



The Professional Board for Psychology

Psychometry:

Framework for Education, Training, Registration and Scope for Psychometry

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Act refers to the Health Professions Act 56 of 1974.

The Board - refers to the Professional Board for Psychology at the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

Classified - in relation to a psychological test means a determination by the board that a test is a psychological test and who may use such tests is specified.

Culture Fairness - being sensitive to culture bias when administering a test to person who does not share the same culture of the people who developed it.

Psychological Assessment - a process oriented activity aimed at gathering information from a wide a wide variety of sources (e.g. tests, interviews, a person's history, and collateral sources).

Psychological Functioning - psychological wellbeing of people.

Psychometric Properties - refer to those criteria that evaluate the merits of a psychological assessment tool. These include but are not limited to: reliability, validity, bias, equivalence, fairness, standardization, norms and responsiveness.

Reliability – the test's ability to measure the construct of interest consistently and with precision.

Standardisation – uniformity of the testing procedure in its administration, scoring and interpretation.

Student Psychometrists – an individual who is officially registered at a South African higher education institution for an accredited BPsych or equivalent Psychology programme in Psychometry.

Validity – refers to how well the test measures the construct it purports to measure.

1 RATIONALE AND PURPOSE FOR THE QUALIFICATION

The qualification is aimed at producing competent, ethical and professional Psychometrists who can meet the needs of South Africa in order to make primary psychological services available in diverse settings thereby enhancing psychological well-being of the public. This qualification is critical in providing good quality psychological care at primary health care level.

The Bachelor of Psychology (BPsych) degree in Psychometry is aligned with the National Framework for Human Resources for Health in South Africa and the National Qualification Framework for Education and is responsive to the psychological needs of the South African population in diverse contexts. The focus of the profession is on prevention, promotion and community based care.

The qualifying practitioner will be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) as a Psychometrist to render psychological assessment services in various settings within the scope of practice for Psychometrists.

2 ROLE OF A PSYCHOMETRIST

The role of the Psychometrists is to make psychological assessment accessible in order to promote the psychological wellbeing of the diverse South African population.

This involves:

- Taking full responsibility for the ethical use of Psychometric tests as defined in *Form 223*. Having adequate knowledge and understanding of psychometrics which informs and underpins the process of psychological assessment;
- Ensuring good practice in the use of Psychometric tests, including test development and test adaptation, test selection, test administration, scoring of tests, interpretation of test scores, reporting accurately on test results and providing feedback;
- Ensuring that the tests are used correctly, is classified and that the test scope, validity, reliability, standardisation, bias, fairness, accessibility, language, level of education practicality and are appropriate to the identified assessment needs of both the context and clients;

- Having the ability to develop, adapt, promote and advise on best practice in the field of Psychometry;
- Contributing to the development of psychometric tests and other assessment devices or techniques in the South African context.

3 OPTIONS FOR OFFERING THE BPSYCH PSYCHOMETRY PROGRAMME

Registration as a Psychometrist is contingent on completion of:

- a) An accredited four (4) year Bachelor's degree in Psychology (BPsych) or a BPsych Equivalent in Psychology or related Psychology field (e.g. Industrial or Educational Psychology) that incorporates an approved 6 month or 720-hour face-to-face practicum. Practical hours in the application of Psychometry must be recorded in a logbook and countersigned by a supervisor.

4 REQUIREMENT OF REGISTRATION AS STUDENT PSYCHOMETRISTS

In terms of the Regulations relating to the registration of student Psychometrists published in terms of Government Notice No 287 of 9 October 2012, all students registered at an accredited institution offering education and training as student Psychometrists have to be registered as students from the first year of study.

In order to register as a student Psychometrist, *Form 53* has to be completed by each student and verified by the educational institution. The following supporting documentation must accompany the application:

- The prescribed registration fee with proof of payment
- A copy of the identity document or birth certificate of the student
- A copy of the marriage certificate of the student (if registering with his/her married surname)

An additional fee in respect of each month or part of a month will be payable should the application be submitted later than four (4) months after the date of registration at the Training Educational Institution.

The register for student Psychometrists was effective as from 2 January 2013.

Currently a register for Psychometrists in Supervised practice exists, however new applications are no longer registerable in this category as it is being phased out. Practitioners who want to transverse to independent practice must successfully pass the Board exam for independent practice or alternatively undergo an accredited B Psych qualification.

5 SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection of student Psychometrists is undertaken by higher educational institutions according to institutional criteria. All selection criteria must be made available on the website of the University or training institute. Examples of criteria should include but not be limited to:

5.1. Academic Criteria

These will be in accordance with the University entrance regulations for Undergraduate and Postgraduate qualifications.

5.2. Selection Criteria

These will be in accordance with the accredited BPsych or BPsych Honours Equivalent programme:

- Academic reading, writing and mathematical skills
- Understanding of basic research and statistical concepts
- Numerical and abstract reasoning skills
- Ability to understand psychometric properties.
- Computer literacy
- Intra and interpersonal skills
- Potential to learn necessary skills of a Psychometrist
- Ability to work individually and in a team
- Psychosocial wellness
- Ability to work under pressure
- Ability to work in different community contexts
- Ability to work with diversity

5.3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

These will be in accordance with University procedures and regulations.

6 ACADEMIC TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Academic training is required in an accredited BPsych Psychometry qualification at an NQF Level 8. This should include the following core areas:

- Professional Ethics
- Psychometric Theory and Practice
- Psychological Assessment
- Counselling Skills
- Research Methods
- Basic and Advanced Statistical Analysis
- Research Project

It is recommended that the research be conducted in an applied context within the areas of Psychometrics and Psychological assessment.

In addition to this, academic training should include a minimum of two (2) other areas in relation to the area of psychology within which the BPsych or equivalent Psychology programme is located. These could include but are not limited to the following:

- Psychopathology
- Developmental Psychology
- Therapeutic Psychology
- Personality Psychology
- Organisational Psychology
- Career Psychology
- Labour Relations
- Educational Psychology
- Inclusive Education
- Learning Support

7 PRACTICUM TRAINING

- 1) A practicum for Psychometrists forms part of a Board accredited BPsych or BPsych equivalent programme;
- 2) The practicum training has a duration of six (6) months full time or an equivalent of not more than 12 months part time;
- 3) This practicum may not be done in a psychiatric setting;
- 4) The practicum training may form part of the four (4) year training in accredited BPsych programmes and may commence from the last semester of the third year;
- 5) In BPsych Equivalent programmes, the practicum will commence on completion of the academic requirements for the programme

8 PRACTICUM TRAINING GUIDELINES

The practicum guidelines provided below apply to programmes offered by academic training institutions, as well as programmes developed by Psychologists and Psychometrists (Independent Practice) or organisations that offer a Psychometry Practicum. In essence, areas of competence that need to be focused on in Practicums are highlighted for each of the critical core competency areas.

8.1. Instrumental Knowledge and Skills

a. Range of tests and experiences

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (Independent Practice) must prescribe and ensure that trainee Psychometrists during their practicum use an appropriate range of tests including:

- i. Group and individually administered tests;
- ii. Tests that tap general cognitive ability;
- iii. Tests that tap specific cognitive, perceptual, and psychomotor functions;
- iv. Tests that tap personality-related functioning (*Please note: restrictions regarding the use of projective techniques have been pointed out elsewhere in this document*);
- v. Tests for children and adults;
- vi. Organizational type tests for organizational development and job selection;
- vii. Computer based tests and Internet based tests

b. Test administration

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (independent practice) must decide which constructs need to be measured and the appropriate test(s), which need to be used. The reason for the choice must be clearly explained to the trainee Psychometrist.

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (independent practice) must ensure that the trainee Psychometrist:

- i. is able to evaluate tests to be able to choose appropriate tests;
- ii. will understand and interrogate Psychometric properties of tests in deciding on appropriate tests to use;
- iii. will understand the limitations of particular tests;
- iv. has adequate knowledge of the manual of each test that is used;
- v. is well prepared for the test session;;
- vi. adheres strictly to the instructions provided in the manual;
- vii. gives clear, concise instructions; administers the test according to best practice and guidelines with due respect for the client;
- viii. completes the answer sheet correctly and correctly scores it;
- ix. obtains the necessary experience in using the tests that are included in the training programme.

c. Scoring and interpretation

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (independent practice) must ensure that the trainee Psychometrist:

- i. has adequate knowledge of the scoring procedures or criteria for each test that is used;
- ii. has adequate knowledge of norm scores, how to transform between different norm scores and learns how to choose appropriate norm tables;
- iii. becomes proficient at converting raw scores to scale or norm scores and in using cut-points to interpret/classify test performance;
- iv. has the ability to calculate appropriate norm scores if required;
- v. understands the limits to the generalizability of norms provided;

- vi. is able to take contextual factors and relevant data into account during test administration and interpretation; and
- vii. obtains the necessary experience in using the tests that are included in the practicum to enable trainee Psychometrists to become proficient in their use so as to use them independently.

8.2. Communication and Interpersonal Skills

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (independent practice) must observe the trainee Psychometrist in action so as to provide supportive and developmental feedback regarding the trainee's communication and interpersonal skills in:

- being able to appropriately prepare test-takers for the test;
- establishing rapport with test takers and asking appropriate questions during the intake interview;
- interacting with relevant persons (e.g., parents, employers);
- administering tests by speaking clearly and coherently ;
- being able to clearly and professionally report on the findings;
- providing clear and well- presented written feedback on the findings according to the constructs/criteria of the relevant test manual;
- providing clear and well-presented oral/verbal feedback on the findings to suit the level of the client.

8.3. Contingency Management Skills

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (independent practice) must ensure that the trainee Psychometrist is equipped to handle:

- routine problems that may arise during test administration, scoring and verbal feedback;
- a test-taker's questions during test administration and verbal feedback;
- situations where there is the potential for test misuse or for misunderstanding the administration and scoring of the test, interpretation of test scores and/or reporting of the test scores.

8.4. Basic Practice Management and Referral Skills

The supervising Psychologist or Psychometrist (independent practice) must ensure that the trainee Psychometrist knows:

- the requirements regarding advertising professional services;
- how to prepare a business plan, start and manage a practice;
- how to implement an accounting system and an appropriate fee structure as per the tariffs set;
- about the need for indemnity insurance;
- how to identify when the needs or symptoms with which a client presents fall outside his/her expertise and should be dealt with by another health care professional;
- how to refer a client to an appropriate professional peer within the health care system (e.g., psychologist, general practitioner, social worker).

9 SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR PSYCHOMETRISTS

Psychometrists are psychological practitioners with special expertise in the use of psychological tests, who perform assessments and also contribute to the development of psychological tests and procedures in a variety of contexts including educational, work, career, health and Non-Governmental Organisations, Non-Profit Organisations and in the community.

Psychometrists adhere to the following scope of practice:

- (a) performing assessments and contributing to the development and adaptation of psychological tests and procedures;
- (b) measuring psychological functions including cognitive, interest, aptitude, and personality;
- (c) select/compile appropriate batteries of tests;
- (d) identifying clients requiring more sophisticated or advanced psychological assessment and referring such clients to appropriate and registered professionals;
- (e) providing feedback to clients on the results of psychological assessments;
- (f) designing and implementing research which contributes to the development of psychological assessment instruments, and reporting on such research; and
- (g) participating in policy development in respect of psychological assessment;

- (h) participating in the design, management, and evaluation of psychological assessment procedure in diverse settings and organisations including but not limited to health, education, labour and correctional services;
- (i) participating in or conducting needs analysis regarding psychological assessment in diverse settings and organisations,
- (j) training and supervising Registered Counsellors, and Psychometrists in supervised practice in psychological measurement;
- (k) conducting psychological assessment practice and research in accordance with the Ethical Rules of Conduct Practitioners registered under the Health Professions Act, 1974;
- (l) adhering to the scope of practice of Psychometrists;
- (m) providing expert evidence and/or opinions.

10 PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS TO BE USED BY PSYCHOMETRISTS

A Psychometrist is permitted to use certain psychological tests (i.e., select, administer, score, interpret, and/or report on), and bill clients for this service, provided that appropriate training has been obtained and the necessary practical competencies have been developed related to the tests used.

Psychometrists are not permitted to use:

- * **Certain personality measures (e.g. TAT, CAT, Rorschach);**
- * **Measures that are used for the diagnoses of psychopathology (e.g. MMPI-2)**

A psychometrist will not be permitted to undertake forensic assessments or any other form of specialist assessment (e.g., neuropsychological), as these forms of assessment require highly specialised and advanced knowledge and competencies which only psychologists can provide.

11 SUPERVISION OF PSYCHOMETRISTS

- a) The accredited higher educational institution is responsible for the supervision of student Psychometrists.
- b) Psychology practitioners may supervise students Psychometrists, except Research Psychologists and Registered Counsellors
- c) The supervisor will be required to have three (3) years post registration experience in his/her registration category as a Psychologist or Psychometrist
- d) The supervisor should ensure that the student Psychometrists adhere to the scope of practice of Psychometrists
- e) 20 hours structured supervision overseen by the University must be conducted one-on-one or in a group setting
- f) A maximum of 1 supervisor to 5 student Psychometrists ratio is prescribed as part of the supervision.

12 TIMEFRAME FOR REGISTRATION AS A PSYCHOMETRIST

Graduates have to register as a Psychometrist within three (3) years of completion of their academic and practical training. The six (6) months practicum must be integrated into the four (4) year accredited programme.

- a) Persons who exceed the timeframe for registration as a Psychometrist by more than 3 to 5 years will be required to complete an additional 3 month practicum. The onus rests on each individual to ensure that they still have the required competency to practice as a Psychometrist.
- b) Persons who exceed the timeframe for registration as a Psychometrist by more than 5 to 7 years and 11 months will be required to complete an additional 6 months practicum.
- c) Persons who exceed the timeframe for registration as a Psychometrist by 8 years or more will not be eligible for registration as a Psychometrist.
- d) Persons who exceeded the timeframe for registration as a Psychometrist by 3 years or more will be required to submit a clearance report from their University or training institute, stating that the University was satisfied or not satisfied with the candidate's theoretical knowledge.