

Who May Purchase Tests

Nelson observes the ethical standards and practices recommended by the Canadian Psychological Association for publication and distribution of testing materials. Orders will be given prompt attention if they adhere to the following CPA guidelines. This information and the Test User Qualification Form in this catalogue comply with the Canadian Psychological Association recommendations.

Generally, there are three major categories of test purchasers. The first category consists of individuals who purchase and use tests for decision-making purposes, whether in schools, hospitals, personnel departments, or other work settings. This category also applies to individuals who train students in the use of tests that will be employed for these purposes. The remaining categories consist of individuals who purchase tests for research purposes or for library use.

Regardless of category, however, all first-time purchasers must complete the Test User Qualification Form in this catalogue and submit this Form together with their purchase order. Orders from individuals who do not have on file a completed Test User Qualification Form will not be filled. Purchase orders from institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.) should be countersigned by an individual who has on file a completed Test User Qualification Form. The following criteria govern the sale of tests to individuals in each category.

CATEGORY 1: Tests Purchased for Teaching or Decision-Making Purposes

An individual who employs the test for the purpose of teaching students, counselling clients, making hiring decisions, grade placement decisions, clinical referrals, etc. must have successfully completed a minimum of two university courses in tests and measurement. The first course, on basic principles of psychological measurement, should have been completed at the undergraduate or graduate level, and should have included information on such topics as scaling, transformations, and norms, as well as information on factors that affect reliability and validity.

The second course, at the graduate level or its equivalent, should have included material on assessment which is appropriate to the test(s) being ordered. Because of the variety of tests listed in the catalogue, coupled with the overlapping content of many advanced level courses in testing, it is not possible to specify by name

which courses are necessarily most suitable for which tests. A course entitled "Educational Assessment," for example, may contain material on the administration and scoring of achievement tests. For this reason, Nelson adheres to the position adopted by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education that a "test user should know her/his qualifications required for the uses of specific tests" (APA, AERA, NCME, 1974, p. 58). It is not the responsibility of Nelson to ensure that tests are used properly once they are sent to the qualified purchaser. That responsibility remains with the test purchaser even in cases where the purchaser delegates the administration and/or interpretation of a test to someone else.

In addition to having completed an appropriate advanced level course in testing, there are also certain tests which are widely recognized as requiring supervised experience in test administration and interpretation in the form of either a practicum or internship. In this catalogue these tests include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test, Cognitive Assessment System, and WJ Cognitive Battery. Tests of this nature will not be sold to individuals who fail to meet this additional training requirement. Nelson retains the right to determine whether a person is indeed qualified to purchase a given test.

Nelson further recognizes that some individuals may have acquired an appropriate background in testing in ways other than course work. It is not the responsibility of the publisher to offer courses in testing. In order to avoid imposing unfair restriction on the sale of tests, if you feel that you are qualified to purchase a given test as the result of having successfully completed an appropriate advanced level workshop or mini-course sponsored by a professional association, college, university, etc. you should describe in a letter the nature of your background. The letter should then be submitted together with the purchase order form. Final approval to purchase a test will rest with Nelson.

In addition to course requirements, an individual who purchases a test for teaching or decision-making purposes must agree to abide by the principles that apply to appropriate test use set forth in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, NCME, 1985)

and in the Guidelines for Educational and Psychological Testing (CPA, 1987). Such an individual also must either be a member of a professional association, registered by a professional association, or be employed by a firm that has endorsed these principles and has adopted a code of ethical conduct which is similar to the code of ethical conduct approved by the American Psychological Association or the Canadian Psychological Association. The reason for this last requirement is to ensure there is an external body that can act as a monitoring agent to which the public can turn in order lodge a complaint when there is reason to believe that a test has been misused.

CATEGORY 2: Tests Purchased for Research Purposes

Tests and test materials that will be used for research purposes only may be purchased by college and university faculty members as well as by professional staff of hospitals and business organizations. Students enrolled in graduate programs may also purchase materials that will be used only for research purposes if the purchase order is countersigned by the student's supervisor or by the department head. Regardless of the purchaser, however, the order must be submitted on business or letterhead stationery and the purchaser must satisfy either the professional membership requirement, professional registration requirement, or the employment requirement specified under Category 1. In the case of students, enrollment in a graduate program that adheres to a code of ethical conduct similar to the code approved by the APA or the CPA will satisfy these requirements.

CATEGORY 3: Tests Purchased for Library Reference Purposes

Tests and test materials for library use or for sale through university bookstores are sold to individuals upon the assurance that these products will be made accessible only to persons who meet the criteria specified under Category 1 and Category 2. This assurance must be submitted in writing on letterhead stationery before the order will be processed. The letter containing this assurance must be countersigned by an individual who satisfies either the Category 1 or Category 2 criteria. In order to purchase materials for libraries or bookstores, the qualified purchaser must also fill out the Test User Qualification Form.