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**HEARING AID COUNCIL**

**OBJECTIVE STRUCTURED  
PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS.**

**OSPEs 2007(2)**

**MODERATOR'S REPORT  
MARCH 2008**

**G R Kirk**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the tenth report to the Hearing Aid Council on the HAC practical examinations (main practical examination and early resits for the practical examination) and will focus on only the practical examinations comprising the 2007(2) examination cycle. A separate report looks at the Written Examinations for 2007(2).

Procedures carried out were similar to those used by the Moderator to produce reports on previous examinations and includes comments from the invigilator's team, candidates, their trainers and members of the examining team.

The Hearing Aid Council's "**Protocol for Conducting Examinations**" - approved by Council 29.09.2005 (PFCE) was the guide document for running these examinations and will be used as the basis for this report. Once again, it is to the credit of the examining team, invigilators and the partnership between Hearing Aid Council staff and staff from Anglia Ruskin University that these examinations went smoothly.

## 2. MAIN EXAMINATIONS – OSPEs (26<sup>th</sup> –30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2007)

- a) This was the fifth time that the practical examinations were held in the format of **Objective Structured Practical Examinations** (OSPEs). Once again, from the candidates' point of view, the OSPEs ran without any serious mishap.
- b) A full examiners' meeting took place on the evening of Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 2007 in Kents Hill Conference Centre, Milton Keynes.
- c) 114 candidates attended the OSPEs in 8 sessions over 5 days in the Kents Hill Conference Centre, Milton Keynes. Individual arrangements were made for a number of candidates.
- d) The Invigilator, Sue Gray, has provided detailed written comments about the practicals. The duplication of software at Stations 5 & 6 was handled efficiently by all concerned.
- e) The Chief Examiner has provided a full and detailed report on the main OSPEs and the resits with comments from each examiner on each station. An analysis and overview of the pass rates still shows that there is relatively poor performance at Stations 7, 9 & 13.
- f) As is common practice, all stations were marked at the end of each session, pooled during the examiners' meetings each day and stored on the Chief Examiner's and Moderator's computers.
- g) There is precise and specific paperwork associated with the running of the OSPE stations. A sample of candidates' assessment/mark sheets were scrutinised by the Moderator to ensure that routine arithmetic is accurate within the assessment sheets and that the transfer of the scores into the master mark sheet is accurate. Due to the pace of work and the numbers involved going

through the practical examination, some consideration should be given to developing a checking procedure to ensure that the addition, collation and transfer of candidate's marks are done with accuracy and precision. No errors were noted by the Moderator during the scrutiny exercise but the sample size was small (5 candidates full OSPE assessment/mark sheets).

- h) An analysis of first time and resit pass rates for 4 training companies is attached to this report.

### **3. OSPE RE-SITS – 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2008**

As is customary, an examiners' meeting took place on the Sunday evening before the resits on 27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2008. Further discussion took place on the further changes needed to refine the OSPEs by separating stations 5 & 6 and stations 10 & 11. A final draft of the Information and Guidance leaflet for Candidates was produced by the Moderator for full discussion.

- (a) The OSPE resits were planned for 67 candidates.
- (b) There were no changes to the OSPE stations or marking schemes.
- (c) The resits were planned well and run efficiently without mishap.
- (d) A report on the OSPE resits was obtained from the Invigilator, Sue Gray.

### **4. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS**

A total of 35 candidates were interviewed by the Moderator over the two OSPE sessions. Many of the queries were similar and were concerned with practicalities at stations.

General comments on the change of venue were very positive.

Following the completion of the resits, some formal, written comments from a candidate were received by the Hearing Aid Council about an incident that occurred during the resits. The HAC has approached BSHAA and asked for an investigation to be carried out. The outcome of this investigation is still pending.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

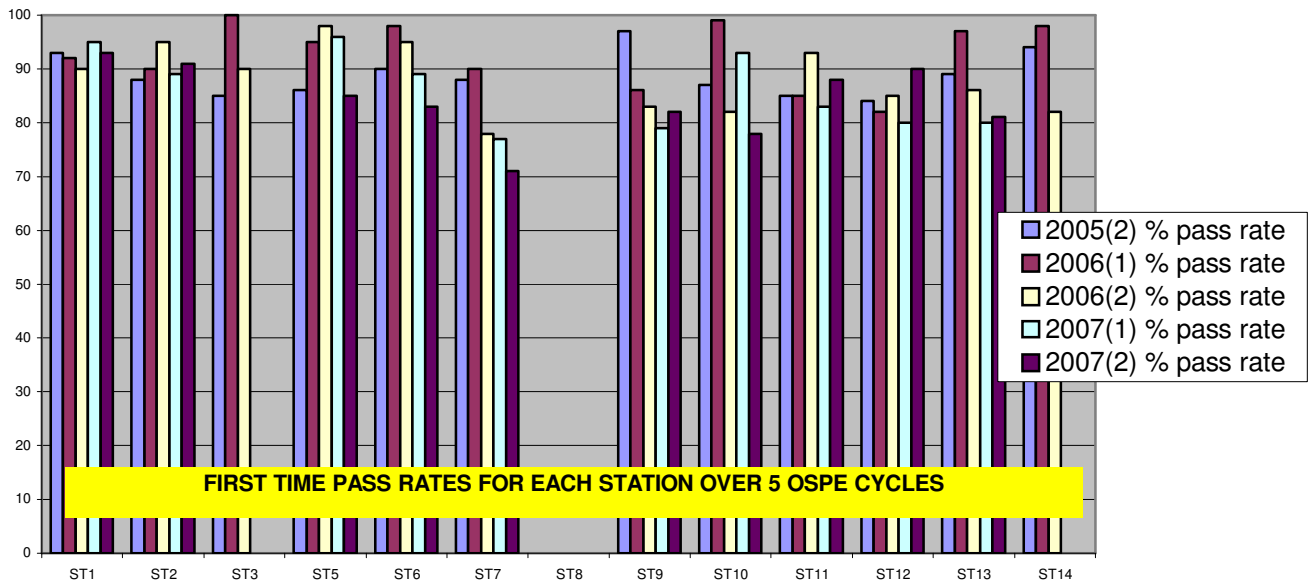
**The changes to the OSPE stations and the relocation of the practical examinations have been implemented and delivered efficiently and without mishap to any candidate.**

**There remain worrying results and trends from Stations 7, 9, and 13.**

**Further changes to the contents of the OSPE changes should now be planned for future OSPEs to incorporate the following changes:-**

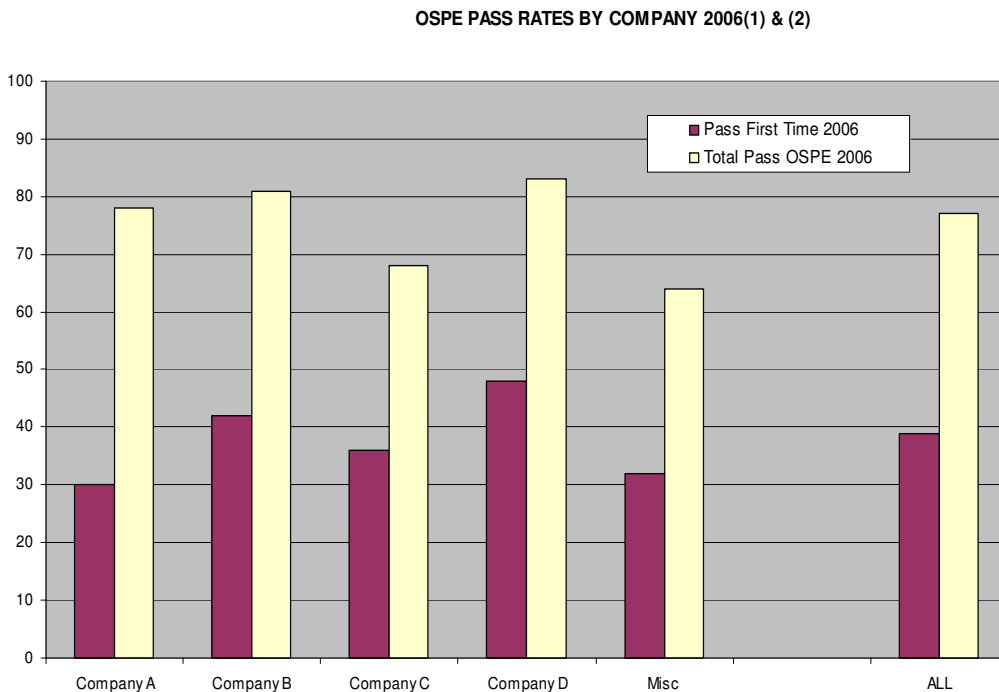
- a) Software and hearing aid upgrades for stations 5 & 6.**
- b) Layout and labelling of stations with a consideration of the number of rest stations and their position in the candidate's journey.**
- c) Revision of the Candidate Information and Guidance leaflet is largely completed and ready for release.**

**(Note: Following a recent joint meeting between examiners and trainers two main suggestions have been put forward to the HAC for consideration. The first suggestion concerns candidates who fail only ONE station. Consideration should be given to the idea that there should be an "immediate" resit within the OSPE day to allow those candidates to resit that one station. The second suggestion was that there should be a spare piece of tubing at Station 7).**

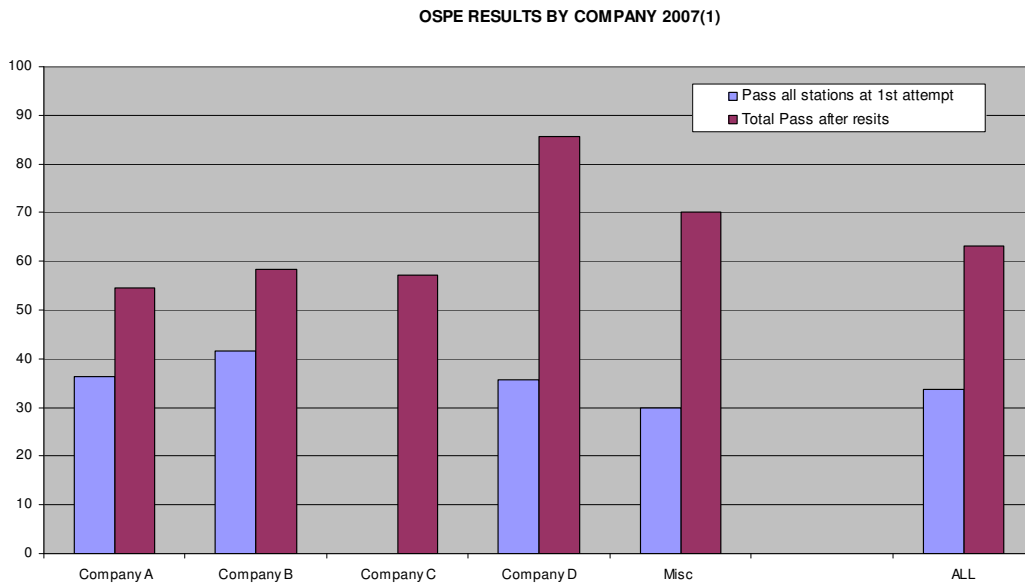


**Chart 1 Trends in First-time Pass Rates for OSPEs over 5 exam sets**

**Chart 2 2006 (1) & 2006 (2) OSPE Results for 4 Training Companies**



### Chart 3 2007(1) OSPE Results for 4 Training Companies



### Chart 4 2007(2) OSPE Results for 4 Training Companies

