

Psychometric Tests

WHAT ARE PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS?

Psychometric tests are used by employers to provide objective and standardised measures of candidate's skills and behaviours. They are carefully designed and rigorously tested. The tests are often used at early stages of the selection process or during an assessment centre. They are common in the large scale recruitment processes typical of the graduate job market.

TYPES OF TEST MIGHT YOU FACE

There are two main types of test:

1. Aptitude tests

These are the most common type of tests encountered in the selection process. They are designed to test for skills required for the job. They are usually strictly timed and commonly involve multiple choice. Examples include:

- Verbal reasoning
- Numerical reasoning
- Diagrammatic reasoning
- Error checking
- Spatial reasoning
- Situational judgement
- Inductive reasoning (or logical reasoning)

2. Personality questionnaires

These are designed to assess personal qualities such as personality or motivation. They can provide information about an individual's likely behavior across situations. They are generally self-reporting and not usually timed, so they feel less like an exam. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, so avoid trying to guess what an employer is looking for and follow the guidelines given, e.g. to answer questions honestly. An example is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Aptitude tests are timed and you need to aim for both speed and accuracy. Although many of the questions on these tests may appear trivial when compared to the types of exam questions you face during your degree, it's important to practice to get the best result. There are many sources of practice material (see below) - remember that other candidates applying for these jobs will be making good use of them. If you know you are going into selection processes during the busy term time, plan ahead so you can prepare for the tests during your vacation.

TOP TIPS

As for any test or exam, to get the best result:

- Make sure you are well-rested and relaxed when you take the test
- Ensure you will not be interrupted so you can focus without distractions
- Ensure your web browser is up to date and compatible with the online platform
- Make sure you have everything with you e.g. calculator, notebook, pen etc.
- Follow the instructions exactly as given and read the questions carefully
- Be aware of the time you have available and if you get stuck, move onto the next question. You can always come back later.
- Avoid guessing, as you may be penalised for wrong answers
- If you have a disability or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, and require reasonable adjustments, you can discuss this with the employer in advance of the test session. See www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/disclosure for more on disclosure of a disability.

PRACTICE TESTS

Always check the websites of organisations you are applying to as many will supply information and practice tests aimed at preparing you for their selection processes.

For general advice, information and practice tests, visit:

- Graduates First
- AssessmentDay
- Cubiks.com
- Institute of Psychometric Coaching
- JobTestPrep
- Psychometric Success
- SHL Talent Measurement

For postgraduate study in the US you will need to complete tests, such as the GMAT, GRE etc. The Fulbright Commission in London has extensive advice on all aspects of applying in the US, including how to prepare for these tests. To find out more go to: www.fulbright.org.uk



FURTHER SUPPORT

Available from the Careers Service:

- **Careers Service website:** www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/applications
- **Bookable appointments** with Careers Consultants: book through JobsLive*
- For information on the disclosure of disability or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia please see information on the Careers Service website: www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/disclosure
- **Reference books** - including: 'The Advanced Numeracy Test Workbook', and 'How to Pass Advanced Verbal Reasoning Tests', and 'The Ultimate Psychometric Test Book' available in the Careers Service, level 5 Sherfield Building
- **Careers Service events** - each year we plan talks and workshops which are designed to enhance your chances of success in the application process - for details, see JobsLive*

* www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/jobslive

