

Preparing for Psychometric Tests

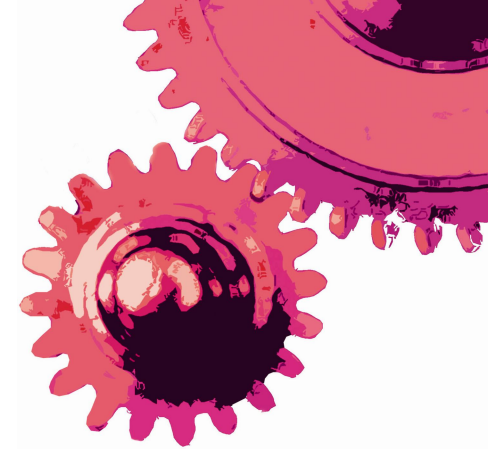
Careers and Employment Service

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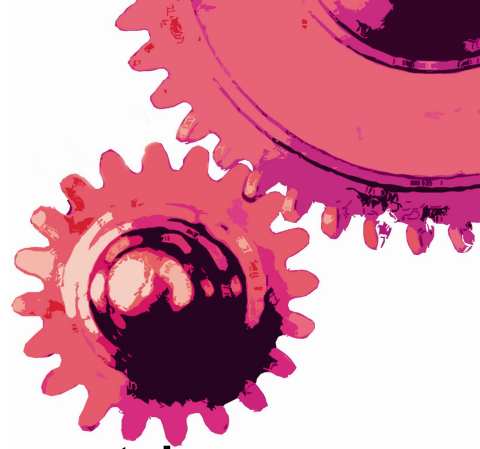
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Aim of the workshop:



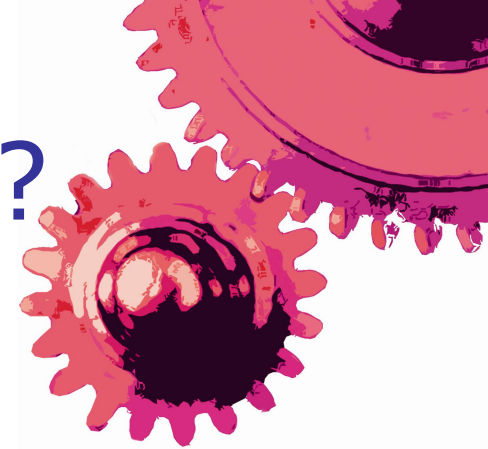
- to provide an insight into what psychometric tests are and to explore their use in recruitment and selection processes
- to signpost further resources that are available

Summary of outcomes



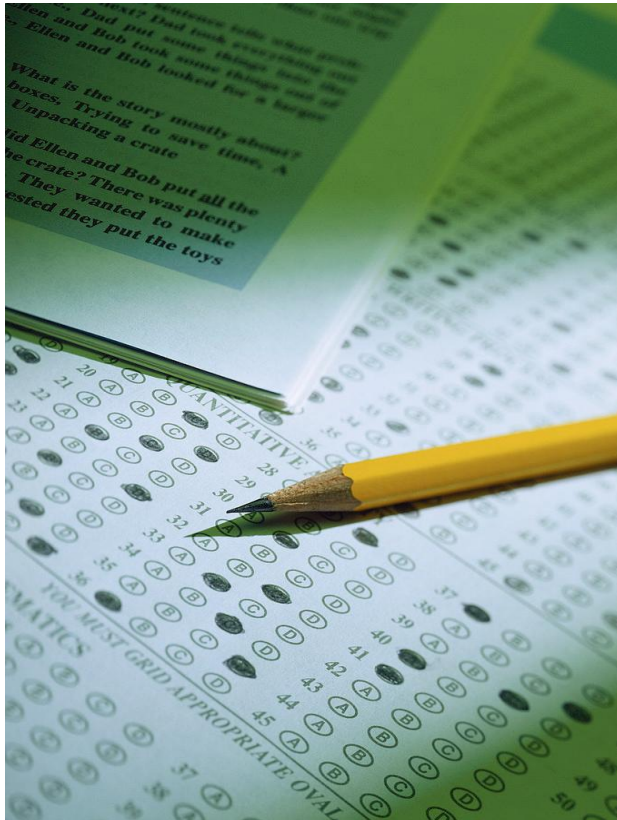
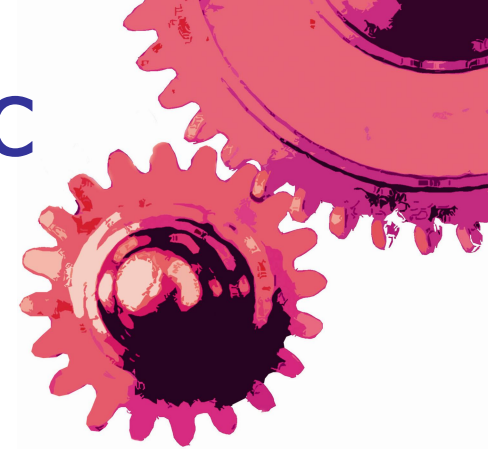
- Clearer understanding of what psychometric tests are and how recruiters use them
- Familiarity with strategies to maximise your performance
- Awareness of practice materials and additional resources

What are psychometric tests?



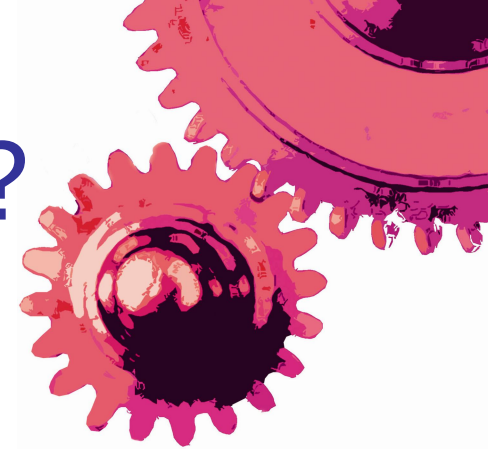
- ‘A standardised sample of *behaviour* which can be *described by a numerical scale* or category system’ (Cronbach)
- A psychological *test used in the world of work*’ (Saville and Holdsworth)
- ‘A psychological test is any procedure on the basis of which *inferences are made, concerning a person’s capability*, propensity or liability to act, react, experience, or structure or order thought or behaviour in particular ways’ (BPS)

Main types of psychometric tests



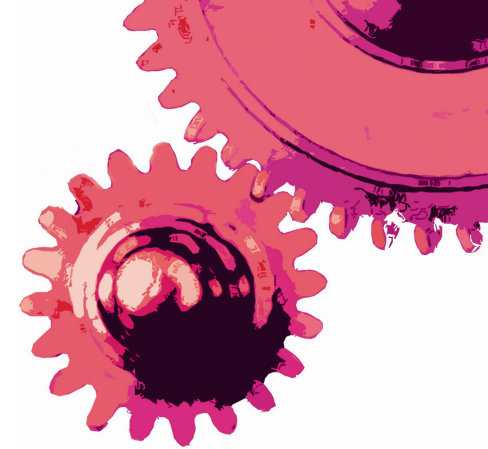
- Ability/Aptitude Tests (usually verbal, numerical and diagrammatic)
- Personality Inventories (questionnaires)
- Career matching software (like Prospects Planner)

Why do Employers use them?



- Measure a skill or the potential to acquire it
- Measure capacity for logical thinking or reasoning
- Establish or confirm competence for a job
- Objectively compare candidates' performance with 'norm' levels for a similar 'population'
- Reliable predictor of how well someone is likely to perform in a given job

Advantages for Employers



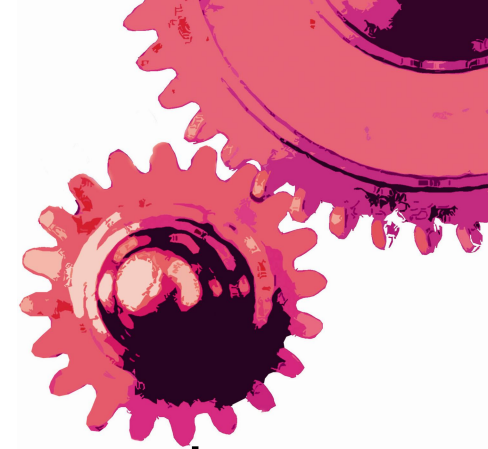
- Less subjective than an interview
- Fairer, more objective decision making
- Online testing = greater cost efficiency

Disadvantages for Employers



- Can be unreliable or invalid
- Can discriminate against certain individuals
- Expensive to commission and costly to administer

Prior to test sessions



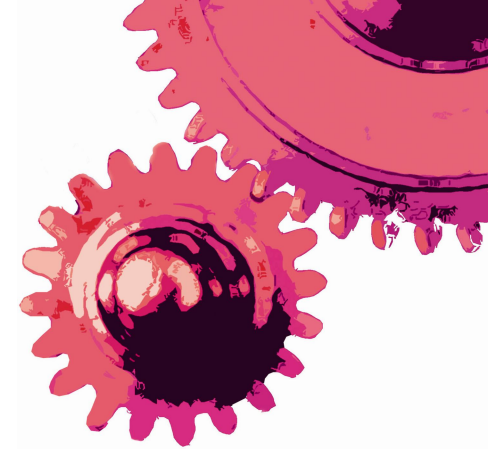
- Be clear which **type of tests** are to be used, e.g. aptitude / personality
- **Practice questions** available?
- Inform administrator about any **factors likely to affect performance**, e.g. cultural issues or disability
- Psychometric tests can be made available in **alternative formats**, e.g. large print, Braille. NB, request in advance

Hints and Tips handout

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Aptitude tests

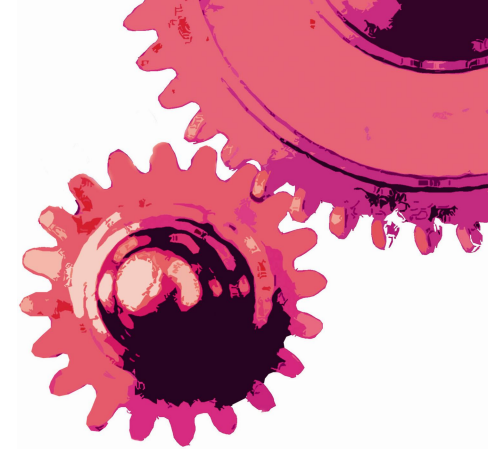
– what to expect



- Used at **different stages** of selection process
- You may get **practice leaflet** or online **practice questions**
- **Exam conditions** and **strictly timed**, standardised instructions
- Answers definitely **right or wrong**
- Answers scored and compared with **appropriate norm group**
 - **EXAMPLE**

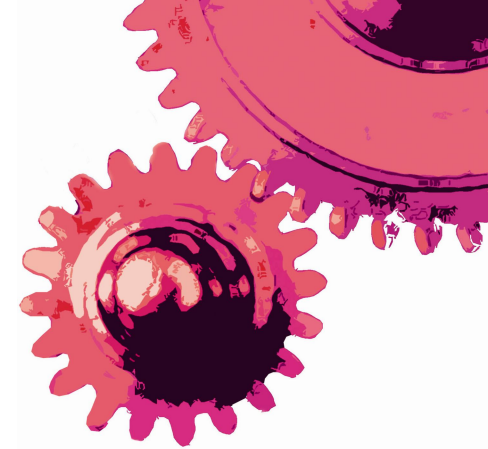
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Aptitude Tests - tactics



- Follow instructions
- Work quickly and accurately
- Skip questions if you are stuck
- Go back and answer the missed questions
- Guess?
- Tests not usually designed to be completed
- Score = correct answers in time allowed

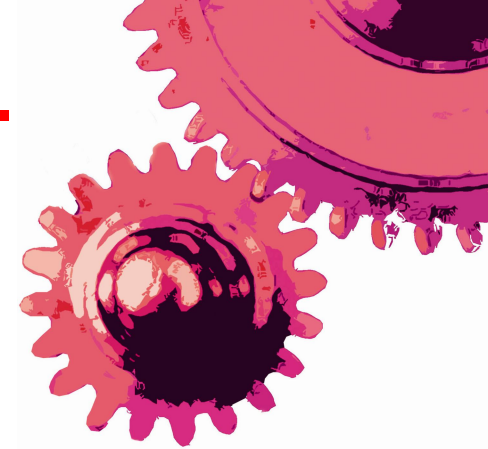
Personality Inventories



- No ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, only **YOUR** answers. Concerned with personality style
- ‘Cultural fit’ tests check whether your values and aims from work match culture of an organisation
- Questions concerned with how you typically behave in work. Thinking about previous work may help
- Usually no time limits, but don’t spend too long – give your most natural answer
 - **EXAMPLE**

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Personality Inventories - tactics



- Avoid the ‘socially desirable’ response – be honest. Many questionnaires check for consistency in response
- Don’t worry if some questions do not seem relevant
- Make sure you answer as many questions as possible
- Normally results would be discussed in interview
- Results usually only part of process alongside other elements, e.g. interview, assessment exercises

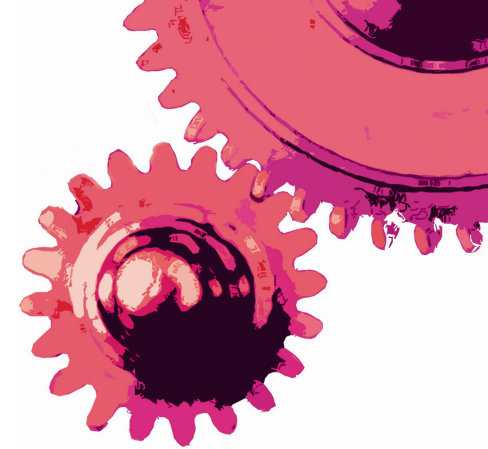
Psychometric test resources



- On-line practice tests available through the CES - call in or telephone 264493
- Practice test leaflets and handouts at CES
- Booklets available to purchase
- Reference books, for example:
 - ‘How to Pass Graduate Psychometrics’
 - ‘Advanced Numeracy Tests’ both by Mike Bryon
 - ‘How to pass Verbal Reasoning Tests’ by Tolley and Thomas

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Careers and Employment Service



- Reed Mews directly opposite the Student Health Centre. Open 9.45am-5.00pm
- Drop in also available at The Works (Devonshire House)
- Careers Advisers offer 20 minute 'duty' appointments each day. See website for more details

Any Questions???

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