



Online Qualifying Test Feedback Report

031: Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Courts)

December 2016

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide general feedback to candidates regarding the first stage online qualifying test for the Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Courts) (DDJ(MC)) selection exercise. The report describes how the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) developed the qualifying test and marking schedule, and how the test was structured.

Competency Framework

The test and marking schedule were designed to assess the competency framework for the post of DDJ (MC), which is published on the [JAC website](#).

Development of the Test

The test was devised by a team of four District Judges (Magistrates' Courts) who are experienced in all aspects of this role and comprised two parts.

Part one was designed to test how a successful candidate would handle situations they could encounter in the role of a Deputy District Judge in the Magistrates' Court. Part two was designed to test a candidate's ability to absorb, process, understand, and apply information.

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

In common with all 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, using volunteer candidates. The volunteers were drawn from a mix of barristers, solicitors and members of CILEx who, although were eligible to apply, were not applying for this particular exercise.

Structure of the Test

The test was hosted on the JAC website on 12 July 2016 and was open from 16:00 to 22:00.

The two parts of the multiple choice test were clearly separated on the system. Part one comprised a 55 minute Situational Judgment test (34 questions). Part two comprised a 45 minute Critical Analysis test (20 questions) based on the first 60 paragraphs on the judgment of [Lords Hughes and Toulson in the cases of R v Jogee and Ruddock v The Queen \[2016\] UKSC 8 \[2016\] UKPC 7](#), which was supplied in advance of the test. Candidates were given the option of taking a break in between the two parts, but were required to complete both parts before 22:00.

Prior to sitting the test, candidates were advised to familiarise themselves with the preparation material listed below:

- Criminal Procedure Rules 2015 (as amended April 2016) particularly Rules 3.2, 6.9, 24.12, and 24.15
- Criminal Practice Directions 2015 Division I, particularly 3F, 3G and 6C.
- S. 83 Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000
- Ss. 36 – 38 Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999
- S. 11 and s. 64 Magistrates' Courts Act 1980
- S.3 Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996
- S. 52 Courts Act 1971

Marking of the Test

The test submissions from each candidate were marked automatically against an agreed marking schedule. The maximum marks available for each question was two marks. Some questions however contained more than one correct answer, with the most appropriate answer attracting the full two marks and correct but less appropriate answers attracting one mark. The highest score that could be obtained in part one was 68 marks and the highest score that could be obtained in part two was 40 marks.

In order to ensure parts one and two of the test contributed equally to a candidate's overall score, the two sections of the test were equally weighted by way of calculating a composite score.

Distribution of Marks

1047 candidates sat the test. The candidate with the highest overall composite score achieved 50 marks (74%) on Part one and 38 marks (95%) on Part two. The average score was 36.5 marks (54%) on Part one and 24.5 marks (61%) on Part two.

To proceed to the second stage of the shortlisting, candidates first needed to score a minimum of 40% in **each** element of the qualifying test.

826 candidates were eligible to progress after achieving the minimum pass mark of 40% in each element of the test.

In line with the slots available for the subsequent stage of shortlisting, the 504 candidates with the highest composite scores progressed to the next stage of the selection process.

To help secure the integrity of future tests, the JAC's policy is not to publish a question-by-question analysis of multiple choice test responses.

Chart 1: Distribution of percentage scores, Part 1 – Situational Judgment

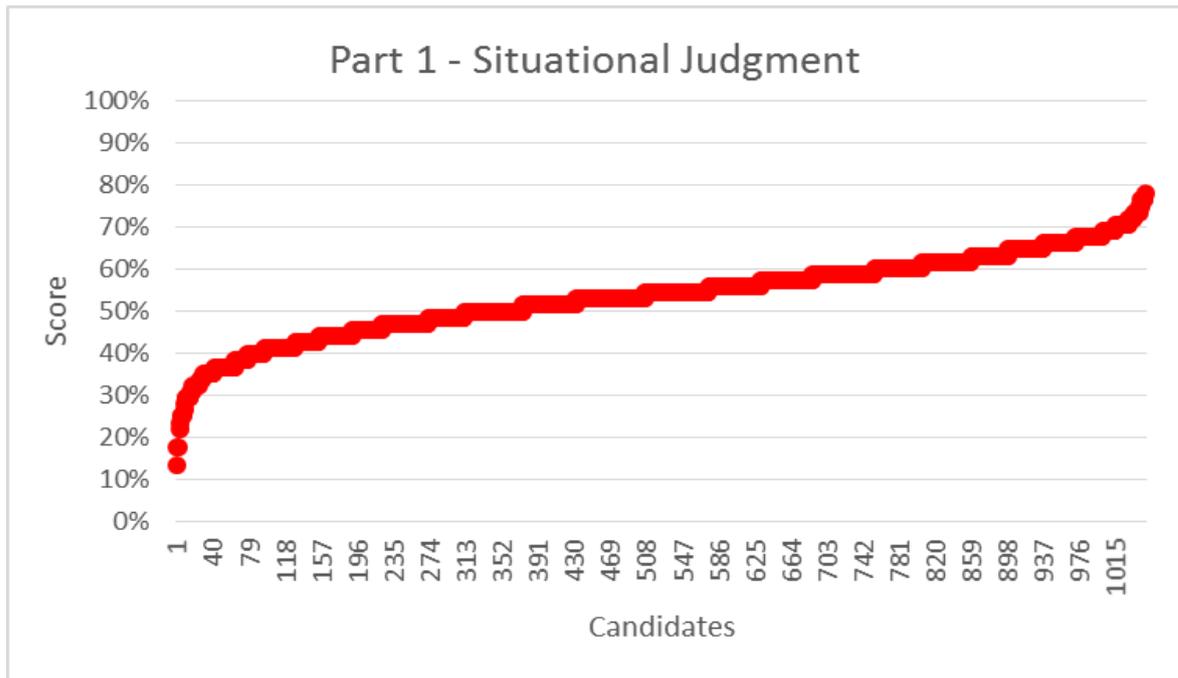


Chart 2: Histogram of point scores, Part 1 – Situational Judgment

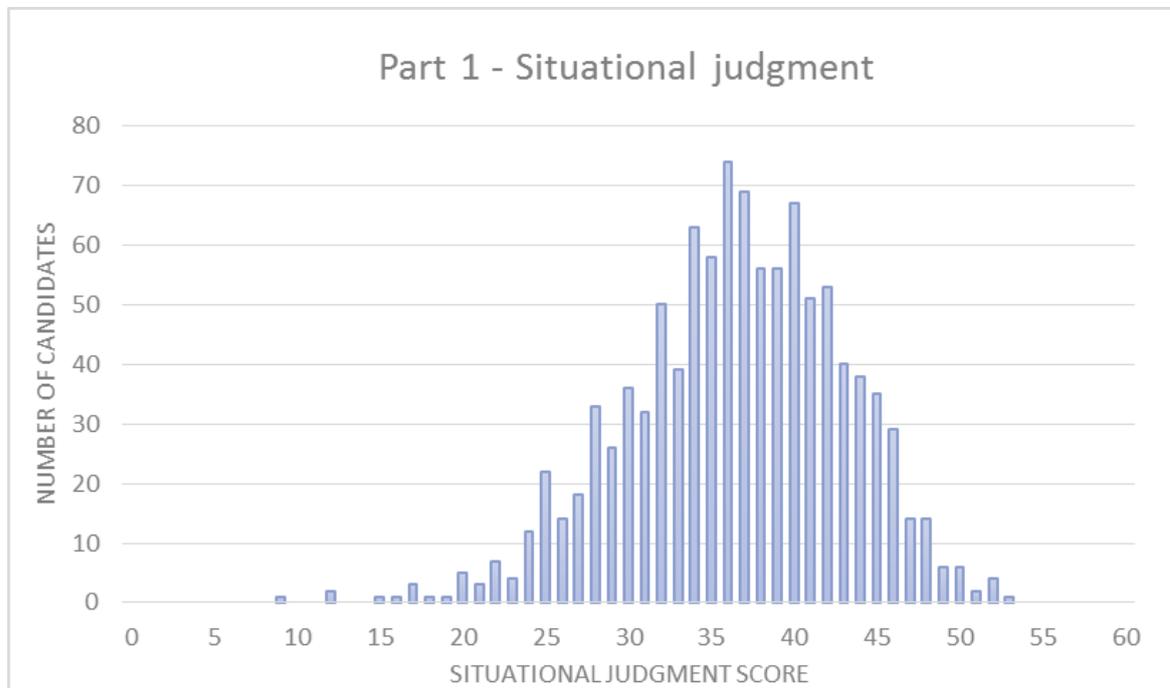


Chart 3: Distribution of percentage scores, Part 2 – Critical Analysis

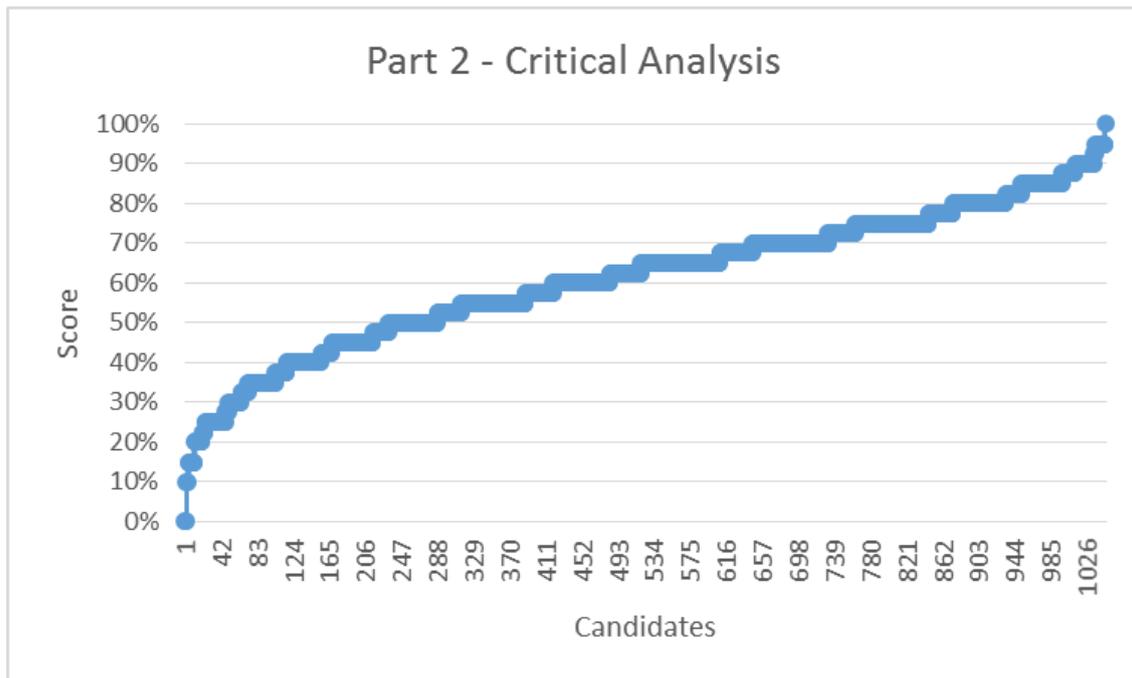
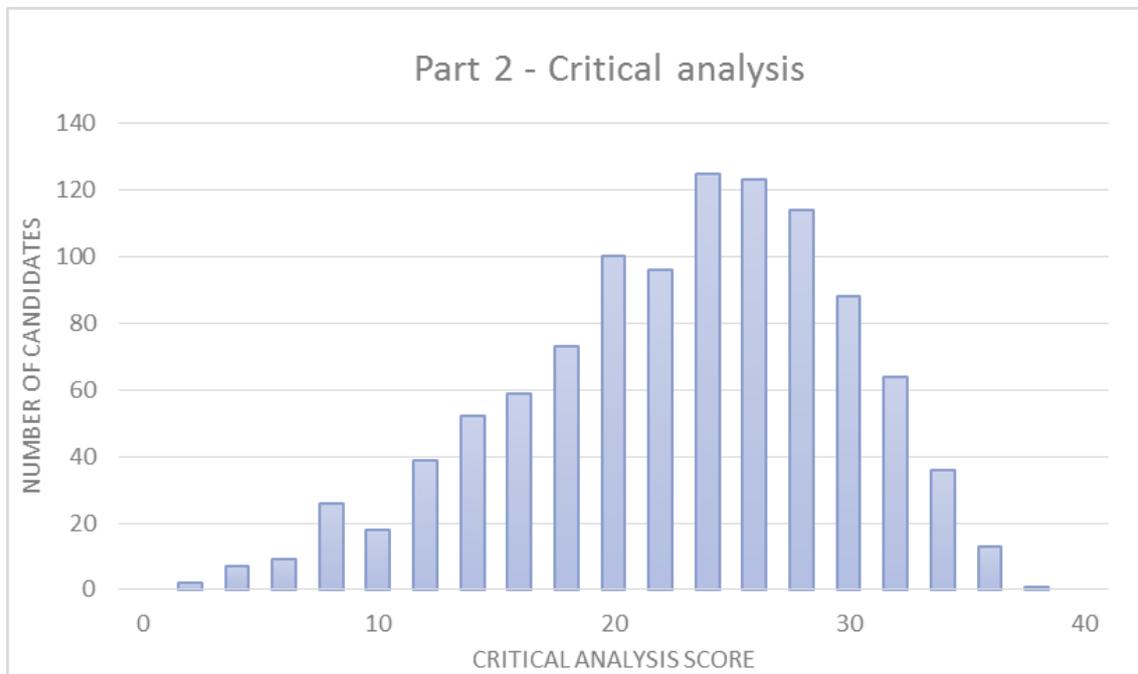


Chart 4: Histogram of point scores, Part 2 – Critical Analysis



Calculating the Composite Score

The composite score was calculated in two steps. Firstly, a standardised score (the Z-Score¹) was calculated for each part of the test. The standardised score represents how high or low a candidate's score is in relation to the scores of all other candidates. Secondly, the standardised scores for parts 1 and 2 were then added together to provide the composite score. This ensured the two sections of the test were equally weighted.

The highest composite score was 4.0006. The lowest composite score was minus 5.9081. Candidates with a composite score of 0.2808 or above (and who scored higher than 40% in both parts of the test) proceeded to the next shortlisting stage.

Chart 5: Distribution of composite scores

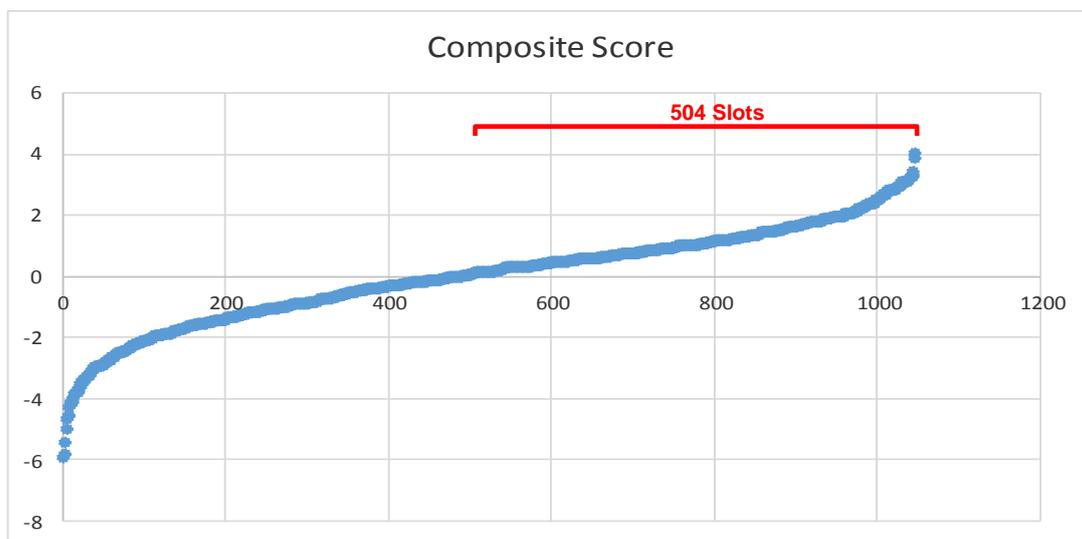
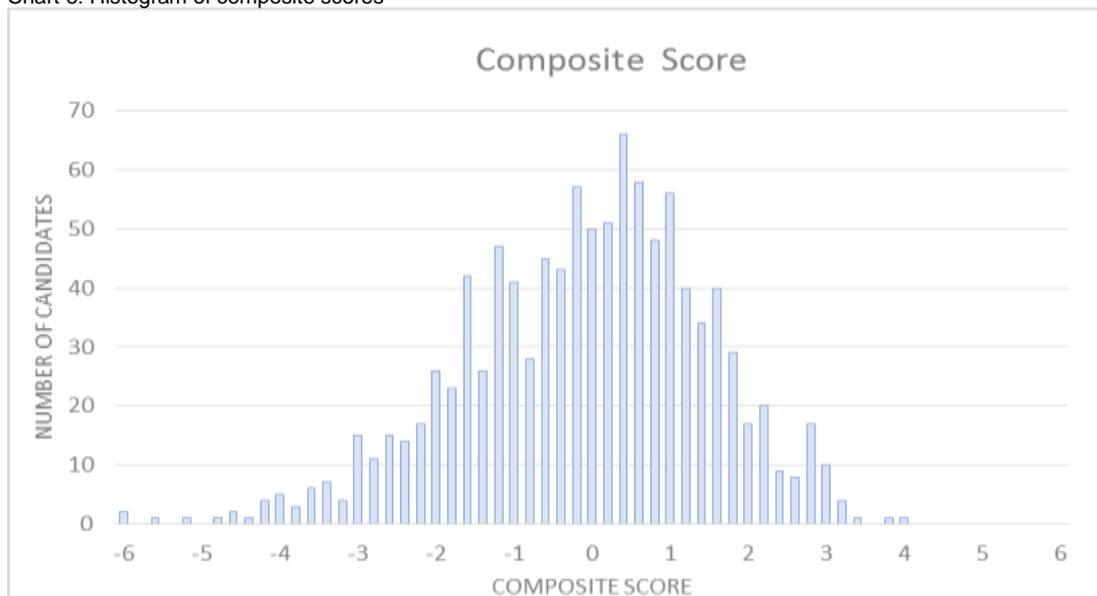


Chart 6: Histogram of composite scores



¹ A z-score is the number of standard deviations from the mean a data point is. See <http://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/z-score/> for more information.