



23 September 2020

**Position statement: Testing Supervision and Online testing guidelines during COVID19 and the regulations as it relates to the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2020.**

The COVID-19 lockdown time has had a significant impact on the personal and professional lives of most people. Professionally a number of activities that used to be done in person have moved to online platforms. This has required various adjustments – some more smooth and successful than others.

In the domain of psychological assessment, many companies have not been able to function operationally as they used to in pre-COVID-19 times. In addition to having to rely on technology for communication, there has also been the additional turn towards technology to try to provide services to clients and end users. It has come to our attention that some companies and test users have considered trying to use normal video conferencing technology like Zoom, Skype or Teams to administer psychological tests that were designed to be used in a supervised mode.

It needs to be reiterated that although some psychological assessment measures are specifically developed to be administered online and in unsupervised mode – that is, by means of a link that gives the test taker access to the measure online in a place and at a time of his/her convenience, this way of administration cannot summarily be generalised to other measures. These assessments would typically include large item banks of items to prevent copying of test items. Randomised items and time limits per test subsets and other techniques to prevent collaboration and sharing of test content could also be part of the design of some of these tests.

Therefore, it is imperative that all test users should continue to abide by the prescriptions and instructions of the test developers and test distributors for the administration and use of specific measures. If a specific measure has not been developed and has not been approved to be used online and/or without direct in-person supervision, then it constitutes an ethical transgression and deviation from accepted professional conduct to change the conditions of testing and/or the methods of administration in a way that differs from the agreed upon use.

We trust that the psychology professional fraternity will continue to uphold the highest ethical standards of conduct and will continue to act in a professional manner that is beyond reproach. If there is any uncertainty, test users are encouraged to contact the test developers and test distributors to answer any specific questions that they may have.

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