



DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF MARITIME ADMINISTRATION, MUMBAI

This is a draft circular placed on the DGMA website for stakeholder comments, until August 10, 2026. Any comments/inputs/suggestions may be sent to the Engineering wing of the DGMA by email to praveen.nair@gov.in. Please indicate the subject of the draft circular while submitting the inputs.

Draft DGMA EAC Branch Circular No.xx of 2026

Subject: Eligibility criteria for admission to Graduate Marine Engineer (GME) Course, reg.

1. Background

The Directorate General of Maritime Administration (DGMA) has been receiving representations from aspiring seafarers holding engineering degrees in various disciplines, including Mechanical Engineering, Automobile Engineering, Naval Architecture, and other allied branches, seeking eligibility to pursue a career as Marine Engineer Officers on board ships.

The Directorate General of Maritime Administration, in exercise of the powers conferred under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 constituted a Technical Committee comprising representatives from the DGMA, domain experts from various industry organizations and professional bodies.

The Technical Committee comprehensively reviewed the existing training and certification framework, examined the eligibility of candidates possessing engineering qualifications from various disciplines, and recommended appropriate amendments to the admission criteria for the GME Course, while ensuring full compliance with the requirements of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and the national regulatory framework.

2. Regulatory Framework

Regulation I/6 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, mandates that the training and assessment of seafarers shall be structured and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the STCW Code, ensuring that all candidates achieve the prescribed standards of competence.

Further, the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers) Rules, 2014, in Chapter III, Regulation III/1, Rule 35, prescribe the requirements for certification as Marine Engineer Officer Class IV (Officer in Charge of an Engineering Watch on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750 kW propulsion power or more). Rule 35 provides ten distinct entry streams in the Engine Department through which candidates may qualify for the award of a Marine Engineer Officer Class IV Certificate of Competency.

Among these, Streams 4 and 5 of the flow diagram under Regulation III/1, read with Item 4.2 of Rule 35, prescribe the educational qualifications for candidates seeking admission through the Graduate Marine Engineering (GME) pathway. Item 4.2 stipulates that the candidate shall possess a full-time Degree in Mechanical Engineering, Naval Architecture, or Mechanical & Automation Engineering obtained from a

college or institution approved by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) or from an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT).

The Technical Committee examined the existing provisions of Rule 35 in the context of representations received from candidates possessing engineering degrees in other allied disciplines and deliberated on the suitability of such qualifications for admission to the Graduate Marine Engineering (GME) Course, while ensuring continued compliance with the requirements of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Rules, 2014.

3. Eligibility Criteria for Engineering Graduates:

The Committee noted that engineering institutions across the country presently offer undergraduate degree programmes in several specialised disciplines in addition to the conventional branches of Mechanical Engineering, Naval Architecture, and Mechanical & Automation Engineering. Consequently, representations have been received from graduates of such allied engineering disciplines seeking eligibility for admission to the Graduate Marine Engineering (GME) Course.

After detailed deliberations, taking into consideration the curriculum and learning outcomes of the various engineering disciplines, the requirements of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Rules, 2014, the Competent Authority has approved the revised eligibility criteria for admission to the Graduate Marine Engineering (GME) Course conducted by DGS-approved Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs).

Accordingly, engineering graduates possessing the qualifications specified in the table below shall be eligible for admission to the Graduate Marine Engineering (GME) Course and, upon successful completion of the prescribed training and fulfilment of all other applicable requirements under the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Rules, 2014, shall be eligible to appear for the Marine Engineer Officer Class IV Certificate of Competency Examination conducted by the Directorate General of Shipping.

Engineering Stream (BE or B.Tech)	MEO Class-IV Part-A Examination	MEO Class-II Part-A Examination
Mechanical Engineering or Marine Engineering	Exempted	Exempted
(i) Mechanical Engineering streams (Mechanical & Automation, Mechanical & Electronics, etc., the word “Mechanical” should be first indicating that mechanical engineering is the core and the second subject is elective) (ii) Mechatronics Engineering (or) Automotive / Automobile Engineering	Exempted from appearing “Mathematics and Applied Mechanics” examination	Exempted from appearing “Mechanics and Hydromechanics” examination
Naval Architecture Engineering streams (Naval Architecture & Ocean Engineering, Naval Architecture and Ship building, etc. the word “Naval Architecture” should be first indicating that Naval Architecture engineering is the core and the second subject is elective)	Exempted from appearing “Mathematics and Applied Mechanics” examination	Exempted from appearing “Mechanics and Hydromechanics” examination

The above B.E./B.Tech degree, or any higher engineering qualification such as a five-year integrated M.E./M.Tech degree, must have been obtained from an AICTE-approved institution, an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), or a University Engineering College (i.e., an engineering college directly administered by a University).

Candidates whose engineering qualification does not fall under any of the above categories shall approach the Engineering Wing of the Directorate General of Maritime Administration (DGMA) (Email: xxxxxxxx), either directly or through a DGMA-approved Maritime Training Institute (MTI), for assessment of their eligibility for admission to the Graduate Marine Engineer (GME) Course. Such candidates shall submit a copy of their Degree Certificate along with the mark sheets of all semesters/years of the degree programme for evaluation of their eligibility.

This Circular supersedes the existing DGS Training Branch Circular No. 16 of 2018 dated 14/05/2018.

This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

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