
HEARING AID COUNCIL

**WRITTEN
EXAMINATIONS
2007(2)**

MODERATOR'S REPORT

Mar 2008

G R Kirk

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the tenth report to the Hearing Aid Council on the HAC examinations and this report will only consider the written 2007(2) examinations and a further report will deal with the practical examinations (OSPEs).

The Hearing Aid Council's "**Protocol for Conducting Examinations**" - approved by Council 29.09.2005 (PFCE) is still the guide document for running these examinations and will be used as the basis for this report.

2. WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

The written examinations took place in three venues - the Bishopsgate Institute and the Hearing Aid Council offices in London and one candidate sat the examination in St Catherine Hospital Doncaster. All three venues ran the examination on 3rd October 2007. There were 101 candidates taking Papers 1 & 2 and 12 candidates taking Paper 3. Sue Gray was the Invigilator.

- (a) The Moderator attended both sessions of the written examinations.
- (b) The venue was only just acceptable. Registration was a trifle busy with so many candidates. As many of the candidates had overnight bags registration took longer and there was much luggage. Security of candidates after registration was not adequate as some left the building before the examination started and then returned. Toilets were a fair distance away, the room was reverberant and many tables wobbled. There was not much space between the desks.
- (c) Completed examination scripts were collected, checked, sealed and given to ARU after the close of each session.
- (d) A total of 113 candidates sat the written papers. Papers 2 & 3 were answered in the morning with Paper 1 being answered in the afternoon.
- (e) There were no errors in the printed written papers. Following a previous joint meeting between examiners and trainers, the style of questions had been improved with more clarity on how marks have been allocated to the more detailed questions. However, one question did seem to be a little misplaced (1B4) so more care should be taken to ensure questions in the various sections are clearly pertinent to that section.
- (f) The Invigilator produced a report on the written examinations. Arrangements for candidates worked smoothly despite delivering the examination in three very different venues using a team of invigilators.

One candidate did not have his/her needs clearly identified before the examination and this was raised with the HAC at a later date. The responsibility for notifying the HAC of a candidate's particular requirements lies with the supervisor and trainers and must be notified to the HAC as soon as possible with supporting evidence and reports where appropriate

- (g) The candidates' scripts were marked by a team of experienced examiners.
- (h) Following the initial marking of the scripts, there were 5 borderline fails which were remarked by the original marker and second marked by the Moderator. There were 2 borderline distinctions which were similarly remarked and second marked. A further selection of 9 candidates' scripts was sampled and scrutinised by the Moderator to assess the spread of marks across Distinction, Pass, and Fail and monitor the consistent use of marking schemes.
- (i) In common with examination practice, a full report has been prepared by the Chief Examiner showing the spread of marks for each question and includes individual comments from examiners on each question. Frequency plots of marks for each question have been prepared and are attached to the Chief Examiner's report. There is an increasing amount of detail being included in the Chief Examiner's report and this should prove useful to all. The Chief Examiner has drawn attention to the spread of ability in answering questions, the sad fact that some candidates do not even answer the correct number of questions and the clear lack of candidate's understanding in some basic areas.
- (j) A frequency count, Chart 1, showing overall candidate's marks comparing 2007(1) and 2007(2) is attached. There is a clear shift downward in candidates marks for 2007(2)
- (k) The Chief Examiner's Report for the 2007(2) examinations includes a survey of pass rates for all examinations from 2002(2) to 2007(2). This shows that this current examination has the lowest pass rate since 2003(1). For convenience, Chart 2 showing the same data is attached to this report.
- (l) Chart 3 shows further analysis of 2007(2) results and shows pass rates, mean, minimum and maximum marks for 4 training companies. There does seem to be some variation between companies.
- (m) A further analysis of pass rates for the compulsory Code of Practice question is attached as Chart 4 and shows that considerable variation takes place between examinations and between trainee and aptitude candidates.

3. SUMMARY

- **The written examinations took place in October 2007 at two venues in London and one in Doncaster. The examinations were carried out in an organised and efficient manner by a team of invigilators led by Sue Gray and supported by the well-organised administrative team from Anglia Ruskin University. Scripts were marked by experienced examiners who have been working with the Council over a number of years. The marking schemes are precise and consistently applied by examiners.**
- **Attached is a frequency count showing the spread of total marks across the 101 trainees and compares these with marks from 2007(1)**
- **The pass rate for this examination is the lowest since 2003(1).**

- **There seems to be apparent differences in pass rates between 4 training companies**
- **The Code of Practice Compulsory question shows improved marks for both groups of candidates.**

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) **The administration and outcomes of the written examinations are similar to previous examinations. The examinations are well run and are likely to continue to be so in light of the smooth hand-over to ARU. There are some concerns over the change of venue to Bishopsgate and Central London.**

Chart 1. Frequency Count of Candidates Marks comparing 2007(1) and 2007(2)

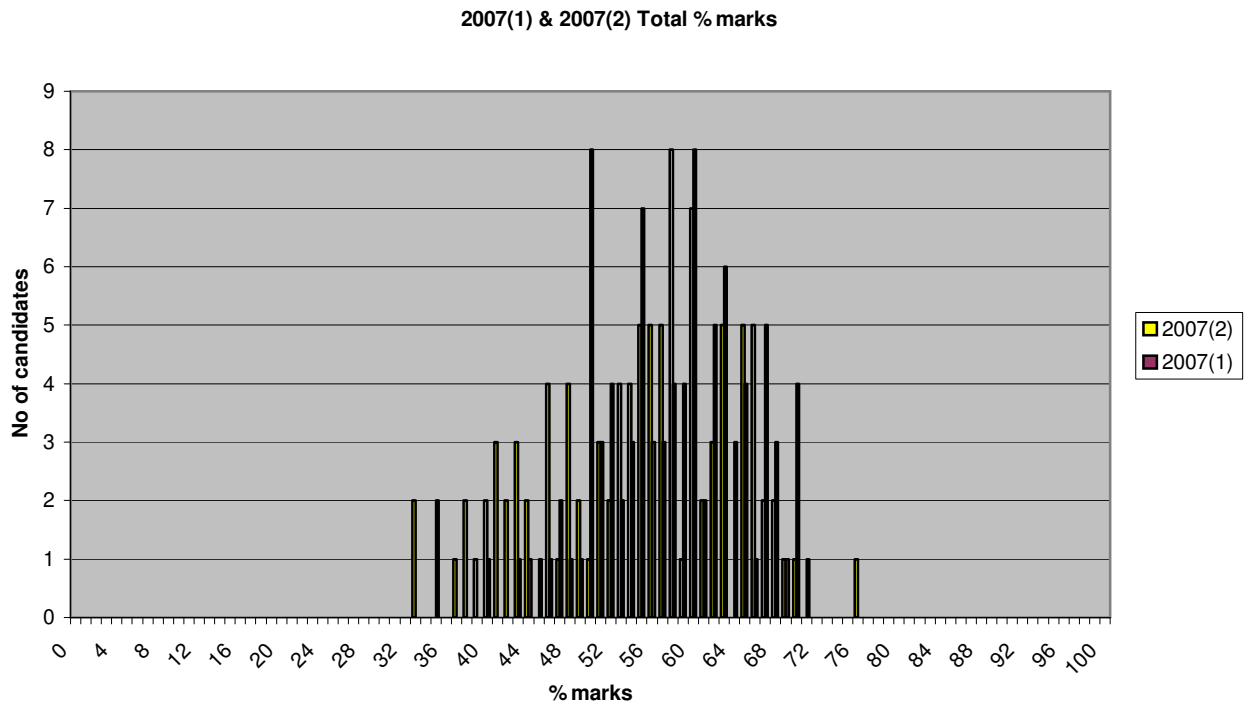


Chart 2. Trends in Pass Rates for Trainees.

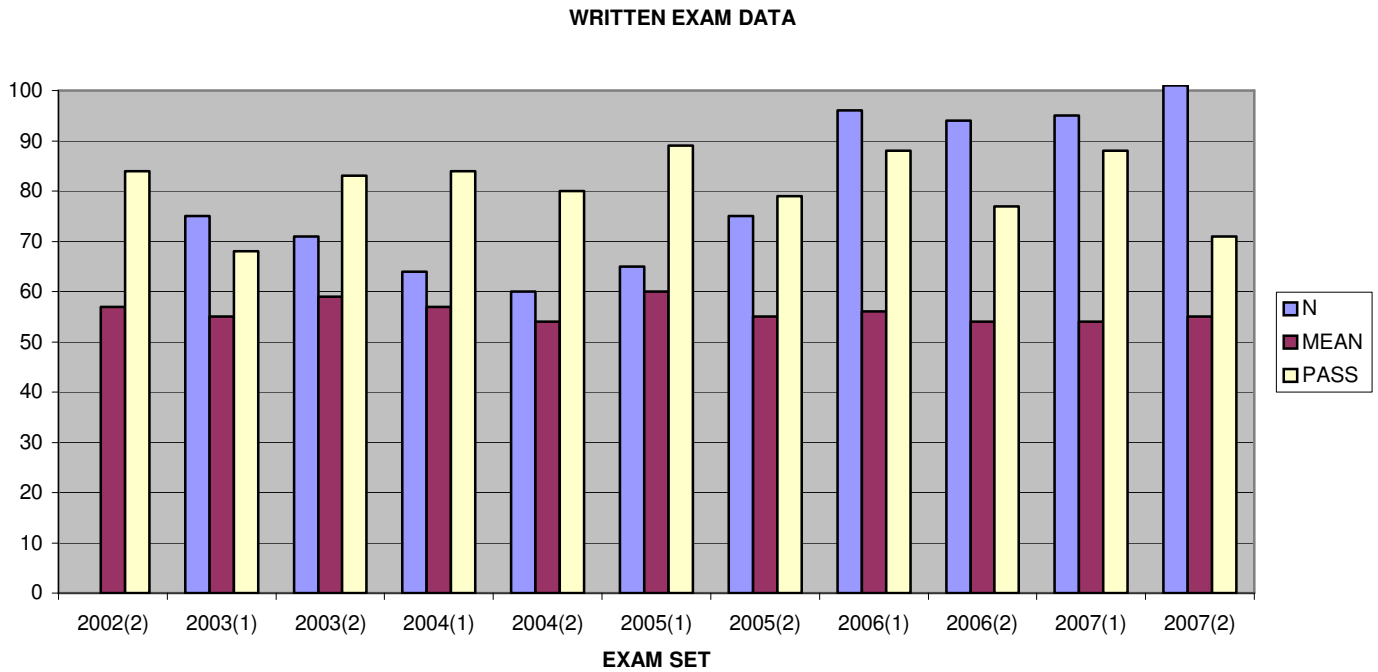


Chart 3. Pass Rates etc for 4 Training Companies

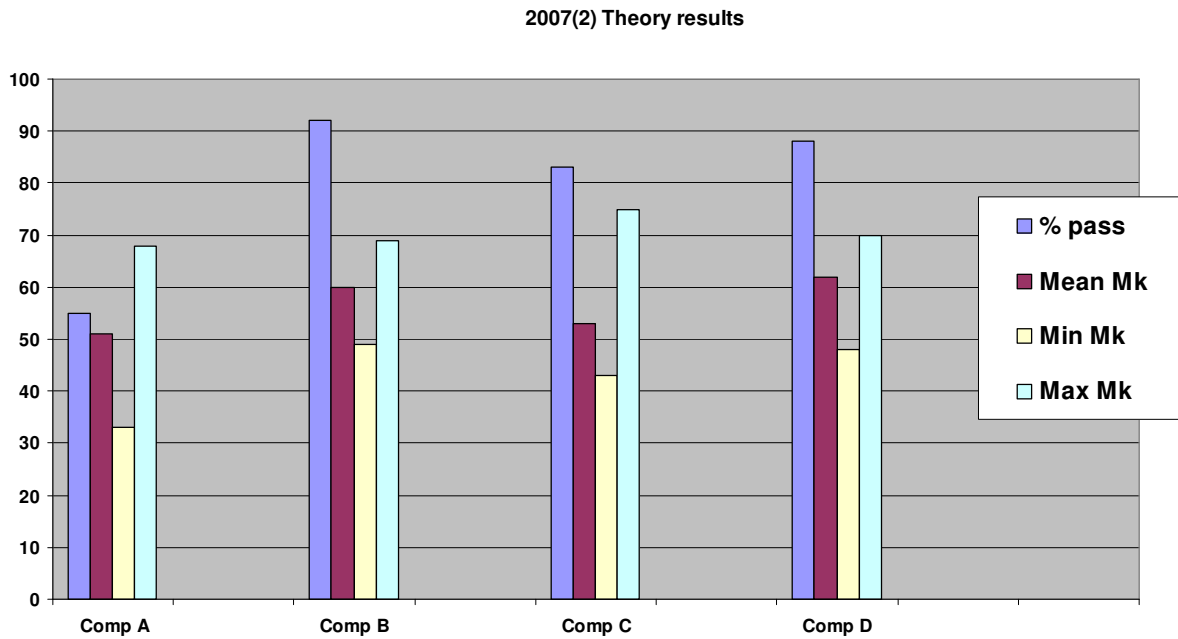


Chart 4 Pass Rates for Code of Practice compulsory question for Trainees and Aptitude Candidates

