Qualifying Test Feedback Report

131 Fee-paid Service Member First-tier Tribunal, War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Chamber (WPAFC Chamber)

June 2019

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide general feedback on candidate performance in the **Fee-paid Service Members of the First-tier Tribunal, War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Chamber 2019** online qualifying test. The report describes how the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) developed the test and marking schedule, and how the test was structured.

Additionally, it provides information on the overall performance of candidates in the test, identifying areas where they performed well and where they performed less well.

Competency framework

The test was designed to assess the following competencies:

- Exercising Judgement
- Working and Communicating with Others
- Managing Work Efficiently

The competencies were developed so that candidates could demonstrate the skills and abilities which were transferable to the role from other contexts. The specific bullet points under each competency heading were designed to reflect skills and abilities that an effective tribunal member is expected to have. This enables us to assess candidates in a fair and consistent way.

Development of the test

The test and marking schedule were devised by 3 tribunal judges from different chambers who work with non-legal members.

The JAC Advisory Group, which is composed of members of the judiciary and representatives of the legal profession, offered advice and guidance during its development.

In common with all qualifying tests used by the JAC, both the test and marking schedule were subject to an extensive quality – and equality – assurance process. The effectiveness of the test was assessed by means of a dry run with a range of volunteers, none of whom are legally qualified.

As with all the material developed for this exercise the online test was designed to assess relevant transferable skills to minimise the extent to which candidates might be advantaged or disadvantaged by their professional background.

Structure of the test

The qualifying test was an online multiple-choice test, comprising of 20 questions lasting for 45 minutes.

All of the situations used in the questions were hypothetical and no prior knowledge of rules or procedures was required. No advance reading was required. Candidates were not being assessed on whether or not they knew the right answer based on knowledge or experience. They were assessed on their reading of a situation and their ability to judge the effectiveness of different responses. There was Most appropriate and least appropriate answer to each question and they attracted1 point each.

Marking of the test

The test was marked automatically. Each question attracted 2 marks: 1 mark for the most appropriate and 1 mark for the least appropriate. A total of 40 marks was available for this test.

Distribution of marks

A total of 87 candidates took the test. Answers were scored automatically and a merit list was developed based on candidates' score.

The highest and lowest marks awarded are shown in the table below:

Test	Highest score	Lowest score
Situational judgement test	28/40 (2 candidates)	13/40 (1 candidate)

The test was clearly quite challenging because:

- no candidate scored the maximum possible marks
- only 2 candidates managed to score the highest mark of 70%

The average candidate score was as follows:

• lowest candidate score was equivalent to 33%
• highest candidate score was equivalent to 70%
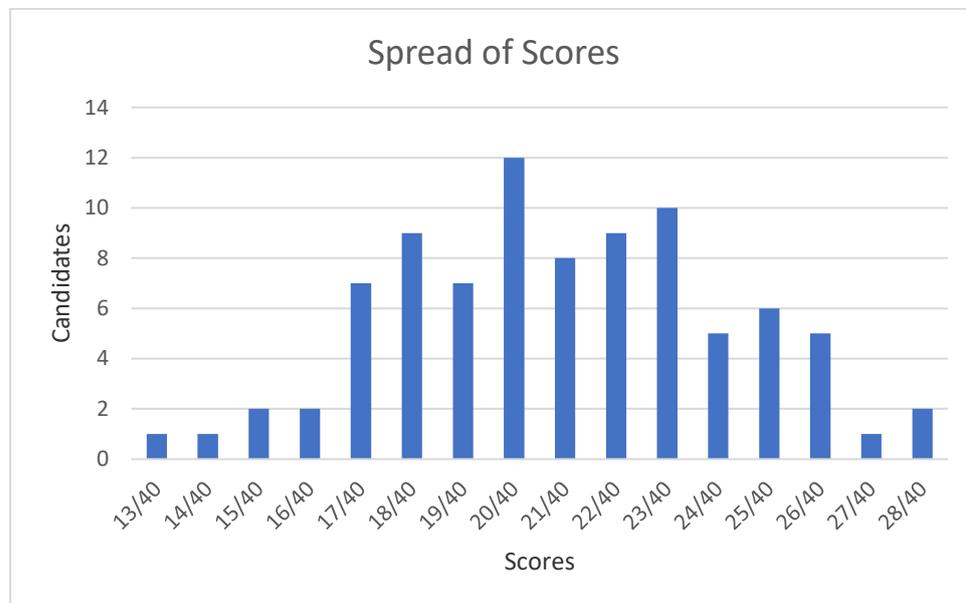• average candidate score was equivalent to 55%

The highest score was a question where 72 out of the 87 candidates got the 'most appropriate' answer correct and 66 out of the 87 candidates got the 'least appropriate' answer correct. In addition to this, there were 3 more questions where candidates achieved a score of 60% or more.

The lowest score was a question where no candidate got the 'most appropriate' answer correct and only 9 candidates got the 'least appropriate' answer correct.

There is not a fixed pass mark as such. The line is determined by how candidates' scores bunch once the test is complete. For example, a score of 28 points out of a possible maximum of 40 points in the test meant there were 2 people with the highest score and 85 other candidates below them. The final position in the

merit list depends on how strong the competitors were and how much bunching there is at the merit points, so the pass mark is relative, not fixed.

The chart below shows the spread of total scores:

Spread of Scores

Chart: Bar chart titled "Spread of Scores" showing the number of Candidates (y-axis, 0 to 14) against Scores (x-axis, 13/40 to 28/40):

Score	Candidates
13/40	1
14/40	1
15/40	2
16/40	2
17/40	7
18/40	9
19/40	7
20/40	12
21/40	8
22/40	9
23/40	10
24/40	5
25/40	6
26/40	5
27/40	1
28/40	2

Approach to shortlisting

When the JAC receives a vacancy request from HM Courts & Tribunals Service confirming how many vacancies there are for a post, we calculate how many candidates we need to take to selection day (usually at a ratio of 2 or 3 candidates interviewed for each vacancy). This allows us to estimate the number of candidates we need to progress after the shortlisting stages until we reach the selection day ratio. If 2 or more candidates have the same score we will take all those candidates through, this is what we call bunching

For this exercise we received a vacancy request to fill 9 posts. We therefore planned the selection exercise based on inviting around 25 candidates to selection day. However, once we examined the bunching of scores, we decided to take 33 candidates forward to selection day.

We do have a lower line below which candidates are automatically sifted out of the competition, this is usually a score of 30% or less on any part of the test

Feedback from candidates

After the qualifying test, candidates were invited to complete an anonymous candidate survey.

55 candidates responded to the survey. Based on the results of the candidate survey, when completing the test:

In terms of the difficulty of the test:

- around 38% of the candidates found it easy to complete the test
- around 5% of the candidates found it difficult to complete the test

Accessibility of the test online:

- around 42% of the candidates found it easy to access the test online
- around 3% of the candidates found it difficult to access the test online

In terms of understanding the instructions about the qualifying test:

- around 47% of the candidates found the instructions easy to understand
- around 2% of the candidates found it difficult to understand the instructions

In terms of qualifying test enabling how to tackle daily challenges working in a non-legal tribunal:

- around 40% of the candidates agreed
- around 13% of the candidates disagreed
- around 15% of the candidates were unsure

In terms of qualifying test accessibility, format, language used and topics covered:

- around 38% of the candidates found the qualifying test were useful
- around 4% of the candidates found the qualifying test were not useful