



european school of administration

Overview of the 2013/14 Certification exercise ¹

The candidates

In total, 71 candidates completed the training programme from 7 EU institutions, the European External Action Service 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	6
Council of the EU	4
European Commission	47
Court of Justice of the EU	2
European Court of Auditors	1
European Economic and Social Committee	2
Committee of the Regions	2
European External Action Service	4
Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market, Alicante	2
Fusion for Energy, Barcelona	1
Total	71*)

*) excluding 2 candidates of whom one did not complete the training programme for duly justified reasons, and one who abandoned the training programme.

There is no limit in the Staff Regulations to the number of candidates that can be selected each year, nor to the number of candidates who may succeed. However, they do specify that no more than 20% of all AD appointments in an institution in a year can be made from among certified staff. In practice, the institutions take this limit into account when deciding on the number of candidates to select.

¹ The information provided refers to the Certification programme for candidates selected in the exercise launched in the institutions in 2013.

N° of candidates having followed the training programme in Brussels and Luxembourg		
Institution	Brussels	Luxembourg
European Parliament	4	2
Council of the EU	4	-
European Commission	42	5
Court of Justice of the EU	-	2
European Court of Auditors	-	1
European Economic and Social Committee	2	-
Committee of the Regions	2	-
European External Action Service	4	-
Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market, Alicante	-	2
Fusion for Energy, Barcelona	-	1
Total	58	13

Language used during the training programme and for the exams			
	Brussels	Luxembourg	TOTAL
English	50	7	57
French	8	6	14

Gender distribution by Institution		
Institution	Male	Female
European Parliament	3	3
Council of the EU	2	2
European Commission	18	29
Court of Justice of the EU	1	1
European Court of Auditors	1	-
European Economic and Social Committee	1	1
Committee of the Regions	1	1
European External Action Service	-	4
Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market, Alicante	-	2
Fusion for Energy, Barcelona	1	-
Total	28	43

The training programme

The training programme consisted of 25 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 (2-25/26 June 2014)	1	Starting the journey
	2	Presenting with impact 1
	3	Reaching sound decisions 1
	4	Negotiating successfully
	5	Writing with impact 1
	6	Block 1 Conclusions
Block 2 (22 September – 3 October 2014)	7	Reaching sound decisions 2
	8	Writing with impact 2
	9	Presenting with impact 2

Candidates were required to follow the whole training programme, the only exception being for duly justified medical or personal reasons. From a total of 1775 candidate-days (classroom-based training), there were only 23.5 days of absence on these grounds.

Candidates were divided into 8 groups, 2 of which were based in Luxembourg and 6 in Brussels. Wherever possible, a gender balance was kept as well as a balance between the institutions (and in the case of the Commission, the DGs) in which 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, delivery and course material.

Additionally, the School asked each of the groups to appoint a spokesperson in order to provide further feedback in a meeting with the Director of the School.

Below is a summary of candidates' evaluation of the 2013/14 training programme:

Satisfaction levels Scale 1 (poor) - 4 (very satisfied)	% of candidates satisfied or very satisfied
Development of new skills	93.55%
Trainers	99.00%
Course materials	78.77%
Overall satisfaction (blocks 1 & 2)	100.00%

Evaluation by module:

	Modules	% of candidates satisfied or very satisfied
Block 1	Starting the journey	99%
	Presenting with impact 1	96%
	Reaching sound decisions 1	91%
	Negotiating successfully	94%
	Writing with impact 1	83%
	Block 1 Conclusions	84%
Block 2	Reaching sound decisions 2	87%
	Writing with impact 2	90%
	Presenting with impact 2	97%

The examinations

In order to be "certified", candidates had to sit and pass four examinations. 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 consistent and objective way. The training consortium was kept informed about the general structure of the exams.

The examinations for the 2013/14 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 to resolve the distribution of a large sum of money that had been left to Coal City in a will. Each candidate in the group assumed the role of a representative of a charity of Coal City. They had to defend their charity's project as strongly as possible whilst also helping the group to reach a decision on how the money should be used. The final proposal could contain elements of several projects 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 representing the country of Kazmistan at the 2016 Universal Exposition. By assuming the role of the special advisor to the Prime Minister of Kazmistan, 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 Prime Minister 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 presentation on a general topic, communicated 10 working days before the examination date, followed by a 10 minute question & answer 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 deputy to the head of internal services and strategic management support at the Steelbourg Municipal Authority in charge of the move of the I Authority's staff to a new building. In this context, candidates received background information on the move and a series of e-mails. They were required to solve 15 problems by identifying the best and worst course of action for each problem from 4 possible options.

Overview of the results of the examinations:

2013/14 Candidates *)	N° / Percentage
Candidates who passed all four examinations	30
Overall pass rate	42.86%
Pass rate for women	42.86%
Pass rate for men	42.86%
Failed 1 examination	24
Failed 2 examinations	12
Failed 3 examinations	4
Failed 4 examinations	0
Pass rate for examination E1	79.17%
Pass rate for examination E2	84.51%
Pass rate for examination E3	61.43%
Pass rate for examination E4	90.14%
Pass rate for those taking training and examinations in English	42.86%
Pass rate for those taking training and examinations in French	42.86%

*) excluding one candidate who did not complete all examinations

Re-sitting Candidates	Percentage
Overall pass rate	48.28%

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 them without going through the selection process again. The general rule is that candidates are allowed to re-sit examinations no more than twice.

January 2015