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## **7 OVERVIEW OF THE CTA EXAMINATION**

### **7.1 Introduction**

#### **7.1.1 The CTA examination and the fields of specialisation**

The aim of the examination is to ensure a high level of competence in using transactional analysis in the candidate's field of specialisation based on the core competencies for that field. These are given in Section 5.

The examination consists of two parts:

1. The Written Examination is submitted first.
2. The Oral Examination can be taken only once the Written Examination has been passed.

Once a Written Examination is passed, its "pass" status is not affected if the candidate does not pass the subsequent Oral Examination.

If necessary, candidates may retake either part of the examination several times. A candidate who does not pass the Oral Examination may not go for re-examination immediately at the same examination session.

The field of specialisation is set out in the training contract. The CTA candidate must take his or her examination in the stated field. Neither the examination board nor the candidate may change the candidate's field of specialisation during the examination itself.

#### **7.1.2 Accreditation**

The examination for accreditation as a Certified Transactional Analyst is carried out by COC, a sub-committee of PTSC, which is a committee of EATA Council. PTSTAs, CTA Trainers and TSTAs may serve as examiners. CTAs may also serve as examiners under the direction of the local Exam Supervisor,

EATA, FTAA and ITAA, have established mutual recognition of their examination procedures and meet annually as a group called TAWCS to continue the dialogue of mutual recognition."

Having passed both the Written and Oral Examinations, the candidate is entitled to use the designation Certified Transactional Analyst (CTA), or whatever nomenclature has been chosen as appropriate by the national organisation. He or she will receive a certificate recognising his or her competence in the field of application.

#### **7.1.3 Payment of examination fees and cancellations**

The total amount of the fee must be paid before the submission of the Written Examination. If the candidate does not pass the Written Examination, and resubmits the Written Examination for evaluation at a later date, a sum equal to one half of the total examination fee must be paid for the re-sit. The fee already paid for the Oral Examination is carried forward until the candidate takes that examination. If the candidate withdraws from the Oral Examination at any point up to two months before the exam date, the fee will be carried forward until the candidate takes the

examination and no refund will be given if the candidate does not take the examination. If the candidate cancels with less than two months notice, the fee will be neither refunded nor carried forward. If the candidate subsequently registers for another Oral Examination, half the total examination fee must be paid again.

Please check details of the current examination fee, how it may be transferred to the EATA account and if there are any local/national arrangements for the payment of the fee. These will be found in Appendix 1 at the end of the EATA Training and Examinations Handbook or on EATA website or can be obtained from national associations.

#### **7.1.4 Translation of written materials**

With the exception of the CTA Written Examination, all written materials for CTA examinations must be in English or the working language of the examination venue. If not in that language, all written materials must be accompanied by a translation, so there will be the same number of originals and translations. In the Oral exam the examiners and the Translator should be able to listen to the recording and see the text in both languages simultaneously so translations of the recorded segments should be presented next to the original text on the same page. *See Section 9.8.3 Guidelines for Oral Examination with Translation.*

### **7.2 Eligibility for the CTA Exam**

#### **7.2.1 Personal readiness for the CTA examination**

In the process of training for examination and accreditation as a Certified Transactional Analyst, the candidate is expected to acquire the core competencies for the specified field. Core competencies for the four fields of application are given in Section 5.

The candidate should demonstrate:

- Establishment of an effective working relationship
- Problem definition and diagnosis
- Definition of treatment goals or plans for change
- Establishment of contracts
- Appropriate reflection on the process and of its effects
- Development of plans appropriate to the goals and circumstances of the relevant TA field
- Practical application of the above
- Confidence in their own performance as a practitioner (with awareness of limitations)

#### **7.2.2 Outline of requirements**

Candidates for the CTA examination must have:

- A TA 101 Certificate, either by attending a course or by taking an exam
- A current EATA training contract endorsed by EATA for at least one year immediately prior to the date of the oral examination.
- Fulfilled the relevant national requirements for certification in the field of specialisation
- Been recommended as ready by their Principal Supervisor
- Fulfilled the minimum requirement of 2,000 hours made up as follows

- ❖ 750 hours of client contact, of which 500 must be in TA
- ❖ 600 hours of professional training, of which 300 must be in TA,
- ❖ 150 hours of supervision, of which 75 must be by a PTSTA, CTA Trainer or TSTA who is a member of EATA, ITAA or FTAA , 40 of which must be with the Principal Supervisor
- ❖ 500 additional professional development hours (to be designated by the Principal Supervisor in accordance with national requirements)

The number of hours of training and practical experience in the candidate's field of specialisation are laid down and standardised. Their purpose is to guarantee the trainee a broad practical experience and a comprehensive theoretical knowledge. Experience gained in practice or training received in the candidate's field of specialisation both before and during their TA training can be counted towards the appropriate category of training hours.

### **7.2.3 Details of the requirements**

#### **7.2.3.1 The TA 101 Certificate**

For details of the TA 101 certificate, see Section 4 of the Handbook.

#### **7.2.3.2 The Training Contract**

The candidate must have a current CTA training contract endorsed by EATA a minimum of one year prior to the oral examination; see Section 6 of the Handbook.

#### **7.2.3.3 Client contact hours**

The candidate must have completed at least 750 hours of client contact with individuals or groups, of which at least 500 must be hours in which transactional analysis was the model used. The candidate will have borne the main responsibility as practitioner, leader or trainer during these 750 hours. A minimum of 50 hours of these practice hours must be with groups and a minimum of 50 with individuals.

In the psychotherapy and counselling fields of specialisation these client contact hours can be with individuals, couples, families and groups, and in therapy marathons. Candidates should have a range of work experience.

In all fields of specialisation, one of the three recordings to be presented in the Oral Examinations must be of the candidate working in a group setting. It will demonstrate the candidate facilitating group dynamics in an effective way and using transactional analysis in their understanding of group processes. For the purpose of the exam, a group is defined as two or more people. Counselling and psychotherapy candidates should have at least one recording of work with an individual.

PTSC has recognised the need for flexibility in the requirement for a group recording for the CTA examination. It is sometimes difficult to obtain permission to record groups, especially in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy. The group recording may therefore be a personal or staff development group, training or experiential group.

#### **7.2.3.4 Professional training hours**

The candidate must have completed a total of at least 600 hours of professional training, of which at least 300 hours must have been TA-specific training with a TSTA, CTA Trainer or PTSTA.

Professional training includes theoretical knowledge and can consist of demonstrations of application of TA, practical training, lectures and discussions.

### **7.2.3.5 Supervision hours**

The candidate must have received at least 150 hours of supervision during their training.

75 hours must be TA supervision given by a PTSTA, CTA Trainer or a TSTA, of which at least 40 hours must have been with the candidate's Principal Supervisor. For the 75 non-TA hours of supervision, the trainee may count supervision using other approaches, before or during their TA training.

#### **A) *What counts as a supervision hour?***

The trainee 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 but have not presented work themselves.

However, where two or three trainees receive supervision together in a group for the corresponding number of hours, and provided that each trainee makes a presentation of their work, each trainee may count all the hours of supervision with the supervisor.

- For example: if three trainees spend three hours in supervision, and each of them presents some of their work for supervision, they may each count a total of three hours of supervision.

In groups of four or more trainees, each trainee who makes a meaningful presentation of their work can claim supervision credit, and for each such presentation that trainee receives one hour of supervision credit. Group members can credit those hours where they do not present material as hours of advanced TA training/Continuing Professional Development. The total number of supervision hours credited cannot exceed the number of hours spent in the supervision session.

- For example: if five trainees spend three hours in supervision, and three trainees present work, one in each of the three hours, each of the trainees who presents work for supervision may credit one hour of supervision and two hours of advanced TA training. The two trainees who were present but who did not present work for supervision may each count three hours of advanced TA training/Professional Development.

#### **B) *Recommendations for supervision***

Once a trainee begins the application of TA in their work, they are obliged to have regular TA supervision with a TSTA, CTA Trainer or PTSTA. Supervision may consist of single presentations of different cases, but we recommend that trainees also present particular clients or groups regularly over an extended period, which allows the trainee to present the investigation, progress, problems and results of their work to a supervisor within their field of specialisation. Another important element of supervision is mutual feedback, confrontation and discussion, which may be between supervisor and trainee, or in a group.

1. Supervision may be live supervision of the trainee's work. Where supervision is the direct

observation of a trainee's application of TA, this may include a trainee working as an assistant to the supervisor. This live observation must be followed by supervisory discussion if it is to be credited as supervision. The Principal Supervisor and candidate will determine the total time credited for supervision in such instances.

- 2 Supervision may be based on oral case presentations, and/or recordings or videotapes of the trainee's work. On-line supervision is acceptable and the proportion of hours of on-line to face to face supervision is a decision to be taken with the Principal Supervisor.

### **7.2.3.6 Additional professional development hours**

The candidate must have completed a minimum of 500 hours of additional professional development. The content of these is to be determined by the regional or national organisation who may delegate this responsibility to the Principal Supervisor. They can include, for example, additional training; supervision; personal psychotherapy; psychiatric placement, etc.

### **7.2.3.7 Personal therapy and/or continuing personal development**

There is no prescribed number of personal therapy/development hours laid down. PTSC recommends personal therapy over the period of training in order to experience the application of transactional analysis and to ensure that the trainee can apply TA from a largely script-free stance and without harmful behaviour. This is a criterion for endorsement for examination.

**Candidates and Principal Supervisors need to check that all National and/or European Associations' requirements for personal therapy are met.**

## **The Examination Timetable**

### **7.3.1 Suggested CTA examination timetable**

Firstly, the candidate and their Principal Supervisor have to agree that he or she is ready to go for examination. The Principal Supervisor may impose specific requirements before he or she is willing to endorse the candidate for examination. It is recommended that they choose an Oral Examination venue date and work back from it. Examination dates and venues are published in the *EATA Newsletter*, and on the EATA website.

- About 18 months before the selected Oral Examination date begin writing the Written Examination.
- At a reasonable time before the selected oral exam date, submit an EATA contract for endorsement. The contract must be endorsed at least 12 months before the oral exam date.
- In preparation for the Oral Examination the candidate is strongly advised to experience at least one mock exam.
- Seven months before the selected Oral Examination date
  - o Pay examination fee (See 7.1.3). Keep a copy of the payment. (Note: in some countries, for example the UK, payment is submitted with the written exam – see below)

- Submit to the Language Group Coordinator no later than 6 months before the selected oral exam date:
  - A) A copy of the candidate's endorsed EATA contract(s) with copies of any exceptions and the training plan associated with the exception attached.
  - B) A completed Principal Supervisor's Endorsement Form of Written Examination (12.7.1).
  - C) A completed Candidate's submission of Written Exam Form (12.7.2).
  - D) Two securely bound copies of the written examination.
  - E) Copy of the appropriate payment receipt.
  - F) The candidate should keep a copy of all the documentation.
  
- Two clear months before the selected Oral Examination date register by sending the Application Form for the CTA Oral Examination and Principal Supervisor's Endorsement (12.7.3) to the Language Group Co-ordinator, keeping copies of it.

If the candidate has been granted any variations to the regulations or has changed their Principal Supervisor or changed their contract, details of these changes should be written on a separate sheet, giving the dates on which any such changes were given or notified to EATA.

Notify the Language Group Co-ordinator if you will be bringing a translator to the exam.

The candidate will normally have received their Written Examination and Written Examination evaluation(s) at least three months before the date of the intended Oral Examination. If the candidate submitted their Written Examination at the correct point, and three months later has not received the examiner's evaluation(s), they may submit the Application forms to the Language Group Co-ordinator. He or she will fill in the details of the Written Examination when they are available (provided the result is a pass).

- The Language Group Co-ordinator sends an Acknowledgement of Documents Received Checklist form to the candidate.
  
- Candidates who wish to withdraw from the Oral Examination should notify their decision in writing to their Language Group Co-ordinator. Candidates who withdraw from the examination at least two months ahead of the date of the Oral Examination may transfer their examination fees to a later examination. Candidates who withdraw from the examination less than two months before the Oral Examination will lose their fees.
  
- The Language Group Co-ordinator will then send a Completion of Registration Certificate to the candidate.
  
- The candidate must take this form to the candidates' pre-examination meeting immediately before the oral examination.
  
- Check the National requirements section of this handbook in case there are further forms required in your region.

### **7.3.2 Summary of the timetable and documentation**

- **More than 12 months** before the selected oral exam date submit an EATA contract for endorsement. (This is to ensure the contract is endorsed one year prior to applying for the oral exam.)
- **18 months** before the selected oral examination date begin writing the written examination.
- **9 months before:** Inform the Language Group Co-ordinator of your intention to submit your written exam
- **7 months before:** Pay CTA examination fee. (Note: in some countries, e.g. the UK, payment is made directly to the Language Group Co-ordinator. Please check national regulations)
- **6 months before:** Send to the Language Coordinator:
  - A copy of the candidate's endorsed EATA contract with copies of any exceptions and the training plan associated with the exception attached.
  - A completed Principal Supervisor's Endorsement of the Written Examination.
  - A completed Candidate's submission of Written Exam Form.
  - Two securely bound copies of the written examination.
  - Copy of the appropriate payment receipt.
  - The candidate should keep a copy of all the documentation.
- **3 months before:** Candidate should have received written examination evaluation
- **2 months before:** Submit Application Form for the Oral Examination and Principal Supervisor's Endorsement
- **1 month before:** Candidate will receive a Completion of Registration Certificate  
Candidate to keep copies of all relevant documentation

### **7.4 CTA Examination Documentation**

EATA Certified Transactional Analyst Training Contract (12.6.1) with any exceptions and the training plan associated with the exception attached.

Principal Supervisor's Endorsement of the Written Examination (12.7.1)

Candidate's Submission of the Written Examination (12.7.2)

Application Form for the Oral Examination and Principal Supervisor's Endorsement (12.7.3)

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