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## **11 THE TSTA EXAMINATION**

### **11.1 Introduction**

Having attended a TEW, signed a TSTA training contract and had it endorsed, the candidate enters a further training to become a TSTA. During the training period the PTSTA can teach and supervise, and does so under the supervision of a certified TSTA. At the end of the training period the PTSTA takes an oral examination before an international board of examiners. The PTSTA is invited to demonstrate his or her competence in the areas of theory, ethics, teaching and supervision within the context of TA's organisational structure. In every case the requirements apply to the field of application in which the candidate has already qualified and in which they seek TSTA status.

Some candidates may wish to qualify only in Teaching (TTA) or Supervising (STA) and may have contracted with someone who is a Supervisor or Teacher but not both. To avoid unnecessary duplication of terms, in this section PTSTA is taken to include PTTA and PSTA and TSTA is taken to include the status of TTA and STA where appropriate.

### **11.2 Eligibility for Examination as a TTA, STA or TSTA**

#### **11.2.1 Introduction**

All candidates must:

- Have a current Training Contract with EATA or T&C Council
- Be certified by COC or BOC as a Certified Transactional Analyst
- Have examined at least five times at three different examination sites during the period of his or her training contract
- Submit three letters of endorsement
  - one from the current Principal Supervisor
  - and two from other TSTAs who have supervised the candidate's work
- The principal supervisor must have examined in three TSTA examination venues during the TSTA training contract with the candidate.

#### **11.2.2 Eligibility for examination as a Teaching Transactional Analyst (TTA)**

To be eligible for examination as a TTA, the candidate must fulfil the criteria set out in 11.2.1. The letters of endorsement must cover his or her teaching. In addition the candidate must have:

- Satisfactorily completed a Training Endorsement Workshop in Ethics, Teaching and Training, approved by EATA PTSC or the T&C Council's TSC
- 300 hours of experience teaching TA, within which must be included
  - 45 hours of teaching which has been supervised by a TSTA who is a member of EATA, ITAA or WPATA, of which 20 hours must be 'live' supervision.
  - 'live' supervision endorsement of the first TA 101 (see 12.4.2)
  - In cases (for example geographical isolation) where arranging live supervision is difficult, a proportion of this may be carried out by a supervisor from a different field or via video tape at the discretion of the primary supervisor.
- Supervision of the TA 101 will not be counted as part of the supervision hours requirement.
- Completed 100 hours of continuing professional education/development

- Given at least 12 hours of presentations at conferences and professional meetings, 6 of which must be at national or international meetings

### **11.2.3 Eligibility for examination as a Supervising Transactional Analyst (STA)**

To be eligible for examination as a STA, the candidate must fulfil the criteria set out in 11.2.1. The letters of endorsement must cover his or her supervision. In addition the candidate must have:

- Satisfactorily completed a Training Endorsement Workshop in Ethics, Supervision and Training, approved by EATA PTSC or the T&C Council's TSC
- 500 hours of experience supervising TA in individual or group supervision, which must include
  - ❖ a minimum of 40 hours of supervision each for at least two supervisees
  - ❖ 50 hours of supervision which has been supervised by a TSTA who is a member of EATA, ITAA or WPATA, at least half of which must be 'live'
- Completed 100 hours of professional education/development

### **11.2.4 Eligibility for examination as a Teaching and Supervising Transactional Analyst**

**TSTA:** To be eligible for examination as a TSTA, the candidate must fulfil the criteria set out in 11.2.1, 11.2.2 and 11.2.3. His or her letters of endorsement must cover both supervision and teaching. Though each letter does not have to include endorsement of both, both areas of expertise must be endorsed.

## **11.3 Supervision**

### **11.3.1 Accredited supervision for the TSTA Exam**

At least 50% of a PTSTA required supervision has to be with a TSTA in the candidates chosen field. The remaining hours of supervision can be with a TSTA from other fields.

Supervision may be the discussion of training or supervision with the Principal Supervisor or it may be 'live supervision'. For example the Principal Supervisor may attend a training module and give supervision afterwards or the Principal Supervisor may supervise the candidate supervise another member of a supervision or training group.

Sometimes it is very difficult to arrange live supervision and so following agreement with the candidates sponsor some of these hours can be done using:

- Webcam or audio/video recordings for supervision of supervision.
- Webcam or video recordings for supervision of teaching.

### **11.3.2 The supervision hour**

In TSTA led supervision groups, the candidate can count any hour with a supervisor in which they actively present work for supervision as one hour of supervision. The trainee does not usually count supervision hours where they have been present during the supervision of other trainees. These will count as continuing professional development.

However, where two or three PTSTAs receive supervision together in a group for the corresponding number of hours, and provided that each PTSTA makes a presentation of his or her work in supervision or training, each PTSTA may count all the hours of supervision with the supervisor.

#### **11.4 PTSTA Records of Teaching and Supervising Hours**

Throughout his or her period of training, the PTSTA is responsible for keeping an accurate record of all teaching and supervision activity and supervision received. The candidate's Principal Supervisor must periodically review this record, and it must be produced at the examination. Part of the Principal Supervisor's task is to ensure that the records are accurate. Copies of all documentation for this section are listed at the end of section 11.

At one-year intervals after signing a TSTA training contract, the PTSTA and Principal Supervisor should each complete a PTSTA Annual Summary Report and the PTSTA Principal Supervisor's Annual Summary Report respectively. Copies of both these annual reports, for each year of training, should be taken to the TSTA examination.

#### **11.5 Applying for the Examination**

Not later than six clear months before the date of the examination, the candidate should pay the examination fees, consulting his or her local or national organisation to check the procedures and amounts, and send the following to the Supervising Examiner

- notification of his or her intent to take the TSTA, TTA or STA examination using the Examination Application form (see section 12)
- the completed Principal Supervisor's Certification Form (see end of section)

#### **11.6 Withdrawal from the Examination**

If the PTSTA withdraws from the examination after registration, by notifying the Supervising Examiner not less than two clear months before the examination date, the fee may be later transferred to a different examination. If less than two months notice is given the candidate may not reclaim or reuse the fee.

#### **11.7 The Examination**

##### **11.7.1 Introduction**

The candidate must bring four copies of the following to the oral examination:

- His or her PTSTA Annual Summary Reports
- His or her Principal Supervisor's Annual Summary Reports
- A Curriculum Vitae setting out his or her education, training and experience
- 3 letters of endorsement (See also 11.2.4)
- The Principal Supervisor's Certification for the TSTA Examination Form
- Evidence showing that they have paid the examination fees
- The context sheet for the teaching section (if appropriate)

Equipment to record the exam (this is essential in the event of an Appeal against the outcome of the exam, see 9.10 for Appeal Procedures). This is not mandatory but in absence of the recording the appeal can not be done.

During the TSTA examination the candidate is invited to show that they:

- have a good understanding of TA theory and can

- ❖ discuss it critically
- ❖ compare and contrast it with other models
- ❖ teach it competently
- can adequately supervise CTA and PTSTA trainees
- are ethical, responsible and reliable in their contacts with other people
- have a good understanding of the workings of national and international TA organisations

**The TSTA examination consists of three sections:**

- A. Theory, Organisation and Ethics
- B. Teaching
- C. Supervision

Including the time for scoring and debriefing the theory section lasts approximately one hour 15 minutes. The teaching and supervision exams take approximately 2 hours. When there is a translation the time can be increased by up to 50%.

A summary of the examination can be sent to you by the supervising examiner and will be available at the exam venues.

Candidates must pass the Theory, Organisation and Ethics section of the examination before they can proceed to take the Teaching and/or Supervision sections. So TTA candidates must pass section A before they proceed to section B, but are not examined in section C. STA candidates must pass section A, and then are examined in section C but omit section B. TSTA candidates must pass section A and are then examined in sections B and C.

### **11.7.2 Before the examination**

- The TSTA Candidates Briefing Meeting is held usually the day before the examination.
- The Exam Supervisor will answer questions, explain the process, go over the Scoring Sheet, and tell the candidates about their rights.
- Four qualified and trained examiners are chosen by the Exam Supervisor to serve on the Examination Board and one of these is chosen as Chair of the Board. Very occasionally, when necessary, a Board of three will be used.
- Further information can also be found in the guide for Local Exam Supervisors available from the Supervising Examiner.
- Examiners can examine a maximum of 3 examinations during one day.

### **11.7.3 The examination**

#### **A. Theory, Organisation and Ethics section**

The Board examines one candidate at a time and

- Reviews the file of documents that the candidate has presented
- Asks about the candidate's philosophy of training in relation to their training programme/practice
- Asks questions to reveal the candidate's ability to think about advanced TA concepts and to compare and integrate TA theory with other models and approaches
- Evaluates the candidate's knowledge of national and international TA organisations

- Evaluates the candidate's sense of being an ethical professional
- Evaluates the candidate's ability to integrate all these aspects into a coherent approach to practice and to the development of transactional analysts

When the Board's questioning is complete, the Board may discuss their scores.

- The candidate may call the Process Facilitator at any time up to the moment when the Board members are ready to score. At this time, the Chair will remind the candidate that this is his or her last opportunity to call the Process Facilitator, and give them the choice of leaving or staying in the room. After this point, only a Board member can call the Process Facilitator
- The Board will evaluate the candidate, using the TSTA exam Scoring Sheet

## **B. Teaching section**

The Teaching section aims to provide a setting as close possible to the normal reality of everyday TA teaching and training, rather than being an artificial situation set up especially for the exam, so that the candidate has an opportunity to

- Demonstrate his or her style and philosophy of teaching and training
- Give a rationale for his or her teaching methods.

### **B.1 Before the examination**

The candidate will have prepared:

- A teaching demonstration of 20 minutes' duration on a topic they have chosen from, or which is clearly related to, TA theory and practice
- A sheet of A4 paper giving the following information:
  - ❖ where this piece of teaching would fit in the overall training programme, and in the specific teaching day(s) of which it is a representative segment
  - ❖ who the participants would be
  - ❖ at what level or stage the participants would be in his or her training

The Board will meet just before the beginning of the examination and will read through this information sheet.

### **B.2 During the examination**

- The Chair will invite the candidate into the exam room and welcome them
- The volunteer audience enters into the room at the start of the exam and can stay during the whole exam process or until the end of the second teaching. This will be decided by the candidate.
- When the candidate, the Board and the audience are ready to proceed, the exam will begin with a dialogue between the candidate and the Board, in which the candidate will be invited to speak briefly to the Board about his or her:
  - ❖ training philosophy, that is, the professional or ethical values and principles that guide his or her choice of training programme structure or training methods
  - ❖ preferred theoretical models of learning, which may be drawn from TA or from other fields of theory
  - ❖ choice of teaching methods, both in his or her overall training programme and in the teaching demonstration to be presented during the exam
- This initial period of discussion should last for between five and ten minutes, though it

may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.

- In this initial discussion the examiners seek to get an initial framework within which to assess the practical demonstration; that is to say, they will measure what the candidate actually does in the teaching in terms of what the candidate says that they do.
- The candidate will then present his or her twenty-minute teaching demonstration to the audience and the Board.
- The teaching demonstration should be representative of an actual session in the candidate's training practice, and should be congruent with the candidate's expressed theoretical model or models of learning.
- Normally the demonstration will include methods of interaction other than formal lecturing, e.g. question and answer, brainstorming, and brief experiential exercises.
- The methods chosen for the demonstration should be such that the Board has plenty of opportunity to see the candidate in action as a teacher. It is the candidate's responsibility, and part of his or her skill, to choose teaching methods that will fully demonstrate his or her teaching skills in the twenty-minute time slot available.
- After the 20 minute teaching demonstration there will be a 10-minute time slot during which the audience members, but not the Board members, may ask questions related to the topic taught and its relationship to other aspects of TA. In choosing his or her questions, the audience members are invited to be themselves as far as possible and not to role-play trainees of any particular level of experience. The candidate may choose to integrate the questions into their teaching so that the teaching session lasts for 30 minutes in total.
- When the ten-minute question time is complete, the Board members may ask questions of the candidate. However, the Board may choose to save the questions until after the TA 101 teach. These questions will be about the theory, philosophy and methodology of the candidate's teaching and/or training activity, including the organisation of the candidate's training programme, and any other matters that the Board deems pertinent to the assessment of the candidate's readiness to be certified as a Teaching Transactional Analyst.
- During this period of questioning, Board members are free to ask the candidate questions about the content of her/his teaching demonstration if the Board member in question sees such questioning as especially important in his/her final evaluation of the candidate. However, the Board Chair is to ensure that the Board's questions during this period focus principally on teaching philosophy, rationale and methodology.
- The Chair of the Board offers the candidate a container in which the TA 101 topics are each written on slips of paper (see section 12). The candidate chooses one at random. He or she then has up to 2 minutes to prepare, after which he or she will teach the topic to the audience. The teach itself will be 5 minutes, followed by 5 minutes questions from the audience (as trainees). The questions may NOT be integrated into the teach.
- When this is complete, the Board may choose to ask further questions, for example, relating to teaching methods.
- When the Board's questioning is complete, the Board may discuss their scores.
- The candidate may call the Process Facilitator at any time up to the moment when the Board members are ready to score. At this time, the Chair will remind the candidate that this is his or her last opportunity to call the Process Facilitator, and give them the choice of leaving or staying in the room. After this point, only a Board member can call the Process Facilitator.
- The Board will evaluate the candidate, using the TTA exam Scoring Sheet.

## **C. Supervision section**

The Supervision exam is to enable the candidate to demonstrate that they can both supervise practitioners and supervise the supervisors of practitioners. The candidate will be expected to have a clear philosophy of supervision and use an appropriate range of supervisory models, as well as showing an ability to establish specific contracts that identify and meet the key issues of the supervision.

### **C.1 The Supervision exam**

- The Chair will invite the candidate into the exam room and welcome them
- When the candidate, the Board and the supervisees are ready to proceed, the exam will begin with a period of dialogue between the candidate and the Board in which the candidate will be invited to speak briefly to the Board about his or her supervision style and the professional and ethical values that guide their supervision.
- The candidate will then be asked to supervise two trainees for a maximum of 20 minutes each, (longer if the examination is being translated). The supervisees will be:
  - ❖ an Educational, Organisational, Counselling or Psychotherapy trainee, whichever is appropriate to the candidate's own speciality, who may bring a tape
  - ❖ a Provisional Teaching and/or Supervising Transactional Analyst (PTSTA), who will be presenting a problem which they have as a supervisor or trainer
- COC suggests that the second supervisee is not present during the first supervision to avoid bias. The supervisees can remain in the room until the end of the whole exam process or until the end of each supervision piece. This is to be decided upon by each candidate.
- If the Board so wish, they may further question the candidate about any aspect of these supervisions, either between the two supervision sessions or after the second session. Scores are not given to the candidate in between the two pieces of supervision. However, feedback may be offered regarding competencies that may not have been evident and that should be demonstrated in the second piece of supervision.
- When the Board's questioning is complete, the Board may discuss their scores.
- The candidate may call the Process Facilitator at any time up to the moment when the Board members are ready to score. At this time, the Chair will remind the candidate that this is his or her last opportunity to call the Process Facilitator, and give them the choice of leaving or staying in the room. After this point, only a Board member can call the Process Facilitator up until the moment when the examiners vote to pass or defer.
- The candidate will then be scored on the STA Scoring Sheet.

## **11.8 The Scoring Procedure**

The procedure for scoring and voting is the same in all three sections of the TSTA exam:

- When the Board is satisfied that they have sufficient information to score and vote, the scoring procedure begins:
  - ❖ Each Board member does his or her own scoring
  - ❖ The Chairperson informs the candidate that this is their last opportunity to call the Process Facilitator. After this, only a Board member can call the Process Facilitator.
  - ❖ There may a discussion if the Board members wish
  - ❖ Board members may revise his or her scoring
  - ❖ The scores are called out
  - ❖ The Chairperson collates the scores on his/her score sheet

- ❖ The chairperson informs the board members that this is their last opportunity to call the Process Facilitator.
- ❖ Board members vote to pass or defer
- The scorings are to be used as a guide and the judgment of the examiners is the final decision. However, the candidate will be deferred if:
  - ❖ two or more examiners vote to defer
  - ❖ OR the total score is less than 60% in any section, which is
    - A. Theory, Organisation and Ethics    Less than 15 points
    - B. Teaching                                    Less than 24 points
    - C. Supervision                                Less than 48 points
  - ❖ OR there is a rating of 1 from all examiners on any one Scoring Scale
- If none of the above applies and three or more examiners vote to pass (or two in a three person board), the candidate is passed.
- The candidate is asked to write his or her comments about the examiners on the Examiner Evaluation Form provided by the Examination Supervisor immediately after the examination.

### **11.9 Guidelines for Examiners in the TSTA Examination**

- Read the candidate's papers before the examination process begins and go over the file with the candidate at the beginning of the examination. In this process, look for something to stroke positively. Use this time to get acquainted with the candidate.
- Ask only one question at a time.
- Ask specifically for the information you want, using open-ended questions as far as possible. For example,
  - ❖ How did you come to be involved in TA training?
  - ❖ Why are you still interested?
  - ❖ What do you consider Berne's original contributions to TA theory to be?
  - ❖ As a TA teacher and supervisor, what size of training group do you have?
  - ❖ Why is that?
  - ❖ What other theories about teaching adults are you aware of?
  - ❖ How do you use them in training?
  - ❖ What sort of diagnostic process do you use during a supervision session with a trainee?
  - ❖ If you were to be the next President of EATA (or ITAA, or national organisation), what is one important goal that you would have for that organisation?
- Give feedback after every question that indicates to the candidate how you are evaluating his or her response. If the candidate answers a question incompletely or inaccurately, tell them what answer you were looking for.
- Look for the strength and competence in the candidate. If you notice problem areas, discuss or explain the areas in question.
- Ask positive questions like "Will you please explain that to me?" or "Will you please tell me more about that?" Avoid the use of non-specific negative phrases such as "I am concerned about . . .".
- Do not get locked into following a line of questioning in an area that the candidate obviously does not know. It is OK for the candidate to say, "I don't know" occasionally.
- TA can be used in many ways. Be willing to listen and understand from the candidate's frame of reference. The candidate may do things differently from the way you do them, but what is important is that they are able to explain and support their thinking.

- Do not teach or supervise either the candidate or the supervisees in the Supervision section of the examination. You have no contract to do this.
- Pay attention to the other members of the Board, giving feedback and support, as well as letting them know what is going on for you.
- Each section of the examination should take approximately 60 minutes (although the Supervision examination will take longer). Towards the end of the exam, the Board should reflect on whether they have all the information they need to score the candidate. Discuss further steps with the other Board members.
- If, after 45 minutes, the end of the examination is not yet in sight, reflect on the examination process and consider calling the Process Facilitator.
- In cases where the examination is being translated, all these suggested times need to be lengthened; total time for a translated examination may thus be around ninety minutes. (see section 9.8 for guidelines for translated exams.)

### **11.10 Guidelines for Supervisees in the Supervision Section of the TSTA Exam**

Thank you for being available and interested in participating in this process. Here are some guidelines that may help you in performing your important task:

- Be aware that the main focus is on the exam and the candidate. Use this opportunity to learn something and to get some free supervision from a supervisor you don't know well.
- Bring an issue you are interested in solving – in other words, bring a real question, not a role-play.
- Bear in mind that the exam supervision will be limited to a time slot of 20 minutes. It is, of course, the job of the candidate to show that they can handle this time boundary in the supervision. However, to gain the maximum benefit for yourself, bring a supervision issue which you believe can practicably be handled within twenty minutes.
- Similarly, it is the candidate's job, and not yours, to invite a clear contract for the supervision and to see that the contract is fulfilled. But, for your own benefit, you may wish to give some thought in advance to what it is you want to get out of the supervision.
- Remember that the candidate is an experienced supervisor, even though they are in a somewhat stressful situation. Don't set out to, for example, Rescue the candidate, but be real, and treat the exam supervision as you would treat any other supervision session.
- If you are a CTA or CTA trainee bring an issue from your practice, in the field of application of the supervisor. The aim of this part of the exam is to evaluate the candidate's supervision of a practitioner.
- If you are a PTSTA bring an issue relating to your training or supervision, i.e. to your practice as a PTSTA, in the field of application of the candidate. This part of the exam aims to test the candidate's ability to supervise a trainer and/or supervisor.
- If you are at an exam site with translation, please allow time for the translator to do his or her job, especially if you are speaking the same language as the candidate, or if there is an examiner on the Board who speaks a different language. Be aware that the translation slows down the process, and has the potential to get in the way of your thought processes or spontaneity. It also has the advantage of giving you extra time to consider and integrate.
- The case you bring, as well as the content and process of the supervision during the exam, will be treated as confidential. Please observe the same confidentiality about the supervisor and the others present, in just the same way as you would in a supervision group.

**11.11 The function of Chairperson, Process Facilitator, Observer, Translator: see section 9**

**11.12 Partial Completion**

If the candidate passes the first section of the exam (theory, organisation and ethics) but is deferred in the other two sections, they will have until 31<sup>st</sup> December of the following year to complete at least one of the other sections. If the time limit is exceeded, the first section must be repeated when the candidate re-presents for examination. A candidate who passes the first section and one of the others, may present for the third examination at any time in the future.

**11.13 Appeals:** The same rules apply as in section 9 of the handbook.

**11.14 Documentation**

List of 101 Topics for Teaching Examination (12.11.1)

PTSTA Annual Summary report form (12.11.2)

PTSTA Principal Supervisor Annual Summary report (12.11.3)

Examination Application Form (12.11.4)

Principal Supervisor Certification Form (12.11.5)

TSTA Theory, Organisation and Ethics Board – Scoring Sheet (12.11.6)

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