

EPSO Written Test Response **Template** (sample)

Use Case: Briefing Note for Internal Commission Audience (e.g., Head of Unit)

Subject:

[Insert Clear and Informative Subject Line] (e.g., “Environmental Implications of the Clean Industrial Deal”)

1. Introduction – Context and Purpose

2–3 sentences

- Briefly state the context of the Communication /Regulation /Document.
- Clarify the objective of the note from your policy angle.

Example:

The Commission’s Communication “Delivering the Clean Industrial Deal” outlines a strategy to reconcile industrial competitiveness with climate goals. This note assesses its environmental implications and relevance to DG Environment priorities.

2. Summary of Key Relevant Points

One paragraph

- Identify the most relevant elements of the document in relation to the environment.
- Focus on actions, proposals, timelines, or instruments that affect environmental policy.

Example:

The Communication proposes actions to scale up clean technologies, streamline permitting for green infrastructure, integrate circular economy principles, and introduce green public procurement standards. The launch of the Industrial Decarbonisation Bank and revised state aid rules further aim to support industry’s green transition.

3. Assessment: Strengths & Opportunities

One paragraph

- Highlight areas where the proposal supports EU environmental/climate goals.
- Mention coherence with EU Green Deal, circular economy, etc.
- Use EU policy terms: mainstreaming, synergies, sustainability, resilience.

Example:

The CID supports mainstreaming environmental objectives in industrial policy by aligning with the circular economy agenda and fostering green innovation. Public procurement measures and investment tools present opportunities to enhance the environmental performance of EU industries.

4. Assessment: Risks & Limitations

One paragraph

- Identify shortcomings, implementation risks, or vague aspects.
- Raise DG ENV concerns: e.g. biodiversity, environmental safeguards, impact assessments.

Example:

The focus on competitiveness and expedited permitting may risk weakening environmental safeguards. Limited

detail on enforcement mechanisms and potential trade-offs between industrial acceleration and environmental integrity merit further attention.

5. Conclusion & Recommendation

2–3 sentences

- Summarise the strategic relevance.
- If appropriate, suggest a next step or internal follow-up.

Example:

The Communication presents a strategic opportunity for DG ENV to influence the green orientation of industrial policy. Close coordination across DGs will be essential to ensure that environmental safeguards remain robust during implementation.

This template is based on the methodology of the book EPSO Unlocked: Strategy, Substance & Success. Find the complete handbook, featuring dozens of examples, 180 original challenging questions and access to the online portal (<https://postgradsuccess.org/epso-unlocked-portal>), here: <https://fylatos.com/shop/epso-unlocked> and here: <https://www.amazon.com/EPSo-Unlocked-Strategy-Substance-Success/dp/9606583937>

EPSO Scoring Checklist (Self or Peer Review)

Criterion	Checklist
Content	Are all elements addressed (summary, assessment, risks)? Are points relevant to the brief?
Structure	Is the text logically organised? Are paragraphs used effectively?
Style & Register	Is tone professional, concise, and Commission-appropriate?
Language	Is grammar accurate? Is vocabulary formal and fluent (e.g. “mainstreaming”, “synergies”)?

Bonus Student Tips

- Time management: Spend 10 min on notes/plan, 25 min writing, 5 min revising.
- Tone: You are not a campaigner — you're a policy officer writing to your superior.
- Don't waffle: One strong point, clearly stated, beats three vague ones.
- Be cautious, not fluffy: Praise when deserved, but raise issues tactfully.