Day Skipper / Watch Leader Syllabus

The syllabus is shown below with an indication of the depth of knowledge required and the minimum time which is to be spent on each subject area. You can tick off each topic as it is completed.

A: Full knowledge

A depth of understanding which is fundamental to safe navigation and good seamanship. The student will be able to apply the knowledge in a practical situation and also appreciates why the knowledge is so important.

B: Working knowledge

Understands what knowledge to apply, when and how to apply it for a particular undertaking. Recognises what level their knowledge is at relative to a given situation. The student is aware that their knowledge is broad but not necessarily deep.

C: Outline knowledge

An awareness of the subject area but with only a superficial understanding of its application in practice. The student recognises that further knowledge of the topic will be required in some practical situations and knows enough to find appropriate sources of information or learning.

	Minimum time (hours)	Depth of knowledge
1 Nautical terms	2	
☐ Parts of a boat and hull		B
☐ General nautical terminology		B
2 Ropework	0.5	
☐ Knowledge of the properties of synthetic ropes in common use		B
3 Anchorwork	1	
☐ Characteristics of different types of anchor		B
☐ Factors to take into account when anchoring		B
4 Safety	3	
☐ Knowledge of the safety equipment to be carried, its stowage and use (see G103 RYA Boat Safety Handbook)		B
☐ Fire precautions and firefighting		B
☐ Use of personal safety equipment, harnesses and life jackets		B
☐ Ability to send a distress signal by VHF radio		B
☐ Basic knowledge of rescue procedures including helicopter rescue		B
☐ Stability		C
5 International regulations for preventing collisions at sea	3	
☐ Steering and sailing rules (5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12-19)		A
☐ General rules (all other rules)		B
6 Definition of position, course and speed	1	
☐ Latitude and longitude		B
☐ Knowledge of standard navigational terms		B
☐ True bearings and courses		B
☐ The knot		C
7 Navigational charts and publications	2	
☐ Information shown on charts, chart symbols and representation of direction and distance		B
☐ Navigational publications in common use		C
☐ Chart correction		C
8 Navigational drawing instruments	1	
☐ Use of parallel rulers, dividers and proprietary plotting instruments		B
9 Compass	2	
☐ Application of variation		B
☐ Awareness of deviation and its causes		C
☐ Use of hand-bearing compass		B

	Minimum time (hours)	Depth of knowledge
10 Chartwork and navigation - traditional and electronic	6.5	
☐ Dead reckoning and estimated position including an awareness of leeway		B C
☐ Techniques of visual fixing		B
☐ Use of GNSS and chart plotters for position fixing		B
☐ Use of waypoints to fix position		A
☐ Course to steer		B
11 Tides and tidal streams	4	
☐ Tidal definitions, levels and datum		B
☐ Tide tables		B
☐ Use of Admiralty method of determining tidal height at standard port		B
☐ Awareness of corrections for secondary ports		C
☐ Use of tidal diamonds and tidal stream atlases for chartwork		B
12 Visual aids to navigation	1	
☐ Lighthouses and beacons, light characteristics		B
13 Meteorology	3	
☐ Sources of broadcast meteorological information		B
☐ Knowledge of terms used in shipping forecasts, including the Beaufort scale, and their significance to small craft		B
☐ Basic knowledge of highs, lows and fronts		C
14 Passage planning	4	
☐ Preparation of navigational plan for short coastal passages		C
☐ Meteorological considerations in planning short coastal passages		C
☐ Use of and visual confirmation of waypoints on passage		B
☐ Importance of confirmation of position by an independent source		A
☐ Keeping a navigational record		A
15 Navigation in restricted visibility	1	
☐ Precautions to be taken in, and limitations imposed by, fog		B
16 Pilotage	4	
☐ Use of transits, leading lines and clearing lines		B
☐ IALA system of buoyage (Regions A & B)		B
☐ Use of sailing directions		B
☐ Pilotage plans and harbour entry		B
17 Marine environment	1	
☐ Responsibility for avoiding pollution and protecting the marine environment		B

Total teaching time 40 hours
(plus time for revision, homework and assessments)

Assessments

There are two assessment papers which need to be completed - *and successfully passed*. The time allocation for each paper is 1.5 hours with additional time for marking and debriefing.

The assessments are:

General Assessment (1.5 hours)
Covering safety equipment and procedures, buoyage, basic radio communications, vessel lights and shapes and the rules of the road.

Chartwork (1.5 hours)
Questions about position fixing, dead reckoning and estimated position, preparing course to steers and tidal heights.