

ASK us about...

# Job Prospects



## Resources

### Psychometric Tests

Students and Staff can make use of the excellent online **Team Focus Ability** tests. Go to the Careers and Job Prospects pages on iCity and click on "Make your Applications" and then "Understanding Psychometric Tests". Password and login details are on this site.

**www.psychtesting.org.uk:** A British Psychological Society (BPS) managed website containing useful information and FAQs on selection testing.

**www.shldirect.com:** The UK's largest test producer, this site has example questions and on line practice tests.

**www.morrisby.com:** Many example questions of different tests plus tips (please note: not necessarily at graduate level though).

**www.ase-solutions.co.uk:** Provides a range of practice tests.

#### Books:

Harry Tolley and Ken Thomas: **How to Pass Numeracy Tests**

Mark Parkinson: **How to Master Psychometric Tests**

Mike Bryon: **How to Pass Graduate Psychometric Tests**

Jim Barrett: **Career, Aptitude and Selection Tests**

Jim Barrett: **Test yourself!**

### Assessment Centres:

**www.prospects.ac.uk:** Go to Careers Advice > Interview Tests and exercises > assessment centres

**www.faststream.gov.uk:** Civil Service Fast Stream, including an example of e-tray exercise.

**www.targetjobs.co.uk:** Go to Careers Advice > Assessment Centres

#### Books:

Harry Tolley and Robert Wood: **How to Succeed at an Assessment Centre**

Lloyd King: **Test Your Creative Thinking**

Mike Bryon: **How to Pass Graduate Selection Tests**

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# Psychometric Tests & Assessment Centres

## What are Psychometric Tests?

Psychometric tests are used by recruiters to assess ability, aptitude and personality. They are increasingly used by employers to see how you perform in a variety of tasks. They also give you the opportunity to demonstrate a range of skills, including communication, time management and team working skills as well as personal attributes such as motivation.

## What is an Assessment Centre?

An assessment or selection centre is used by employers to bring a group of candidates together to undertake a series of assessment activities.

Usually lasting one or two days, it may be based on an employer's premises or at a nearby hotel.

You will be told in advance when, where and how long it will be and given an indication of what will happen.

## Need more help? Just ASK!

Call in for initial advice at a Help Zone "Drop In" in Student Services, who will refer you to a career specialist if required:-

- City North Campus, First Floor Baker Building
- City Centre Campus, Gosta Green, Room G27
- City South Campus, Second Floor Seacole Building
- Millennium Point: Ask at Reception

Telephone 0121 3315588 or visit our web pages for dates and times of Drop Ins and services at other sites.

#### Careers and Job Prospects websites:

- <https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/careers>
- [www.bcu.ac.uk/alumni/careers](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/alumni/careers)

#### Online e-guidance service:

- [www.bcu.ac.uk/askus](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/askus)

#### Social Media:

- Facebook: [BCUemploymentzone](https://www.facebook.com/BCUemploymentzone)
- Twitter: [@employmentzone](https://twitter.com/employmentzone)

View our full range of leaflets online:  
<https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/careers> >> Quick Link >> Handouts

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Student Services

T: 0121 331 5588  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/student-services](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/student-services)

**ASK**

ADVICE SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE  
Student Services

## Psychometric Tests: What can I expect?

- Tests are often taken under exam conditions and are usually timed
- They are designed to measure your intellectual capability for thinking and reasoning; some are meant to be **very** difficult

### How do I prepare for a psychometric test?

- **Do:** Familiarise yourself with sample tests and take a practise test, either online or by using the many resources available in the Student Services ASK resources area or the main university library.
- **Do:** Check out the information on how to master psychometric tests and develop strategies for the delay
- **Do:** Contact the administrator in advance if there are factors likely to affect your performance e.g. Dyslexia; or if English is not your first language.
- **Don't:** Have a late night before the test session

## Assessment Centres: What can I expect?

You will be invited along with other potential candidates to take part in a series of activities, tests and exercises. The Assessment Centre stage may come after the first round of interviews, although some employers use them as an initial selection process.

Assessment Centres can seem quite daunting, as it is unlikely you will know what exercises and activities you will be asked to do on the day. The content, length and format can all vary significantly. However, you can prepare yourself by thinking about what the employer will be looking for during each task. Employers will focus on how you react to situations, your thought processes, and to what extent you match the pre-determined criteria they have set out. This criteria will usually include some or all of the following:

Teamworking skills	Leadership skills	Creativity	Decision-making
Listening skills	Problem Solving skills	Negotiating skills	Organisation skills
Communication skills (written and verbal)		Timekeeping	Levels of motivation

## Assessment Centres: Types of test

### In-Tray exercises

With a heaped in-tray or inbox, you will need to make a decision on each item, deciding priorities, drafting replies or identifying work to be delegated.

**Looking for:** The ability to prioritise work and demonstration of communication, analytical and planning skills

**Do:** Go through the whole tray before dealing with items

**Don't:** Run out of time

### Practical tasks and exercises

As a group, candidates may be asked to use materials or equipment to make something or solve a problem.

**Looking for:** How the group interacts; involvement

**Do:** Work with the best ideas, even if they are not yours. Contribute to discussions and get involved.

**Don't:** Take over.

### Group discussion and role playing

As a group discussing ideas, or using a briefing pack to role play a person or particular point of view.

**Looking for:** Contribution to team; your influence, creativity, time management and organisational skills

**Do:** Be enthusiastic and encourage others. Keep to time.

**Don't:** Take over but don't stay too quiet either!

### Presentations

Giving an oral presentation which you may have time to prepare or could be a surprise task of the day.

**Do:** Speak clearly and present a professional image. Maintain eye contact. Stick to a simple structure

**Don't:** Mumble and drift from the subject

### Report writing or case studies

You could be given a set of papers relating to a situation and asked to make recommendations in a brief report.

**Do:** Read through your papers carefully. Keep an eye on the time

**Don't:** Make recommendations until all of the papers have been read through.

### Interviews

These may be on a one-to-one basis or as part of a panel.

**Do:** Read through the Careers interview handout and check out the detailed resources on our website.

**Don't:** Fail to prepare.

# ASK

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