EQE 2025 – survey summary

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1. Executive summary

The European qualifying examination (EQE) took place from 11 to 21 March 2025, for the fifth time as a fully digital exam. Nearly 2,000 candidates sat one or more exams across two weeks. Following the exams, a comprehensive survey was conducted between 21 March and 7 April 2025 to collect feedback on candidates' experience, covering questions related to preparation, exam infrastructure, support, time management, diversity, and areas for improvement. This report summarises the main outcomes of this survey (25% response rate) and provides insights into developments vis-à-vis last year(s), along with candidates' impressions of the newly introduced module F.

This year's EQE marks a significant milestone in the evolution of the European qualification examination system. Central to this transformation is the launch of module F in 2025 reflecting the EQE's shift toward a progressive and modular structure, allowing candidates to build and demonstrate their skills step by step over three years, in a more flexible and structured way. While the EQE has been fully digital since 2021, with more than 17 000 exams sat to date and 3 500 candidates qualifying as professional representative digitally by 2025, the introduction of module F marks a shift from digital delivery to a modern modular exam.

The first implementation of module F was well received, setting a strong foundation for the continued evolution of the EQE towards fully modernised exam, reflecting the reform's principles of progressiveness, modularity, and competence-based evaluation. Feedback from stakeholders and from module F candidates who responded to the post-examination survey indicates that module F was well-balanced in both difficulty and time allocation, with 85% of survey respondents finding the time available sufficient. This supports the module's function as a suitable entry point early in the qualification journey.

Overall, EQE 2025 confirms a mature, stable digital examination: engagement with live sessions was high (89%), prior online experience is now the norm (75%), and the infrastructure scores strongly (average 90%). Key advantages of the digital format - such as convenience of sitting the exam at a place of their own choice, reduced travel time and costs as well as better balance of personal and professional commitments - received strong ratings, with an average of over 87% of respondents giving favourable feedback

In summary, positive assessment was given for the online EQE and its aspects. High satisfaction levels were reported for the activation of the examination flow/launch of lockdown browser (92%), availability of tutorials, FAQs, and documentation (91%), chat functionality (89%), and access to digital documentation (87%). These consistently high ratings across key exam settings indicate strong consolidation and broad acceptance of the digital examination format, especially since 66% of respondents were taking an EQE exam for the first time.

Despite clear guidance in the Instructions to candidates, 45% of respondents reported having used a corporate-managed computer – a figure consistent with previous years. This continues to be a leading cause of technical issues on candidates' side, primarily due to restricted administrator rights and corporate security settings. Such constraints often require the intervention of the company IT

department, which can result in lost examination time that is not recoverable, with potential consequences for candidate performance.

Satisfaction with support services has remained consistently high, with 87% rating positively the support from invigilators, followed by 82% for second-line support and 73% for technical support. These figures reflect a sustained consolidation of candidates' satisfaction levels.

The scheduling over five examination days distributed over a two-week period, with at least one rest day between the main papers as well as the duration of scheduled breaks for multi-part exams, were deemed effective by 73% of participants.

Time pressure remains to be perceived as the principal challenge for EQE candidates, with 65% indicating that additional time during the exam would have enhanced their performance. This proportion has remained consistent in recent years and has been one of the key concerns taken into account when designing the modernisation of the EQE.

In conclusion, the survey findings from 496 candidates reflect a consolidated positive perception of the digital examination system. The benefits continue to have a positive impact on candidates' flexibility, well-being, and accessibility, while also contributing to sustainability, diversity, and inclusion. The survey figures confirm that candidates are confident and comfortable with the digital format, although non-compliance with Instructions to candidates (e.g. use of corporate device) remains a source of avoidable risk.

2.   Introduction to the EQE 2025

- 1 985 candidates sat one or more exams within EQE 2025, receiving an invitation to the survey
- Five fully digital exams split over nine flows and two weeks
- 118 exam pages in each of the three official EPO languages
- 23.5 hours of examination over five days
- 34 online invigilators and a deployment force of 12 members for first- and second-level support
- Some 300 professionals involved in drafting the examinations and marking the answers
- Secure examination environment
- Audio and image invigilation
- Bidirectional invigilator-candidate communication channel

1 985 candidates
sitting > 3 900 exam papers

5 exams
split over 9 flows

118 exam pages
3 official EPO languages

>300 professionals involved,
including governance, drafting,
marking and quality

34 online invigilators
+ support team (12 members)

23.5 hours of
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3.   Assessment of the EQE 2025

3.1   Launching of module F

Participation patterns:

Exam preparation patterns show that 62% of respondents had taken a pre-examination by 2024, while 38% had not. 31% respondents sat module F, marking a strong start for the modernised EQE and highlighting the possibility of early start of the qualification journey.
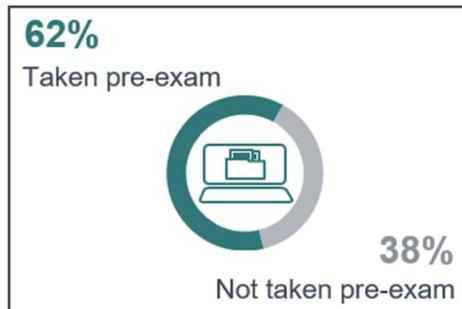
Perception of time availability and difficulty:

Module F was well-balanced in both difficulty and time allocation, with 85% of respondents finding the time available sufficient.
The overall ease of the exam, reported by 76% of candidates, especially in Part 2 (rated easiest by 85%), suggests that the progressive design effectively aligns with the intended entry-level competences and expectations of declarative knowledge.
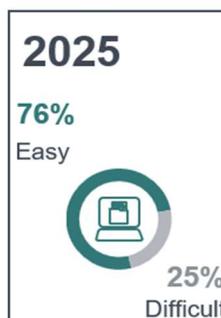
3.2   Preparation of candidates

Ahead of EQE 2025, several steps were taken, and documents provided to assist candidates in preparing fully digital EQE. The preparations included:

- Access to EQE compendium directly on WISEflow examination platform from mid-October 2024 onwards, enabling the candidates to familiarise themselves with the examination environment and examination formats early in their preparation journey, without time constraints or other restrictions.

- Providing supporting documentation and guidance, including:

    - A video with explanation to help ensure a smooth and successful online exam
    - A podcast series on the reformed EQE
    - A comprehensive dedicated EQE section on epo.org with extensive FAQs and EQE compendium with examiners' reports
    - Instructions to candidates
    - Code of conduct

- Total of four live sessions were offered on 23 January and 18 February 2025, with both morning and afternoon slots available each day to allow all candidates to find a suitable time. An average of 89% of survey participants took part in one of the sessions, which provided an opportunity to check the technical setup and – new this year – complete a set of practical exercises. The latter made the session format more interactive, requiring candidates to practice the use of key features and functionalities, such as accessing and copying information from external sources, contacting the invigilator, and actively using the functionalities that are essential during the exams.
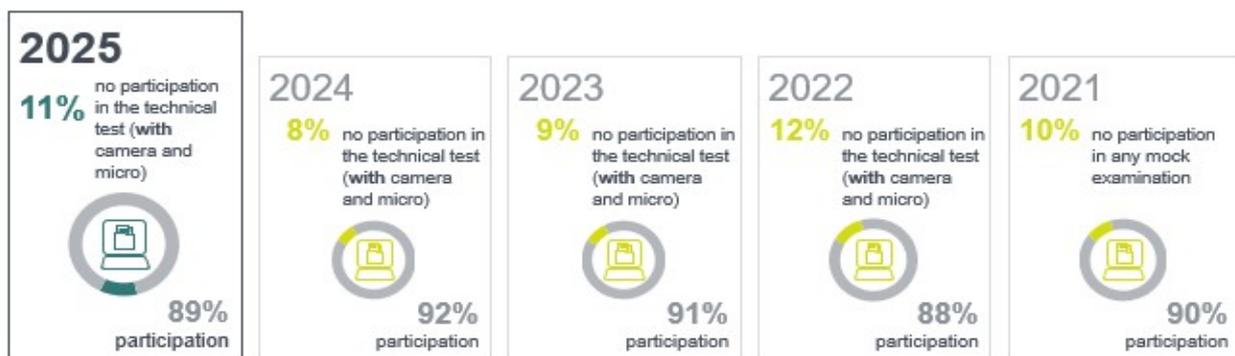
While most candidates participated in one of the live sessions, 42% considered that such participation should not be compulsory (vs 36% in 2024).

2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
58% demand training on digital tools	64% demand training on digital tools	63% demand training on digital tools	67% demand training on digital tools	80% demand training on digital tools
42% not necessary	36% not necessary	37% not necessary	33% not necessary	20% not necessary

The consistent figures across 2022–2025 show that experience with online exams has consolidated at a strong level with 75% of respondents indicating experience in online exams. The steadily high share of experienced digital exam takers reflects how digital literacy have become a norm among EQE candidates over the past few years – a key skill for a professional representative before the EPO.

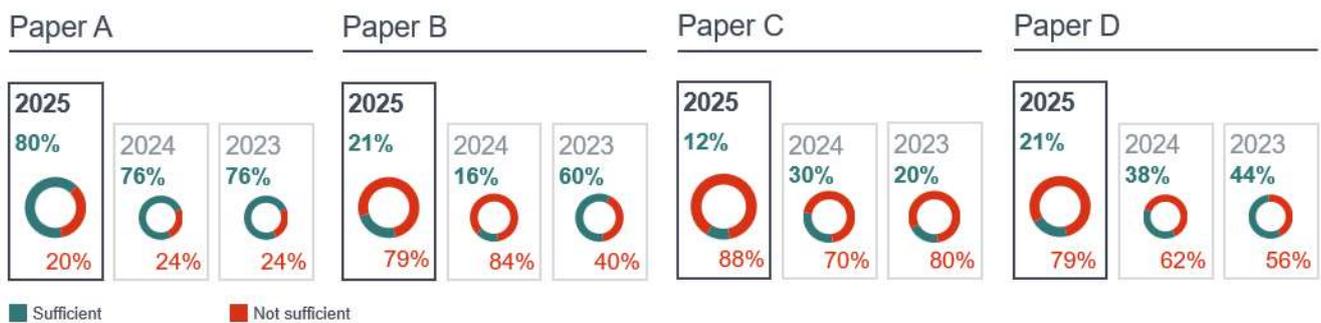| 2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
75% experience in online exams	76% experience in online exams	75% experience in online exams	79% experience in online exams	23% experience in online exams
25% no experience	24% no experience	25% no experience	21% no experience	77% no experience

3.3   Time constraints

The scheduling of five examination days over a two-week period, with at least one rest day between the main papers, was deemed effective by 73% of participants. Likewise, 73% found the scheduled break periods between parts of multi-part exams sufficient, while emphasising the scope of certain papers relative to the time allotted. This suggests that the adjusted scheduling and pacing of breaks are largely meeting candidate's needs.

Time constraints continue to be highlighted as a significant challenge by EQE candidates, with 65% indicating in 2025 that additional time during the exam would have improved their performance - a proportion that has remained consistent in recent years and was one of the drivers for the modernisation of the EQE.

A look at the past editions shows consistent patterns. Paper A has maintained consistently well-balanced with 76% to 80% of candidates finding the time sufficient, while Paper B, after a decline in 2024, showed an increase by 5% of positive perception in 2025. Paper C continues to be regarded as the most time-pressured, with 12%, and Paper D, although showing a decrease, still has around 21% of candidates reporting sufficient time.

Paper A			Paper B			Paper C			Paper D		
2025	2024	2023	**2025**	2024	2023	**2025**	2024	2023	**2025**	2024	2023
80%	**76%**	**76%**	**21%**	**16%**	**60%**	**12%**	**30%**	**20%**	**21%**	**38%**	**44%**
20%	24%	24%	79%	84%	40%	88%	70%	80%	79%	62%	56%

■ Sufficient   ■ Not sufficient

3.4   Infrastructure

Candidates gave consistently high ratings to key examination settings indicating a clear consolidation and acceptance of the digital examination format.

Across all evaluation indicators, candidates assessed the setting of the EQE 2025 more positively than in previous editions, continuing the upward trend observed since the first fully digital EQE in 2021 as in the below overview:
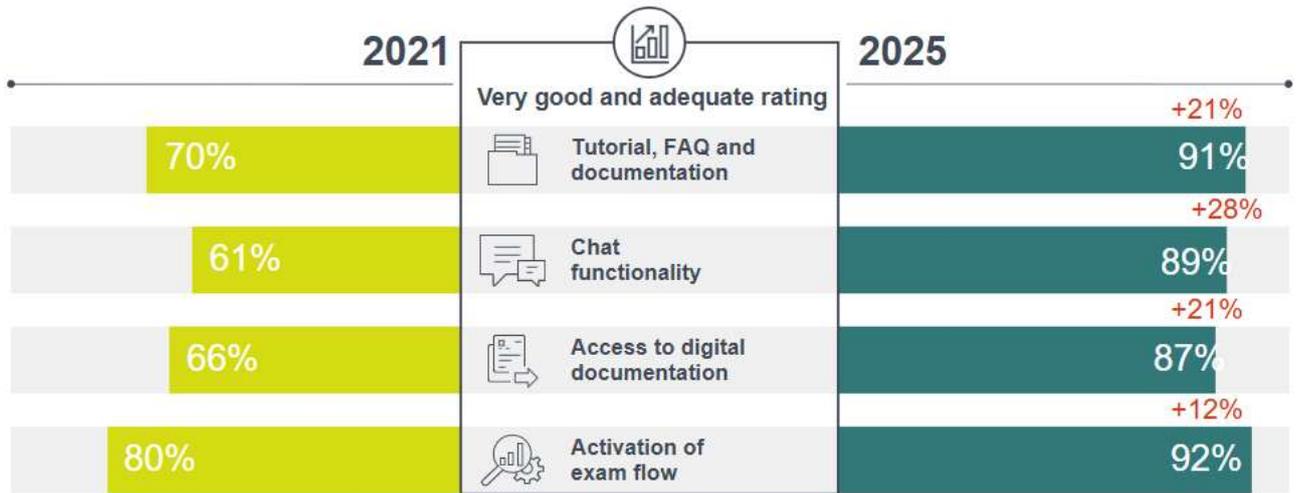
Robust positive assessment was given for lockdown browser (92%) and digital documentation (87%), which are particularly notable results considering 66% of first-sitters participating in the survey.
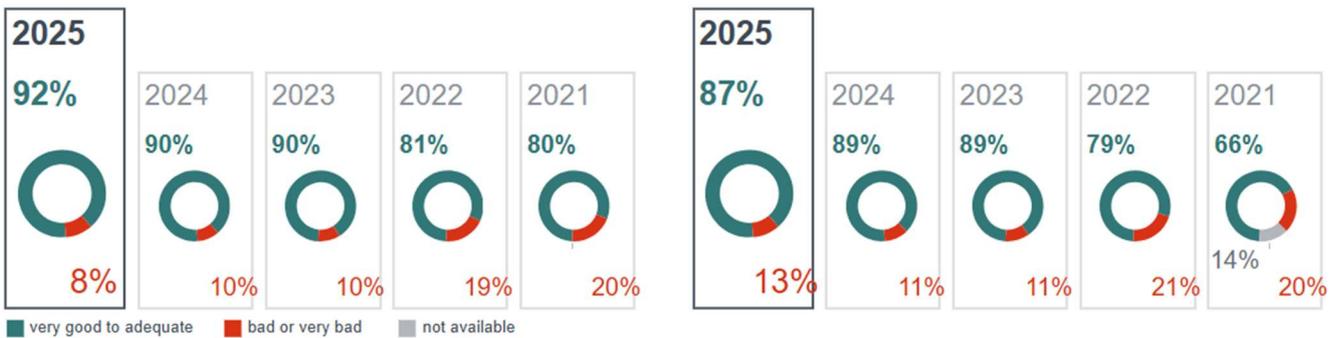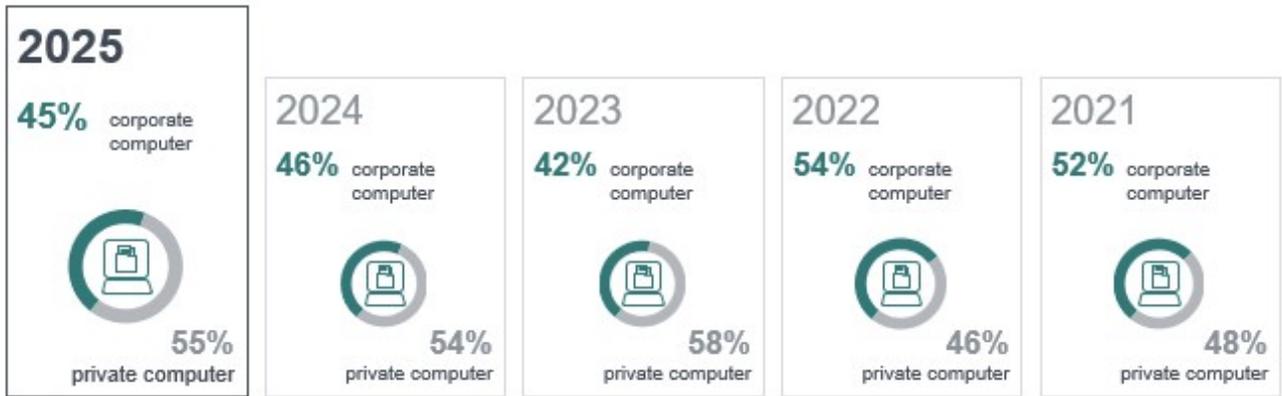

Use of corporate computers for the examination:

Prior to EQE 2025, guidance provided to the candidates explained that corporate environments might include security features impacting the system performance. Candidates were provided opportunities to test their systems in advance in live sessions and strongly recommended to use private computers for the exam. When asked, 45% of the candidates who nevertheless took the exam in a corporate environment reported problems potentially due to corporate settings and security features. The deployment force observed that most individual technical issues experienced during the exam were reported by candidates who sat the exam in a corporate environment, adversely to the Instructions to candidates.

2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
45% corporate computer	46% corporate computer	42% corporate computer	54% corporate computer	52% corporate computer
55% private computer	54% private computer	58% private computer	46% private computer	48% private computer

46% indicated to have experienced technical issues with corporate computer due to limited administrator rights and corporate security features, requiring support of their company's IT department.

2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
54% No	77% No	93% No	80% No	66% No
46% Yes	23% Yes	7% Yes	20% Yes	34% Yes

Candidates are required to ensure compliance with Instructions to candidates. In case of non-compliance, the responsibility rests with the candidate and any examination time lost is not recoverable.

3.5   Service

Comprehensive support has been available via three lines of support: invigilators, second-line and technical teams.

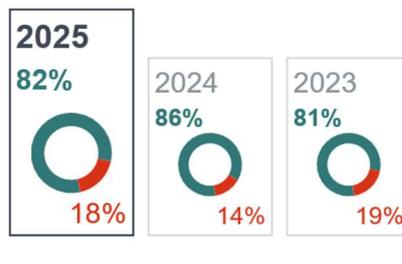Invigilators   2nd line   Technical support

Candidates' overall satisfaction with support services has consistently ranged high over the last years of exams. Recent data indicates a consolidation of these high satisfaction levels with invigilators at 87%, with 2nd line of support at 82% and with dedicated technical support at 73%.
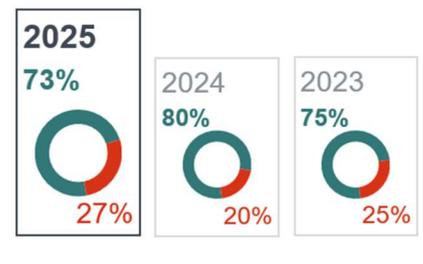

Support by the invigilators

2025
87%

2024
92%

2023
91%

13%   8%   9%

Support by the 2nd line

2025
82%

2024
86%

2023
81%

18%   14%   19%

Technical support

2025
73%

2024
80%

2023
75%

27%   20%   25%

■ very good to adequate   ■ bad or very bad

A bidirectional invigilator-candidate communication channel was available throughout the exams. In practice, this meant that if a candidate encountered a problem, they could quickly alert an invigilator via chat, and conversely invigilators could reach out to candidates, if they detected any issue, such as a potential rule breach. This immediate communication was cited by respondents as reassuring and efficient. Survey comments frequently mentioned the promptness of responses, addressing raised issues.

Candidates also noted that the procedures (ID checks, environment scans, etc) were handled professionally and that the presence of invigilators did not interfere with their concentration. The invigilators could also broadcast timely announcements, which worked well. No major complaints about invigilation were recorded in the survey, while many candidates thanked the invigilators for their support and clear instructions.

3.6   Diversity and Inclusion
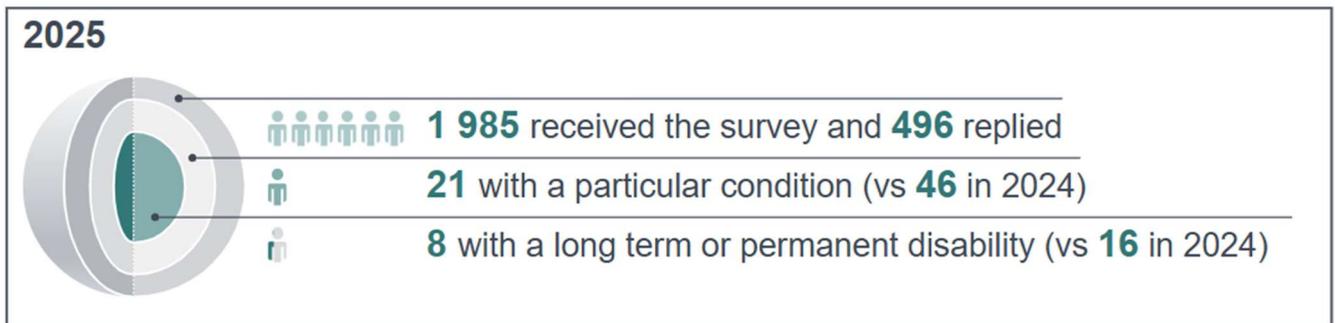
21 candidates reported that at the time of the examination they suffered from a particular condition that impacted their ability to participate in the examination and required special accommodations. Fewer than half of these candidates stated that they benefit from adjustments in their workplace.

The main types of conditions reported were medical conditions (9 candidates vs 21 in 2024), mental health difficulties (7 candidates vs 11 in 2024) and pregnancy (1 candidate vs 6 in 2024). A small number of candidates required specific accommodations, such as the use of a diabetes device or wearing specialised glasses.

The consistently low number of reported special-needs cases suggests that existing measures continue to provide appropriate support, ensuring equitable examination conditions.

4. General advantages of online examination

Survey participants were asked for their personal assessment of online examinations in general and in terms of advantages, such as the comfort of sitting the papers at a place of one's choice, being able to use a computer to type the answers, saving travel time, saving travel costs, limiting health risks, avoiding issues with travel logistics (e.g. strikes, weather) and providing for a better balance between family and work-related commitments.

In summary, the candidates rated most of the advantages consistently better since the first fully digital EQE in 2021 reaching up to 90% of positive replies by survey respondents after EQE 2025. This evolution since the first fully digital EQE is reflected as follows:

Comfort of writing the test at a place of own choice	Being able to use a computer to type in the answers	Better balance family and work
2025 87% +11% 2021 76% 13% 24%	2025 90% +11% 2021 79% 10% 21%	2025 77% +16% 2021 61% 23% 39%

Save travel time	Avoid issues with travel logistics (e.g. strikes, weather, ...)	Save travel costs
2025 90% +18% 2021 72% 10% 28%	2025 88% +15% 2021 73% 12% 27%	2025 89% +22% 2021 67% 11% 33%

■ ■ very important, important, somewhat important   ■ neutral, non-important

Preparing for and taking the EQE is demanding. Candidates valued being able to keep their routine and the comfort of using their own desk, chair, and set-up, which candidates mentioned as an advantage, reducing stress and fatigue. They also appreciated the benefit of avoiding large gatherings, especially for those with health concerns, reporting that remote exam participation provided peace of mind. Many who had experience with paper-based exam highlighted the possibility to type answers and to use digital search functions as huge improvements.

Importantly, these advantages were noted among both those who passed and those who failed, indicating that the digital format is not seen as an impediment to success, but as a modern and firmly embedded standard for delivery.
Taken together, the responses reinforce that digital tools can support performance, when used effectively, including practising with the EQE compendium in WISEflow during preparation for the exams.

5. Improvements

Feedback from stakeholders and from module F candidates indicates that module F was well-balanced in both difficulty and time allocation. Notably, 85% of survey respondents considered the time available sufficient, contrasting the assessment of main papers ranging between 12% and 66% (see chapter 3.3 above). This supports the module's function as a suitable entry point early in the qualification journey, in line with the EQE reform's commitment to educational quality and pedagogical integrity. The early result availability helps candidates to better plan their next steps, including sitting modules M1 and M2 in 2026, following the progressive approach.

Top three features that candidates felt could be improved were the duration of papers (66%), the text editor (52%), the format of the papers (46%). Among further improvements respondents indicated printing (31%), communication with invigilators (29%) and scheduling of papers (23%).

Among experienced candidates who had taken the exam in the previous year, 73% rated the EQE system positively demonstrating strong confidence in its reliability. With 56% noting consistent performance and 17% recognising clear improvements, the results highlight the platform's stability and adaptability.

The **EQE 2025** improved, greatly improved or stayed the same

73%

Functionalities and performance

The **EQE 2024** improved, greatly improved or stayed the same

86%

Functionalities and performance

The **EQE 2023** improved or greatly improved the functionalities

93%

Functionalities and performance

The **EQE 2022** improved or greatly improved the functionalities

79%

Share of participants who sat the exam in **2021** and re-sat the exam in **2022**

■ ■ improved, greatly improved or stayed the same compared to previous year　■ worsened