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STUDY GUIDES · EU KNOWLEDGE

Internal competitions · the Commission test

EU knowledge

Everything the EU knowledge test of the Commission's internal competitions asks, taught from the official texts: the institutions, the Commission's powers, how the College decides and the 2024-2029 priorities, with every answer explained.



MCMLI — MMVII

I	PARIS	18 IV 1951
II	ROMA	25 III 1957
III	BRUXELLES	8 IV 1965
IV	LUXEMBOURG	17 II 1986
V	MAASTRICHT	7 II 1992
VI	AMSTERDAM	2 X 1997
VII	NICE	26 II 2001
VIII	LISBOA	13 XII 2007

5	20	25 h	133	1
PARTS	CHAPTERS	OF GUIDED STUDY	QUESTIONS SOLVED	FULL TEST ON EPSOMETRO

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INSIDE THIS GUIDE

EU knowledge: what you get

Everything the EU knowledge test of the Commission's internal competitions asks, taught from the official texts: the institutions, the Commission's powers, how the College decides and the 2024-2029 priorities, with every answer explained.

20
chapters of lessons

25 h
of guided study

133
questions, each answer explained option by option

58
official sources quoted and checked

Taught, not just listed

Every chapter explains the subject from the ground up: how it works, the look-alikes, the traps, with worked cases. Where to read more is an extra, not the content.

Checked twice

Every fact is quoted from its official source and checked word for word. Every question was re-judged blind by an independent reviewer; anything arguable was removed.

Every option explained

For each question: why the key is right, what is wrong with each other option, the trap it uses and the chapter to review.

A full test included

Your personal code for the complete timed test on EPSOmetro is on the last page: sit it when your tracker is complete.

WHAT A SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE

2.1.1 · A

Article 2 TEU states that the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. It is the article that lists the values; other articles protect them or organise the institutions.

B Article 7 is the procedure that protects the values of Article 2 against a serious breach; it refers to them but does not lay them down.

C Article 19 concerns the Court of Justice of the European Union, which ensures that the law is observed; it does not list the values.

D Article 13 lists the institutions of the Union and their institutional framework, not the values on which the Union is founded.

Trap: The look-alike: Article 7 always appears beside the values, so it is mistaken for their source.

Review: **Institutions: The Treaties, competences and legal acts p. 12**

BEFORE YOU START

Hello, I'm EUgenio. From here to your test, I'm your coach.



My job is to get you ready for the EU knowledge test. The route has 5 parts and 20 chapters, about 25 hours of work. I open every part with what to do and how long it takes, and I'm waiting at the end of every chapter to tell you how you did and where to go next.

You always know where you are: the bar at the top of each page shows your part, each chapter says its step out of 20, and the tracker two pages on is your scorecard. Tick it as you go.

The finish line is the full test on EPSOmetro, with the personal code on the last page. Sit it when every line of your tracker is ticked.

Your first step: The test and your route, p. 7. Let's go.

Your route

1. **The test and your route** — p. 7 · about 1 h
2. **The EU's institutional set-up** — p. 11 · about 7 h
3. **The Commission's powers under the Treaties** — p. 54 · about 5 h
4. **How the Commission decides** — p. 90 · about 6 h
5. **The Commission's priorities 2024–2029** — p. 140 · about 6 h
6. **Full test on EPSOmetro** — p. 190

HOW THIS GUIDE WAS CHECKED

Every factual statement in the lessons is checked word for word against the official text it comes from: the Treaties, the Commission's Rules of Procedure and the Commission documents cited in each chapter. Every question has been re-judged blind by an independent reviewer; any item whose key could be argued was removed.

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1

The test and your route

Thirty questions, four areas, about a minute each. This part tells you what the test asks, where the questions come from, how wrong options are built and in what order to study, so that every hour after this one goes where it scores.

EUGENIO

Read this chapter once, slowly: twenty minutes. Then tick it on your tracker and go straight to the next part. Don't start practising before you know the six traps.

Start here: The test: 30 questions, four areas (p. 8)



START HERE · THE TEST: 30 QUESTIONS, FOUR AREAS

The test: 30 questions, four areas

The EU knowledge test is the one part of an internal competition you can prepare line by line: a closed set of texts, most of them about the house you already work in. Knowing what it draws on tells you what to read and what to leave.

Step 1 of 20 · About 20 min

BY THE END OF THIS CHAPTER YOU CAN

- State the format of the test and its pass mark
- Name the four areas and the official texts each one draws on
- Recognise the six ways a wrong option is built
- Plan your study in the order that pays most

What you sit

In the 2026 round of the Commission's internal competitions the test had the same shape in every competition for generalists: **30 multiple-choice questions**, taken on a computer, in your **language 2** (English, French or German). Administrator competitions gave **30 minutes**; assistant competitions gave **40 minutes**. The pass mark was **15 out of 30**.

Two consequences. First, you have one minute a question, or a little more: there is no time to reason an answer out from first principles, so the test rewards facts you recognise at once. Second, half marks pass, but a competition ranks: treat 15 as the floor and aim for 24.

These figures describe the 2026 round. Your own notice of competition is the rule: check the number of questions, the time and the pass mark there before you plan.

The four areas and what each draws on

The test covers four areas. The notices give no weights, and no official syllabus is published outside the Commission. What can be known is the set of texts each area rests on, and that set is short.

Our full test on EPSOmetro splits its 30 questions 7, 7, 6 and 10. The heavier share for priorities is a working assumption, built on what candidates reported after the 2026 tests, not an official figure. Plan for all four areas; none is safe to skip.

If you have prepared an open competition before, note the difference. There the knowledge questions are Treaty law and EU policies. Here two of the four areas are about the Commission itself: its Rules of Procedure, its working methods and its current programme, texts that general handbooks on the EU seldom cover.

AREA	WHAT IT ASKS	CORE TEXTS	IN OUR FULL TEST
1 · The EU's institutional set-up	The seven institutions, who appoints and controls whom, how a law is made	Treaty on European Union; Treaty on the Functioning of the EU	7

AREA	WHAT IT ASKS	CORE TEXTS	IN OUR FULL TEST
2 · The Commission's role and powers under the Treaties	Right of initiative, delegated and implementing acts, infringements, budget, competition	The Treaties; the comitology regulation; the Financial Regulation	7
3 · Governance, decision-making and procedures	How the College decides, the President, cabinets, the Secretariat-General, better regulation, ethics	Rules of Procedure of the Commission (2024); working methods; Code of Conduct	6
4 · The Commission's policy priorities	The 2024-2029 guidelines, the work programmes and the flagship initiatives	Political Guidelines; Commission work programmes 2025 and 2026; the main communications	10

How a wrong option is built

Most wrong options in a knowledge test are a true-sounding sentence with one thing changed. Six changes cover almost all of them. Learn to name the change and the right answer is usually the only option left standing.

The examples in the figure all come from one subject, the College meeting, which the first chapter of Part 4 teaches in full. Read them again after that chapter: you should then see each trap before you finish the sentence.

SIX TRAPS, ONE EXAMPLE EACH

The wrong actor
The weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet is chaired by the Secretary-General; the option says the President's Head of Cabinet.

The wrong base
An act needs a majority of the Members; the option says a majority of the Members present.

The wrong number
An agenda item is requested at least nine working days ahead; the options offer five, seven and ten.

The look-alike
Votes go in the special minutes, which are classified; the option puts them in the ordinary minutes, which are made public once approved.

The rule without its exception
Quorum: a majority of all the Members must be present; the option says remote participants never count, yet those the President invites in exceptional circumstances are deemed present.

The famous fact as bait
Article 250 TFEU is offered as the source of the quorum; it sets only the majority to adopt and leaves the quorum to the Rules of Procedure.

The order that pays

Study in the order of the guide. Areas 1 and 2 are Treaty law: stable, and the base for everything else. Area 3 is where most candidates start from zero even after years in a Directorate-General, and it is the most learnable: one decision, the Rules of Procedure, carries most of it. Area 4 goes last because priorities date: figures and titles you learn in the final week are the ones you still hold on the day.

In each chapter work in the same four moves. Read the lesson with the figures. Cover the page and say the remember list aloud. Do the practice questions before you look at any solution. Then read the solution of every question, including those you got right: the explanation of each wrong option is where the traps are taught.

One primary reading repays its hour more than any other: Articles 1 to 40 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure. Read them once after the last chapter of Part 4.

REMEMBER

- 2026 round: 30 questions; 30 minutes in administrator competitions, 40 in assistant ones; pass mark 15 out of 30.
- The test is taken in language 2: English, French or German.
- Four areas: institutional set-up, Commission powers under the Treaties, governance and procedures, policy priorities.
- No official weights are published; our full test uses 7, 7, 6 and 10 as a working assumption.
- Six traps: wrong actor, wrong base, wrong number, look-alike, rule without its exception, famous fact as bait.

HOW THE EXAM TESTS IT

- Actor swaps: President, College, Secretary-General and Heads of Cabinet are offered against each other in most governance questions.
- Number ladders: when four options differ only by a figure, the test is the figure; learn deadlines and majorities as numbers with their base.
- Source swaps: a rule from the Rules of Procedure is attributed to a Treaty article, or the reverse.



EUGENIO · YOUR COACH

First step done: Start here. You've started, and that's the step most people put off. Tick it on your tracker and reread the sheet tomorrow morning: five minutes that make it stick.

Next: Part 2: The EU's institutional set-up → p. 11

1 The test and your route p. 7 · about 1 h
2 The EU's institutional set-up p. 11 · about 7 h
3 The Commission's powers under the Treaties p. 54 · about 5 h
4 How the Commission decides p. 90 · about 6 h
YOU ARE HERE
5 The Commission's priorities 2024–2029 p. 140 · about 6 h
6 Full test on EPSOmetro p. 190

4

How the Commission decides

Area 3 of the test: governance, decision-making and procedures. It rests on a handful of internal texts, above all the Rules of Procedure the Commission adopted in 2024, and it is the area where knowing the exact rule beats years of experience in a service.

EUGENIO

Five chapters, the most learnable points in the test. Start with the College meeting, then the other procedures. After the last chapter, read Articles 1 to 40 of the Rules of Procedure once: one hour.
Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting (p. 91)



GOVERNANCE · COLLEGIALITY AND THE COLLEGE MEETING

Collegiality and the College meeting

Every Commission act is adopted in the name of a College of 27 who answer for it as one. The rules on how they meet, who sets the agenda, when a decision is valid and what is written down afterwards are precise, numbered and easy to swap: exactly what a multiple-choice question needs.

Step 11 of 20 | About 75 min | 7 questions

BY THE END OF THIS CHAPTER YOU CAN

- Explain what collegiality requires of each Member, including when a position changes
- Name the four procedures by which the Commission adopts an act and who acts in each
- Follow an agenda item from the request to the meeting, with its deadlines and actors
- Tell the quorum from the majority needed to adopt, and apply both to a case
- Say what goes in the ordinary minutes and what goes in the special minutes

Collegiality: one body, one voice

The Commission does not decide through its President or through the Commissioner in charge of a file. It decides as a **College**: the President and the other Members together. The Rules of Procedure derive this from Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union and build it on three ideas: every Member takes part in decisions **on an equal footing**; decisions are the subject of **collective discussion**; and all Members bear **collective political responsibility** for every decision adopted, whether or not they agreed with it.

The Treaty gives that responsibility its edge: the Commission is responsible to the European Parliament as a body. Parliament cannot censure one Commissioner; a motion of censure is aimed at the whole College.

Three duties follow for each Member, and all three are tested:

- **Loyalty to adopted positions.** Each Member must respect, promote and support the positions adopted by the Commission, in particular through the stages of the legislative procedure.
- **No solo changes.** A position that departs from the one originally adopted must be collegially approved before anyone representing the Commission presents it to another institution, a Member State, a third country or any other third party.
- **A portfolio is not a fief.** Each Member is responsible for action in the field assigned to them, but without prejudice to the principle of collegiality: the field is theirs to prepare, the decision is the College's.

CASE

The negotiator who wants to move

In a trilogue, the Council offers a compromise that goes beyond the Commission's adopted position on one article. The Commissioner in the room thinks it is a good deal. May she accept it on the Commission's behalf? Not on her own authority. The compromise is a position diverging from the one originally adopted, so it must first be approved collegially; until then her duty is to support the adopted position. The approval may come quickly, but it comes from the College, not from the Member in charge, the President alone or the Secretary-General.

Four ways to adopt an act

Collegiality does not mean that 27 Members debate every act. The Rules of Procedure give the Commission **four decision-making procedures**, and in all four the act is an act of the Commission.

The two collegial procedures put the draft before all Members: the **oral procedure**, at a meeting, and the **written procedure**, where the draft is made available to every Member with an expiry date and stands adopted when the time limit runs out, if it meets the conditions of substance and form. The two delegated procedures hand work down: by **empowerment**, one or more Members adopt acts on the Commission's behalf; by **delegation**, a Director-General or Head of Service does. A general empowerment and a delegation cover management or administrative acts of a routine and recurring nature, adopted on the Commission's behalf and under its responsibility, and the Commission keeps the right to exercise the powers itself. An ad hoc empowerment is narrower: limited in time, for one-off, specific measures whose substance the Commission has already determined, adopted in agreement with the President.

This chapter follows the oral procedure. The written procedure, empowerment and delegation have the next chapter; for now, hold the table.

PROCEDURE	WHO ADOPTS	THE RULE TO HOLD
Oral	The College, at its meeting	Adopted by a majority of the Members; may be adopted without debate if the Heads of Cabinet agreed and the item stays on the agenda
Written	The College, without meeting	Stands adopted on expiry of the time limit if the draft meets all conditions of substance and form; ordinary limit no less than five working days; as a rule, needs the positive opinion of the Legal Service before it starts
Empowerment	One or more Members	General: routine and recurring management or administrative acts, subdelegable to a Director-General or Head of Service unless the decision forbids it. Ad hoc: one-off measures, adopted in agreement with the President, never subdelegated
Delegation	A Director-General or Head of Service	Same kind of acts; delegated powers may not be subdelegated further, save certain grant and contract decisions

The weekly meeting: from request to agenda

The President **convenes** the meetings. Ordinary meetings take place, as a general rule, once a week; in practice the College usually meets on Wednesday morning in Brussels, and on Tuesday in Strasbourg during the Parliament's plenary sessions. Extraordinary meetings are held whenever the President deems it necessary.

The President also **sets the agenda**. A Member who wants an item on it sends the request to the President at least **nine working days** before the meeting; only in exceptional circumstances may the President accept a late request. If the proposal has significant budgetary implications, the explicit agreement of the Member responsible for the budget must be on file with the request.

Items are then **prepared by the cabinets**. The standing forum is the weekly meeting of the Heads of Cabinet, chaired by the **Secretary-General**. For particular files the President may call special meetings of cabinet members, chaired by a member of the **President's cabinet** and usually held the week before the Commission meeting. Two rules make this preparation count. What is agreed at a preparatory meeting may, in principle, not be reopened later. And if the Heads of Cabinet agree on an item and it stays on the agenda, the College may adopt the act **without debate**.

The Secretary-General sends the agenda, as set by the President, to the Members at the latest the day before the meeting, and it is made public. On a proposal from the President, the College may still discuss a matter that is not on the agenda.

AN AGENDA ITEM, FROM REQUEST TO ADOPTION

1	**Request to the President**	By one or more Members, at least nine working days before; late only in exceptional circumstances; the Secretary-General is informed.	9 working
2	**Heads of Cabinet prepare**	Weekly meeting chaired by the Secretary-General; agreement here is in principle not reopened.	
3	**President sets the agenda**	Sent to Members at the latest the day before; made public.	
4	**College meeting**	Quorum checked before any vote; adoption with or without debate, by vote if the President or a Member asks.	
5	**Minutes**	Drawn up by the Secretary-General, approved at a later meeting.	

Quorum, attendance and the vote

Two different majorities govern a meeting, and questions are built on confusing them.

The **quorum** is the number of Members who must be present for the Commission to take valid decisions: a majority of its Members. With 27 Members, that is 14. The **adoption** rule comes from the Treaty itself: the Commission acts by a majority of its Members. Again 14 of 27, and the base is the whole College, never the Members in the room. A vote is not automatic: it is taken at the initiative of the President or at the request of one or more Members. When it is, the President first establishes that the quorum exists; each Member has **one vote, which may not be delegated**; the act is adopted if the votes in favour equal or exceed a majority of the Members; and in certain exceptional circumstances the President may decide on a secret ballot.

Attendance is an obligation that flows from collegiality: Members attend all ordinary and extraordinary meetings in their entirety. Only the President may release a Member, for compelling circumstances such as obligations towards other EU institutions or the external representation of the Union, on a substantiated written request. **Absent Members cannot be replaced**: no Head of Cabinet takes the seat or the vote. The one flexibility is remote participation: in exceptional circumstances the President may invite Members who cannot attend in person to take part by telecommunication, and they then count as present for the quorum.

TWO MAJORITIES THAT QUESTIONS SWAP

Quorum

- Asks: may the College decide today?
- A majority of the Members must be present, 14 of 27.
- Members the President invites to join remotely, in exceptional circumstances, count.
- Set by the Rules of Procedure, as the Treaty requires.

Adoption

- Asks: did the act pass?
- Votes in favour equal to or more than a majority of the Members, 14 of 27.
- One vote each; it cannot be delegated.
- Set by the Treaty itself and repeated in the Rules of Procedure.

Both are counted on all the Members. Neither is counted on the Members present.

CASE

Eighteen in the room

Eighteen of the 27 Members attend. A vote is requested on a draft decision: 13 in favour, 5 against. Is the act adopted? The quorum is met, since 18 is more than 14. But 13 votes are a majority of those present, not of the Members: the act needs 14 and fails. Had three absent Members joined by video link at the President's invitation in exceptional circumstances, their votes could have counted; their Heads of Cabinet could not have voted for them.

Behind closed doors: attendance and minutes

Meetings of the Commission are **not public**, and the discussions are covered by confidentiality. The President decides who may attend besides the Members. Unless the President decides otherwise, six officials may attend, and any of them who cannot come may send a representative: the Secretary-General, the President's Head of Cabinet, the Director-General of the Legal Service, the Director-General for Communication, the Head of the Spokesperson's Service and the Director in the Secretariat-General responsible for decision-making and collegiality. Anyone else comes only if the President invites them for a given item.

The **Secretary-General draws up the minutes** of every meeting. Two records can result, and they look alike but are treated in opposite ways: the ordinary minutes, and special minutes that may accompany them. Draft minutes of both kinds go to the Commission for approval at a subsequent meeting and are then authenticated by the signatures of the President and the Secretary-General.

	ORDINARY MINUTES (PVO)	SPECIAL MINUTES (PVS)
Record	The conduct of the meeting, the discussions and the adoption of acts	Discussions and acts not covered by the ordinary minutes, the votes taken, statements Members ask to have recorded
Status	Made public once approved by the Commission	Classified

REMEMBER

- Collegiality: equal participation, collective discussion, collective political responsibility for all adopted decisions.
- A position diverging from the adopted one must be collegially approved before it is presented to anyone outside.
- Four procedures: oral, written, empowerment, delegation.
- The President convenes meetings and sets the agenda; requests arrive at least nine working days before; a late one only in exceptional circumstances.
- The Secretary-General chairs the weekly Heads of Cabinet meeting; a member of the President's cabinet chairs special meetings.
- Quorum and adoption are both a majority of the Members: 14 of 27, never of those present.
- One vote each, not delegable; absent Members cannot be replaced; only the President releases a Member from attending, for compelling circumstances.
- Ordinary minutes are public once approved; special minutes hold the votes and are classified.

HOW THE EXAM TESTS IT

- Wrong base: 'a majority of the Members present' is offered next to 'a majority of the Members'; the first is never right for the College.
- Wrong actor on the chair: Secretary-General for the Heads of Cabinet meeting, a member of the President's cabinet for special meetings; options swap them or offer the President's Head of Cabinet.
- Number ladder on the agenda deadline: five, seven, nine or ten working days, all with the same exception attached.
- Look-alike minutes: votes and requested statements are placed in the ordinary minutes, or the special minutes are said to be published.
- Over-reach of a portfolio: the Member in charge, the President alone or the Secretary-General is said to approve a diverging position; only the College can.

GOING FURTHER: OFFICIAL READING

Rules of Procedure of the Commission, Decision (EU) 2024/3080 — Recital 4 and Articles 2, 4, 6 to 16

25 min

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/3080/oj

Worked example

GOVERNANCE · WORKED EXAMPLE

A vote is called at a College meeting which some Members cannot attend, and the President has established that the quorum is met. What must a draft act obtain in order to be adopted?

A It needs votes in favour equal to or more than a majority of all the Members of the Commission.

B It needs votes in favour equal to or more than a majority of the Members present at the meeting.

C It needs votes in favour equal to or more than two thirds of all the Members of the Commission.

D It needs votes in favour equal to or more than two thirds of the Members present at the meeting.

THINKING ALOUD · 45 SECONDS

1. Split the two tests the stem mixes: quorum (may we decide?) and adoption (did it pass?). The quorum is already met, so only adoption is asked.
2. Recall the adoption rule: the Commission acts by a majority of its Members. The base is the whole College, 27, not those in the room.
3. Strike both options counted on 'the Members present': the base is wrong, however natural it sounds for a meeting with absences.
4. Strike two thirds: no decision of the College needs two thirds. What remains is a majority of all the Members, 14 of 27.

Practice

4.1.1 · GOVERNANCE ●●●○○

The Commission's Rules of Procedure state that the principle of collegiality governs how the College functions. What does this principle mean in practice for the way the Members of the Commission adopt decisions?

A Members take part in decisions on an equal footing after collective discussion, and all of them bear collective political responsibility for the decisions adopted.

B Members take part in decisions once the President has endorsed them, and the President alone bears political responsibility for the decisions adopted by the College.

C Members take part in decisions according to their rank in the order of precedence, and each bears political responsibility only for their own portfolio.

D Members take part in decisions only where their portfolio is concerned, and the lead Member alone bears political responsibility for the decisions adopted.

4.1.2 · GOVERNANCE ●●●○○

A Member of the Commission is representing the institution during a complex interinstitutional negotiation. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Commission (2024), what is this Member required to do regarding the positions adopted by the institution?

A Request a formal endorsement from the College before presenting any position to the other institutions.

B Disclose the internal discussions held at College meetings to ensure transparency during the negotiation process.

C Defend the interests of the Member State of which they are a national whenever these positions affect it.

D Respect, promote and support these positions throughout the different stages of the legislative procedure.

4.1.3 · GOVERNANCE ●●●●●

A Member of the Commission wants an item to be included on the agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the College. Under the 2024 Rules of Procedure, which statement about the deadline for that request is correct?

A The request must be submitted to the President at least seven working days before the meeting, although the President may accept a late request in exceptional circumstances.

B The request must be submitted to the President at least nine working days before the meeting, although the President may accept a late request in exceptional circumstances.

C The request must be submitted to the President at least ten working days before the meeting, although the President may accept a late request in exceptional circumstances.

D The request must be submitted to the President at least five working days before the meeting, although the President may accept a late request in exceptional circumstances.

4.1.4 · GOVERNANCE ●●●●●

Besides the weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet, the 2024 Rules of Procedure provide for special meetings of cabinet members, usually held in the week before the Commission meeting, for a preliminary discussion of specific matters or files. Who chairs these special meetings?

A These special meetings are chaired by a member of the competent Executive Vice-President's cabinet, and an agreement reached in them may in principle not be reopened later.

B These special meetings are chaired by a member of the President's cabinet, and an agreement reached in them may in principle not be reopened later.

C These special meetings are chaired by the Secretary-General of the Commission, and an agreement reached in them may in principle not be reopened later.

D These special meetings are chaired by a member of the responsible Member's cabinet, and an agreement reached in them may in principle not be reopened later.

4.1.5 · GOVERNANCE ●●○○○

Who may release a Member of the Commission from the obligation to attend College meetings?

A The Secretary-General

B The College, by simple majority

C The President

D The Executive Vice-President concerned

4.1.6 · GOVERNANCE ●●●○○

A meeting of the College has concluded, and the Secretary-General is now drafting the records. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Commission (2024), which document is used to record the votes taken and specific statements requested by Members?

A The ordinary minutes are used to record these elements alongside the general conduct of the meeting.

B The summary notes are used to record these elements alongside the acts adopted by oral procedure.

C The special minutes are used to record these elements alongside discussions not covered by the ordinary minutes.

D The day notes are used to record these elements alongside the acts adopted by written procedure.

Solutions at the end of Part 4, **p. 133**. Answer all of them before you look.



EUGENIO · YOUR COACH

Step 11 of 20 done: Governance is yours. On to the next one. Now test yourself before you look: 6 practice questions. All right? Move on today. One or two wrong? Reread the section behind each, fifteen minutes, then move on. More than that? Redo the chapter tomorrow: a point fixed now is a point on the day.

Next: Governance: Written procedure, empowerment and delegation → p. 99

PART 4 · SOLUTIONS

Solutions to Part 4

Check each answer, then read why the wrong options are wrong: that is where the exam will try to catch you next time.

4.1.1 · A

Recital 4 and Article 2 of the Rules of Procedure define collegiality by three elements: decisions are the subject of collective discussion, all Members take part on an equal footing, and all bear collective political responsibility for every decision adopted. The key is the only option that keeps the three together.

B The President steers the work of the Commission and sets the agenda, but decisions are adopted by a majority of the Members and the responsibility is shared by all.

C The order of precedence is fixed by the President and gives no extra weight in decisions; responsibility is collective, not limited to a portfolio.

D Every Member takes part in every decision, whatever the portfolio; the lead Member prepares the file but does not carry the responsibility alone.

Trap: Over-reach of the portfolio: responsibility for a field is mistaken for responsibility for the decision.

Review: **Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting p. 91**

4.1.2 · D

Article 2(4) of the Rules of Procedure: each Member shall respect, promote and support the positions adopted by the Commission, in particular throughout the different stages of the legislative procedure. An interinstitutional negotiation is exactly that setting, and the duty attaches to positions already adopted.

A Confuses two paragraphs. Collegial approval is required only for a position that diverges from the adopted one, not for presenting the adopted position.

B Discussions at College meetings are confidential; disclosing them would breach the Rules, not serve them.

C The opposite of a Member's status. Members act in complete independence and take no instructions from any government.

Trap: The look-alike paragraph: prior collegial approval applies to a diverging position, not to every position.

Review: **Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting p. 91**

4.1.3 · B

Article 9(5) of the Rules of Procedure: a request to include an item on the agenda is submitted by one or more Members to the President at least nine working days before the meeting; in exceptional circumstances the President may accept a late request. The four options differ only in the figure.

A Seven working days appears nowhere in the rules on the agenda.

C Ten is the round number one expects; the rule says nine.

D Five working days is the minimum time limit of an ordinary written procedure, not the agenda deadline.

Trap: The number ladder: five working days is a real figure, but it belongs to the written procedure.

Review: **Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting p. 91**

4.1.4 · B

Article 10(2) of the Rules of Procedure: special meetings of cabinet members are organised at the President's initiative and chaired by a member of the President's cabinet. Under Article 10(5), what is agreed at a preparatory meeting may in principle not be reopened later.

A The Rules of Procedure give no chairing role in the preparatory meetings to the cabinet of an Executive Vice-President.

C The Secretary-General chairs the other preparatory forum, the weekly meeting of the Heads of Cabinet.

D Cabinet members speak for their own Member at preparatory meetings (Article 10(8)); the Rules do not give the responsible Member's cabinet the chair.

Trap: The wrong actor: the Secretary-General does chair a cabinet meeting, but the weekly one.

Review: **Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting p. 91**

4.1.5 · C

Article 12(4) of the Rules of Procedure: the President may release a Member from the obligation to attend a meeting if compelling circumstances justify it, such as obligations towards other EU institutions or the external representation of the Union, on a substantiated written request.

A The Secretary-General draws up the minutes and assists the President, but cannot release a Member.
B The College does not vote on attendance; the power is the President's alone.
D The Rules of Procedure give a Vice-President no authority over another Member's attendance at the College.

Trap: The wrong actor: the Secretary-General runs the machinery of the meeting, so looks plausible.

Review: **Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting p. 91**

4.1.6 · C

Article 16(3) of the Rules of Procedure: the special minutes record the discussions and acts not covered by the ordinary minutes, the votes taken and the statements which Members ask to have recorded. The special minutes are classified; the ordinary minutes, which are made public once approved, record only the conduct of the meeting, the discussions and the adoption of acts.

A The ordinary minutes give the conduct of the meeting, the discussions and the adoption of acts, and are made public; votes are kept out of them.
B A summary note is drawn up at each meeting, but it lists the acts adopted by oral procedure; it records neither votes nor statements.
D Day notes record acts adopted outside the meeting, by written, empowerment or delegation procedure, not what was voted in the room.

Trap: The look-alike: two sets of minutes, and the public one seems the natural home of a vote.

Review: **Governance: Collegiality and the College meeting p. 91**

4.2.1 · D

Article 20(2) of the Rules of Procedure: in an expedited written procedure, requested by the Member responsible on grounds of unforeseen and/or exceptional circumstances, the President may authorise the Secretary-General to set the minimum time limit to three working days from the date the draft act was made available to the Members.

A Five working days is the floor of the ordinary written procedure under Article 19(2); the expedited kind exists to go below it.
B Ten working days is the standard period for services to reply in a formal interservice consultation, not a written procedure limit.
C The Rules count written procedures in working days, never in hours; going below three working days is the urgent procedure.

Trap: The wrong number: five working days is real, but it is the ordinary procedure's floor.

Review: **Governance: Written procedure, empowerment and delegation p. 99**

4.2.2 · B

Article 25(1) of the Rules of Procedure: any Member may send the Secretary-General a reasoned request for suspension of an ongoing written procedure, and the Secretary-General shall suspend it and inform the Members. The request does not need to come from the Member responsible, and the Secretary-General has no discretion to refuse.

A Only the Member responsible for the draft may amend it, on their own initiative or at another Member's request.
C Reopening comes after a suspension, when the Member who asked for it requests that it be lifted or the conditions are met.
D Abandonment follows a request of the Member responsible, the Secretary-General's initiative on substance or form, or the President accepting the draft for a meeting.

Trap: The look-alike: abandonment and suspension both stop the clock, but only suspension follows automatically from any Member's request to the Secretary-General.

Review: **Governance: Written procedure, empowerment and delegation p. 99**

4.2.3 · B

Article 33(1) of the Rules of Procedure: a Director-General holding subdelegated powers may in turn subdelegate certain project-selection decisions and individual grant and procurement decisions to a Deputy Director-General, a Director or, in agreement with the Member of the Commission responsible, a Head of Unit. The agreement condition attaches only to the Head of Unit.

A A Director may receive these decisions without the Member's agreement; the condition applies only to the lowest level.
C A Head of Service is the equal of a Director-General as first recipient of a subdelegation, not a further step down.
D A Deputy Director-General may receive these decisions without any agreement of the Member responsible.

Trap: The rule without its exception: the list has three recipients, and only one needs the Member's agreement.

Review: **Governance: Written procedure, empowerment and delegation p. 99**

4.2.4 · D

Article 32(2) of the Rules of Procedure: when a general empowerment is subdelegated, the Director-General or Head of Service acts under the authority of the empowered Member, and the empowered Member of the Commission shall remain accountable to the Commission for compliance with the conditions and rules. Article 33(2) keeps the same Member accountable after a further subdelegation.

REVISION

Night-before sheets

One block per chapter. If a line does not ring a bell, go back to the chapter.

Start here · The test: 30 questions, four areas

- 30 questions, about a minute each: recognise, don't derive.
- Name the trap before you choose: actor, base, number, look-alike, exception, bait.
- Four areas, all tested; priorities carry the largest share in our full test.
- Your own notice of competition is the rule for time and pass mark.

Institutions · The Treaties, competences and legal acts

- TEU = values, institutions, CFSP, accession, withdrawal; TFEU = competences, policies, acts, procedures; same legal value.
- Article 7: risk = Council 4/5; breach = European Council unanimity; sanctions = Council QMV. Parliament consents at both determinations.
- Conferral: not conferred stays national. Subsidiarity: best level, not for exclusive. Proportionality: no more than necessary.
- Exclusive five: customs, competition rules, euro money, marine biological resources, trade policy.
- Supporting: health, industry, culture, tourism, education and sport; no harmonisation.
- Regulation all and directly; directive result; decision its addressees; recommendation and opinion nothing.
- Delegated act: amends or supplements non-essential elements. Implementing act: uniform conditions of implementation.
- Citizen: move and reside, EP and municipal votes, consular protection, petition, Ombudsman, write in any Treaty language.

Institutions · Parliament, European Council and Council

- Article 13 TEU: seven institutions; each acts within its conferred powers; mutual sincere cooperation.
- Parliament: legislates and budgets with the Council, controls, consults, elects Commission President. 750 + 1; 6 to 96 seats.
- Commission President: European Council proposes (QMV), Parliament elects (component members); new candidate within one month.
- European Council: impetus, no legislation, consensus; meets twice every six months; procedural questions by simple majority.
- Council QMV: 55 % / 15 / 65 %; 72 % without Commission or HR proposal; blocking minority at least four.
- Presidency: trios for 18 months, six months each; Foreign Affairs chaired by the HR; Coreper prepares.
- Council of Europe = Strasbourg, 46 states, human rights; not part of the EU.

Institutions · Courts, the ECB, the Court of Auditors and other bodies

- CJEU = Court of Justice + General Court + specialised courts; six years; partial renewal every three.
- Infringement: observations, reasoned opinion, Court. State against State goes via the Commission (three months).
- Annulment: two months; MS, EP, Council, Commission any ground; CoA, ECB, CoR prerogatives only.
- Failure to act: called upon first; two months to answer, two more to sue.
- ECB: price stability; independent; Executive Board 6, European Council QMV, eight years, not renewable.
- Court of Auditors: Council lists Members after consulting EP; six years renewable; assurance to EP and Council.
- EPPO: Article 86, Luxembourg, since 2021, prosecutes. OLAF: Commission, administrative.
- Euro Group: informal, president two and a half years. Deficit 3 %, debt 60 %.

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