V

(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN PERSONNEL SELECTION OFFICE (EPSO)

NOTICE OF OPEN COMPETITION

EPSO/AST-SC/03/15

Secretaries/Clerks (SC 1 and SC 2) in the following fields:

1. **Administrative support,**

2. **Financial support,**

3. **Secretarial support**

(2015/C 003 A/01)

The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) is organising an open competition, based on tests, to draw up reserve lists from which to recruit officials as 'Secretaries' and 'Clerks' (*) for the institutions of the European Union.

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*Before applying, you should carefully read the General Rules applicable to open competitions published in **Official Journal of the European Union C 60 A of 1 March 2014** and on the EPSO website. These Rules are an integral part of the competition notice.*

CONTENTS

(*)   Any reference in this notice to a person of the male sex must be deemed also to constitute a reference to a person of the female sex.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. **Number of successful candidates sought per field and per grade**		Grade SC 1	Grade SC 2
	Field 1	104	35
	Field 2	80	30
	Field 3	147	99

These figures represent the total number of successful candidates requested by all the institutions. Please note that recruitment at grade SC 2 will mostly be done by the Institutions based in Luxembourg.

2. Remarks

This notice of open competition covers three fields, each with two grades.

Due to budgetary and administrative constraints, and in the interest of the service to have at its disposal a reserve list of candidates, specialised and immediately operational, you may only apply to one field and one grade.

You must make your choice when you apply online and you will not be able to change it after you have confirmed and validated your online application form.

However, if in your chosen field:

— you applied for grade **SC 2**, **and**

— you obtained one of the highest marks in the admission tests (see point IV) so as to be invited to the next stage of the competition,

    and

— you do not meet the eligibility requirements for grade **SC 2** but you do meet those for grade **SC 1**,

the selection board may, with your consent, **reassign your application to grade SC 1** [1].

In that case your results will be compared with those of the candidates for grade **SC 1 and**, **if** you are among those with the highest marks for that grade, you will be added to the list of **SC 1** candidates invited to the assessment tests.

Any such reassignment will take place before invitations to the assessment tests are sent out and will be made on the basis of the information given in your online application. Candidates whose marks are below the threshold set for the highest marks in grade **SC 2** per field will not be considered for transfer to grade **SC 1**.

3. How to apply

You must apply online, following the instructions on the EPSO website and particularly in the online application manual.

Deadline (including validation): **10 February 2015** at 12.00 (midday), Brussels time.

II. DUTIES

The secretaries and clerks (AST SC function group) carry out clerical and secretarial tasks, office management and other equivalent tasks requiring a certain degree of autonomy.

The specific duties to the fields sought are described in the annexes.

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[1] You will be asked to give your consent during the online application process.

III. **ELIGIBILITY**

On the closing date for online applications, you must fulfil all the following general and specific conditions:

1. **General conditions**

a) You must be a citizen of one of the Member States of the European Union.

b) You must enjoy your full rights as a citizen.

c) You must have fulfilled any obligations imposed on you by the laws on military service.

d) You must meet the character requirements for the performance of the duties involved.

2. **Specific conditions**

2.1.	**Qualifications** ([2]) **See annexes.**
2.2.	**Professional experience** **See annexes.**
2.3.	**Knowledge of languages** ([3])
Language 1	**Main language (minimum required level: C1)** A thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union.
Language 2	**Second language, must be different from language 1 (minimum required level: B2)** a satisfactory knowledge of English, French or German In the light of the judgment given by the Court of Justice of the European Union (Grand Chamber) in Case C-566/10 P, Italy v Commission, the EU institutions wish to state the reasons for limiting the choice of the second language in this competition to a small number of official EU languages. Candidates are therefore informed that the second language options in this competition have been defined in line with the interests of the service, which require new recruits to be immediately operational and capable of communicating effectively in their daily work. Otherwise the efficient functioning of the institutions could be severely impaired.

([2]) All diplomas must be issued by recognised bodies/universities in the 28 Member States of the European Union. Candidates with diplomas issued in non-EU Member States will be asked to provide the official recognition of such diplomas by an EU Member State.

([3]) See the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Downloads/CEF/LanguageSelfAssessmentGrid.csp).

It has long been the practice to use mainly English, French, and German for internal communication in the EU institutions and these are also the languages most often needed when communicating with the outside world and dealing with cases. Moreover, English, French, and German are the most common second languages in the European Union and the most frequently studied as a second language. This confirms what is currently expected of candidates for European Union posts in terms of their level of education and professional skills, namely that they have a command of at least one of these languages. Consequently, in balancing the interests and needs of the service and the abilities of candidates, and given the particular field of this competition, it is legitimate to organise tests in these three languages so as to ensure that all candidates are able to work in at least one of them, whatever their first official language. Assessing specific competencies in this way allows the institutions to evaluate candidates' ability to be immediately operational in an environment that closely matches the reality they would face on the job.

For these same reasons, it is reasonable to limit the language of communication between candidates and the institution, including the language in which application forms are to be drafted. Furthermore, this ensures uniformity when comparing candidates and checking their application forms.

To ensure equal treatment for all candidates, everyone — including those whose first official language is one of the three — must take some tests in their second language, chosen from among these three.

None of this affects the possibility of later language training to enable staff to work in a third language, as required under Article 45(2) of the Staff Regulations.

IV. ADMISSION TESTS

Computer-based admission tests are organised by EPSO. The selection board decides on the difficulty of the tests set out in the table below (point 2) and approves their content based on proposals made by EPSO.

1. **Invitation**	You will be invited to sit the tests if you have validated your application on time (see Section I.3). **N.B.:** 1. By validating your application you declare that you meet the general and specific conditions listed in Section III. 2. You **must** reserve a date to sit the tests. This must be done by the deadline notified to you via your EPSO account.
2. **Nature and marking of tests**	A series of tests comprising multiple-choice questions to assess your general aptitudes and competencies as regards:
Test (a)	Verbal reasoning
Test (b)	Numerical reasoning

Test (a)	Verbal reasoning	Marking: out of 20
Test (b)	Numerical reasoning	Marking: out of 10 Pass mark for each field: Field 1: 4 Field 2: 5 Field 3: 4

Test (c)	Abstract reasoning	Marking: out of 10
		Aggregate pass mark for tests (a) and (c): 15
Test (d)	Professional skills: Accuracy and precision	Marking: out of 40
Test (e)	Professional skills: Prioritising and organising	Marking: out of 40
		Aggregate pass mark for tests (d) and (e): 40
3. **Language of the tests**	Language 1 for tests (a), (b) and (c) Language 2 for tests (d) and (e)	

V. ASSESSMENT TESTS

1. **Invitation**	You will be invited to sit the assessment tests, normally in Brussels, in a one-day session:
	— if you have obtained the pass mark in all the admission tests,
	— if you have one of the highest aggregate marks for tests (a), (c), (d) and (e),
	and
	— if checks on the information given in your online application show that you fulfil the general and specific conditions listed in Section III ([4]).
	Test (b) is eliminatory but the marks will not be added to the marks from the other tests in order to identify the candidates to invite to the assessment tests.
	The number of candidates ([5]) invited to the assessment tests for each field and grade will be approximately **2 times,** but no more than **2,5 times**, the number of successful candidates sought indicated in this competition notice. It will also be published on EPSO's website (http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/eu-careers.info/).
	If you are invited to the assessment tests, you must bring your full application file including all supporting documents of your qualifications and professional experience with you when you attend ([6]).
	Details: See point 2.1.7 of the General Rules applicable to open competitions.
2. **Assessment tests, marking and weighting**	You will sit two types of tests, in your **Language 2**, the content of which is validated by the selection board, to assess your:
	— specific competencies, **and**
	— general competencies

([4]) This information will be verified against the supporting documents before the reserve list is drawn up (see Section VI and Section VII.1).
([5]) Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, they will all be invited to the assessment tests.
([6]) You will be notified in good time via your EPSO account of the date when you have to attend.

Your specific competencies will be assessed by means of (7):

Field 1: Administrative Support

(f)   an office skills test;

(g)   a practical test to assess your drafting skills (particularly spelling, syntax and grammar).

Test (f) marked out of 25.

Pass mark: 15

Test (g) marked out of 10.

Pass mark: 6

Combined weighting: 30 % of the overall mark

Field 2: Financial Support

(f)   a finance skills test;

(g)   a practical test to assess your drafting skills (particularly spelling, syntax and grammar).

Test (f) marked out of 30.

Pass mark: 15

Test (g) marked out of 10.

Pass mark: 6

Combined weighting: 30 % of the overall mark

Field 3: Secretarial Support

(f)   a practical test involving the preparation and/or processing of an MS Word and Excel document;

(g)   a practical test to assess your drafting skills (particularly spelling, syntax and grammar).

Test (f) marked out of 20.

Pass mark: 12

Test (g) marked out of 10.

Pass mark: 6

Combined weighting: 30 % of the overall mark

Your general competencies (8) will be assessed by means of:

For all 3 fields:

(h)   an e-tray exercise;

(i)   a structured interview.

These tests will be marked out of 10 for each general competency.

Pass mark:

an aggregate of 35 out of 70 for all 7 general competencies

Combined weighting: 70 % of the overall mark

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(7)   Details of the keyboards available will be provided with the invitation to the assessment tests. Standard European keyboards will be provided.
(8)   More information on these competencies can be found in point 1.2 of the General Rules applicable to open competitions.

These general competencies will be tested as shown in the following table:

	E-tray	Structured interview
Analysis and problem-solving	x	
Communicating		x
Delivering quality and results	x	
Learning and development		x
Prioritising and organising	x	
Resilience		x
Working with others		x

VI. VERIFICATION OF THE INFORMATION GIVEN BY CANDIDATES

Following the assessment tests, the information given by candidates in their online application will be verified against the supporting documents they have provided; this will be done by EPSO for the general conditions, and by the selection board for the specific conditions.

The applications of candidates who have passed tests (f), (g), (h) and (i) with the highest aggregate marks will be verified in descending order of merit. Verification will continue until the number of candidates who can be placed on the reserve list for each field and grade and who actually fulfil all the conditions for admission reaches the threshold. The files of candidates below the threshold will not be examined.

If verification shows that the information given in your online application form is not borne out by appropriate supporting documents, you will be disqualified from the competition.

VII. RESERVE LISTS

1. **Candidates placed on the reserve lists**	The selection board will place your name on the reserve list: — if you have passed the assessment tests with one of the highest aggregate marks (see number of successful candidates sought, Section I.1) (^{9}) — **and if your supporting documents show** that you meet all the eligibility requirements (see Section III).
2. **Classification**	Lists will be drawn up for each field and grade, and names will be listed in alphabetical order.

(^{9})   Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, they will all be placed on the reserve list.

ANNEX I

FIELD 1. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

1. **Nature of the Duties**

The institutions are looking for staff to carry out administrative support tasks within their departments, including their linguistic departments.

Administrative Support agents will carry out assistance and support tasks, using IT tools, related in particular to technical/ operational and administrative support.

The duties are varied and may include:

— handling and following-up technical and administrative files in line with the applicable framework, such as:

  — drawing up technical reports and/or specifications, monitoring contract performance and acceptance of works,

  — administrative work relating to the purchase of products (equipment, supplies and goods),

  — handling personnel files, related in particular to recruitment, careers, professional training, equal opportunities,

  — handling and following-up case files: open and register cases, follow-up the procedures, monitor deadlines, update case management databases,

— drafting correspondence, notes, minutes, and/or reports,

— managing and archiving documents. This may involve registering, encoding, allocating and distributing in/out documents/mail; archiving and securing documents/files in compliance with archiving, data protection and confidentiality rules,

— assisting in the coordination and planning of the department's work.

These duties require a thorough knowledge of IT tools such as word-processing, spreadsheets and databases.

2. **Qualifications**

Grades SC1 and SC2

Post-secondary education of at least one year attested by a diploma relevant to the nature of the duties.

or

Secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education, followed by at least three years' professional experience mostly related to the nature of the duties.

or

Professional training (equivalent to European Qualification Framework Level 4) (¹) of at least one year, followed by a minimum of three years' professional experience. Both the training and experience must be mostly related to the nature of the duties.

NB: **The three years mentioned above do not count towards the number of years of professional experience required below.**

(¹)   See the European Qualification Framework — http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/search/site?f%5B0%5D=im_field_entity_type%3A97

3. **Professional experience**

Grade SC2 only

At least **four years'** professional experience mostly related to the nature of the duties.

This professional experience is relevant only where it has been gained after obtaining the qualification giving access to the competition.

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ANNEX II

FIELD 2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. **Nature of the Duties**

The institutions are looking for staff to carry out support tasks in the field of budget and financial management.

The position concerned is that of financial support agent. These agents provide financial administrative support within the departments or units of the institutions.

The tasks are varied and may include:

— handling budget implementation files in compliance with financial rules in force (administrative monitoring of invitations to tender, preparation of contracts, monitoring of related transactions, etc.),

— bookkeeping,

— checking invoices,

— recording and monitoring of validation of transactions (commitment proposals, payment orders, recovery orders, data relating to contracts and contractors, etc.),

— handling invoicing and collection schedules,

— handling financial files, including correspondence, filing and archiving.

These duties require a thorough knowledge of IT tools such as word-processing, spreadsheets, and the use of accounting software.

2. **Qualifications**

Grades SC1 and SC2

Post-secondary education of at least one year attested by a diploma relevant to the nature of the duties.

or

Secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education, followed by at least three years' professional experience mostly related to the nature of the duties.

or

Professional training (equivalent to European Qualification Framework Level 4) (^{1}) of at least one year, followed by a minimum of three years' professional experience. Both the training and experience must be mostly related to the nature of the duties.

NB: **The three years mentioned above do not count towards the number of years of professional experience required below.**

3. **Professional experience**

Grade SC2 only

At least **four years'** professional experience mostly related to the nature of the duties.

This professional experience is relevant only where it has been gained after obtaining the qualification giving access to the competition.

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(^{1})   See the European Qualification Framework — http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/search/site?f%5B0%5D=im_field_entity_type%3A97

ANNEX III

FIELD 3. SECRETARIAL SUPPORT

1. **Nature of the Duties**

The institutions are looking for staff to carry out secretarial tasks within their departments, including their linguistic departments.

These tasks, often assigned to administrative/office management, can, however, vary according to the post. In general, a secretary provides support to one or several people in a department or unit within the institutions.

The tasks are varied and may include:

— organising the department's administrative and support activities (meetings, official travel etc.),

— handling/managing/archiving documents and requests for action (receipt, processing, follow-up, and filing of documents, reports and correspondence),

— preparing, processing, finalising, and checking documents (editing/drafting, page layout, formatting, tables) with the aid of specific software,

— researching, compiling and disseminating information (updating databases, files),

— handling and following-up administrative and technical matters for the department/unit,

— keeping and updating the unit/department diary, answering calls, taking messages.

These duties require a thorough knowledge of IT tools such as word-processing, spreadsheets and databases.

2. **Qualifications**

Grades SC1 and SC2

Post-secondary education of at least one year attested by a diploma in the secretarial field

or

Secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education, followed by at least three years' professional experience mostly related to the nature of the duties

or

Professional training (equivalent to European Qualification Framework Level 4) (^{1}) of at least one year, followed by a minimum of three years' professional experience. Both the training and experience must be mostly related to the nature of the duties.

NB: **The three years mentioned above do not count towards the number of years of professional experience required below.**

3. **Professional experience**

Grade SC2 only

At least **four years'** professional experience mostly related to the nature of the duties.

This professional experience is relevant only where it has been gained after obtaining the qualification giving access to the competition.

(^{1}) See the European Qualification Framework — http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/search/site?f%5B0%5D=im_field_entity_type%3A97