



177 ARBUCKLE AVENUE
FOLSOM, CALIFORNIA 95630-5412

T 916.351.9147
F 916 353 1147

www.comiratesting.com

February 9, 2006

Linda Drake, Chair
NVRA Validation Committee
207 Third Avenue
Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Subject: Validation of NVRA Examination Program

Dear Ms. Drake:

The purpose of this letter is formally state that the examinations developed and published in January 2006 by the National Verbatim Court Reporters meet the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing¹, hereafter called the Standards. The Standards specify the requirements for developing valid examinations for academic, employment, and credentialing applications. A validation report will be prepared but this letter provides a description of the procedures applied to support the validity of the examinations.

The examination validation process began with an occupational analysis of the verbatim reporters profession. Job analysis interviews were conducted to identify the tasks performed by verbatim reporters and knowledge needed in order to perform the tasks. A questionnaire was constructed including demographic questions, rating scales, and the task and knowledge statements. The questionnaire was made available to all members of the NVRA. Most of the questionnaires were completed online while a small number were made available in hard copy.

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed to identify the tasks and knowledge statements that were most important to safe and effective practice. The results from the analyses were reviewed by subject matter experts (SMEs). The SMEs then used the results to create test specifications (test blueprint). The test specifications consist of four content areas. There are: (a) verbatim record, (b) transcript production, (c) transcript distribution, and (d) professional responsibilities consisting of two sub areas, professional practice and ethics. The SMEs applied the results from the practice areas to assign weights to the content areas in order to apportion appropriately the questions.

The next step in the validation process was to develop items in accordance with the test specifications. The SMEs were trained in the appropriate item writing procedures in order to ensure that the items met professional item writing standards. The item writing was a highly iterative process such that the items were reviewed first by the testing

¹ American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education. (1999). Standards for educational and psychological testing. Washington DC: American Educational Research Association.

specialists on site and then all the items were reviewed as a group by all SMEs. After the items were reviewed and accepted by the SMEs, the items were stored in an item bank.

Test publishing was the next step in the validation process. The SMEs selected items from the item bank in order to create two parallel examination forms. Items were selected to ensure that the forms were balanced in terms of content and difficulty and reduce clueing or overlap within the forms.

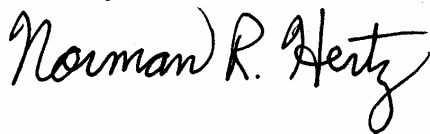
The final step in the validation process was to establish criterion-referenced cut scores for the examinations. A modified-Angoff approach was applied to obtain difficulty ratings for each of the items. The SMEs were trained to apply the concept of minimum competence in judging the difficulty of the items. The results from the modified-Angoff cut score study produce the cut score that should be applied to each form of the examination.

The validity of the dictation examination was established by identifying the tasks and knowledge from the practice analysis that are best tested in a skills examination. Therefore, from these tasks and knowledge, test specifications were developed for the dictation examination. Based on the results of the practice analysis and expert judgment, the dictation examination is supported in its current form.

To summarize, two forms of a written examination for the NVRA have been developed according to the Standards. The Standards specify the steps that should be undertaken to produce examinations that will yield valid results. Hence, the NVRA examinations meet the professional and legal standards for the process of validating examinations.

I can be reached at 916.351.9147 or by email at nhertz@comiratesting.com if you have questions regarding the validation process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman R. Hertz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'N' and 'H'.

Norman R. Hertz, Ph.D.
Director of Psychometric Services