



European Tree Worker Certification

Exam Rules & Regulations



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European Tree Worker Certification Rules

The curriculum and the examination regulations for the European Tree Worker have been prepared and are maintained by the European Arboricultural Council (EAC). They will be updated and amended on a regular basis.

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Arboricultural Council (EAC), represented by the national associations which make up this council, offers the qualification of "European Tree Worker". The aim of the examination is to test the knowledge and skills that the candidates have to master according to the ETW curriculum.

Successful candidates may use the title "Certified European Tree Worker ".



2. ORGANISATION

The Certification Centre (CC) has to inform the EAC Office at **a minimum of two months** prior to the certification date.

For **cancellation costs**, please look at the currently valid scale of fees which can be found on the EAC website.

A modification of the test days (more or less) within the stipulated deadline is permitted. **Resulting expenses** by the EAC Office and the Supervisors have to be paid by the responsible CC.

Questions must be sent not later than **ten calendar days** in advance to the selected Supervisor and to the EAC Office directly from the respective Certification Centre.

All questions, written and oral, must be **available in English** for the Supervisor..

On the candidate's application form there must be an agreement that the candidate's name may be published on the **EAC website**.

Questions for every examination **must be different**. The questions from the last examination should be sent to the EAC Office with the Supervisor's report.

The **examination fee** is payable in advance and is not refundable if the candidate fails the examination.

If a candidate's **absence during the examination** is **unexcused**, he still has to pay the examination fee.



3. THE EXAMINING BOARD

The examining board should be composed of **representatives from the following groups:**

- The recognised and responsible **Training Centre / Certification Centre**
- The private tree **contracting industry**
- The public tree **management services.**

An EAC Supervisor, independent to the examining board, must also be present.

4. CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Open access to the examination is offered to all those who possess the necessary technical skill to carry out the below-mentioned operations. However the examining board is the sole arbiter of entry and there is no absolute claim to admittance.

Candidates **must** provide:

- 4.1 Proof of **payment** of the certification fee
- 4.2 Proof of **physical and mental ability** to carry out tree care operations safely, with a **medical certificate**
- 4.3 Proof of a valid qualification in **first aid**, according to the national regulations
- 4.4 Proof of training in **the use of chainsaws** and, if required in their own country, a qualification or a licence for the use of a chainsaw at height. **If there is nothing, examination of chainsaw use in the tree must be undertaken (minimum 5 final cuts).**
- 4.5 For the climber **and the MEWP operator**: proof of a minimum of **one year practical experience** in tree care must be provided.
- 4.6 If required in their own country, proof of **skills in climbing and aerial rescue must be provided.**



If no proof of aerial rescue training is available, the candidate will be required to carry out simulation 3 (aerial rescue) as part of the examination.

- 4.7 For the **MEWP operator** in their CC country: **proof of skills** in the use of a **MEWP/Platform** and emergency situation must be proofed.
- 4.8 The **language** used **between the candidate and the examination board** must be the same (written and oral), no translation or translator is allowed.



5. GENERAL EXAMINATION RULES

- 5.1 **A translator** must be available at each certification in order to help the Supervisor with questions etc., where necessary.
- 5.2 Candidates and examiners are not allowed **to use mobile phones** during any part of the examination unless in an emergency situation.
- 5.3 Candidates and examiners are not allowed **to give interviews** or speak to passers-by during the examination.
- 5.4 Candidates must be **separated in groups** so that they cannot influence each other before and after each part of the examination.
- 5.5 The examining board has the right to stop the examination of a candidate at any time if that candidate has committed an unsafe actor put his own life and / or others at risk. In such a case, the candidate has failed that part of the examination.
- 5.6 The complete examination can also be halted due to **bad weather** or other unforeseen circumstances.
- 5.7 The certification reports of each part must be **signed by both examiners**.
- 5.8 Candidates wishing to take **both practical exam parts** (6.5 Climbing / 6.6 Platform operator) must use **60 minutes** for each part.



5.9 During the exam it is required that the candidates and the examiners wear **Hi Viz Vests** of different colours (for example, orange with a number for the candidates and yellow for the examiners).

5.10 All examiners participating in the EAC examination **must be technically competent.**

6. THE EXAMINATION FORMAT

The examination consists of the following parts:

6.1 Written Theoretical Examination

6.2 Oral Examination

6.3 Tree Identity Examination

6.4 Practical Examination – General

6.5 Practical Examination – Climbing

and / or

6.6 Practical Examination – Platform / MEWP

6.7 Practical Examination – Groundsman (Climbing and Platform)



6.1 Written Theoretical Examination

6.1.1 30 Multiple Choice questions

8 Open questions

6.1.2 The first part of the written examination contains **30 multiple choice questions** with four possible answers only one of which is correct. This will be sent by the EAC Question-Bank System.

6.1.3 The **eight open / long questions** concerning local situations to be supplied by the Certification Centre have to be answered in the candidate's own words.

6.1.4 The whole written examination will take **60 minutes to complete**.

6.1.5 The written examination requires only **one examiner to observe**.

6.1.6. The control / grading of the written part must be **done by two examiners and signed by both examiners**.

Pass rate: **50% of available points in each part**

A failure to reach 50% in either multiple choice or open questions would mean a retake in the whole written exam.



6.2 Oral Examination

- 6.2.1 The oral examination will last between **15 and 20 minutes**, and will be conducted by **two examiners**, with the use of samples and visual aids, as and when necessary.
- 6.2.2 An examination report must be made in **written form** and **be signed** by the examiners.

Pass rate: **50% overall**



6.3 Tree Identity Examination

- 6.3.1 The Tree Identity (ID) Examination will last a maximum of **15 minutes**. It will cover samples of **15 species**, which will consist of a regional representation of both broadleaved trees and conifers (and palms where applicable).
- 6.3.2 The answers will be given in **written form**.
- 6.3.3 Real samples must be used for the examination, but **digital and coloured photographs** can be used in addition during the winter months.
- 6.3.4 Botanical name: **genus** (1 point) and **species** (1 point) and **common name** (1 point) = **3 points** for each sample.
- 6.3.5 **Sample: Acer (1 point) campestre (1 point) Field Maple (1 point)**
- 6.3.6 The Tree ID Examination requires only **one examiner**.

Pass rate: **67% (30 out of 45 points)**

6.4 Practical Examination – General

- 6.4.1 The **examination site** must be properly secured by the **Certification Centre** and the **worksite secured** by the candidate / groundsman.
This is a part of the exam.
- 6.4.2 Current EU **PPE (Personal Protection Equipment)** regulations and the safety guide of the EAC will apply. Details will be laid down by supplementary examination regulations, and in some circumstances the examining board is empowered to make more rigorous safety demands.
- 6.4.3 The candidate has to **provide** all the necessary safety equipment and clothing which must comply with at least the current national regulations in the country where the examination takes place.
- 6.4.4 Trees have to be at least **15 meters high** and the minimum **working height** must be **at least 10 meters**.
- 6.4.5 Climbing / platform (pruning) starts with **the equipment check** and **risk assessment** and ends when climbing equipment is removed from the tree or when the platform (MEWP) is in the lowered position and ready for transport.
- 6.4.6 **Communication** (hand-signs or verbal) between climber / platform and groundsman must be part of the examination.



6.4.7 **The examiners cannot take part in the practical examination** i. e. by playing the role of the groundsman. It is essential that there are **two examiners at all times**. Both examiners must observe the candidates whilst they are in the tree and on the ground, working as **“a team”**.

6.4.8 At least one examiner on site must be able **to carry out a rescue** of the candidate if necessary, for tree climbing and platform (MWEF).

6.4.9 The **safe use of a chainsaw** during this part of the examination has to be demonstrated on a minimum of five cuts. **Handsaw use is preferred** for smaller cuts during the whole practical examination.

(A **certificate to verify chainsaw training** must be sent with the entry form, if available in that country.)

6.4.10 Both **live and deadwood pruning** ability in the tree must be shown.

6.5 Practical Examination – Climbing

- 6.5.1 The practical examination (climbing) consists of pruning in the crown carried out by using **approved climbing techniques**. The practical examination will take **60 minutes**.
- 6.5.2 The candidate must be able to climb to all parts of the tree to carry out the pruning within the available time of 60 minutes. No more than 30 minutes can be spent on accessing the crown (to get to the first working position) and **30 minutes for actual pruning**.
- 6.5.3 The **rescue line** has to be installed **by the examination board** before the tree is used for the exam.
- 6.5.4 Climbing candidates must place their **access line** themselves in the tree. **Candidates cannot use the rescue line for access**.
- 6.5.5 Branches used for **limb walking** must allow the climber to walk out a minimum length of four metres from the trunk and / or at least two thirds of the length of the longest branch.

Pass Rate: **50% overall**



6.6 Practical Examination – Platform / MEWP

- 6.6.1 The practical examination (MEWP / Platform) consists of pruning in the crown carried out by using a MEWP / Platform. The team will consist of one candidate / operator and one groundsman.**
- 6.6.2 The practical examination will take **60 minutes**.
- 6.6.3 The candidate must be able to access **all parts of the tree**, where practicable, without damaging the tree, to carry out the pruning within the available time of 60 minutes, of which no more than 30 minutes can be spent on the MEWP / Platform setup and on accessing the crown to get to the first working position, and **30 minutes for actual pruning**.

Pass Rate: **50% overall**



6.7 Practical Examination – Groundsman (Climbing / Platform)

- 6.7.1 In addition to the practical examination, the candidate must spend **60 minutes as a groundsman.**
- 6.7.2 An **oral examination** of the groundsman is an integral part of this examination and will take an additional **15 minutes.** The oral part can be taken **separately** from the practical part. This means he / she can be tested separately.
- 6.7.3 The groundsman must be **examined as part of a team** with the climber / platform operator (duration 60 minutes).
- 6.7.4 **Failure** to pass the **groundsman section** (either oral or practical) of the examination will result in a failure of the practical examination.
- 6.7.5 **The groundsman cannot be tested** whilst the climber installs his / her climbing rope, unless there are two extra examiners available for this oral test.
- 6.7.6 The separate Groundsman Examination will be conducted by **two examiners.**

Pass Rate: **50% overall**



7. SIMULATIONS

7.1 *Simulation 1*

7.1.1 Simulation 1 will consist of an **explanation and demonstration in a practical way** of arboricultural operations. Each simulation will last between **20 and 30 minutes** and will be conducted by two examiners.

7.1.2 The subjects for Simulation 1 will be chosen from:

- **Pruning Young Trees**
- **Planting / Transplanting**
- **“Small” Tree Inspection.**

7.1.3 For every exam the simulation choice must change.

Pass Rate: **50% overall**



7.2 Simulation 2

7.2.1 Simulation 2 will consist of an **explanation and demonstration in a practical way** of arboricultural operations. Each simulation will last between **20 and 30 minutes** and will be conducted by two examiners.

7.2.2 The subjects for Simulation 2 will be chosen from:

- **Crown Stabilisation (Tree Bracing)**
- **Felling & Rigging**
- **Protection of Trees on Construction Sites**

7.2.3 For every exam the simulation choice must change.

Pass Rate: **50% overall**



7.3 Simulation 3

Aerial Rescue Test (Optional)

- 7.3.1 Simulation 3 is optional and only applicable where there is **no formal Certification for Aerial Rescue** in the candidate's country and should be conducted by two examiners.
- 7.3.2 An explanation and demonstration of technique to rescue a person from a tree or a MEWP **will then be required in a practical way.**
- 7.3.3 The emergency situation requiring an Aerial Rescue (Climbing) will be selected by the examiner from a **choice of three situations** contained on the Aerial Rescue Score Sheet.
- 7.3.4 The examiner is **not allowed** to take over the role of the injured **climber / dummy.**

Pass Rate: **50% overall.**



8. CERTIFICATION

- 8.1 A **pass rate of 50% for all parts** of the examination is required.
- 8.2 With the exception of a **pass rate of 67%** for the **Tree Identity** Examination.
- 8.3 Candidates will only have **successfully passed** the complete examination (**including Simulation 3** where applicable) when the above results have been achieved.
- 8.4 Candidates may **retake** individual parts of the examination, in which they have not achieved the pass rate, **twice**. This must be after a **minimum of one month** or a **maximum of two years** following the initial examination.



9. RECERTIFICATION

- 9.1 The European Tree Worker Certificate is **valid for three years** from the date of issue, but can **be renewed** for a further three years by the EAC only if the certified European Tree Worker can provide:
- 9.1.1 Proof of practical **tree care work** (i.e. climbing work or MEWP / platform work), in 24 of the previous 36 months
 - 9.1.2 Proof of a valid qualification in **first aid**
 - 9.1.3 Proof of **physical and mental ability** to carry out tree work at height, with a current **medical certificate**
- 9.2 **Applications** must be made in writing to the national coordination office and must include the required documents of proof and the appropriate payment.
- 9.3 **Recertification** can only be approved up to December 31, one year after the expiry date of the certification.
- 9.4 **After expiry date**, the candidate's name on the EAC Register will be marked **"to be renewed"**.
- 9.5 If the certificate has not been renewed **by this date**, the European Tree Worker examination **must be retaken**.



9.6 The national board can make an **exception if recertification has not been possible** for reasons such as military draft, maternity leave, etc.

9.6.1 The national board, at their discretion, can **refuse recertification** for reasons such as:

- unsafe work
- unprofessional work
- unprofessional conduct.

Certification and Quality Management (CQM)

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