

Psychometric Test Use Policy

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Mission statement

Erko Group Ltd. is committed to using tests in fair and responsible way, promoting high standards. As such Erko Group Ltd. adheres to all of the clauses in the British Psychological Society's 2016 Code of Good Practice for Psychological Testing (found [here](#)), The Data Protection Act 2018 and Equality Act 2010. Psychometric tests are used to support a range of processes and the aim of this policy is to explain and define both ability and personality assessment tests and the guidance surrounding best practice when considering the use of testing in the recruitment, selection and development of both internal and external participants. Erko Group Ltd. are committed to the highest standards of practice in the use of all psychometric tests, in order to maximise the benefit of testing to the organisation and the individual, and to promote fairness and equal opportunity.

For the purposes of this documents 'Ability' tests refer to any assessment of cognitive ability, skills test, or any test of aptitude. 'Personality' questionnaires refer to the assessment of an individual's tendency, preference or characteristic modes of behaviour. Assessments and questionnaires used should at all time meet or exceed the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Psychological Testing Centre (PTC) criteria for reliability and validity, including any benchmarking or 'norm' groups used.

Scope

The scope of this policy includes any and all use of psychometric tests.

Responsibility for testing standards

Erko Group Ltd. takes responsibility for the appropriate use of psychometrics tests of ability and personality, and ensuring that all test use is completed in accordance with the standards set out in this policy.

Qualifications

Test users shall have appropriate qualifications in test use according to their role in the testing process;

Test administrators: Test administrators may conduct a testing session where the participants complete the questionnaires. Test administrators may not score, interpret or feedback results – this will be considered a significant breach of both the BPS' code of conduct, and the PTC Code of Good Practice for Psychological Testing and this policy.

Test User Occupational, Ability: Individuals holding this qualification may administer, score, interpret and feedback results for all tests of ability, skill and aptitude.

Test User Occupational, Personality: Individuals holding this qualification may administer, score, interpret and feedback results for the any questionnaires that they have completed the pre-requisite training for e.g. OPQ32.

Line Managers: In line with BPS standards Line managers users may ONLY have access to appropriate 'Line Manager' reports after having been briefed by Colin Matthews in the purpose of the assessment and the scope of the assessment (what the assessment do and do not measure). Line managers MAY NOT have access to raw data (e.g. profile sheets, percentiles); this will be considered a significant breach of both the BPS' code of conduct, and the PTC Code of Good Practice for Psychological Testing and this policy.

Candidates/untrained users (if not breaching confidentiality): Candidates and other untrained users may only have access to 'candidate' reports designed specifically for an untrained user, or, feedback from an appropriately qualified individual (see above).

Testing standards

Each test user must ensure that he/she uses tests to the highest professional standards and only in accordance with the guidelines set out in this policy. Overall responsibility for testing standards for ability tests and the OPQ lies with an appropriate representative, in this case Colin Matthews, who is qualified by the British Psychological Society.

Colin Matthews is also responsible for advising other representatives in the business on the most appropriate test, or combination of tests, to be used for the selection and development of employee at Erko Group Ltd. based on the requirements of the job, person specification, and desired outcomes.

Any procedure that will involve the use of psychometric testing must be referred to Erko Coaching for approval before implementation. Erko Coaching will provide guidelines for the use of tests that must be followed by all users.

It is the responsibility of all test users to ensure that this policy is applied at all times. All deviations should be reported to Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews, who will take the appropriate action.

When tests are used

Tests can be used for many purposes including; selection decisions, short listing, placement and promotion decisions, development, team building, HiPo identification and validation and organisational development. In each case, Erko Coaching will determine whether the situation is appropriate for the inclusion of psychometric tests based on the desired outcomes.

Assessment results are best used in conjunction with other information, where available, when taking decisions. Use of a single test result to make a decision should be avoided in all situations with the exception of shortlisting using an appropriate ability test. Consideration should be given to the stage at which the testing is utilised. Personality tests should not be used for shortlisting.

Any additional uses should be referred to Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews have final say on the use of tests, with the ability to supersede any decisions made by untrained users.

How tests are chosen

Trained test users such as Colin Matthews have undertaken training in how to choose appropriate assessments given the context and the objectives of the testing process. Psychometric tests should only be used where it can clearly be demonstrated the results are relevant to the characteristics in question. Additionally that the use of psychometrics are fair to the population being tested both now and in the future.

A properly constructed psychometric test is accompanied by information on the test's technical properties. This is contained in the test's technical manual provided by the publisher. It includes the test reliability, validity and norm group data.

Erko Coaching will only use psychometric tests if:

- They can be shown to be relevant, appropriate and effective to the context
- They meet the standards for reliability, validity and norms set out by the PTC
- The test is up-to-date
- Inclusion does not disadvantage/discriminate any group of participants

It is the duty of Erko Coaching to ensure all psychometric tests used are clearly relevant to the given purpose based on:

- Detailed job descriptions
- Detailed person specifications

That have been collected through a thorough and accurate job analysis process.

Commitment to equal opportunities

It is the responsibility of Erko Coaching to ensure that testing does not disadvantage or advantage any group(s) taking part in a testing process. Consideration should be given to the protected characteristics set out in The Equality Act (2010) for example;

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Race, religion or belief
- Disability

Test publisher should provide data relating to the 'fairness' of the assessments they publish. The absence of which should preclude the test from being used. If there is any doubt about the impact of testing, Erko Coaching will explore reasonable adjustments or provide an alternative method.

How test scores will be used

Test scores should always be interpreted by properly trained individuals in the context of clearly defined criteria. Test scores must be interpreted on the basis of relevant norm groups. Fixed cut-offs (i.e. when decisions are made based purely on test takers obtaining a minimum score) may only be imposed where specific evidence of test relevance is available through job analysis or a validation study. As required, further guidance / interpretation should be sought from Erko Coaching in the first instance and the test provider if standards are not already set.

Cut offs will not be set using personality test data as it is strength of preference and therefore not a measure of ability.

Confidentiality, storage of results and retesting

In the first instance Erko Group Ltd. takes responsibility for adhering to the Data Protection Act (1998) exactly. Additionally all test results will be stored securely with limited access given to trained users responsible for the administration and collation of test data. Only those involved directly in selection and development processes will be allowed supervised access to appropriate data (e.g. reports related to their level of training) so long as it does not contravene the confidentiality agreement in place at the time of testing. Requests to access data should be sent to Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews. Results will not be printed on public printers or hard copies left in unsecured storage e.g. a desk filling tray. Breaches must be reported to from Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews immediately. For guidance, test results should be kept by test users in locked files (when paper copies) or on a secure network (when completed online). Where access to such network is not limited to trained test users, results should be password protected.

Test data, unless it forms a part of an ongoing personnel file, shall not be kept longer than is necessary and not longer than 12 months in any case. With the exception of personality data for incumbents that can have a shelf life of up to 24 months. Ability test data shall have a shelf life of 12 months, with retesting requests considered after 6 months. Data collected for selection purposes may ONLY be used for development with explicit consent of the participant. Data collected for development purposes MUST NOT be used for selection purposes. Data on unsuccessful applicants may be retained for 3 months to support feedback delivery or challenges on decisions made.

Responsibilities to test takers

Erko Group Ltd. will be honest about the purpose of testing and how the results will be used. We will provide suitable support, briefing, information and feedback to all candidates and questions or comments will be welcomed and necessary action taken. No candidate will be unfairly disadvantaged by Erko Group Ltd. processes.

Monitoring of testing

The use of tests and other psychometric instruments will be continually monitored to ensure continued appropriateness and effectiveness. Monitoring by the characteristics listed above (age, gender, ethnicity, race, religion or belief, disability) will also be completed to identify any adverse impact. Only tests with supporting equality information will be used by Erko Group Ltd.

Materials and copyright

Copyright legislation forbids the reproduction of psychometric test materials. It is an infringement of copyright to copy test materials without the express permission of the test's publisher. Testing materials should be considered as exam materials and not be circulated or disseminated in any way. Test materials should be stored securely within Erko Coaching and access only granted to those with appropriate qualifications when the situation dictates it is necessary to access them.

All requests for materials should be made to Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews.

Use of technology with testing

The primary method of administration within testing will be remotely via the internet. As this is a less controlled mechanism of administering tests, test takers will be provided with appropriate information about the process and appropriate support provided if required. The lack of control over the process will be considered in the interpretation of scores and decision making and assessment tests will always be supported by other methods (e.g. interview) when making a selection decision. Where questions are raised about the accuracy of ability test data, verifications tests will be completed under supervised conditions to confirm the result.

Policy review

Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews will formally review the function of this policy after six months initially and then annually thereafter.

Suggestions for changes and amendments should be addressed directly to Erko Coaching and Colin Matthews who will review the appropriateness and validity prior to inclusion.

Acceptance and adherence

Colin Matthews, all employees working within Erko Coaching and Erko Group Ltd. will adhere to the principles and policies detailed in this policy when using psychometric tests.

Signed  Colin Matthews

Date: 20th December 2020