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7 OVERVIEW OF THE CTA EXAMINATION

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The CTA examination and the fields of specialization

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, and
   - no earlier than six months after submitting the written examinations, and
   - no later than three years after passing the written examination.

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 site.

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

7.1.2 Accreditation

The examination for accreditation as a Certified Transactional Analyst is carried out by IBOC. Both PTSTAs and TSTAs may serve as examiners. Under the direction of the supervising examiner, CTAs may also serve as examiners.

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 organization. He or she will receive a certificate recognizing his or her competence in the field of application.

7.1.3 Payment of examination fees

For the CTA written examination, there are two fees (see file for IBOC Fee Schedules or website <*www.itaaworld.org/contract*> and examination fees)

1. a written examination recording fee, and
2. an examination assessor's fee

These can be paid via the website.

The fee for the CTA oral examination must be sent at the time of the application for the oral examination.

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. 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. The examiners and the translator should be able to listen to the recordings 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: Guidelines for Oral Examination with Translation.*

7.2 Eligibility for the CTA examination

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 own performance as a practitioner (with awareness of limitations).

7.2.2 Outline of requirements

Candidates for the CTA examination must have:

- a TA101 Certificate, either by attending a course or by taking an exam;
- a current training contract, endorsed by IBOC or EATA at least twelve months prior to the oral examination date;
- fulfilled the relevant national requirements for certification in the field of specialization;
- been recommended as ready by their 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 or TSTA who is a member of EATA or ITAA, 40 of which must be with the candidate's supervisor;
    - 500 additional professional development hours (to be designated by the supervisor in accordance with national requirements).

Note that not less than 30% of the 300 TA training hours (ie. 90 hours of training and 12 hours of supervision) must be delivered by someone who is qualified to teach and supervise in the **field of specialization** of the CTA candidate.

The number of hours of training and practical experience in the candidate's field of specialization are laid down and standardized. 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 specialization both before and during the TA training can be counted towards the appropriate category of training hours.

Conference attendance is not considered formal professional training but can be added to additional professional development hours.

7.2.3 Details of the requirements

7.2.3.1 The TA101 Certificate
For details of the TA101 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 IBOC at least twelve months prior to the oral examination date.

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 TA 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 specialization 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 specialization, one of the three recordings to be presented in the oral examinations must be of the candidate working in a group setting. Counselling and psychotherapy candidates should have at least one recording of work with an individual. It will demonstrate the candidate facilitating group dynamics in an effective way and using TA in her or his understanding of group processes. For the purpose of the exam, a group is defined as two or more people.

IBOC has recognized 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, a training or an 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 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 the training.

75 hours must be TA supervision given by a PTSTA or a TSTA, of which at least 40 hours must have been with the candidate's supervisor. For the 75 non-TA hours of supervision, the trainee may count supervision using other approaches, before or during the 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, each may 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 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 trainees begin the application of TA in their work, they are obliged to have regular TA supervision with a TSTA 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 trainees to present the investigation, progress, problems and results of their work to a supervisor within their field of specialization. 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 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 audio recordings or video recordings of the trainee's work. Occasionally, supervision may be at a distance, through the use of audio or video recordings, by telephone, by a voice-over-IP service, such as Skype, Zoom, or by email.

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 organization who may delegate this responsibility to the 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. IBOC recommends personal therapy over the period of training in order to experience the application of TA and to ensure that the trainee can apply TA from a largely script-free

stance and without harmful behavior. This is a criterion for endorsement for examination.

Candidates and supervisors need to check that any local or national requirements for personal therapy are met.

7.3 The examination timetable

7.3.1 Suggested CTA examination timetable

- Firstly, the candidate and her or his supervisor have to agree that he or she is ready to go for examination. The 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 Script* of ITAA and on IBOC website.
- No less than twelve months before a selected oral examination date, the CTA Training Contract needs to be filed and endorsed by IBOC.
- About twelve months before the selected oral examination date, the candidate should begin writing the written examination.
- In preparation for the oral examination the candidate is strongly advised to experience at least one mock exam.
- No less than six full months before the selected oral examination date, the candidate must submit the written examination in electronic form (preferably as a PDF file) to the IBOC Office (e-mail: *iboc@itaaworld.org*) . By the same date, the office must also be in receipt of the completed Supervisor's Endorsement of Written Examination Form (12.7.1), evidence of payment of the fees, and the Candidate's Submission of Written Examination Form (12.7.2), either by mail or electronically as scanned files. Once all these documents have been received, the IBOC Office will forward the written examination and the supervisor's endorsement form to the appropriate regional examination coordinator (see Section 8.6.4, clause 3).
- Three full months before the selected oral examination date, the candidate must register for the oral examination by sending the Supervisor's Endorsement for the CTA Oral Examination Form (12.7.3) and the application for the CTA Oral Examination Form (12.7.4) to the IBOC Office. If the candidate has been granted any variations to the regulations or has changed supervisor or changed the contract, details of these changes should be written on the reverse of the supervisor's endorsement for oral examination form, giving the dates on which any such changes were given or notified to IBOC. The IBOC Office must be notified if a candidate brings a translator to the exam.
- The candidate will normally have received her or his written examination evaluation(s) at least three months before the date of the intended oral examination. If the candidate submitted the written examination at the correct point, and three months later has not received the examiner's evaluation(s), he or she may still submit the application and supervisor's endorsement forms to the IBOC Office. The office will fill in the details of the written examination when they are available (provided the result is a pass).
- Candidates who wish to withdraw from the oral examination should notify their decision in writing to the IBOC Office. 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 the application part of their fee (see file for IBOC & ITAA fee schedules).

7.3.2 Summary of the timetable and documentation

12 months before: With the CTA Training Contract filed and endorsed by IBOC, candidate decides on oral examination venue and begins written examination.

12 months before: Candidate informs the regional IBOC examination coordinator of the intention to submit his/her written exam.

6 months before: Candidate pays to the IBOC Office the CTA written examination filing fee.
Candidate sends to the IBOC Office the following:
- the written examination in electronic form,
- the supervisor's endorsement of written examination form, and
- the candidate's submission of written examination form.

3 months before: Candidate should have received written examination evaluation.

3 months before: Candidate registers for oral examination by sending to the IBOC Office: the Supervisor's Endorsement for CTA Oral Examination Form (12.7.3), the Application for the CTA Oral Examination Form (12.7.4), and the oral examination fee.

2 months before: Candidate is sent Acknowledgement of the Documents-Received Checklist (12.7.5). This is the last point at which the candidate can withdraw from the oral examination without forfeiting the examination fee.

Candidates are advised to keep copies of all relevant documentation submitted.

7.4 CTA examination documentation

Supervisor's Endorsement of the CTA Written Examination (12.7.1)
Candidate's Submission of the CTA Written Examination (12.7.2)
Supervisor's Endorsement of the Candidate for CTA Oral Examination (12.7.3)
Application for the CTA Oral Examination (12.7.4)
Acknowledgement of Items Received for CTA Examination (12.7.5)
Letter to Assessor of the CTA Written Examination (12.7.6)
Written Examination Scoring Scale (12.7.7)
Letter sent with Assessment(s) of CTA Written Examination (Pass) (12.7.8-a)
Letter sent with Assessment(s) of CTA Written Examination (Deferral) (12.7.8-b)
Oral Examination CTA Counselling Scoring Sheet (12.7.9)
Oral Examination CTA Education Scoring Sheet (12.7.10)
Oral Examination CTA Organizations Scoring Sheet (12.7.11)
Oral Examination CTA Psychotherapy Scoring Sheet (12.7.12)
Examiner Evaluation Form (12.7.13)
Examination Supervisor's Report (12.7.14)