



Job Description – staff First Mate

This job description is a guidance document expanding on the contract of employment. It does not form part of the contract and is included as a non-exclusive expectation of the day-to-day duties and responsibilities of the staff First Mate of an OYT South vessel.

Introduction

Ocean Youth Trust South has traditionally operated with volunteer First Mates, but the Covid-19 pandemic has left the charity temporarily short of qualified volunteers: some First Mates have retired or moved on, while the second mates couldn't sail for a year and a half and are therefore needing to refresh and consolidate their skills before being tackling a First Mate assessment, with many still needing to complete RYA qualifications.

The charity is therefore looking to recruit a paid First Mate on contract for the 2022 season, to sail on voyages which we can't cover with volunteer First Mates and to support the training of second mates to help them towards completing First Mate assessments, as well as encouraging those further down the ladder to develop the skills to step into the resulting second mate vacancies.

The post is offered for one season (January to November 2022) but the person appointed would then be able to move on in the industry with an exceptionally strong addition to a CV in terms of having been a senior member of a team on board a 32-metre commercial vessel, with extensive experience of working with young people from all backgrounds and working with and training volunteers.

Person Specification

Must be at least a Commercially Endorsed RYA Yachtmaster with experience on board vessels greater than 60 feet LOA. A Cruising Instructor or Yachtmaster Instructor qualification would be an advantage. Ideally you will have experience in sail training with young people.

Giving Young People the Skills to Succeed in Life

OYT South uses Adventure Under Sail for the personal development of young people aged 12-25. A majority – though not all – of our young crew members come from disadvantaged backgrounds. This can include young carers; children who have been bullied, bereaved, abused or neglected; young people in care; individuals with physical or learning difficulties or emotional or behavioural problems; young people from families affected by substance abuse or mental health issues; those who have been excluded from school; young people not in education, employment or training; young offenders; and many more. But crew members can also come from mainstream backgrounds and may include high achievers or people working towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award.

All this means that while young people can and do learn to sail with us, the priority on most voyages is about using the vessel and the sea to develop things like confidence, teamworking, coping with unfamiliar situations, dealing with setbacks, communication and co-operation.

The role of First Mate is therefore just as much about youthwork as it is about seamanship and sailing or instructing.

It is important that the First Mate supports the Staff Skipper in creating a healthy, safe and welcoming environment at any time young people are with OYT South, whether that be ashore or afloat. Working with the Skipper, the First Mate plays a key role in ensuring the young people who sail with us are listened to and kept safe from harm. The First Mate must demonstrate the best practice in child protection and be able to safeguard children and young people taking part in activities with us from physical, sexual or emotional harm. They must be able to recognise signs which could signify the abuse of a child and be able to record and respond to accidents, complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents. The First Mate must be fully committed to promoting the general welfare, health and full development of young people when with us.

OYT South has an excellent reputation for client relationships and repeat bookings. In support of the Skipper, the First Mate will be expected to work closely with all those referring young people to sail with us to ensure the best possible outcomes for all involved. This will include providing detailed reports and other information that may be required by the Chief Executive to provide feedback to referring agencies, donors etc.

Skipper support

The First Mate should be utterly reliable at 1M level, to take pressure off the skipper and volunteer 1Ms when sailing.

They should be willing to sail in different capacities (1M, watchleader, or relief engineer) on voyages where we can't fill all volunteer berths.

The safety, navigation and maintenance of the vessel should always be achieved to the highest of standards and in full compliance with any regulations set by any international, national or local authority flag state or other body that may apply; together with any directive or operating procedure set by the Chief Executive or Board of Trustees. This includes operating any vessel on behalf of OYT South in accordance with environmental legislation and minimising any adverse impact on the marine environment. The First Mate will be expected to support the Skipper in the delivery of these standards.

They should have strong admin skills – willing and able to take admin workload off the skipper so she can concentrate on sailing. This would include writing crew reports, ordering parts, liaising with ports, event planning, filling short-notice volunteer vacancies, attracting volunteers to maintenance days etc.

The First Mate can help to develop improved ways of reviewing and evidencing what young people achieve during their voyages.

Sea staff support and development

It is vital that the role is used to support and encourage existing volunteers and that no-one should feel undermined or redundant. We are looking for someone with the personal qualities to make everyone from volunteer first mates to bosuns feel that they are valued assets to the team.

The First Mate must be good at supporting sea staff who might be able to progress up the ladder from bosun to third mate to second mate to first mate. That means assisting with training where needed as well as spotting potential and building confidence among volunteers who may not realise how high they can go. Really strong training skills will be a major asset. The First Mate should be interested in using technology and new approaches for staff training – e.g. helping to video specific evolutions, such as the ideal main hoist, RIB launch or MOB recovery, which can be uploaded to our website for the benefit of volunteer sea staff.

Vessel refit and maintenance

From January 2022 until the season starts in March, the First Mate will be supporting the Staff Skipper and Staff Engineer in the refit and maintenance of *Prolific*, plus sea trials and volunteer training. The First Mate should have good technical skills.

Lifestyle

The First Mate works on a pattern which will average roughly four weeks on board and two weeks ashore during the sailing season from mid-March to early November. The periods ashore include relief time but also time for administration, potential client visits etc.

Outside the season the First Mate will be working on vessel maintenance, refit and sea trials as described above and although this should average a five-day working week this will involve significant weekend working with weekdays off in lieu.

The First Mate will be required to live on board the vessel except when on relief.

The First Mate is a key person in delivering the services of OYT South. Because of the central nature of the First Mate role, enthusiasm and high motivation are essential to this role.

Position in organisation

Reports to: Staff Skipper

Duties and key responsibilities

Specific duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1 Navigation and seamanship

- Assisting the skipper in the safety and security of the vessel, its equipment and crew at all times, whether at sea or in port.

2 Care and development of young people

- Assisting the skipper in ensuring that every opportunity is taken to promote the social and personal development of the young people on board.
- Assisting the skipper in encouraging the enjoyment and participation by young people in as many activities as possible.
- Assisting the skipper in taking responsibility for the safety and good conduct of young people in the crew both at sea and in port.

3 Clients and group leaders

- Working with all organisations who send young people to sail with OYT South to promote good relationships and achieve the best possible outcomes through OYT South voyages, both for the organisations and for the young people themselves.
- Assisting the skipper in working with adult leaders sailing on OYT South voyages to ensure that they have the best possible experience during OYT South voyages, both for themselves and for the young people in their group.

4 Maintenance and refit

- Assisting the skipper and staff engineer in ensuring the vessel and its equipment are maintained in a safe and seaworthy condition at all times.
- Assisting the skipper with the refit of the vessel to the standards required by OYT South and external legislation and codes of practice.
- Complying with the instructions relating to safety and maintenance standards issued from time to time by Chief Executive or employer.
- Ensuring that the vessel is kept in a clean, tidy and presentable state at all times when this is practicable.

5 Health and safety, and other legal requirements

- Complying with the requirements of the H&S, Merchant Shipping and other relevant legislation, as amended from time to time.
- Ensuring that other relevant legislation (e.g. relating to the care of children, and child protection) is complied with.

6 Relations with voluntary supporters

- Maintaining good relations and communication with all the volunteers, especially support groups and voluntary sea staff.
- Assisting the skipper in encouraging the recruitment, training and development of suitable voluntary sea staff and other voluntary support.

7 Public relations

- Making best use of any opportunities to promote and publicise the Trust.
- Attending and speaking at presentations to young people, boat shows and other events designed to publicise the activities of the Trust.
 - The First Mate is expected to be mindful of their position as temporary guardians of young people and avoid conduct, either their own or that of the crew or sea staff, that could cause adverse comment.

8 Equal opportunities

- Promoting access to the Trust's resources for all people regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation or marital status, race, religious beliefs, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, part-time working or responsibility for dependants.
- Encouraging young people to be aware of equal opportunities issues
- Avoiding any conduct on board of a discriminatory nature

9 Administration and finance

- Maintaining up to date and accurate financial, administrative and personal records and submitting these to the office in a timely manner.
- Operating within the budgetary and financial guidelines set out by the Chief Executive or the Staff Skipper.
- Exercising proper care and control of all Trust monies and other assets and resources in the First Mate's care.

10 Other duties

- Attending meetings, seminars and training sessions as required by the employer.
- Being familiar with the requirements of the OYT South handbook, as amended from time to time, and ensuring that the authorised standards of operating contained therein are strictly followed.
- Being familiar with the OYT South Voyage Handbook and Systems Manual, and ensuring that all voyage operations conform to the standards contained therein. Working with Chief Executive, ensuring that the Voyage Handbook and Systems Manual is kept up to date as required.
- Ensuring that other reasonable instructions issued by the Staff Skipper, Chief Executive or employer are obeyed.

11 Assessments and qualifications

The First Mate should possess the skills and qualifications required for an Ocean Youth Trust South First Mate. This includes the ability to take command and get the vessel, young people, volunteers and other staff to a safe haven if the Skipper is ill or injured.

Ocean Youth Trust South's First Mate assessment form is available here:

http://www.oigtsouth.org/pdfs/1Massform_Prolific_Mar2018.pdf. The successful applicant will be required to pass this assessment at the earliest opportunity.