



Glossary of terms – Psychometric testing

Ability tests – tests used to evaluate an individual’s performance in some defined domain of cognitive, psychomotor or physical functioning.

Answer key – the key that describes the scoring scenario for a question or test.

Battery (test battery) – a collection of tests the results of which can be combined to produce a single score.

Cognitive processes – higher mental processes such as perception, memory, language, problem solving and abstract thinking.

Emotional intelligence – defined as the abilities to perceive, appraise and express emotions accurately and appropriately; to use emotions to facilitate thinking and to use emotional knowledge effectively to promote both emotional and intellectual growth.

Intelligence test – any test that claims to measure intelligence. Generally consists of a graded series of tasks, each of which has been standardised with a large, representative population.

Inventory – a questionnaire or checklist, usually in the form of a self-report, which can elicit information about an individual’s personal opinions, interests, attitudes, preferences, personal characteristics and motivations etc.

Ipsative – reflected or measured against the self. For example, an ipsative personality test may reveal that an individual is higher in the need for achievement than in the need for affiliation.

Normative – relates to norms or standards used to get a sense of underlying distribution.

Norm group - the group used to establish a standard against which to measure performance or evaluate behaviour.

Percentile – the score on a test below which a given percentage of scores fall. For example the 40th percentile would have 40% of the scores below.

Personality – the unique psychological qualities of an individual that influence a variety of characteristic behaviour patterns across different situations and time.





Range – the difference between the highest and lowest scores.

Raw score – the unadjusted score on a test.

Reliability – the dependability of a measurement test or instrument. The extent to which a test consistently produces the same or comparable results when used in similar conditions.

Scale score – the score to which raw scores are converted by numerical transformation such as the conversion to percentile ranks or standard scores.

Standardised testing – tests completed under a set of uniform procedures.

Trait – any enduring characteristics that can serve an explanatory role in accounting for the observed regularities and consistencies in behaviour.

Type – a class or group distinguished by possessing or displaying some particular characteristic.

Validity – the degree to which a test or other instrument of measurement measures what it is supposed to measure. There are different types of validity such as face validity and content validity.

