

Human Resources

Ethical Test Use Policy



Chelmsford City Council - Ethical Test Use Policy

Psychometric tests are research based instruments, which can be used to help measure abilities aptitude, behaviour preferences and likely behaviour. They can be a valuable aid to activities such as recruitment, selection for promotion, management development and team building. They can be shown to assess and measure the differences between individuals.

The incorrect use of tests can give rise to unfair decisions and the misuse of test information can unfairly damage an individual's reputation. This statement is intended to reassure employees and potential employees of Chelmsford City Council that their individual rights are protected and that the organisation will do all in its power to ensure good testing practice.

Choice of tests

1. Tests will be chosen so as not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age or religion.
2. A test will be used only if an extensive research basis for it has already been published. Only the most up-to-date version will be used.
3. Normative data will be the basis for comparison of all scores derived from normative test. The norm tables or comparison groups used give a fair and relevant comparison with the individual being tested and are up to date.
4. Psychometric tests will only be used if they are relevant, appropriate and effective to the circumstances to which they are applied.
5. Only tests will be used that are shown to be valid (measure those things that the supplier claims they measure) and reliable (consistently measure those things)
6. Where tests are being used in assessment for selection of existing employees, personality test data will only be used to supplement available data from on-the-job performance. In particular, personality tests will not be used as the sole means of screening individuals.
7. No organisational or personal decisions will be based solely upon interpretation of data from one personality inventory.

Test administration

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 if test takers are coerced or inadequately informed about the purpose of the assessment, this may affect their attitude in completing the tests. This in turn may affect their responses and distort the information that is produced regarding their abilities or personality.

1. Those taking the tests will be told in advance about the nature of the assessment, why it is being used, the conditions under which it will take place and the nature of the feedback the candidate can expect to receive. Their informed consent in taking part in the process will be obtained. If a test taker declines to take the test they will not be coerced and their non-completion will not be viewed negatively in any decisions arising from the assessment process.
2. The recommended administration, scoring and interpretation instructions will be followed at all times.
3. Test administrators will gather relevant background information on those taking the tests. Relevance is judged by the importance of the data in making accurate and meaningful interpretation of the data.
4. Chelmsford City Council undertakes to collect supplementary data on all candidates for equal opportunities monitoring. The company will also, from time to time, request test takers to give supplementary data for the purposes of research. All data collected in this way will be stored without personal identifiers.
5. Test data will not be used for purposes other than those to which the test taker has given their consent.

Feedback

1. Face-to face feedback will be given on the test results by an appropriately trained individual to any employee who is tested. Feedback will be offered to external candidates for positions within the company and will be carried out as soon as possible after the testing.
2. Test takers and those making assessment decisions will be given an indication of the status and value of the information obtained and how it relates to other information about the test taker's abilities and personality.

Confidentiality

1. All candidates will be informed as to who will see their personality data and/or reports written on the basis of these data.
2. The candidate will have control over the disclosure of the data, i.e. the candidate's personality data will only be revealed to others with the candidate's prior informed consent.
3. Where scores and other data from testing are stored, they will be accessible only by named persons who have been trained in the interpretations of the relevant test.
4. When scores are held on computer, care will be taken to restrict access as above. The company will abide by the guidelines set out in the Data Protection Act.
5. All candidates will be informed where and for how long the data will be stored.
6. Scores and data from the testing will be destroyed after two to four years.

Test users

1. Users must have specific training in any test they intend to use. The form and extent of the training must be approved by representative HR.
2. Successful completion of training must be registered with one of the above.
3. These procedures also apply to external consultants using test within the company, and members of the company's staff who engaging consultants must ensure that they follow correct procedures.
4. No unsupervised access to tests is allowed to anyone who is not trained or qualified.

Test ethics committee

1. A committee will oversee all test use with the council, acting as a referral body where questions arise. It will comprise:
 - The HR Manager
 - A trained staff from the HR Strategy & Development Team

2. The committee will have access to advice from a named Occupational Psychologist on a consultancy basis. It will meet at least annually to review test use in the organisation and report to the Chief Executive of the Council.

Signed: _____

Name (printed): _____ Date: _____

Version Number	Creation Date	Changes Made	Changes Made By:	Authorised/Checked?	Date of Changes
1.3	Jan 2011	Replaced two ticks with disability confident	HR Team	Y	18/10/2016
1.2	Jan 2011	Rebranded to City	HR Team	Y	Sept 2012
1.1	Jan 2011	Removed Director of Corporate Services	M Kettles	Y	13/09/2012