

# Policy – Psychometric Assessment

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## Version control

This document is subject to regular review due to legislative and policy changes. The latest versions of all our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Notes / changes
v1.0	12/04/16	Full council	New policy
v1.2	14/09/17	Sophie Vaughan	Inclusion of technology in testing
v2.0	25/04/18	Andrea Malam	Reformatting
v2.1	25/06/22	David Kennedy	Reformatting

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## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The HR Organisational Development Manager is responsible for providing registration, advice, training and operational guidelines in conjunction with the Recruitment Specialist and the Trade Unions to ensure effective application and monitoring of this policy.

The Recruitment Specialist and trained members of Human Resources are responsible for the ordering, safe storage of materials, recording of all assessment centre activities and the interpretation of assessment tools including feedback to the recruitment panel.

The administration, scoring and interpretation of tests by the council are done in conjunction with the British Psychological Society.

Each test user must ensure that they use the tests to the highest professional standards and only in accordance with guidelines set out in this policy.

### **Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing**

Human Resources will be able to oversee the controlled environment for test administration and feedback of results subject to their level of training in occupational testing (British Psychological Society Level A). Further details of competence can be sought from Human Resources.

### **Types of psychometric testing**

Psychometric (or Occupational) Testing is a tool of selection, career development and team building. Where testing is seen to be appropriate, the council is committed to achieving the highest standards of practice in the use of psychometric tests for selection and development to maximise their benefit and to promote fairness and equality of opportunity for all. Psychometric testing is used in conjunction with other test and assessment methods, for example, interview, presentation and group exercises.

There are three types of psychometric tests:

- **Personality and Motivation questionnaires** – focus on typical or preferred behaviours

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- **Ability Tests** – focus on maximum performance in specific areas

Advice and support on psychometric testing is available from Human Resources.

## Psychometric test procedures

### Test administration

The council will ensure that only trained/qualified test users who hold the relevant qualification (BPS level A/level B) will use and interpret psychometric instruments. Trained/qualified test users may delegate test administration to a person trained in this area.

Human Resources will ensure that the most current and up to date materials are used for all testing.

Where external consultants are engaged to use tests at the council, their level of certification will be verified and they will be subject to these procedures.

Proper briefing and administration of tests is critical to the quality of the data produced. If tests are not administered with due regard to recommended procedure, or test takers are coerced or inadequately informed of the purpose of the assessment their attitude to completing the tests may be affected. This in turn may affect their responses and distort the results produced.

Candidates will be treated ethically at all stages of the testing process and prior to the testing session will be informed in writing:

- the nature of the assessment, why it is being used, the conditions under which it will take place and the nature of the feedback they will receive
- how their results will be used, e.g. alongside other information from the interview and application form to decide their suitability for the post
- who will be given access to their results (limited to those who genuinely need to know)
- how long the results will be retained (with reference to the Data Protection Act)

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The informed consent of candidates to taking part in the test process will be obtained. If a candidate declines to take the test they will not be coerced and whilst their non-completion will not be viewed negatively in any decisions in the assessment process, the absence of comparative test data may be a factor in the selection decision.

The administration, scoring and interpretation instructions that apply to the test(s) being administered will be adhered to at all times. Test data will not be used for purposes other than those to which the test taker has given their consent.

## Test choice and selection

If testing is being considered, Human Resources should be contacted as early as possible in the recruitment process to discuss:

- Whether it is appropriate to use testing and whether it will provide any additional relevant information
- How the relevance of the test is linked to the requirements of the role
- What test to use
- The time requirement in the process
- The availability of appropriately trained staff to administer tests and feedback results

Psychometric tests must be clearly relevant to the given purpose. Psychometric tests for selection can only be of use if the job has been analysed thoroughly and a person specification drawn up to define the skills, abilities and competencies necessary for effective performance in the post. Tests can then be clearly related to the requirements for the job, which is a legal requirement.

A trained assessor based in Human Resources must justify why the assessment(s) are being carried out and record this on the Vacancy Control Form (VCF) which will be kept on the recruitment file.

Personality questionnaires will not be used for short listing purposes although they may be appropriate as supplementary information at a later stage in the selection process.

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## **Test takers**

Candidates will receive adequate notice that they are required to complete the test and additional relevant information. Information regarding feedback of results, storage and access will also be communicated to the individual.

The council will obtain consent from the individual regarding the above.

## **Occupational testing results**

Only qualified assessors will be able to interpret test scores. Any scores given will be interpreted using a norm group which will be determined by the assessor and recruitment panel.

## **Feedback of test results**

Feedback will be offered to all candidates by a qualified assessor from Human Resources and will normally be face to face. The same assessor will also provide verbal feedback to the recruitment panel, normally prior to interview. Written feedback can be provided to the candidates on request.

## **Test reliability and validity**

Any test to aid selection has to be reliable and valid. The reliability of a test is concerned with its precision of measurement and statistical data on reliability is provided by reputable test publishers. The test of validity is the extent to which the test is relevant to and a predictor of successful job performance. Test publishers produce statistical data to demonstrate the validity of their tests for certain roles or types of employment. This information assists in the selection of appropriate tests and Human Resources can advise on the types of test available, the costs and their usefulness for a particular post.

It is essential not to judge the validity of a test on face validity (i.e. it looks right) or faith alone (i.e. because we have used it before -but without statistical data to justify its effectiveness).

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## Equal opportunities

All assessments for selection and promotion will be monitored to insure that they do not unfairly disadvantage or exclude anysection of the population.

No candidate will experience discrimination, harassment or bullying or receive less favourable treatment because of their age,disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status race, pregnancy or maternity religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities.

Appropriate alternative arrangements must be made when a disability prevents a suitably qualified individual from taking part in thestandard selection procedures. Please contact the Recruitment Specialist before making any changes to the test administration procedures.

## International Standards for assessment centre delivery (ISO 10667)

Denbighshire County Council are required to meet the international standards for assessment centre delivery (ISO 10667) and shallensure that it, and anyone whose work it controls is competent to carry out the assessment.

They shall:

- Conduct work using appropriate professionally accepted technical quality guidelines to select or develop effective assessments;
- Have sufficient knowledge of theories, methodology and measurement practice relating to assessment work and organisational settings
- Have sufficient knowledge of available assessment methods used in work and organisational settings
- Keep up to date with developments and advances in relevant areas
- Know the competencies of each person providing services and ensure that those people are not required to work outside the limits of their competence
- Require people providing services under its control to work within the boundaries of their professional ethics.



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## Retesting

For selection purposes a candidate's test results are valid for any similar position for 6 months from the date of testing. Candidates may be retested after six months at their request. Candidates may be retested within a shorter period only at the discretion of the relevant recruiting manager, should there be evidence to suggest they may have underperformed the first time e.g. due to illness. The candidate should supply details in writing supporting their application.

## Use of Technology with Testing

Denbighshire County Council will administer tests remotely via the internet, test takers will be provided with appropriate information about the process and who to contact for assistance if required. Where necessary final decisions will be supported by additional supervised testing.

All Test users must ensure that all test materials are securely stored. An accurate log should be kept by the Recruitment Specialist of all test materials held. The log should be updated whenever materials are removed, replaced or added to the store.

## Security of documentation

Psychometric documents must be kept secure (in locked filing cabinets) at all times within Human Resources and only those that are qualified to use the materials will have access. Candidates will not be able to take assessment centre materials home.

Persons who are untrained should not be allowed access to raw data from tests but only to clearly described interpretations.

Assessment results will be kept confidential and will not be stored without the candidate's permission in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The assessment results are valid for a period of six months and will be destroyed after this period of time in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

All Test materials, including profile charts and software supplied on computer installations are subject copyright laws which prohibit the reproduction of materials. The transfer of

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pencil and paper tests to a computer also constitutes of an infringement of copyright. Under no circumstances should any test materials be photocopied or installed on computer without the test publisher's express permission. Any potential breaches of copyright will be actively pursued by the provider.