



# Saskatchewan College of Psychologists

1026 Winnipeg Street  
Regina SK, S4R 8P8

Tel: (306) 352-1699  
Fax: (306) 352-1697  
Email: [skcp@sasktel.net](mailto:skcp@sasktel.net)  
[www.skcp.ca](http://www.skcp.ca)

## Membership Advisory

### Use of Psychometrists

One of the many contributions Psychologists make to health and educational services is that of psychological assessment. Often assessment includes the use of psychometric instruments or tests. Psychometric instruments are used to assess cognitive, behavioural and emotional functioning. Competency to administer psychometric instruments is established through a combination of formal training, supervision, and experience, and this is most often found within graduate training programs in Psychology. In their training, Psychologists obtain the necessary theoretical and experiential underpinnings required to competently administer and interpret instruments/tests, and to integrate the information obtained through testing with information from other sources to form a complete and valid picture of their client's situation and needs.

Conducting an assessment which includes testing is a complex activity which requires more than technical skill in the administration of standardized psychometric instruments. The impact that test results can have on the lives of clients can be significant. When psychometric instruments are improperly administered and/or interpreted there is liability for both the assessor and the employer, and most importantly a potentially negative outcome for the client. It is essential that psychometric instruments are administered only by individuals who are well qualified and competent by virtue of their training, supervision, and experience.

Many organizations utilize non-Psychologists or Psychometrists to administer psychometric instruments. The qualification and training of individuals functioning as Psychometrists can vary greatly. At times Psychometrists work under the direct oversight of registered Psychologists, and at other times these individuals are functioning independently. The Saskatchewan College of Psychologists (College) advises that it is in the best interests of clients that psychometric instruments are administered only by qualified individuals, and if they are not a registered Psychologist that their assessment work is conducted under the direct oversight of a registered Psychologist. The College also advises that there are a number of important considerations which should be taken into account in utilizing non-Psychologists or Psychometrists to conduct psychometric testing:

1. Perhaps the key purpose of psychometric testing is to help inform diagnostic formulation, prognosis, and the development of an effective treatment plan. Diagnostic privilege is a controlled activity under *the Psychologists Act 1997*, and is only open to duly qualified medical professionals, and registered Full Practice Psychologists with the Authorized Practice Endorsement (APE) on their license. Non-psychologists or Psychometrists are not qualified or legally entitled to convey diagnoses.
2. Informed consent is essential in conducting a psychometric testing including discussing with the client, the training and qualifications of the assessor. It is essential that clients understand that a Psychometrist is not a member of a regulated profession and is not a Psychologist.
3. When a Psychometrist or non-Psychologist is working under the direct oversight of a registered Psychologist, it is essential that this relationship is clearly identified for the client, and that the client is provided with information as to how to access the Psychologist should they have any questions or concerns with regard to the psychometric assessment and the outcome of that assessment.

4. When a registered Psychologist is supervising the work of a Psychometrist, they are ultimately responsible for the work conducted under them. Psychologists must not diagnose a client based solely on the results of a psychometric assessment and without being involved in the assessment process with the client directly.
5. A psychometric instrument/test is not by itself diagnostic. The results of testing must be taken into account within the larger context of the client's history, current presentation, and current life situation.
6. Test developers have established competency and training requirements for the purchase and the use of psychometric instruments. There are some instruments which require specific training in Psychology at the graduate level before they can be purchased and used.
7. Psychologists have the responsibility to ensure that the integrity of instruments/tests is maintained, that psychological instruments are accessed only by those qualified, and that psychological information is not misused. In a practical sense this requires Psychologists to ensure that they allow access to test materials only to those who meet the competency and training requirements, must ensure that test protocols and other test data is accessed only by qualified professionals, and that they do not allow their name and qualification to be used to purchase test materials for the use of others without ensuring those using them are qualified to do so.
8. The confidentiality and security of test results and client information is paramount and must be ensured. Test data should in general not be maintained within common files and/or cumulative files.

References:

- The Saskatchewan College of Psychologists Professional Practice Guidelines (SCP 2010)
- Guidelines for the Practice of Professional Psychology in Schools Within Saskatchewan (Ministry of Education 2008)
- The Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (CPA 2000)
- Professional Practice Guidelines for School Psychology in Canada (CPA 2007)
- Practice Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services (CPA 2001)
- Report of the Taskforce on Test User Qualifications (APA 2000)