

Book Reviews

Johnson, B. and G. Hagger-Johnson, (2013). *Psychometric Assessment, Statistics and Report Writing: an introduction for psychologists, teachers and health professionals*, Pearson Assessment, London. ISBN 9780749163778 RRP: £30.00 pbk

Reviewed by **Dr Anna Smith, Cognitive Neuropsychologist and Postgraduate Psychology Tutor for Dyslexia Action.**

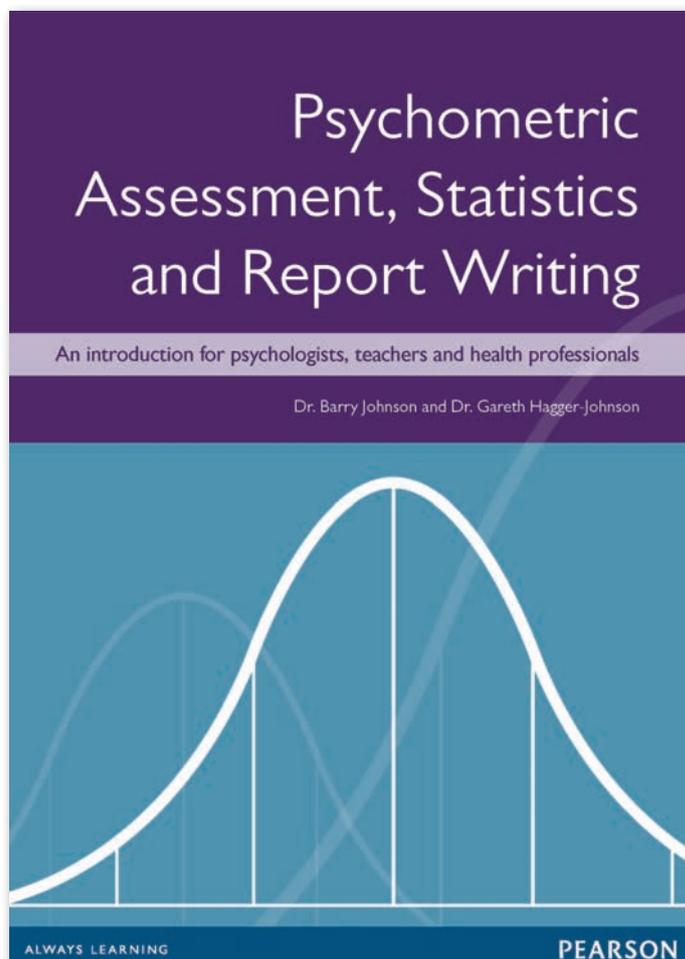
This timely book written by two well known psychologists with expertise in the field of statistics is aimed at SENCOs, psychologists, and other teaching professionals who intend to assess individuals with educational needs. While the content of this book is sometimes technical and may not suit those who are not already familiar with assessment, the first chapter introduces many of the statistical components required for competent skills in this field, such as correlation and the standard error of measurement (SEM).

The book is divided into three sections: Section 1 contains the nuts and bolts of the book and forms the largest section. Helpfully, the concepts to be tackled are introduced by way of case examples, such as a practitioner wishing to convert T to standard scores for the purposes of comparison in Chapter 2 and further on in Chapter 13, the use of probability to decide whether extra time in a reading test has resulted in significant improvement in a learner's raw score. This unique approach gives the book a pragmatic feel and may appeal to more nervous readers. Another very practical aspect to this book is the use of excel tables throughout, which eases the reader through necessary calculations while encouraging us to create our own collection of tables for future reference.

Section 2 covers report writing and includes a very useful section on the confusing issue of range descriptors, a chapter devoted to producing charts and graphs in Excel, as well as other practical and time saving advice to enhance report writing skills. Finally Section 3 discusses future issues including a useful account of alternatives to the discrepancy model.

The style of this book may appeal to those who find statistics daunting as it uses Excel as a calculating device rather than presenting abstract equations. Additionally, the focus upon problems that may well come up in a typical assessor's day also contributes to a less abstract and more practical style. The statistical concepts are explained for those who are interested and it is particularly helpful to see references to online statistical tools such as stattrek.com, as alternatives to using excel formulae.

While these inclusions may well date the book prematurely, it currently serves as a very useful handbook for any assessor who wishes to enhance their statistical knowledge and in so doing will very likely improve their report writing skills.



Reader Offer

Psychometric Assessment, Statistics and Report Writing: an introduction for psychologists, teachers and health professionals,

Pearson Assessment is offering free copies of this book to the first 3 lucky readers who contact them at marketing@pearsonclinical.co.uk.

Subsequent readers will be offered 20% discount on the retail price when they quote ZADAPY13 before 30/12/2013.