates should consider whether they are ready to take on the responsibility and challenges that come with the role, as well as the satisfaction and impact it can bring.

Pre-Requisites:

- Candidates must be at least 16.5 years of age.

It is recommended candidates have both;

- SBSS Advanced Boat Handling Certificate
- Coastal Navigation for Small Boats Certificate

While these certificates provide valuable preparation, they do not exempt candidates from performing any part of the SBSS Pre-Entry Assessment.

The assessment is conducted on a Pass - Fail basis and consists of two-parts; AFLOAT & ASHORE

1. AFLOAT Practical Skills

Boat handling skills should be confident and smooth and at the confidence level of Advanced Boat Handling. You will be asked to complete all the below manouvers.

While doing so, you must demonstrate the ability to apply "The 5 Essentials" at all times on all points of sailing.

The Assessor is not looking for the next Olympian, they be seeking to confirm that you can sail **competently** and **confidently**.

Practical skills should be undertaken in a seamanship like manner. This means that skills do not need to be taken on the first attempt and a decision to break-off at a reasonably early stage and try again is acceptable. If a sailor has become a committed to a task, it should be successfully completed and to standard.

The assessment must be conducted in a minimum wind speed of **11-knots** and must be undertaken in a sailing dinghy, catamaran or keelboat depending on the type of instructor course that it is required for. Practice skills will be assessed as both crew and as helm - the assessment will not be completed in a single-hander.

Sail a Triangular Course

You will be asked to sail around a triangular course.

Each leg of the course will be at least 400 meters long.

During this you will be expected to demonstrate that you can:

- Apply the 5-Essentials at all times.
- Closely round a mark without touching it.
- Allow for any tide / currents if present.
- Use all of boats equipment to best advantage including spinnaker if conditions are appropriate.

Sail a Triangular Course Rudderless (dinghies & keelboats only)

You will be asked to sail the same course as previously, but without a rudder.

The rudder may be secured with bungee rather than totally removed.

During this you will be expected to demonstrate that you can:

- Sail the boat around the course without noticeable difference from sailing with a rudder.
- Maintain proper control of the boat on all points of sailing as well as while tacking & gybing.
- Make the necessary adjustments to sail area, sheeting arrangements & centreboard position.
- Maintain proper awareness of other water users and take proper avoiding action if necessary.

Note that you will not be penalised for reefing the boat if conditions are such that it would be seamanlike to do so.

Sail a Tight Circular Course

You will be asked to sail a tight circle around a stationary but free-floating boat.

The circle should be as small as you can safely make it. However, the assessor will accept that in doing this, you may have to leave the centreboard in one position.

During this you will be expected to demonstrate that you can:

- Sail a smooth circle within a radius of three-boat-lengths of the Assessors boat.
- Make only one tack & one gybe during the circle.
- Maintain appropriate sail trim and boat balance / trim at all times

Sail a 'Follow The Leader' Course

The course may include all points of sailing and may be behind another sailing boat or behind a powerboat.

During this you will be expected to maintain a constant distance of approximately one-boat-length between you and the boat in front.

Pick-Up a Man-Overboard Dummy

You will be asked to drop-off and then pick-up an MOB dummy.

The dummy will be of sufficient weight so as to represent a person in the water.

During this you will be expected to;

- Stop the boat dead in the water when you pick up the dummy.
- Pick up the MOB at the windward shroud.
- Not tack while you pull the MOB on board.
- Not need more than one attempt to pick up the MOB.

Lee-Shore Landing and Departure (dinghies & catamarans only)

You may be asked to demonstrate a lee-shore landing & departure.

During this you will be expected to;

- Use the correct sail plan (inc. jib only if necessary).
- Land in a controlled fashion.
- On departure, clear the shore successfully in a controlled way [on the first attempt](#).



Anchor or Pick-Up a Mooring – Wind Against Tide

You may be asked to either anchor or pick-up a mooring in a wind over tide situation.

During picking up a mooring you will be expected to;

- Use the correct sail plan.
- Stop the boat dead in the water next to the buoy.
- Pick up the mooring [on the first attempt](#).
- Keep the boat under control once the buoy is on board.

During Anchoring you will be expected to;

- Use the correct sail plan.
- Anchor in the area designated by the Assessor.
- Anchor successfully [on the first attempt](#).
- Keep the boat under control once you have anchored.

Come-Alongside a Moored Boat - Wind Against Tide

You may be asked to come-alongside in a wind against tide situation.

During this you will be expected to;

- Maintain complete control of the boat during the approach.
- Stop alongside the boat [on the first attempt](#).
- Remain in control of the boat once you are alongside.

Recover a Capsized Dinghy and Sail Away (dinghies & catamarans only)

You will be asked to recover a capsized dinghy and then sail it away.

During this you will be expected to;

- Successfully right the dinghy without external help in a calm and controlled manner.
- Need only one attempt to recover the boat.
- Recover the crew and yourself into the boat and sail away while maintaining control of the boat at all times.

Reducing Sail While Underway (keelboats only)

You will be asked to change headsails and reef the mainsail while underway.

During this you will be expected to;

- Maintain control of the boat at all times.
- Reef the sails in a manner that allows them to be set to best effect.
- Ensure the safety & security of crew.
- Execute the changes in a timely and efficient manner.



2. ASHORE Background Knowledge

This typically takes the form of a written theory paper.

Candidates should review the sample papers on *sailing.ie* to become familiar with how the questions are presented and asked.

The Assessor may also ask questions orally to better understand a candidates competency in a particular area.

Ensure you are familiar with the weeks weather; what weather systems are present and what are the expected conditions.

The Assessor will provide sufficient charts.

Candidates must provide their own stationary, calculators and navigation instruments.

Subject	Method	
Sail & mast controls	Using a three sail boat normally fitted with a trapeze the sailors will be asked to identify any of the boats sail & mast controls, describe how it might be used, and if possible, demonstrate on the boat the effect that control has.	Main sail - Halyard, Cunningham, Out haul, Vang, Battens, Main-sheet, Traveller Telltales. Jib - Halyard, Sheets & Sheeting angles, Telltales. Mast - Rig tension, Spreader length & angles, Mast ram / chocks, Rake.
Compass	The sailor will be asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a course to steer from a chart and apply it to a compass. Plot a magnetic bearing onto a chart. 	Having been given two points on a chart the sailor should be able to plot a course between the two points onto the chart, convert this course to a course to steer by applying the appropriate variation and deviation from the compass card provided. Having been given three compass bearings the sailor should be able to plot a position fix onto a chart.
Chart symbols	The sailor will be asked to identify a number of common symbols and features from a chart.	Latitude & longitude, Depth contours, Tidal diamonds, Rocks, Drying areas, Port & Starboard Lateral marks, North, East, South & West Cardinal marks, Special marks, Isolated danger mark & Safe-water mark.
Tides	For a primary port, the sailor will be asked to either; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predict the depth of water at a given time and place. Predict the time at which the water will reach a particular depth at any given time or place. For a position on the coast or in a channel adjacent to a primary port the sailor should be able to estimate the time and direction of maximum and minimum tidal flow.	Given a position on a chart, a time and a set of tide tables for a primary port the sailors should be able to calculate the depth of water at that point. Given a required depth at a position on a chart and a set of tide tables for a primary port the sailors should be able to calculate the time at which the water will be at the depth given. Given a position on a chart, a set of tide tables and a set of tidal charts the sailor the sailor should be able to estimate the time and direction of maximum flow and time of minimum tidal flow.

Collision Regulations	Using either an oral interview, written questions or models the sailor will be asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From colour pictures, identify a number of common navigation day marks and describe their relevance to sailors. 	Port & Starboard Lateral marks, North, East, South & West Cardinal marks, Special marks, Isolated danger mark & Safe-water mark.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly identify who has priority and correct action by stand on vessel in a number of simple scenarios. 	Sail vs sail - Port / starboard, overtaking, windward / leeward. Sail vs power - Meeting vessels, overtaking, restricted manoeuvrability. Power vs power - Meeting vessels, overtaking, towing.
Weather	During an oral interview; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sailor will be asked to describe the prevailing weather patterns and effects for a period of 2 days prior to the assessment. The sailor will be asked to provide a synopsis of the expected weather for the day of the assessment and describe how it might be expected to affect the sailing area used for the assessment. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sailor will be asked to describe the cause of, effects of and features of at least two common weather conditions / features. The sailor will be asked to identify two types of cloud from colour photographs. The sailor will be asked to describe identify the prevailing wind speed and direction. 	Sea breeze, Radiation Fog, Sea Fog, Thunderstorms, Line squalls, Warm front, Warm sector, Cold front, Cold sector, Occluded fronts, Depressions, Anti cyclones. Cirrus, Cirrostratus, Altostratus, Altocumulus, Stratus, Cumulus, Cumulonimbus, Nimbostratus, Fractostratus, Stratocumulus.
Ropework	The sailor will be asked to tie and describe the appropriate use for three knots.	Reef Knot, Bowline, Clove hitch, Round turn & two half hitches, Sheet bent and Rolling hitch, Figure of eight.

All Pre-Entry Candidates must have an Irish Sailing Passport (Checkclick) account for the Assessor to track skills and add feedback.

Candidates must 'affiliate' to their Assessor on Checkclick.

If a candidate does not pass one part of the Assessment (AFLOAT or ASHORE), they may resit that part again, in its entirety within 6-months.

eg. failed coming alongside skill - they can resit the full practical assessment again; not just a repeat of the specific skill.



 Checkclick

training@sailing.ie