

[DFA, March 17, 1992]

RULES AND GUIDELINES IN THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS FOR THE CAREER FOREIGN SERVICE CORPS

Pursuant to Title VI of Republic Act 7157, otherwise known as the Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991, approved on 21 September and which took effect on 11 October 1991, the Board hereby adopts the following Rules to carry out the provisions of the Act on matters pertaining to the Board:

Article I Organization

SECTION 1. The Board of Foreign Service Examinations shall be composed of the following:

Chairman: Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs
Members: Assistant Secretary, DFA Office of Personnel and
Administrative Services
Commissioner, Civil Service Commission
Board Director, Foreign Service Institute
Secretary:

SECTION 2. A Secretariat shall assist the Board so that it can perform its functions efficiently. It shall be composed of a Foreign Service Officer and a staff to be assigned by the Secretary.

SECTION 3. An Assistant Board Secretary shall be appointed to oversee the work of the Secretariat and assist the Board Secretary on all relevant tasks and responsibilities.

SECTION 4. In the event that there is no official Board Secretary, which may happen when the position of Director of the Foreign Service Institute is vacant, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs may designate a foreign Service Officer as Acting Board Secretary.

Article II Functions

SECTION 1. The Board shall conduct examinations for Career Ministers, Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), Foreign Service Staff Officers (FSSOs) and Foreign Service Staff Employees (FSSEs). The examinations for Career Ministers and the Foreign Service Officers shall be done at least once a year. The examinations for FSSOs and FSSEs shall be done at least once in every two (2) years or whenever necessary.

SECTION 2. The Board shall determine the subjects for the examinations it will

give. It shall also be responsible in preparing and grading the examination papers on the specified subjects. Through the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, it shall seek the assistance of competent officers in government service and of other governmental institutions for the formulation of the examination questions and the checking of the test papers.

SECTION 3. The Board shall facilitate the giving of psychological examinations to the examinees. The psychological examinations should test, among others, the examinees' stress points, emotional stability and overall fitness for higher responsibilities.

SECTION 4. The Board shall announce the final ratings of the examinees and, thereafter,

a. shall recommend to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for appointment by the President of the Philippines, as Foreign Service Officers, Class IV those who successfully passed the examinations.

b. shall certify to the Board of Foreign Service Administration the nominees for the position of Career Ministers.

c. shall certify to the Office of Personnel and Administrative Services, which will later recommend them to the Board of Foreign Service Administration, the names of the career Foreign Service Staff Officers and Foreign Service Staff Employees who have successfully passed the examinations given them.

SECTION 5. The Board shall set the necessary qualification standards and requirements for all applicants to the examinations.

SECTION 6. It shall also set all pertinent rules which shall govern the examination process and the giving of the final passing marks.

SECTION 7. It shall continually review, whenever necessary, these examination systems for purposes of assessing their relevance, effectiveness, and validity given the changing conditions and needs of the service. Special studies may be conducted and assistance from the Foreign Service Institute or other government institutions and experts may be solicited.

SECTION 8. It shall meet at least once in every six (6) months or whenever the Board Chairman calls for one.

Article III

Qualifications of Examination Applicants

SECTION 1. The Board shall enforce the following basic requirements for applicants to the examinations:

a. **For Career Ministers:** Foreign Service Officers, Class 1, who have completed at least two (2) years of "very satisfactory" service in the rank.

b. **For Foreign Service Officers, Class IV:**

- b.1. Academic Training — holder of at least a 4-year Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent;
- b.2. Practical Experiences — preferably those who have had two (2) years of work experience from the time the Bachelor's Degree was received;
- b.3. Must be less than 36 years old at the date of the examinations;
- b.4. Filipino citizen and a permanent resident of the Philippines; and
- b.5. Physically and psychologically fit, and of good moral character.

c. **For Foreign Service Staff Officers:** Examinations shall qualify applicants to be appointed to FSSO Rank IV (lowest rank). The examinations shall be competitive and shall therefore be open to personnel of the Department and to outsiders.

- c.1. Academic Training: Bachelor's degree;
- c.2. Must not be more than 35 years old at the date of the examination;
- c.3. Must be a Filipino citizen and a permanent resident of the Philippines; and
- c.4. Physically and mentally fit, and of good moral character.

d. For Foreign Service Staff Employees: Examinations shall be to FSSE III (lowest rank). The examinations shall be open to personnel of the Department and to outsiders.

- d.1. Academic Training: Completed at least three (3) years of college work;
- d.2. At least 20 but not more than 30 years of age;
- d.3. Must be a Filipino citizen and a permanent resident of the Philippines; and
- d.4. Mentally and physically fit, and of good moral character.

e. Common Provisions on Qualifications

- e.1. Marriage Status — A Filipino of either sex who is married to an alien may not take examinations unless there is a written consent of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs.
- e.2. Age Limit — Any person holding a responsible position in the service, meaning the Department of Foreign Affairs or the Foreign Service Institute, for at least two (2) years prior to