Guidance on the use of digital scoring platforms supplied with certain assessment materials.

Assessment test publishers and distributors can offer assessors the opportunity to digitally score test results via platforms such as *Pearson's Q-Interactive* *http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/Psychology/generic/qinteractive/qinteractive.aspx*

and Q-Global https://images.pearsonclinical.com/images/qglobal/

There are advantages and disadvantages to using such platforms to score test results and assessors may find it helpful to weigh up the pros and cons of using these platforms.

Assessors need to ensure that their use of digital scoring platforms is fully compliant with data protection legislation.

Advantages	Issues to consider
Potentially time saving – although many of these platforms are designed with group test administration in mind rather than the individual assessor with a single examinee. Learning how the platform operates initially can take time and patience but essentially, scores generated this way should, with practice, take just seconds.	**Cost.** Not all such platforms are free. Many involve paying a time-limited licence fee and using one (or two) iPads or similar devices.
Accessibility. Access to some platforms comes with access to the internet, so reduces the need to have at hand or to carry around heavy test manuals and norms tables. But assessors should be careful not to access or process such data in public places, e.g. on trains or open offices, where data may be inadvertently seen	Users need to read all **licensing and privacy agreements** very carefully before using these platforms. An assessor is likely to need to ensure they have gained the consent of the person assessed for their data to be entered digitally. Data entered may include much personal information and this may be used by the platform

by others. WIFI is needed for Q-Global and Bluetooth Connections between two iPads is needed for Q-Interactive	provider (sometimes in de-identified form) for their own purposes in refining and re-standardising the tests they publish. Assessors need to check that they and their clients agree with the basis upon which data entered on these platforms may subsequently be used.
Accuracy. If data is entered accurately, scores given through the digital platform should be 100% accurate. An excellent way to double check manually-derived scores. However, eagled eyed assessors have sometimes, when hand-scoring tests, spotted typographical or other errors in test manuals. This is less likely to happen with the use of these platforms.	**Experience of using statistics.** Timesaving though it may be to use a digital scoring platform, assessors, especially those newly-qualified, are likely to miss out on the cumulative statistical knowledge and experience gained from hand-scoring tests using a manual. Digital platforms are designed as tools to supplement the assessment process, not to be used alone or to replace professional learning and judgement. Assessors do need a thorough knowledge of the test to ensure that the scores are interpreted correctly and appropriate to the person being assessed. Over-reliance on these scoring platforms may also discourage the analysis of qualitative information regarding test performance. Professional judgement must be applied in the write-up of the results.
Extra information and analysis: on some platforms, further analysis of test scores may be available beyond	The **presentation and format of digitally scored test results** may not be suitable for direct inclusion in

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that gained through hand-scoring a test. However, assessors will need to think about whether there is the need for such detailed information.	an assessment report. Care need to be taken in using interpretations /recommendations provided in digitally-generated output as these are not always accurate or appropriate for the particular individual. Assessors need to carefully select information for possible inclusion with the person tested (and any other possible audience for the report) in mind. The licensing agreement for the use of the platform may allow only small portions of digitally reproduced reports to be extracted for inclusion in an assessment report.
Access to scoring for multiple tests in assessors' battery. Some platforms, such as Pearson's QGlobal, allow assessors to score a range of tests for the price of a single subscription. There may be different user packages available, e.g. an annual subscription, payment by individual report generation etc.	**Long-term storage of assessment data** on a digital platform exposes the assessor to the risk of failure of the database system and the loss of assessment information. Dormant user accounts may be deleted after a certain period, with the loss of all data. Technical support from the platform provider may be limited to office hours and may not be as extensive or available as the user would wish. Back-up of data and reports to a personal computer or drive will be essential.

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