

A GENTLE GUIDE TO ASSESSMENTS IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

What to expect, examples, and how to prepare

Looking for work can feel challenging, especially when employers ask you to complete assessments. This guide explains what assessments are, why employers use them, what they might look like, and how you can prepare — including how to use AI safely and confidently.

Assessments are not exams. They are simply tools employers use to understand how you approach tasks and situations at work.

Why employers use assessments

Employers use assessments to:

- Make recruitment fairer
- Understand skills and potential, not just CVs
- See how people approach real work situations
- Support better job matching

They are not there to trick you or catch you out.



How assessments usually take place

Assessments can happen in different ways. Knowing what to expect can help you feel calmer and more prepared.

1 Online assessments sent by email

You may receive:

- An email with a link
- Instructions and a deadline
- A login or reference number

You usually complete these:

- At home or in a quiet place
- On a phone, tablet, or computer
- In one sitting

2 Online assessments at a set time

Some employers ask you to:

- Log in at a specific date and time
- Complete the assessment within a fixed time window

These are common for larger employers or technical roles. - Tip: Log in early, check your internet connection, and read instructions carefully.

3 Assessments before or during an interview

You might:

- Complete a short task when you arrive
- Be given a written or practical exercise
- Answer scenario questions before or during the interview

These are often short and straightforward.

4 Group assessments

Some employers invite several candidates at once.

You may:

- Work as part of a group
- Discuss a task or solve a problem together
- Be observed quietly by an assessor

You may also:

- Be split into breakout rooms online
- Have an observer watching but not speaking

They are looking at:

- Communication
- Listening
- Teamwork
- Respect for others

You do not need to be the loudest person to do well.

How assessments usually take place

1 Numeracy (using numbers)

What this checks:

Comfort with everyday numbers used at work.

Example 1:

A customer buys items costing £4.50 and £3.25 and pays with £10.

How much change should they receive?

Example 2:

An item costs £30 and has 20% off.

What is the final price?

2 Language and understanding

What this checks:

Understanding instructions and communicating clearly.

Example 1:

Read a short paragraph and answer a question about what action to take.

Example 2:

Choose the best reply to a customer email.

3 Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs)

What this checks:

Judgement and workplace behaviour.

Example 1:

A customer is unhappy because a product is unavailable. What do you do?

Example 2:

You notice a colleague struggling. What is the best response?

There are usually no perfect answers — employers want to see common sense and professionalism.

4 Personality or work-style questions

What this checks:

How you prefer to work.

Example 1:

"I enjoy helping others solve problems."

Agree → Disagree

Example 2:

"I am comfortable working as part of a team."

There are no right or wrong answers — honesty matters.

5 Technical or skills-based tasks

What this checks:

How you approach real work tasks.

Example 1:

Write or explain a short piece of code.

Example 2:

Explain how you would fix a problem or error.

Employers care about how you think, not just the final answer.

6 Logical or numerical reasoning (advanced)

What this checks:

Problem-solving and pattern recognition.

Example 1:

What number comes next?

2, 4, 8, 16, ?

Example 2:

Look at a chart and identify trends or changes.

7 Role plays and practical exercises

What this checks:

Communication and confidence.

Example 1:

Explain how you would handle a difficult customer.

Example 2:

Talk through how you would plan a task or project.

Talking through your thinking is often more important than being right.

Using AI to help you prepare

AI can be a helpful learning tool when used responsibly.

Good ways to use AI:

- Practising assessment questions
- Asking for explanations step by step
- Improving confidence with writing or numbers
- Practising interview or role-play questions
- Understanding how employers use AI in recruitment

Example prompts you can use:

“Give me simple numeracy practice questions and explain the answers.”

“Help me practise situational judgement questions.”

“Pretend to be an interviewer and practise with me.”

“Explain this problem in simple language.”

Things to avoid:

- Using AI to answer live assessments dishonestly
- Copying answers without understanding them

Many employers value candidates who understand how to use AI ethically and responsibly.

Helpful tips for assessment day

- Read instructions carefully
- Take your time where possible
- Focus on what you can do
- Don't panic if you don't know every answer
- Ask for clarification if allowed

Remember:

Mistakes are expected.

Assessments do not define your worth or potential.

How we can support you

We can help you:

- Practise assessments step by step
- Build confidence with numbers and language
- Prepare for online, in-person, and group assessments
- Understand and use AI safely in job searching
- Reflect on feedback and progress

You are not alone — assessments are a skill, and skills can be learned.

Remember:

Employers are not looking for perfection.

They are looking for potential, effort, and how you approach situations.

Good Luck and please contact us if you need any further help

