

Policy on the use of Psychometric Assessments

SUMS uses psychometric assessments on behalf of member institutions in occupational settings. These are used to enhance the quality and quantity of information obtained about individuals in an objective manner for the purpose of recruitment and selection, development, team building and engagement, career conversations and organisational change.

The assessments objectively measure test takers against criteria crucial for success in a post to improve the match between the person and the job and to promote personal development.

Those who are trained in administering the assessments are accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and align to the [Code of Good Practice](#) to ensure they meet all the standards of competence defined by the BPS for the relevant Certificate(s) of Competence in Occupational Testing, and endeavour, where possible, to develop and enhance their competence as test users.

SUMS are committed to the highest standards of practice in all use of psychometric assessments to maximise the benefit of assessments to the client and to promote fairness and equality of opportunity.

1. Background

Psychometric assessments are complex tools that are designed to assess people and measure the differences between individuals. They are designed and developed in such a way that they can be shown to measure what they claim to measure with a certain degree of accuracy. They are objective, standardised instruments that achieve this by using well controlled, uniformed methods of administration and scoring.

2. Scope

The term 'assessment' in the context of this policy applies to psychometric measures of maximum performance such as ability, aptitude or attainment and measures of personal qualities such as motivation, personality, values, and preferred ways of working.

This policy applies to all assessment users namely administrators, interpreters, line managers, external consultants and all participants or test users.

3. Responsibilities

SUMS and their relevant test users (qualified/licenced practitioners administering the assessment) are responsible for ensuring that all assessments are used in accordance with this statement and in line with the ethical and professional standards. It is the responsibility of the client to ensure that this policy is communicated and shared with all relevant test takers and adhere with the expectations of this statement.

4. Policy

Test users

Knowledge and experience are required to use psychometric assessments effectively, consequently only trained tests users who hold the relevant qualifications may use and interpret psychometric instruments. This ensures the competent and responsible use of assessment, including the choice, application and administration of the assessment and the interpretation and feeding back of the results.

1. Only trained users who hold the current relevant qualifications and/or licence (e.g., British Psychological Society Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing Level A / Test User Occupational, Ability and/or Level B / Test User Occupational, Personality) will administer, interpret, and feedback psychometric assessment results, in accordance with the assessment supplier's requirements.
2. Each user will ensure they use assessment to the highest professional standards and only in accordance with this policy.
3. No unsupervised access to assessments is allowed to anyone who is not trained or qualified.

Use of psychometric assessments

Psychometric assessments will only be used where:

4. They are relevant, appropriate, and effective tool for the given purpose and circumstances to which they are to be applied. For instance, where they are used for recruitment purposes, they will relate to the selection criteria for the post.
5. They measure the specific skill requirements and are at the correct level of difficulty needed.
6. They form an assessment alongside other assessment methods and only when their use can be supported by the available technical information.
7. They are of proven quality and can be shown to be valid and reliable.
8. Their use does not disadvantage certain groups, does not unfairly discriminate and is not otherwise unlawful. Due consideration will be given to factors such as gender, ethnicity, age, disability and special needs, educational background, and level of ability in using and interpreting the results of assessments. For example, it may be appropriate for a dyslexic candidate to be allowed more time to complete the assessment and particular care should be taken to ensure that instructions have been understood. In all instances where a candidate has declared a disability it is essential to speak to the candidate before the assessment to determine if any adjustments are required, and what these should be, rather than to make assumptions.
9. The norm tables or comparison groups provided give a fair and relevant comparison with the individual being tested and are up to date.
10. They provide an opportunity for feedback to all test participants.
11. They are used in accordance with the requirements of the test publisher.

For Occupational Ability Assessments, the test user should select the most appropriate battery of assessments to meet the needs of the assessment.

For Occupational Personality Questionnaires, the choice of assessment will be discussed with the client and decisions will be based on the set of circumstances and the

development need at the time. Assessments may also be incorporated, as appropriate, into courses and workshops. Where this occurs, more detailed information will be provided as part of the overview of a particular programme.

All psychometric assessments used must be clearly relevant to the given purpose. Detailed job descriptions and person specifications based on objective job analysis must be prepared prior to the choice of assessments(s) for any selection or promotion process.

Guidelines for the use of assessments

Users of psychometric assessments should ensure that: -

12. The purpose of the assessment is clear to all parties involved prior to the use of the assessment, and there is an understanding that the results will not be used for any purpose other than those communicated at the outset.
13. All test takers are well informed and well prepared for the assessment session, and that all have had access to practice or familiarisation materials where appropriate.
14. The informed consent of potential test users is sought, making sure that they understand why the assessment will be used, what will be done with their results and who will be provided with access to them
15. The level of confidentiality regarding the assessment results is fully explained.

Administering assessments

The objectivity and standards of the results of psychometric assessments rely on standard circumstances for their completion. The arrangements for anyone taking an assessment should follow uniform procedures specified by the test supplier to maintain the objectivity of the assessment. Those who administer psychometric assessments should ensure that: -

16. Everyone completing the assessment receives the same standard instructions specified by the suppliers of the assessment.
17. The test takers complete the assessment by themselves and without help from others.
18. The assessment is completed in a suitable environment in which the test taker is physically comfortable, with, for example, adequate light and a comfortable temperature.
19. Any person completing the assessment can avoid disturbance, distractions, or interruption from others.
20. Test users have sufficient time to complete the assessment (unless it is timed, in which case they understand what the time limit is and is applied consistently, except for when reasonable adjustments are applied).

Assessment results

Assessments should always be interpreted by a properly trained person in the context of clearly defined criteria and in compliance with the requirements of good practice advice of the assessment publisher. Results must be interpreted based on relevant norm groups and in accordance with the standards defined by the BPS.

Feedback

Feedback on the interpretation of assessment scores will be given to the test taker to establish the validity of their results.

All candidates will be offered confidential feedback of their assessment results by a qualified user in a form which makes clear the implications of the results, is clear and in a style appropriate to their level of understanding.

For Occupational Personality Questionnaires (and related assessments), a feedback meeting will be offered to individuals to discuss the profile.

Equality

Whenever a disability prevents a suitably qualified individual from undergoing standard procedures, appropriate alternative arrangements for assessing must be found. Test users should seek advice from the test publisher before making any changes to the assessment administration procedures.

Confidentiality

The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) requires that information collected during psychometric assessments are accurate, up to date and stored confidentially.

21. Assessment results will never be used for any other purpose than intended and will not be shared with any other unauthorised or unqualified person without the explicit prior consent of the test taker.
22. Assessments and their relevant materials will not be used for any purpose other than those agreed with the test taker.
23. Results generated will be destroyed after twelve months.

Complaints or concerns

Any complaints or concerns about the terms of the assessment laid out in this document or breach of the assessment use conditions should be directed to Emma Ogden (e.l.ogden@reading.ac.uk).