

National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification, Inc.
Report on the 1996 Certification Examination

During the 1996 testing year ending with the February 1997 examination, 5,243 individuals were either first-time or retake candidates for the NATABOC written examination for at least one of the five test dates. 3,985 candidates took the practical during the year, while 4,372 candidates took the written simulation. Candidate performance for the three portions of the test for all candidates (including retakes) is presented in Table II.

Table II: All Candidates Taking the Examination

	Total Sitting	# Pass	% Pass	# Fail	% Fail
Written	5,243	2,220	42.34%	3,023	57.66%
Practical	3,985	2,206	55.36%	1,779	44.64%
Simulation	4,372	2,371	54.23%	2,001	45.77%

There were 2,200 individuals who were first-time candidates during the testing year. All of the first-time candidates in 1996 sat for the written portion of the test. There were 2,197 new candidates for the practical and 2,198 for the simulation. First-time candidates are required to take all three parts on the first attempt, but occasionally candidates are ill or experience scheduling problems, which caused the slight variation observed. Enrollment of first-time candidates may be understood further by determining the number of candidates for each route to candidacy. There were 838 candidates who qualified to take the test by completing approved curriculums and 1,362 candidates who qualified by internship. Table III presents a summary of first-time candidate performance on each part of the NATABOC examination, with data also reported separately for curriculum and internship applicants for certification.

Table III: Candidates Taking the Examination for the First Time

	Total Sitting	Total Pass/%	Total Fail/%	Total Intern	# Intern Pass/%	# Intern Fail/%	Total Curric	#Curr Pass/%	#Curr Fail/%
Written	2,200	1,095 0%	1,105 0%	1,362	596 44%	766 66%	838	499 60%	339 40%
Practical	2,197	1,220 6%	977 44%	1,359	707 52%	652 48%	838	512 61%	326 39%
Simulation	2,198	1,175 3%	1,023 7%	1,360	674 50%	686 50%	838	501 60%	337 40%

The group of candidates retaking the NATABOC written test in 1996 totaled 3,043. 1,788 candidates retook the practical, while 2,174 retook the written simulation. Retake candidates are those who failed one or more portions of the examination in the 1996 testing year or earlier. Table IV presents information about retake candidates.

Table IV: Candidates Retaking the Examination

	Total Sitting	Total Pass/%	Total Fail/%	Total Intern	# Intern Pass/%	# Intern Fail/%	Total Curric	#Curr Pass/%	#Curr Fail/%
Written	3,043	1,2884 2%	1,7555 8%	2,152	845 39%	1,307 61%	891	437 49%	454 51%
Practical	1,788	1,2677 1%	521 29%	1,286	871 68%	415 32%	502	396 77%	106 23%
Simulation	2,174	1,2815 9%	893 41%	1,360	674 50%	686 50%	838	501 60%	337 40%

Statistics on Candidate Performance

Descriptive indices for candidate performance are useful in evaluating the examination. The written examination contains 150 questions. Different versions, or forms, of the test are equated using linear equating procedures that are accepted for use in credentialing examinations. This means that candidate performance can be compared across different versions of the test. It also ensures that no candidate benefits if questions on one version of the test are easier than those on another version. The highest score on either form of the test in 1996 was 133, and the lowest score obtained in the year was 22. The average scores and other statistics are shown in Table V.

Scores on the practical are scaled from 0 to 50. This part of the test is also equated with linear equating procedures. The highest score on any form used in 1996 was 49, and the lowest score was 0. Averages across the three forms of the test are comparable and are reported with other statistics obtained for the year in Table V.

The written simulation test is scored so that points range from 200 to 800. The highest score in the year was 765 while the lowest score obtained by a candidate was 200. Some candidates elected not to complete the simulation portion of the test, and most of these received 200, the lowest possible score.

Table V: Descriptive Statistics on Candidate Scores

	Written		Practical			Simulation	
High Score	133	132	48	48	49	765	747
Low Score	32	22	7	13	0	200	200
Average Score	103.79	103.68	35.76	35.23	35.00	501.40	501.14
Standard Deviation	9.84	9.56	6.65	6.03	6.36	99.41	99.92

Conclusion

NATABOC continues to meet or exceed relevant standards governing standardized examinations used in certification. Efforts currently underway to continue building the item banks and maintain the currency of the examination using up-to-date references will enable NATABOC to achieve its ultimate objectives of ensuring that certified athletic trainers have met standards and passed an examination that establish their competence. By continuing these efforts, NATABOC will ensure the ongoing validity of its examination.