

Terms of Reference for experts in EUAA's Training Pool



Decision of the Executive Director No 16/2024

on the terms of reference for experts in the EUAA's Training Pool

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,

HAVING REGARD to Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum¹ (hereinafter 'the EUAA Regulation'), and in particular Articles 8 and 47(5) thereof,

WHEREAS:

- 1) Pursuant to Article 8(4) of the EUAA Regulation, the training offered by the Agency should be of high quality and should identify key principles and best practices with a view to ensuring greater convergence of administrative methods, decisions and legal practices, while fully respecting the independence of national courts and tribunals.
- 2) The Management Board adopted Decision No 102 of 7 March 2022 on the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy (hereinafter 'the Strategy'), which outlines the manner in which the requirement laid down in Article 8(4) of the EUAA Regulation is to be applied across all stages of the training cycle. The Strategy also tasked the Executive Director of the Agency with the implementation of the Strategy, and in particular with the adoption of a Training Quality Assurance Framework providing for the detailed policies and procedures necessary for the implementation of the Strategy.
- 3) The Executive Director adopted Decision No 59 of 1 April 2022 on the Training Quality Assurance Framework (hereinafter 'ED Decision No 59/2022') outlining the quality assurance system for the EUAA's training activities and detailing the procedures and methods in place to ensure that the training offered by the Agency is of the required quality, in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area².
- 4) As set out in sub-section 2.7.3 of the annex to ED Decision No 59/2022, the EUAA maintains a pool of EU Member States' and associated countries' experts (hereinafter 'Training Pool') drawn from the asylum and reception field who contribute to the design, development, delivery and assessment of the EUAA's training.
- 5) Terms of reference for members of the Training Pool have been developed by the Training and Professional Development Centre in consultation with training national contact points. Those terms of reference should be formally established to specify in more detail the roles and responsibilities of each of the categories of experts included in the Training Pool.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010, (OJ L 468, 30.12.2021, p. 1).

² Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium (https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf).





- 6) The members of the Certification and Accreditation Working Group were consulted on the proposed terms of reference following the meeting held on 12 and 13 September 2023,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Terms of reference for experts in the Training Pool

The terms of reference for experts in the Training Pool, as annexed to this Decision, are hereby adopted.

Article 2

Implementation

The Head of the Training and Professional Development Centre responsible for training and learning activities is tasked with ensuring the dissemination of this Decision among current and prospective trainers and content experts in the Training Pool.

Article 3

Entry into force

This Decision enters into force on the date of its signature.

Done at Valletta Harbour, on 12 April 2024

Signature on file

Nina Gregori
Executive Director

Annex: Terms of reference for experts in the Training Pool.



Annex

Terms of Reference for experts in the Training Pool

1. Introduction

Article 8 of the EUAA Regulation tasks the Agency with establishing, developing, and reviewing training for members of its own staff and members of the staff of relevant national administrations, courts and tribunals, and of national authorities responsible for asylum and reception. Such training is to be developed in close cooperation with Member States and, where appropriate, other European Union (EU) agencies, relevant training entities, academic institutions, judicial associations, networks, and organisations.

The Agency's training is provided in the framework of:

- **Permanent support** activities aimed at supporting practical cooperation between Member States³;
- **Operational support** to Member States subject to disproportionate pressure on their asylum and reception systems and with regard to the implementation of their obligations under the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In this context, the Agency trains members of asylum support teams and also delivers training to national authorities as part of the support activities under operational plans⁴;
- **Support to third countries** as part of capacity building under the external dimension of the CEAS⁵. In this context, the EUAA organises and delivers training for third country officials.

In line with its vocational nature, the Agency's training includes modules targeted specifically at asylum and reception officials, aimed to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to perform their job tasks. However, with a view to building capacity and sustainability in the Member States and third country partners, the EUAA also implements where possible a 'train-the-trainer' approach. In this case, asylum and reception officials from national administrations are trained by the EUAA to become trainers, who can train other asylum and reception officials in their home administrations, in national training sessions organised by national authorities. In adopting this approach, the EUAA creates a multiplier effect and maximises the impact of its training at national level. The European asylum curriculum therefore offers training targeting both learners and trainers.

2. Background information

In line with the principle of EU solidarity and the EUAA's mandate, the Agency maintains a Training Pool, which is a pool of Member State experts⁶ who contribute to the design, development, review, update and implementation of the Agency's training, including as assessors and verifiers. While the Training Pool is generally restricted to members of national asylum and reception administrations who

³ Pursuant to Article 2(1)(d) and Article 8 of the EUAA Regulation.

⁴ Pursuant to Articles 16, 18 and 19 of the EUAA Regulation.

⁵ Pursuant to Article 35(2) of the EUAA Regulation.

⁶ This may also include experts from associate countries under certain conditions.



are nominated by the respective training national contact points (TNCPs) to contribute to the EUAA's training activities, the Agency may exceptionally include other relevant actors. Members of the Training Pool are key actors in the implementation of the CEAS. They contribute to fostering existing cooperation in the field of asylum and the promotion of best practices.

The Head of the Training Design and Development Sector manages the selection and participation of content experts for specific assignments or tasks relating to the design, development, and review of the Agency's training, through a call for nominations sent to the TNCPs. The Head of the Training Planning and Programming Sector manages the selection of trainers (including those acting as assessors and verifiers) from Member States and associate countries to contribute to the implementation of the Agency's training depending on their area of expertise, through a call for nominations sent to the TNCPs.

This document sets out the role and responsibilities of members of the Training Pool, whether as content experts or trainers involved in any aspect of training design, development, and implementation, in accordance with the EUAA's Training Quality Assurance Framework⁷ (TQAF) and the functioning of the Training and Professional Development Centre.

3. Categories of experts in the Training Pool

The Agency draws on the following categories of experts, involved in the design, development, and implementation of EUAA training.

- **Content experts** are specialised in a subject matter in an area relevant to the specific training material to be developed, reviewed, or updated⁸/upgraded⁹, including banks of assessments. They may deliver the modules they helped develop and may also act as assessors/verifiers.
- **Trainers** in European asylum curriculum modules may act as 'trainers for learners' or 'trainers for trainers', and/or provide on-the-job coaching, depending on the module/course delivered and on whether they completed the required certification paths for the specific subject matter(s) on which they train.

4. Role and responsibilities of experts in the Training Pool

4.1. Roles and responsibilities of content experts

The **role** of content experts is related to the updating and development of modules of the European asylum curriculum (including trainers' manuals and banks of assessments), or other EUAA training materials, following a standardised design and development process aimed to ensure that training has

⁷ ED Decision No 59/2022.

⁸ Improvement of the quality of a module content that does not affect the basis upon which the module has been accredited; changes can only be minor and must not include any amendments to the learning outcomes or European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for asylum and reception officials (ESQF) level.

⁹ Changes to a module that affect the basis upon which it is accredited, including the ESQF level, overarching learning outcomes, assessment methods, learning time or European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) value.



clear learning outcomes and that the learning and assessment strategy of each module/course is conducive to achieving those learning outcomes. With the nomination of the expert, the TNCP confirms that the expert is able to fulfil this role, dedicate the requested time and perform the tasks as specified in the call for nominations.

In the context of the task assigned to them, content experts are **responsible** for:

- Developing ‘common’ European training material in the area of international protection, reflecting EU standards and regulations, often as part of a group process under the coordination of the module design coordinator(s)¹⁰;
- Upholding the highest quality standard in the development of training materials, ensuring, *inter alia*, the originality of the materials, correct referencing and following the relevant drafting guidelines provided by the Agency;
- Designing and developing authentic assessment tasks which enable the Agency to certify that learning outcomes have been achieved;
- Remaining committed throughout the entire process to which they have accepted to contribute, through their nomination to the Training Pool following the timeline and deadlines indicated by the Agency¹¹;
- Attending all meetings, participating actively, working in collaboration with other experts and delivering their work within the agreed timeframes;
- Informing the Agency through the respective TNCP in case of unforeseen circumstances preventing fulfilment of tasks and further contribution to the process, in order for the Agency to make alternative arrangements;
- Being mindful that any activities that they conduct, including all content developed, is in line with and reflects fundamental rights principles. Furthermore, adhering strictly to the principle of non-discrimination and gender sensitivity in all aspects of their tasks, including while developing case studies and exercises;
- Contributing to a group process to develop high quality training materials¹²;
- Ensuring the availability during the development of training modules to discuss and address the relevant comments and inputs of the Reference Group and the Consultative Forum, prior to finalisation of the content;
- When relevant, participating in EUAA activities for trainers, in particular continuing professional development activities, in order to keep their skills up to date;
- When relevant, participating in Trainers Network meetings and conferences, depending on their availability and in consultation with or upon nomination by the TNCP, as applicable;
- Abiding by all the applicable measures, rules and procedures under the TQAF as they apply to content experts;

¹⁰ The Agency retains the intellectual property rights of all the material developed by content experts during the process. Content experts are not permitted to reproduce the material for any other purpose, except with the formal authorisation of the EUAA.

¹¹ To this end, adequate time must be allocated by the national administration to ensure the availability of the content experts for the foreseen activities before they can engage in a module/training material development/upgrade/update;

¹² Differences of expert opinion will be discussed in the group and all efforts should be made to reach consensus. In case an agreement is not reached at the level of the group, the module design coordinator(s) will take a decision reflecting EU standards and regulations and may escalate the matter to the Head of the Training Design and Development Sector, where appropriate;



- Strictly adhering to the code of conduct for participants in EUAA training activities¹³.

4.2. Roles and responsibilities of trainers

The **role** of trainers is to deliver training, organise workshops and group activities, and support the learning and professional development of learners, in particular by following their progress and providing feedback to assignments and activities. Trainers may additionally act as assessors or verifiers for assessed learning, provided they comply with the applicable requirements.

Coaching is intrinsic to the role of the trainer because they ensure learners are not only technically proficient but also well-rounded, confident, and prepared for the challenges and dynamics of their workplace. Through the application of on-the-job coaching techniques, learners can gain a practical grasp of the field and can learn to navigate real-world challenges and nuances under the mentorship of more experienced professionals (in this case the trainers). This can also include the support and guidance of new trainers.

Trainers are **responsible** for:

- Delivering training in the context of the EUAA's training or national training sessions, in line with the Agency's methodology;
- Integrating and employing, where applicable, coaching practices to their training approach by providing a continuous feedback loop to their learners on their performance, encouraging a growth mindset to view challenges as opportunities for growth, and supporting learners in building their confidence, ensuring they feel competent in their abilities and prepared for the workplace;
- Providing information during training delivery, that is consistent with the training material and trainer's manual, without exceeding the limitations of their scope of practice;
- Ensuring when giving feedback or any other opinion that it is based on their expert knowledge and in line with the Agency's approach whilst meeting the objective to deliver training in a harmonised way to enhance the implementation of the CEAS;
- Collaborating closely with co-trainers (when applicable) to prepare sessions and coordinating feedback and support to learners;
- Collaborating with the training delivery focal point for the respective module, on any questions regarding the training material and training sessions;
- Strictly adhering to the code of conduct for participants in the EUAA's training activities¹⁴, and ensuring, during the course of their work, that their attitude and behaviour is in line with general fundamental rights principles, including the principle of non-discrimination and gender sensitivity;
- Remaining committed throughout the entire process to which they have accepted to contribute¹⁵;
- Informing the Agency through the respective TNCP in the event of unforeseen circumstances preventing them from fulfilling their tasks and further contributing to the process, in order for the Agency to make alternative arrangements;

¹³ Decision of the Executive Director No 76 of 30 May 2022 on the Code of Conduct for participants in the EUAA's training activities.

¹⁴ *Idem*.

¹⁵ To this end, adequate time must be allocated by the national administration to ensure the availability of the trainers before engaging in a training activity.



- Attending scheduled preparatory meetings and work in collaboration with other trainers assigned to the same training activity;
- Actively supporting learners in the learning process by (i) closely monitoring their progress and providing them with constructive feedback on the assignments and other activities pertaining to online learning as well as during face-to-face components, whenever applicable, (ii) adhering to the trainer's manual during the online phase and face-to-face sessions to ensure consistency and coherence in methodology, and (iii) providing constructive, detailed feedback to the formative and summative assessments that are part of the assessed modules;
- Providing feedback on training sessions to the Agency using the trainer feedback form available for each training session;
- Conducting assessments of learning and grading assessments taken by learners (for assessed training, when acting as assessors) in accordance with the assessment procedures, assessment schedule and marking criteria (rubrics) specific to the relevant module, the assessment regulations, and any other instructions;
- Verifying grades awarded by assessors (for assessed training, when acting as verifiers) in accordance with the criteria and instructions provided by the Agency and the TQAF;
- Reflecting on learners' feedback on trainer performance to improve professional practice;
- Participating in the EUAA's activities for trainers, in particular continuing professional development activities, in order to keep their skills up to date;
- Participate in Trainers Network meetings and conferences, depending on their availability and in consultation with or upon nomination by the TNCP, as applicable;
- Respecting the measures in the TQAF as they apply to the EUAA's trainers.

5. Inclusion in the Pool

All Member States shall be invited to designate content experts and trainers for inclusion in the Training Pool, according to set criteria.

A request to designate content experts and trainers shall be sent once a year by the Agency to the TNCPs in order to keep the Training Pool updated. The TNCPs shall be requested to forward the *curricula vitae* (CVs) of content experts and trainers, preferably in Europass format, together with the list of designated content experts and trainers and inform the Agency of any changes concerning the availability of their formerly designated content experts and trainers. The Training Pool shall remain open throughout the year for new designations and the Agency shall encourage and welcome any new designations to the Training Pool. Personal information on members of the pool shall be covered by the applicable Data Protection Notice.

As laid down in section 4, all trainers and content experts shall be obliged to strictly adhere to the code of conduct for participants in the EUAA's training activities and understand that failure to do so may lead to de-prioritisation of their participation in future activities or, in case of severe or repeated breaches, to removal from the Training Pool. Complaints submitted against members of the Training Pool, including those concerning alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, shall be processed in accordance with the Training Complaints Procedure¹⁶.

¹⁶ Standard operating procedure on the processing of training complaints (SOP TD-001).



6. Selection criteria

The selection of experts for specific assignments or tasks shall be based on the extent that content experts and trainers included in the Pool and nominated by their TNCP for the specific assignment or task fulfil the criteria detailed in the respective call for nominations and, where necessary, considerations of geographical representation.

Selection does not under any circumstances or at any point in time constitute and/or lead to an employment relationship with the EUAA or any other entities with whom the content expert or trainer may interact in the context of their assignment.

7. Expected outputs

Outputs shall be defined in the call for nominations and, additionally for content experts, according to the distribution of tasks established during the kick-off meeting.

8. Duration of membership in the Training Pool

Duration shall be defined in the call for nominations and, additionally for content experts, after possible modification during the kick-off meeting.

9. Reimbursement for members of the Training Pool nominated by TNCPs participating in module development meetings and training delivery

Reimbursement of costs (i.e., travel, accommodation, and daily allowances) linked to scheduled in-person meetings shall be reimbursed by the EUAA as per the applicable Decision of the Executive Director on the rules for reimbursement of expenses incurred by participants invited to attend the EUAA's activities.

