



Register of Competence
in Occupational Testing

General Information Pack

Certificate of Competence in
Occupational Testing (Level A)

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The Society has recently established a Psychological Testing Centre to consolidate its activities in the areas of psychological testing. As part of the services offered by the Centre the Society is developing a website which will provide information, guidance and links to test takers, test users and test publishers alike. The website can be found at <http://www.psychtesting.org.uk>

Level A covers general foundations of testing, and the performance skills associated with test administration and interpretation of ability tests.

Level B complements Level A. It increases the scope of the scheme to cover personality assessment, and the interpretation and use of personality tests.

Together, Level A and Level B provide a set of standards which define the competent user of psychological tests in occupational settings.

Details of Level B are available from the Society or on our website.

Other relevant FREE publications are available on our website or by contacting the Society:

- *Psychological Testing: A Users Guide*
- *Non-evaluative list of UK test publishers*
- *Leaflet describing the BPS Review of Ability and Aptitude Tests (Level A) for use in Occupational Settings*
- *Leaflet describing the BPS Review of Personality Assessment Instruments (Level B) for use in Occupational Settings*

The Society holds no other information on Tests, other than those which appear in the above two Reviews.

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General Information

Training

To obtain a Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A) you must first undertake training and then have your competence affirmed by an Assessor (that is, a Chartered Psychologist whose assessment methods have been verified by the Society). In many cases Trainers are also Assessors, but not necessarily so.

A list of training courses is published in each issue of the *Selection & Development Review* and a list of Assessors is obtainable on the website: www.psychtesting.org.uk. Before starting any training, you should check with the Trainer that the course will lead to eligibility for the issue of a Certificate, and that the Assessor holds a current Assessor's Certificate.

The benefits of the scheme

The main benefits of the scheme are that it:

- provides the potential test user with a clear specification of what he/she needs to know and be able to do, to use tests properly;
- provides the holder access to most ability tests and interest inventories and a range of careers guidance materials;
- provides the students on training courses with a set of specific objectives which they can match against the content of their training course;
- provides evidence of qualification which should be 'transferable' between various providers of training in testing and between the various publishers and other suppliers of test materials – as its form and content is not dependent on specific tests, publishers or trainers;
- provides a form of national certification of competence in occupational testing, which employers will be encouraged to recognise as necessary for the proper use of psychological testing within their organisations. If employers can be encouraged to stipulate that testing may only be carried out in their organisations by or under the direction of suitably qualified people, there should be significant improvements in professional standards in testing.

The adoption of the scheme has positive benefits for teaching of psychology in that it encourages the inclusion of relevant teaching and training at both postgraduate and undergraduate levels. The scheme also places the responsibility for judging competence squarely on the shoulders of Chartered Psychologists – who are accountable should they act outside their areas of competence.

The Level A Certificate does not qualify people in the use of personality assessment instruments. The Steering Committee has developed a checklist of competences for a Level B qualification. This is similar in format to the one presented here for Level A, but concerns topics such as: theories of personality; methods of assessing personality; knowledge of the major self-report inventories; interpretation and feedback skills, and so on. This provides a general qualification in personality assessment which needs to be supplemented with specialist training in particular instruments (e.g. the I6PF, OPQ, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator).

The Level A Certificate can be used as evidence of competence for people wishing to use or purchase test materials. As such, evidence that one has attained the required standard for all the essential elements of competence is deemed by the Society as being a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for access to test materials.

While publishers and suppliers of test materials cannot be bound by the Society, the Society encourages them to accept the Certificate as a basis for their registration of test users. Suppliers of tests may, of course, require evidence of additional areas of competence as being required for particular tests or may require users to have additional specialist training in the use of particular instruments. Any person who has the minimum competence defined by the standards should of necessity be in a position to appreciate the need for additional training where it is required.

To apply for the Certificate of Competence

You will need to have the Affirmation of Competence (on the back of the application form) completed by one or more suitably qualified people who should be Chartered Psychologists who hold either a Statement or Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing and have had their assessment methods verified. The completed Affirmation should then be returned to the Society.

If you are a Chartered Psychologist with a current Practising Certificate, there will be no charge for the Certificate of Competence. If you are not a Chartered Psychologist holding a current Practising Certificate, please enclose payment of £65 with your application.

If you want your name to be entered on the Register of Competence in Occupational Testing, please enclose £20 for the first year's subscription, together with your payment for a certificate if applicable.

Certification Scheme – background and explanation

Preamble

The British Psychological Society Steering Committee on Test Standards has spent much of its time discussing the problem of how to ensure that those who use psychological tests do so to acceptable standards of competence. The Committee was assisted by representatives from three of the major UK test publishers, and subsequently this scheme has received the explicit support of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

The following certification scheme was developed from these initial discussions and focuses specifically on occupational testing. The Scheme is presented here as an agreed package of measures that the Society has introduced. It was preceded by a process of consultation, comment and modification in the light of advice received.

The need for Certification arrangements

Considerable concern was expressed by members of the Steering Committee, the test publishers and many Occupational Psychologists about the growing problem of misuse and abuse of psychological testing in industry and commerce. These problems arose largely from the fact that purchasers of assessment materials and procedures often lacked the knowledge to make informed judgements about the worth of the products they were buying and the users of test materials were often inadequately trained – if trained at all – in their use and application.

Poorly designed tests and procedures with little or no validity were finding an increasing market amongst those who were in no position to discriminate between good and bad. In the long run this inevitably would have led to a backlash against testing. While the Society may be in no position to control the sharp practices of some non-psychologists in this area, it can act to: provide better guidance and control for psychologists who work in Occupational Psychology and better inform others who are likely to use psychological assessment procedures.

To avoid bringing testing into disrepute, the Society takes action directed towards:

- ensuring that any of its members who operate with psychological tests do so in a professional manner and to agreed explicit minimum standards of competence;
- providing some means of recognising those people who are competent such that others may have a means of distinguishing the competent from the incompetent;
- establishing minimum standards for training in the use of psychological testing.

General outline of the Certification Scheme

The Scheme provides an agreed set of standards relating to an individual's ability:

- to use psychological tests fairly and effectively within one or more of those areas of application covered by the Society's Division of Occupational Psychology; and
- to adhere to the codes of practice and professional conduct defined by the Society and other relevant bodies (e.g. the C.I.P.D).

The standards have been designed to fulfil a number of functions, including:

- the provision of criteria which may be used in assessing an individual's competence to use psychological tests;
- guidance for those who may wish to employ users of tests or who may be approached by users or purveyors of tests.

Detailed specifications of standards of competence cover the following areas:

- **Relevant underpinning knowledge** – especially in the nature and theories of ability, the area of psychometrics and theory of mental testing.
- **Task skills** – relating to the performance of relevant activities such as test administration, provision of feedback to candidates and clients.
- **Task management skills** – required to achieve overall functional competence: organising assessment procedures, control and security of materials, etc.
- **Contingency management skills** – to deal with problems, difficulties, breakdowns in routine, dealing with candidates' questions during test administration, etc.
- **Contextual skills** – relating to the appropriate integration of psychological testing with other aspects of the job role – e.g. knowing when to use tests and when not to.
- **Instrumental skills** – relating to specific assessment procedures or instruments – such as use of computer-based assessment procedures.

Outline of the procedures

A Checklist of Competences in Occupational Testing (Level A) appears later in this pack. This checklist defines a major set of categories of knowledge and skills relating to the use of psychological tests.

The competences are those which are regarded as 'essential' and define the minimum levels of competence required for any test user. The list of competences is regarded as exhaustively defining the minimum standards required.

Thus, these cover the basic knowledge and skills which are necessary for all forms of psychological testing – whether paper-and-pencil or computer-based.

Any person who has met the standards required for ALL the items on the Checklist is eligible to apply to the Society for *The British Psychological Society Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A)*.

Who will be responsible for assessing an individual's competence?

Assessing is the responsibility of a suitably qualified Chartered Psychologist. He or she is a Chartered Psychologist who has been certificated as a competent user of occupational tests (i.e. has a Statement or Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing) and who has access to sufficient evidence and experience in relevant areas to assess the competence of the person in question.

Who will be subject to control on test use?

Any person wishing to make use of psychological tests in an occupational setting – be they psychologists or non-psychologists. The label 'psychologist' is being used to refer to any person eligible for Graduate Membership of the Society – not just to Chartered Psychologists.

In general, current undergraduate courses in psychology provide students with little knowledge of testing and psychometrics and frequently no direct experience of, nor training in, the use of tests – and yet the graduates from such courses may have relatively unrestricted access to assessment materials and are subject to exemptions from training requirements on the basis of their status rather than their competence. It is wholly inappropriate that we should continue to allow access to test material on such a basis. While there are many areas where the Society does not have the power to act, this is one area where we will put our own house in order. In doing this, the Society is seen to be practising what it preaches and hence is in a stronger position to encourage others, through their professional organisations, to enforce similar requirements.

The scheme provides mechanisms to ensure that anyone who, as a member of the Society, uses occupational tests and offers services involving the use of such tests possesses the Society's Certificate or Statement of Competence in Occupational Testing.

In all cases, it will be the responsibility of a Chartered Psychologist to assess the competence of the person concerned.

It must be stressed that the qualification is not a qualification in psychology, but a qualification in psychological testing.

How will the standards be maintained?

By providing an explicit common set of criteria for judging competence, the system leads to more uniform standards across training courses.

However, it is important to note that the criteria do NOT stipulate how training should be carried out, nor are they intended to act simply as definitions of training course contents. They stipulate what people should be able to do and know – regardless of how they acquire that knowledge and skill.

Further control is provided through the Society by the fact that the Chartered Psychologist, who completes and signs the Checklist, is accountable to the Society. This accountability is for their own actions. Actual responsibility for misuse or abuse of tests must lie with the test user.

Verification of assessment methods

A system is in place to verify the assessment materials and activities used by Assessors to affirm applicants for the Certificate of Competence.

The verification process has been set up to aid the development of nationwide standards for assessment and considers only the assessment materials and activities used by the Assessors. It **does not** directly consider the methods of training or the qualities of the Assessor.

Assessors are all Chartered Psychologists who also hold a Statement or Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing and are obliged to abide by the Code of Conduct for Chartered Psychologists.

When the verification has been completed, Assessors are issued with an Assessor's Certificate which confirms that their assessment materials and activities have been verified by The British Psychological Society. These certificates must be available for inspection by applicants.

The Society, in collaboration with the test publishers and training course organisers, will put in place procedures to monitor the success of the scheme. Because of its voluntary nature, the scheme can work only with the goodwill and support of others outside the Society, in particular the test publishers.

The Society reserves its position to make changes and introduce additional procedures for monitoring and maintaining standards if necessary.

How does the Certification procedure operate?

Timing

The scheme began to operate in 1991. *Statements* of Competence in Occupational Testing were issued to competent users of occupational tests registered with one or more of the major test publishers before 1 January 1991 and to those who became recognised as competent during the six month period up to 1 July 1991. The issuing of *Statements* has now been phased out. *Certificates* of Competence were issued from 1 July 1991 onwards when the conditions outlined in the next section were met.

Normal conditions for Certification

Any person who can provide 'proof of general competence' is eligible to receive a Certificate and, in addition, if they so wish, to have their name placed on a Register of Competence in Occupational Testing on payment of the relevant fees.

Proof of general competence is provided by production to the Society of the Affirmation of Competence form on which a signature from a 'qualified person' has been obtained against each of the units on the list. This checking-off procedure is known as an 'Affirmation of Competence'. Advisory notes to Chartered Psychologists who are intending to sign an 'Affirmation' appear later in this pack.

A 'qualified person' for this purpose is a Chartered Psychologist who holds an Assessor's Certificate (Level A).

Test use

The Society is encouraging test publishers and distributors to supply relevant tests for use in occupational settings only to people who hold a Certificate or Statement of Competence in Occupational Testing.

Charges

The Society charges a once only fee of £65 for the award of each Certificate. However, the fee is waived for Chartered Psychologists who hold annual Practising Certificates qualifying for a Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (such people having already paid registration fees to the Society to have their qualifications recognised).

For an additional £20 a year holders of Certificates (and Statements) of Competence in Occupational Testing may join the Register of Competence in Occupational Testing which is maintained by the Society.

NB: It is not possible to have an entry on the Register without applying for a Certificate.

The Register of Competence in Occupational Testing

The Society makes positive efforts to encourage employers only to use competent test users, and the Register is their basic source guide to check the credentials of individuals they intend to consult or employ.

Selection & Development Review (SDR) is published six times a year under the aegis of the Society's Division of Occupational Psychology. The annual fee for entry to the Register is £20. Registrants automatically receive *SDR* free and are encouraged to contribute to the publication. *SDR* is one way for competent test users to keep in touch with developments in the field. There is no facility for advertising tests, courses or services beyond the existing paid listing of appropriate upcoming courses in *SDR*.

Registrant's details are held on the Society's database. Details are available to enquirers who mention a person by name, but not available as part of a more general listing.

Names and addresses of Chartered Psychologists who appear on the Register and whose verification methods have been confirmed by the Society appear on the appropriate list of Assessors.

If you wish to check if a person is or is not on the Register, please contact the RCOT desk on direct line no: 0116 252 9530. For a list of Assessors visit our website at www.psychtesting.org.uk or contact the RCOT desk.

Introduction to the Checklist

The checklist

This Checklist defines those things which the Society considers you should know and be able to do in order to use psychological tests fairly, properly and in a professional manner. It does not cover everything you should know – it covers the minimum requirements for using most group ability tests and a range of career guidance instruments. As a general introduction to psychological testing you should also read *Psychological Testing – A User's Guide* (available on our website).

Reading through *Psychological Testing – A User's Guide* and the Checklist of Competences should help to make you aware of what you do and do not know or understand about psychological testing. The Checklist also provides you with a means of evaluating the content and coverage of any training course you might attend.

While self-assessment using the Checklist may give you some insights into your own degree of competence and training needs, formal assessment of your competence must be carried out by a Chartered Psychologist who holds a Certificate or Statement of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A). When you have obtained signatures for all seven units on the Checklist of Competences, you will be eligible to receive your own Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A). To apply for your Certificate, you should complete the personal details on the application form and send it, together with the appropriate registration fee, to the Society.

Satisfying the requirements set out in the Checklist does not give you the right to obtain and use whatever materials you wish, nor can it be counted as a formal qualification in psychology. The Certificate can be used as evidence of competence when you apply to publishers to register as a qualified test user. However, each publisher may quite properly require additional information or evidence or require you to attend special training courses for certain instruments. As a test-user, you are responsible for ensuring that you do not act outside your own areas of competence; you are responsible for the way you use tests and for what happens to information obtained with them.

The Checklist covers seven Units of Competence. A Unit is a coherent group of specific competences. Anyone who meets the requirements of all seven Units, will be eligible for the award of Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A).

Test Administration Certificate

Some people may wish only to administer Level A tests (as opposed to interpreting test data, or communicating test data to others). The Society is introducing a Test Administration Certificate for such persons. This includes elements from Unit 5, on test administration, as well as some elements from Unit 1, concerned with knowing what psychological tests are, and some elements from Unit 7, relating to storing new or completed test material. Please visit our website for further information on this development. (www.psychtesting.org.uk)

General descriptions of the Units of Competence

LA UNIT 1. Psychological testing: defining assessment needs

The UNIT deals with the general categorisation of types of assessment instrument and covers the underlying psychological theory and background to ability testing. Issues of job and task analysis are covered insofar as they relate to the delineation of assessment (as opposed to training) needs. Competence in job analysis is NOT assumed, though an ability to evaluate critically the results of job analyses is.

The next two UNITS concern the relevant underpinning knowledge and understanding required to make proper use of psychological tests.

LA UNIT 2. The basic principles of scaling and standardisation

This deals with the fundamental statistical concepts required to use psychological tests. Most undergraduate psychology courses will have covered this material, as will some other social science degree courses.

LA UNIT 3. The importance of reliability and validity

Considerable stress is based on understanding a number of essential concepts in psychometrics.

The remaining Units focus on practical issues relating to test administration, relationships with clients and candidates, use of test information and so on. Each is seen as a necessary precursor to the next.

LA UNIT 4. Deciding when psychological tests should or should not be used as part of an assessment process

This covers the selection of tests and their appropriateness within specific assessment situations.

LA UNIT 5. Administering tests to one or more candidates and dealing with scoring procedures

This is very much a skill-based unit with the stress on people's competence to follow good professional practices in test administration, ensuring the maintenance of standard conditions and fairness.

LA UNIT 6. Making appropriate use of test results and providing accurate written and oral feedback to clients and candidates

Stress is placed on competence in the interpersonal skills required to provide face-to-face feedback of test results as well as the oral and written communication skills required to convey highly technical information in lay terms accurately, fairly and sensitively.

LA UNIT 7. Maintaining security and confidentiality of the test materials and the test data

This deals with issues of security and confidentiality which are of central importance in the professional relationship between test user, candidate and client.

Notes

In the following Checklist:

- 'assessee' refers to the person whose competence is being assessed;
- 'client' is used to refer to the 'commissioning agent' – the person or organisation for whom the test is carried out;
- 'candidate' refers to the person who is tested. In some situations (e.g. career guidance), the client and the candidate may be the same person.

Checklist of Competences in Occupational Testing (Level A)

LA UNIT 1. Psychological testing: Defining the assessment needs

Can the Assessee:

- Describe the distinction between tests assessing 'maximum' performance (ability, attainment, etc.), and those assessing 'typical' performance (personality, interests, etc.).
- Distinguish between tests of attainment and ability.
- Differentiate between norm-referenced, criterion-referenced and domain-referenced (e.g. mastery tests, workplace competence assessment procedures) measures.
- Explain what a work-sample test is and how it is used.
- Give examples of each type of test as used in occupational psychology.
- Describe the distinction between measures of general and specific ability – with illustrative examples.
- Describe how measures of ability are more or less influenced by environmental factors and give examples.
- Describe the relationship between job analysis or other procedures for defining selection criteria and the production of a person specification for a job.
- List, for each characteristic of a person specification, one or more possible methods of assessment.
- Describe how job knowledge and information on work performance are important for the proper use of tests in career guidance.

LA UNIT 2. The basic principles of scaling and standardisation

Can the Assessee:

- Construct a frequency distribution (histogram or frequency polygon) from a set of sample raw scores.
- Calculate the mean and the standard deviation (SD) of these scores.
- Relate the mean and SD to positions on the measurement scale underlying the histogram.
- Describe the relationship between the mean, median and mode of a distribution and the way their relative locations vary with the shape of the distribution.
- Describe the ways in which the means and SD of samples may vary when they are drawn from the same population.
- Describe the relationship between the Standard Error of the mean of a sample of observations and the size of the sample.
- Describe what confidence limits are and demonstrate how they are computed from a sample mean and its SD.
- Use tables of areas under the normal distribution to convert Z-scores into percentiles and percentiles into Z-scores.
- Describe different scaling properties of raw-scores, standardised scores and percentile scores and give illustrative examples of each type of scale.
- Using the mean and SD, convert raw scores into non-normalised Z-scores, T-scores, stens and stanines and vice versa.
- Using norm tables, find percentile equivalents of raw scores and then obtain both Z-scores and T-scores from normal distribution tables.
- Explain the difference between ipsative and non-ipsative scale scores.

LA UNIT 3. The importance of reliability and validity

Can the Assessee:

- Explain the notion of correlation as a measure of the degree of relationship between two measures.
- Define the conditions under which correlation is maximised (both positively and negatively) and minimised.
- Provide reasonable rough estimates of the correlation coefficients represented by various bivariate scattergrams.
- Describe the basic premises of classical test theory – that actual measures are 'fallible' scores which contain a 'true' score and a random error.
- Explain in outline the methods of estimating reliability (internal consistency, test re-test – same or alternate form) and describe their relative pros and cons.
- Describe why test scores are unreliable (e.g. measurement error, scoring error, situational factors, item sampling, etc.).
- Describe how reliability is affected by changes in the length of a test.
- Describe how reliability is affected by range restriction and how to adjust for such effects.
- Compute limits for different levels of confidence from raw and standard scores using the standard error of measurement.
- Compute the standard error for the difference between two scale scores and for the sum of two scale scores.
- Describe how the degree of correlation between two scale scores affects the reliability of (a) their sum, (b) the difference between them.
- Express the basic notion of Generalisability Theory – that reliability concerns the degree to which one can generalise from results obtained under one set of conditions to those which would be obtained under another.
- Describe and illustrate the distinctions between face, content, construct and criterion-related validity.

LA UNIT 4. Deciding when psychological tests should or should not be used as part of an assessment process

Can the Assessee:

- Describe the law relating to direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender, community group or disability in recruitment and selection.
- Use test publishers' catalogues, specimen sets and other reference materials to identify one or more instruments potentially suitable for a particular function.
- Identify, for each test, information in the test manual which relates to the test's rationale, reliability, validity, its norms and any specific restrictions or limitations on its areas of use.
- Identify relevant practical considerations (ease of administration, time required, special equipment needed, etc.).
- Examine any restrictions on areas of use (e.g. age; cultural or ethnic limitations; ability range, etc.) and make an appropriate judgement as to whether the test could be used.
- Compare information presented about the test's validity with relevant aspects of the assessment specification and make an appropriate judgement about their fit.
- Examine the norms and make a suitable judgement about their appropriateness in terms of representativeness and sample size.
- Identify whether use of the test would meet the mandatory requirements of the Equal Opportunities and Sex Discrimination and Disability Discrimination legislation.

- With reference to technical recommendations and restrictions regarding the test (including copyright), decide on the specific adjustments, including a recommendation not to use, that could reasonably be made to a test's administration to accommodate any disability encountered. The importance of not compromising the test's technical qualities should be given due regard.
- Explain how one would assess the benefits and/or losses associated with using psychological tests as part of some personnel decision-making process.
- Describe the way in which information about a test (especially predictive validity data) can be used to reduce the risks associated with personnel decisions.
- Make a final selection of test(s) which demonstrates a proper weighting of all the available evidence about the appropriateness of psychological testing given the assessment specification.

LA UNIT 5. Administering tests to one or more candidates and dealing with scoring procedures

Does the Assessee:

- Plan test sessions with due regard to the maximum numbers of candidates who can be assessed in one session and the maximum duration of each session.
- Ensure that any equipment (e.g. computer) is operating correctly and sufficient test materials are available for use by the candidate.
- Ensure, where re-usable materials are being used, that they are carefully checked for marks or notes which may have been made by previous candidates.
- Arrange a suitable quiet location for carrying out the testing and arrange the seating and desk space to maximise comfort and minimise the possibilities of cheating. Inform the candidates of the time and place well in advance and ensure they are adequately prepared – where relevant – for what they will be required to do and why.
- Brief candidates on the purpose of the test session and put them at their ease while maintaining an appropriately business-like atmosphere.
- Enter the candidate's personal details in the test session log, together with relevant details of what assessment instruments were used, and what provision was made for any special needs.
- Check to ensure all candidates have the necessary materials.
- Use standard test instructions and present them clearly and intelligibly to the candidates.
- Provide the candidates with sufficient time to work through example test items.
- Make careful checks to ensure proper use of the answer sheet and response procedures.
- Deal appropriately with any questions which arise without compromising the purpose of the test.
- Explain any time limits and ensure that during the test candidates maintain silence to avoid distracting others.
- Make clear that once the test has begun no further questions can be answered.
- Adhere strictly to test-specific instructions concerning pacing and timing.
- Collect all materials when each test is completed.
- Carry out a careful check against the inventory of materials to ensure that everything has been returned.
- Lock all materials away in a secure place.

- Thank the candidates for their participation when the final test has been completed, and explain the next stage (if any) in their assessment to them.
- Make final entries in the test session log – including notes on any particular problems which arose during the session which might have affected a candidate's performance.
- Visually check answer sheets for ambiguous markings which could be obscured by scoring keys or cause problems with machine scoring systems.
- Demonstrate accurate use of a range of different hand-scoring keys and 'self-scoring' forms.
- Accurately transfer raw score marks to record cards.
- Use norm tables to find relevant percentile and/or standard scores and transfer these to the candidates' record cards.

LA UNIT 6. Making appropriate use of test results and providing accurate written and oral feedback to clients and candidates

Can the Assessee:

- Select appropriate norm tables from the test manual or supplementary material.
- Make appropriate use of information provided in the test manual about job-related cut-off scores.
- Either attach suitable cautions to interpretation of the results, or not use the test, where no relevant norms or cut-off tables are available.
- Give due consideration, where necessary, to the comparability between the candidate and any reference groups, the standard error of the group mean and the standard error of measurement of the candidate's scores.
- Present norm-based scores within a context which clearly describes the range of abilities or other relevant characteristics of the norm group they relate to.
- Describe the meanings of scale scores in terms which are accurate, reflect the confidence limits associated with those scores and are intelligible to the client and the candidate.
- Provide interpretations of scale scores paying due regard to the correlations which exist between each pair of scales and for the standard error of their difference.
- Make appropriate connections between performance on a test and characteristics in the original person specification.
- Compute composite test battery scores from weights given in a test manual.

Does the Assessee:

Provide feedback of information about results to the candidate which:

- is in a form appropriate to his or her understanding of the tests and the scales;
- describes the meanings of scale names in lay terms which are accurate and meaningful;
- provides the candidate with opportunities to ask questions, clarify points and comment upon the test and the administration procedure;
- encourages the candidate to comment on the perceived accuracy and fairness or otherwise of the information obtained from the test;
- clearly informs the candidate about how the information will be presented (orally or in writing) and to whom.

Provide written reports for the client and/or candidate which:

- presents in lay terms the rationale and justification for the use of the test.
- describes the meanings of scale names in lay terms which are accurate and meaningful;
- carefully explains any use of normed scores in relation to the ability range of the norm group; carefully justify any predictions made about future performance in relation to validity information about the test;
- gives clear guidance as to the appropriate weight to be placed on the findings.

LA UNIT 7. Maintaining security and confidentiality of the test materials and the test data

Does the Assessee ensure that:

- Clear descriptions are given to the candidate(s) prior to their assessment concerning: how their results are to be used; who will be given access to them; for how long they will be retained.
- All test data are kept in a secure place and that access is not given to unauthorised personnel.
- All test materials are kept in a secure place which is not accessible to people other than authorised test users.
- All mandatory requirements relating to candidate's and client's rights and obligations under the Data Protection Act are clearly explained to both parties.
- Where data are stored, the conditions of the Data Protection Act are abided by.
- Potential test candidates are not provided with prior access to test materials other than those specifically designed to help candidates prepare for their assessment.

Notes for Assessors and Trainers

General notes

- No formal assessment procedures have been identified, but the Society does publish *Guidance for Assessors*, updates of which will be announced in *Selection & Development Review*.
- No formal training requirements have been defined.

Assessments of competence must be carried out by a Chartered Psychologist who holds a current Assessor's Certificate.

The Assessor must initial each item on the Checklist. Where all the items on the Checklist for a Unit have been initialled, the Affirmation of Competence in that Unit should be signed and dated.

Training courses

Chartered Psychologists who direct training courses in Occupational Testing need to have obtained Statements or Certificates of Competence in Occupational Testing.

If ALL the competences are covered, the course may be advertised as:

- 'Providing training leading to fulfilment of requirements for The British Psychological Society Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A).'

If SOME but not all of the competences are covered, the course may be advertised as:

- 'Providing training leading to partial fulfilment of the requirements for The British Psychological Society Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing (Level A).'

Courses which are not under the direction of a Chartered Psychologist may not make any claims relating to The British Psychological Society Certificate.

Code of Good Practice for Occupational Testing

People who use psychological tests in occupational settings are expected by The British Psychological Society to:

- Take steps to ensure that they are able to meet all the standards of competence defined by the Society for the relevant Certificate(s) of Competence in Occupational Testing, and to endeavour, where possible, to develop and enhance their competence as test users.
- Monitor the limits of their competence in psychometric testing and not to offer services which lie outside their competence nor encourage or cause others to do so.
- Use tests only in conjunction with other assessment methods and only when their use can be supported by the available technical information.
- Administer, score and interpret tests in accordance with the instructions provided by the test distributor and to the standards defined by the Society.
- Store test materials securely and to ensure that no unqualified person has access to them.
- Keep test results securely, in a form suitable for developing norms, validation, and monitoring for bias.
- Obtain the informed consent of potential test takers, making sure that they understand why the tests will be used, what will be done with their results and who will be provided with access to them.
- Ensure that all test takers are well informed and well prepared for the test session, and that all have had access to practice or familiarisation materials where appropriate.
- Give due consideration to factors such as gender, ethnicity, age, disability and special needs, educational background and level of ability in using and interpreting the results of tests.
- Provide the test taker and other authorised persons with feedback about the results in a form which makes clear the implications of the results, is clear and in a style appropriate to their level of understanding.
- Ensure test results are stored securely, are not accessible to unauthorised or unqualified persons and are not used for any purposes other than those agreed with the test taker.

THE SOCIETY

The British Psychological Society was founded in 1901 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965.

Its principal objects are to:

- promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied;
- promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge;
- maintain a Code of Conduct for the guidance of Members;
- compel the observation of strict rules of professional conduct;
- maintain a Register of Chartered Psychologists.

The Society has more than 34,000 members and:

- has branches in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales;
- accredits nearly 700 undergraduate degrees;
- accredits nearly 100 postgraduate professional training courses;
- accredits higher degrees, in partnership with the Open University Validation Service;
- confers Fellowships for distinguished achievements;
- confers Chartered Status for professionally qualified psychologists;
- awards grants to support research and scholarship;
- publishes 10 scientific journals;
- publishes books, CD-ROMS, videos and other educational resources;
- publishes *The Psychologist* each month;
- publishes newsletters for its constituent groups;
- maintains a website;
- has international links with psychological societies and associations throughout the world;

- provides an information service for the news media and the public;
- has an Ethics Committee;
- provides service to the Disciplinary Board;
- maintains a Register of more than 9,500 Chartered Psychologists;
- prepares policy statements on matters of social policy;
- holds conferences, workshops, continuing professional development and training events;
- recognises distinguished contributions to psychological science and practice through individual awards and honours.

The Vision Statement of the Society plans that by 2006:

- there will be 50,000 members;
- the Society will have offices in the major constituent parts of the United Kingdom;
- the public at large will have a clear understanding of psychology as both a research and applied discipline;
- the Society will seek to influence public policy on matters relating to education, health, the family and the community;
- all its members will contribute so that the strengths and diversity of its membership are fully utilised.

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