

*U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration*

VBA - AFGE Memorandum of Understanding

**VBA Skills Certification
Organizational Validation Test**

The following constitutes an agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, National VA Council #53, regarding the VBA Skills Certification Organizational Validation Test.

The Organizational Validation Test is the last stage of development for a VSR Skills Certification test instrument. The data gathered from this test will assist the Design Team and HumRRO in finalizing the VSR Skills Certification instrument.

1. No adverse action will be taken against an employee as a direct result of participating, or choosing not to participate, in the Organizational Validation Study nor will the results negatively impact eligibility to sit for certification in the future.
2. A minimum of 100 GS-996-11 VCE/VSRs and 200 GS-996-10 VSRs with at least one year in grade as of July 1, 2003, are needed to conduct the Organizational Validation Study. VBA may expand the number of participants, at their discretion. The selection criteria in the following paragraph will be used.
3. Participation in the Organizational Validation Study will be voluntary. All eligible employees will be notified of the Organizational Validation Test. Those wishing to sit for the test must volunteer through their HR liaison even if they previously volunteered. In order to participate in the test, all employees must be meeting local performance standards as verified by their supervisor. Selections will be based on seniority, however those employees who were selected for the last Organizational Validation Test, or those who volunteered and were not selected for the Organizational Validation Test cancelled in October 2001, will be given first priority, if still eligible. Seniority is defined as time in grade in the VSR 996-10 and/or VCE 996-11 positions at each facility. Each Regional Office will have at least one participant, provided the office has an interested and eligible candidate. The number of participants at each station will be determined by the methodology previously established by HumRRO.
4. The test used in the Organizational Validation Study will be comprised of approximately 140 questions. The procedures guiding administration of the test will be covered by the test administration guide as developed by HumRRO and approved by the Design Team.
5. The Design Team (with Union representation) in consultation with HumRRO will review the results of the Organizational Validation Test in order to assess equitable treatment, compliance with merit system principles, fairness, and validity. Copies of the tests will not be released. Data resulting from these studies will be shared with AFGE/NVAC.

6. The minimum score for certification will be determined by the Design Team utilizing universally accepted validation procedures as prescribed by HumRRO in "Establishing a Passing Score using the Angoff Method."
7. A copy of this MOU shall be provided to Local AFGE Presidents by an appropriate management official upon receipt at the facility.

/S/ Crystal Wiggins
For Management
For AFGE/NVAC

/S/ Alberta Franklin

Date: July 2, 2003