

Preparing for Psychometric Tests

Psychometric tests are structured methods used by employers to assess each candidate's suitability for a job. They may include aptitude or ability tests, personality questionnaires or a combination of both

Aptitude tests

These are formal tests, usually completed online and they are designed to test your reasoning and cognitive capability, usually to a strict deadline. Each test is generally comprised of multiple choice questions.

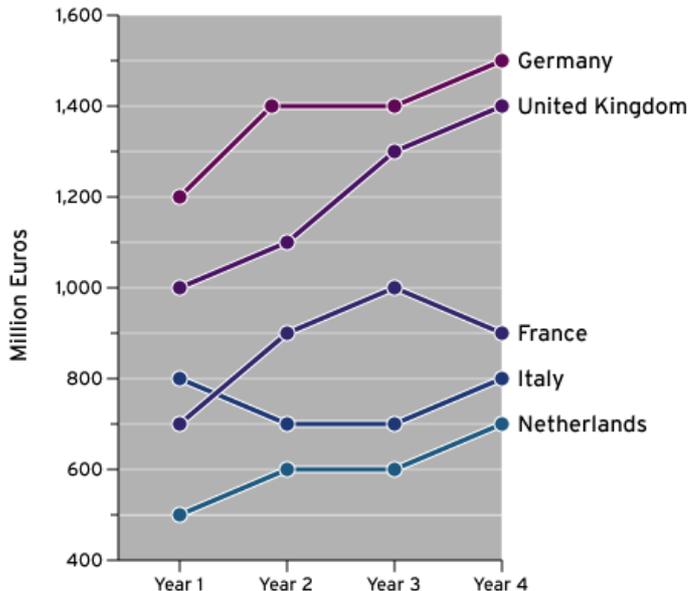
The most common are;

Numerical reasoning tests - Numerical tests aim to measure your understanding of tables of statistical and numerical information as well as your ability to make logical deductions.

The important characteristics of a numerical reasoning test are:

- Multiple choice answers
- No prior study required
- Use of calculators permitted
- Strict time limits
- Based on only the information given - you should not make assumptions

Try this!



Question 1 – In Year 3, how much more than Italy did Germany spend on computer imports?

- A- 650 million
- B- 700 million
- C- 750 million
- D- 800 million
- E- 850 million

Answer: B! In yr 3, Germany spent 1400m euros and Italy 700m euros. (1400 - 700 = 700) so the difference is 700m euros

Verbal reasoning tests - Verbal tests aim to assess your ability to comprehend written information and to evaluate arguments about this information.

You will be presented with a short passage of text and will need to answer a True, False or Cannot Say response to each statement.

- **True** - The statement's logically in line with the information provided in the text.
- **False** - The statement isn't logically in line with the information provided in the text.
- **Cannot Say** - It isn't possible to deduce this based on the information provided in the text. Further information is required.

Try this!

Many organisations find it beneficial to employ students over the summer. Permanent staff often wish to take their own holidays over this period. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for companies to experience peak workloads in the summer and so require extra staff. Summer employment also attracts students who may return as well qualified recruits to an organisation when they have completed their education. Ensuring that the students learn as much as possible about the organisation encourages interest in working on a permanent basis. Organisations pay students on a fixed rate without the usual entitlement to paid holidays or sick leave."

Statement 1 - It is possible that permanent staff who are on holiday can have their work carried out by students.

True! As the passage says 'Many organisations find it beneficial to employ students over the summer. Permanent staff often wish to take their own holidays over this period.'

Statement 2 – Students in summer employment are given the same paid holiday benefit as permanent staff.

False! As the passage says 'Organisations pay students on a fixed rate without the usual entitlement to paid holidays or sick leave.'

Statement 3 – Students are subject to the organisation's standard disciplinary and grievance procedures

Cannot Say! The passage does not make any reference to disciplinary and grievance procedures

Personality and OPQ Tests

This questionnaire will give you a chance to show a little more about yourself, by measuring your preferences, styles and behaviours in relation to work. This is not an ability test; it is a tool for profiling personality, not assessing aptitude or attainment. Remember there are no right or wrong answers!

Tip: Be yourself - avoid trying to predict what would be a good or bad response. Go with your gut instinct and answer honestly;

A typical test would look something like this;

Complete the following using the rating scale: **1** Strongly Disagree; **2** Disagree; **3** Unsure; **4** Agree; **5** Strongly Agree

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) I assert myself in company | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2) I generally trust other people | <input type="radio"/> |

PPA – Personal Profile Analysis

You may get asked to complete a short PPA as it provides the employer with an accurate insight into how you currently behave at work. The results are designed to assist an employer in the interview process. It will suggest what kind of position you would be most happy in.

You will be answering questions like;

- What are your strengths and limitations?
- How do you communicate?
- Are you a self starter?
- What motivates you?

You should aim to take no more than 8 minutes to complete it. Don't worry, this is not a test! There are no right or wrong answers so you cannot pass or fail. Be certain that you complete the PPA thinking of yourself in your current job; if you are not working, then think of yourself in your last job. If you have not worked, then think of yourself at home.

All Tests - Tips and Advice

- Get a feel for the assessments you're going to do, by doing practice tests.
- All tests **MUST** be completed in isolation and without interruption. Many people complete these on-line tests and questionnaires at home so you need to effectively manage any potential interruptions.
- Make sure you have sufficient broadband connectivity.
- Think about the best time of day to complete the test. What time are you at your best to concentrate, feel positive / motivated?
- Keep an eye on the time, pace yourself and do not dwell on one question.
- For numerical tests, get your calculator ready! it's also worthwhile reminding yourself how to do the basics such as fractions, percentages.
- For best results, for Personality and PPA's – go with your first choice or your gut feeling.

Practice tests

If you would like to practice a full length test or find out more information on tests in general I suggest using the following links below;

All tests: http://www.shldirect.com/practice_tests.html
<http://www.psychometric-success.com/downloads/download-practice-tests.htm>

Numerical & Verbal tests: <http://www.assessmentday.co.uk/>

Personality tests: <http://www.findingpotential.com/>