



**The British
Psychological Society**
Psychological Testing Centre

[Blog](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Search this site...

[Home](#)

[PTC](#)

[Psychological Testing](#)

[Training & Research](#)

[How to Apply & Packs](#)

[Directories](#)

[Test Registration & Test Reviews](#)

[The Register \(RQTU\)](#)

[Registrants Area](#)

[The Public \(/roles/public\)](#)

[Psychologists \(/roles/psychologists\)](#)

[Organisations \(/roles/organisations\)](#)

[Testers \(/roles/testers\)](#)

Organisations



If you already offer, or would like to offer training in Certificates of Competence in Psychological Testing, please refer to the links.

Frequently Asked Questions

- How much are tests used by employers?
- What's the difference between tests used for selection and tests used for development?
- Can an employee be made to take a test by a consultant working for his company? Has the employee the right to refuse to take a test? What rights has an employer to discipline an employee who refuses? Is an employee entitled to feedback if the outcome of the test is likely to affect his career/employment?

How much are tests used by employers?

Most large organisation use tests of some description in both recruitment and development. Many will use tests at all levels of recruitment. In particular, if you are a graduate or manager applying for a job you can expect to undergo some form of psychometric assessment over the course of your career. Many smaller companies will use psychometric tests only for more senior appointments where making the wrong selection decision can have more significant consequences for the organisation.

's the difference between tests used for selection and tests used for development?

Tests are used in a variety of contexts, the two most common being selection and development. In a selection context tests are used to help organisations choose between candidates. In a development context, tests are used to highlight candidates' strengths and development areas. Maximum performance tests are more often used in a selection context, while typical performance tests tend to be used equally in selection and development.

Can an employee be made to take a test by a consultant working for his company? Has the employee the right to refuse to take a test? What rights has an employer to discipline an employee who refuses? Is an employee entitled to feedback if the outcome of the test is likely to affect his career/employment?

It would be inappropriate for this website to provide legal advice, therefore for definitive information about employment law you should consult a legal expert. In general what an employer can ask of an employee is determined by the contract of employment, although a contract cannot usually overrule legal rights and requirements under employment law. You should have received a written copy of your contract and any staff handbook of company policies and procedures. It would usually be expected that an employee comply with the employer's procedures such as staff appraisal and development. Refusal could therefore invoke the disciplinary procedure. If you have concerns that the testing is being used unfairly - particularly in making important decisions such as redundancy or promotion - you may be able to take a legal challenge through an employment tribunal.

If you do have concerns about the way tests are being used in your organisation you should try to discuss these with your manager, someone from the HR department, or the external consultant in the first instance. Whenever you are asked to complete a test or questionnaire you should receive a clear explanation of what the test is, why it is being used and what will happen with the results. You can check the BPS Register of Qualifications in Test Use to see whether the person administering the tests has an appropriate qualification. A Chartered Psychologist could provide advice on whether the particular tests and the way they are being used are appropriate. This site provides reviews of many different tests, although these are written for qualified test users and do require some technical knowledge to fully understand.

It is always good practice in any testing procedure to provide participants with feedback on their results. Where these are held on file you can make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act to see the results if your employer refuses to provide feedback on request.

[Back to top](#)

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