



european school of administration

Overview of the 2012/13 Certification exercise ¹

The candidates

In total, 93 candidates participated in the training programme: from 7 EU institutions, the European External Action Service, the Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU and 2 Agencies. The selection of the candidates was, as always, the responsibility of each institution/agency.

The breakdown of candidates was as follows:

Institution	Number of candidates
European Parliament	7
Council of the EU	4
European Commission	63
Court of Justice of the EU	1
European Court of Auditors	1
European Economic and Social Committee	1
Committee of the Regions	1
European External Action Service	10
Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market, Alicante	3
Fusion for Energy, Barcelona	1
Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU	1
Total	93

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 2012.

N° of candidates having followed the training programme in Brussels and Luxembourg		
Institution	Brussels	Luxembourg
European Parliament	3	4
Council of the EU	4	-
European Commission	57	6
Court of Justice of the EU	-	1
European Court of Auditors	-	1
European Economic and Social Committee	1	-
Committee of the Regions	1	-
European External Action Service	10	-
Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market, Alicante	1	2
Fusion for Energy, Barcelona	1	-
Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU	-	1
Total	78	15

Language used during the training programme and for the exams			
	Brussels	Luxembourg	TOTAL
English	54	8	62
French	24	7	31

Gender distribution by Institution		
Institution	Male	Female
European Parliament	4	3
Council of the EU	2	2
European Commission	25	38
Court of Justice of the EU	-	1
European Court of Auditors	1	-
European Economic and Social Committee	1	-
Committee of the Regions	1	-
European External Action Service	3	7
Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market, Alicante	1	2
Fusion for Energy, Barcelona	-	1
Translation Centre for the bodies of the EU	-	1
Total	38	55

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 (27 May - 21 June 2013)	1	Starting the journey
	2	Reaching sound decisions 1
	3	Communicating effectively
	4	Writing with impact 1
	5	Succeed as a team player
	6	Negotiating successfully
Block 2 (23 September – 8 October 2013)	7	Reaching sound decisions 2
	8	Presenting with impact
	9	Writing with impact 2
	10	Springboard for the future

Candidates were required to follow the whole training programme, the only exception being for duly substantiated medical or personal reasons. From a total of 2604 candidate-days (classroom-based training), there were only 17 days of absence on these grounds.

Candidates were divided into 9 groups, 2 of which were based in Luxembourg and 7 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 are invited to a meeting with the Director of the School to provide further feedback.

Finally, the new contractor, who was awarded the contract following an open call for tender and who will run the training programme from 2014, observed all the modules in this year's programme to ensure continuity in 2014.

In addition to the usual evaluation process, the School conducted an in-depth review – as in 2009 – with all the institutions. It was agreed that the classroom based part of the training programme would be reduced by 3 days in 2014. The basic exam structure remains in place.

Below is a summary of candidates' evaluation of the 2012/13 training programme:

Satisfaction levels Scale 1 (poor) - 4 (very satisfied)	% of candidates satisfied or very satisfied
Development of new skills	88.46%
Trainers	95.51%
Course materials	85.26%
Overall satisfaction (blocks 1 & 2)	94.88%

Evaluation by module:

	Modules	% of candidates satisfied or very satisfied
Block 1	Starting the journey	91.14%
	Reaching sound decisions 1	91.14%
	Communicating effectively	83.54%
	Writing with impact 1	98.73%
	Succeed as a team player	62.03%
	Negotiating successfully	92.41%
Block 2	Reaching sound decisions 2	67.53%
	Presenting with impact	79.22%
	Writing with impact 2	93.51%
	Springboard for the future	58.44%

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 (EB) 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 2012/13 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 redevelopment of the city of Krukah's old train station as part of an urban development project to improve the quality of the town and its services. Each candidate in the group assumed the role of the Director of one of the local administration's departments with the task of defending their department's preferred options as strongly as possible and of helping the group make a final proposal. This could contain elements of several options providing it did not become 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 managing the Forest of Othe that was part of a large family estate inherited by the region of Natapal. By assuming the role of the Advisor to the Natapal Regional Authorities, 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 Regional Council 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 the Technical and IT Support team in the Support Services Department of the town of Mulaze's municipal authority in charge of implementing the first electronic voting system in the town. In this context, they were required to solve 15 problems related to different aspects of electronic voting by identifying the best and worst course of action from among 4 possibilities in each case.

Overview of the results of the examinations:

2012/13 Candidates	N° / Percentage
Candidates who passed all four examinations	50
Overall pass rate	53.76%
Pass rate for women	60.00%
Pass rate for men	44.74%
Failed 1 examination	28
Failed 2 examinations	13
Failed 3 examinations	2
Failed 4 examinations	0
Pass rate for examination E1	89.25%
Pass rate for examination E2	78.49%
Pass rate for examination E3	67.39%
Pass rate for examination E4	100.00%
Pass rate for those taking training and examinations in English	56.45%
Pass rate for those taking training and examinations in French	48.39%

Re-sitting Candidates	Percentage
Overall pass rate	65.15%

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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