



Guidance for candidates taking our online suitability tests

Online tests like the ones we use may not be familiar to some people. Regardless of whether or not you have taken tests similar to this before we recommend that you read the following guidance which will tell you more about what the assessments involve and how to approach them so you perform at your best.

About our assessments

Our online suitability tests are only used for our 'entry level' jobs which are typically administrative and support level jobs. These include jobs such as Administrative Assistants, Administrative Officers, Court Officers, Macers, Jury Minders and Support Officers to name a few.

We have introduced these tests to replace our minimum qualification entry requirements to ensure our jobs are accessible to everyone. All of our tests are written in business English in order to provide a clear and concise experience for candidates.

Our selection tests have been developed by qualified Occupational Psychologists who are regulated by The British Psychological Society (BPS). The BPS has a website which has a lot of useful information including answers to frequently asked questions about testing: www.psychtesting.org.uk

By reading the information that follows and exploring the web-links you should be able to gain a better understanding of our suitability assessments and how to maximise your performance on them.

Top tip: Don't put off doing these assessments until the last minute because if you do, you may find that you don't have the time to properly prepare.

Applicants with a disability

Our online assessments conform to level Double-A of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 to ensure accessibility for users with a disability. Users can perform adjustments to the display settings for the tests using the Accessibility options at the foot of every page within the system. These adjustments include font size and a range of different high-contrast display modes as well as compatibility with screen readers and refreshable Braille.

Our assessments have been fully tested to ensure that there is no adverse effect on different demographics and individuals with disabilities. If however you feel your disability would detrimentally impact your performance in these tests please contact recruitment@scotcourts.gov.uk. We will then contact you to see what reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate your particular circumstances.

Before taking the tests:

1. Find out as much as you can about the tests and practice similar tests in advance. By practising comparable tests you will become familiar with the testing process and will feel more confident when you take the actual assessment. The following website (and many others if you search on the keywords "psychometric", "practice" and "tests") has test questions that you can practice:

- <http://www.criterionpartnership.co.uk/about-us/help-for-test-takers/>

2. The types of assessments we use are as follows:

- **Situational Judgement Test (SJT):** Within this test you will be presented with a set of work scenarios you can expect to face in these jobs. You are required to choose your most likely and least likely response from the options available.
- **Verbal reasoning:** This multiple-choice test measures your ability to understand, process and work with written information.
- **Numerical reasoning:** This multiple-choice test measures your ability to understand, process and work with numerical information.
- **Checking test:** This test measures your ability to use a high and sustained level of detail.

There will be 3 elements to each assessment and the types of assessment you take will depend on the role you are applying for:

Test	SJT	Numerical	Verbal	Checking
Role				
AA-AO (non-court)				
AA-AO (court)				
SGB				

SGB= Support grade positions such as Court Officer/Macer
 AA-AO= Administrative level positions such as Administrative Officers

Note: You don't have to complete all 3 elements in a single sitting; you can take one then come back and complete the others when you are best placed to. Just make sure you complete all 3 elements of the suitability test before the closing date for the vacancy.

The results for all 3 elements of your test will be assessed and a decision usually will be communicated to you within 24 hours. If you pass the suitability test you will be able to apply for similar jobs for a period of 6 months, after which time the test will need to be retaken. If you do not pass the test you will unfortunately not be able to apply for a similar post for the following 6 months, after which time you may apply again. As mentioned above we do have different tests in operation for different jobs, so you will be able take another test within 6 months if you apply for a different type of job.

Please note that due to the volumes of applications we receive we are unable to provide test feedback to applicants.

3. To achieve your best score on our assessments you need to feel positive and ready for them, so we recommend that you:

- Arrange to complete the tests in quiet surroundings, free from interruptions
- Ensure that you have adequate time to complete the tests. With online tests you can choose when and where to take the tests, so select a time of day when you know you will perform at your best.
- Avoid taking tests straight after a heavy meal, late at night or in other circumstances when you may find it harder to concentrate.
- Ensure that you have everything else you may need to hand before starting the test. If you use reading glasses or require any other equipment for viewing a computer monitor make sure that you use these when taking the test.

4. For the numerical test you may need to be able to calculate percentages and deal with other ratios in order to complete some of the questions. You may want to practise doing these types of calculations beforehand. Make sure that you have a reliable simple calculator that you are familiar with and have pens and paper ready for rough calculations.

When taking the tests:

1. Pay very careful attention to the test instructions. You can take your time, as there is no time limit for this part of the test. If you misread and fail to follow the instructions you are likely to affect your test result for the worse.
2. Our tests typically provide you with practice questions before the assessment starts (verbal and checking test not our numerical test). This is to help you familiarise yourself with the test formats that may be new to you.
3. Make the best use of the limited time available once you start the timed part of the test. **You should work as quickly as you can through the questions but ensure accuracy.** If you are getting nowhere with a question, leave it and move on to the next one. You can return to any unanswered questions later if you have time remaining.
4. All questions in the tests are answered by choosing between a number of alternative answers. Read each question very carefully. **Do not skim read** the questions as this will result in missing important details that may be crucial to the answer.
5. With some questions a good approach can be to eliminate the wrong answers to arrive at the correct one. If you are down to a choice between two answers, guess rather than leave the question unanswered. Incorrect answers do not count against you when your test score is calculated.
6. Finally, remember that our tests are designed to be challenging and it is not necessary to complete all the questions in order to pass.

How will my test results be used?

1. All personal information is held securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 with access to materials and results only available to authorised persons.
2. There is a minimum benchmark that applicants must reach in order to pass our suitability tests. After the results have been analysed applicants who have failed to meet the minimum benchmark score will unfortunately be rejected. All applicants that pass the assessment will progress through to the next stage of the application process which involves submitting a short competency based application.
3. At sift, we will score all applications from individuals that passed the suitability test. In the event that there are a number of applications with the same sift score we will then refer to the suitability test scores for applicants in order to differentiate between which applicants will be invited to interview and those we will be rejecting.
4. All test scores are stored and valid for 6 months, after which time another assessment can be taken and all personal data associated with the test is deleted.
5. Test scores are not used for any purposes other than for the measurement of suitability for appointment to the Scottish Court Service.

If you have any questions or need assistance during the tests please contact
recruitment@scotcourts.gov.uk