



european school of administration

Overview of the 2011/12 Certification exercise ¹

The candidates

In total, 132 candidates participated in the training programme: from 7 EU institutions, the European Data Protection Supervisor, the European External Action Service and 2 Agencies. The selection of the candidates was, as always, the responsibility of each institution.

The breakdown of candidates was as follows:

Institution	N° of candidates
European Parliament	7
Council of the EU	4
European Commission	95*)
Court of Justice of the EU	1
European Court of Auditors	1
European Economic and Social Committee	2
Committee of the Regions	2
European Data Protection Supervisor	1
European External Action Service	16
Community Plants Variety Office (CPVO)	2
Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU (CdT)	1
Total	132

*) incl. one candidate selected in 2010/11 who postponed their participation until 2011/12

There is no limit to the number of candidates that can be selected each year, nor to the number of candidates who may succeed. However, the staff regulations specify that no more than 20% of all AD appointments in a year can be made through Certification and the institutions take these limits into account in the number of candidates they select.

¹ The information provided refers to the Certification programme for candidates selected in the exercise launched in the institutions in 2011.

N° of candidates having followed the training in Brussels and Luxembourg		
Institution	Brussels	Luxembourg
European Parliament	4	3
Council of the EU	4	-
European Commission	81	14
Court of Justice of the EU	-	1
European Court of Auditors	-	1
European Economic and Social Committee	2	-
Committee of the Regions	2	-
European Data Protection Supervisor	1	-
European External Action Service	16	
Community Plants Variety Office (CPVO)	2	-
Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU (CdT)	-	1
Total	112	20

Language used during the training programme and for the exams			
	Brussels	Luxembourg	TOTAL
English	84	14	98
French	28	6	34

Gender distribution by Institution		
Institution	Male	Female
European Parliament	5	2
Council of the EU	1	3
European Commission	39	56
Court of Justice of the EU	0	1
European Court of Auditors	0	1
European Economic and Social Committee	1	1
Committee of the Regions	1	1
European Data Protection Supervisor	0	1
European External Action Service	8	8
Community Plants Variety Office (CPVO)	2	0
Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU (CdT)	0	1
Total	57	75

The training programme

The training programme consisted of 28 days of classroom-based training divided into 2 blocks plus the equivalent of 10 days individual study period in between. The purpose of this programme is to help candidates acquire or strengthen their skills in a number of key areas necessary to become an effective administrator. They were then tested on these skills in four different examinations.

The structure of the training programme was very similar to that of previous years:

	Modules	
BLOCK 1 30/5 – 22/6/2012	1	Starting the journey
	2	Reaching sound decisions I
	3	Influencing and persuading
	4	Negotiating successfully
	5	Writing with impact I
	6	Managing Meetings
	7	Succeed as a team player
BLOCK 2 17/9 – 2/10/2012	8	Getting Back on Track
	9	Writing with impact II
	10	Presenting with impact
	11	Reaching sound decisions II

Candidates were required to follow the whole training programme, the only exception being for duly substantiated medical or personal reasons. From a total of 3696 candidate-days (classroom-based training), there were only 36.5 days of absence on these grounds.

Candidates were divided into 12 groups, 2 of which were based in Luxembourg and 10 in Brussels. Wherever possible, a gender balance was kept as was a balance between the institutions (and in the case of the Commission, the DGs) where candidates worked.

Evaluation of the training programme

The School continued its policy of asking candidates to evaluate the training programme at the end of each of the blocks in relation to content, presentation and course material.

Additionally, the School asked each of the groups to appoint a spokesperson. Spokespersons will be invited to a meeting with the Director of the School to provide further feedback. A meeting will be held in both Brussels and Luxembourg. Finally, the usual review was held with the management team of the training consortium.

As usual, the evaluation process will probably result in a number of adjustments without substantially affecting the training programme as a whole or its overall length

A more in-depth review of the programme and the examinations has been launched with the institutions but any changes resulting from this consultation will only be effective from 2014.

Below is a summary of candidates' evaluation of the 2011/12 training programme:

Satisfaction levels Scale 1 (poor) - 4 (very satisfied)	% of candidates satisfied or very satisfied
Development of new skills	94.25%
Trainers	95.19%
Course materials	78.86%
Overall satisfaction (blocks 1 & 2)	97.79%

Evaluation by module:

	Modules	% of candidates satisfied or very satisfied
BLOCK 1	Starting the journey	99.10%
	Reaching sound decisions I	87.39%
	Influencing and persuading	80.18%
	Negotiating successfully	91.89%
	Writing with impact I	81.98%
	Managing Meetings	83.78%
	Succeed as a team player	83.78%
BLOCK 2	Getting Back on Track	81.74%
	Writing with impact II	92.17%
	Presenting with impact	94.78%
	Reaching sound decisions II	79.13%

The examinations

In order to be "certified", candidates had to sit and pass four examinations, designed by EPSO and the School in collaboration with outside experts. An inter-institutional Examining Board was set up to test candidates' competencies. The members of the Board were trained in the necessary assessment techniques to be able to judge the performance of candidates in a coherent and objective way. The members of the training consortium management team were kept informed about the general structure of the exams.

The examinations for the 2011/12 exercise were structured as follows:

E1 Assessment of candidates' interpersonal skills, reasoning and creative thinking, negotiation and persuasion skills through observing a group exercise.

The examination consisted of a discussion in groups of 5 or 6 candidates about resolving the problem of under-capacity at Wingfield International Airport in Toptown, the capital of Westland. Each candidate in the group assumed the role of a senior civil servant in a Ministry of the government of Westland, assembled in a meeting, with the aim of defending their Ministry's preferred option as strongly as possible and to reach an agreement about which solution should be adopted. The group's final proposal could contain elements from more than one option without becoming so much of a compromise as to be unrealistic or amount in practice to a non-decision.

The exercise involved individual preparation followed by group discussion, the latter of which was observed and marked by the EB.

E2 Assessment of candidates' abilities to analyse information and to solve problems, to think strategically (seeing the bigger picture) and to communicate effectively in writing.

Candidates were given a file relating to 3 projects for putting in place an additional national TV channel in the country of Cathodia. By assuming the role of the Vice-Chair of the board of the National Broadcasting Authority of Cathodia, candidates were asked to analyse and summarise the advantages and disadvantages of the three proposals under consideration and to make a clear recommendation to the Cathodian government as to which one to select including suggestions for dealing with any possible opposition.

Candidates typed their texts on computer.

E3 Assessment of candidates' ability to find, understand and process information, to present a case logically and coherently and to communicate convincingly.

This exam was composed of two parts: a 10-12 minutes speech on a general topic, communicated 10 working days before the examination date, followed by a 10 minutes questions & answers session with the Examining Board.

E4 Assessment of candidates' ability to organise and prioritise, to solve problems and to provide good customer service.

Candidates assumed the role of the Head of Event Organisation in the fictitious Department for Good Practice in European Public Administration in charge of organising the annual Fair Play Award. In this context, they were required to solve 15 problems by identifying the best and worst course of action from among 4 possibilities covering different aspects of the organisation of the award.

Overview of the results of the examinations:

2011/12 Candidates	N° / Percentage
Candidates who passed all four examinations	84
Overall pass rate	63.64%
Pass rate for women	68.00%
Pass rate for men	57.89%
Failed 1 examination	34
Failed 2 examinations	13
Failed 3 examinations	1
Failed 4 examinations	0
Pass rate for examination E1	87.12%
Pass rate for examination E2	84.09%
Pass rate for examination E3	81.82%
Pass rate for examination E4	99.24%
Pass rate for those taking training and examinations in English	67.35%
Pass rate for those taking training and examinations in French	52.94%

Re-sitting Candidates	Percentage
Overall pass rate	77.42%

Depending on the provisions of the implementing rules of each of the institutions, candidates who were unsuccessful in one or more of the examinations can re-sit those examinations without going through the selection process again. With the exception of one institution, the general rule now is that candidates are allowed to re-sit examinations no more than twice.

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