

Assessment With Gender Diverse¹ Examinees

Frequently Asked Questions

¹**Gender diversity** refers to the extent to which a person's gender identity, role, or expression differs from the cultural norms prescribed for people of a particular sex.

Definitions provided in this document are from the Media Reference Guide available online from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) at glaad.org.

Why is it necessary to select a binary gender to generate a report (for a product that does not provide gender-based norms)?

Our Pearson Clinical Assessment team is working on updates to the reporting process to allow for a nonbinary gender option to generate the reports and to use gender-neutral pronouns in reports. Until these reporting updates are made, some products require selecting male or female for report generation; however, examiners may select the Microsoft® Word output option for the report and modify the report as necessary. In addition, reports are designed for examiners for professional use only, not for use by caregivers or examinees.

When Pearson collects demographic data for product norms, why are data collected and reported using binary (female, male) sex classifications?

Demographic data have been reported using the same classifications used by the nation's census. Because the U.K. has historically collected information on binary sex classifications, the number of transgender² or gender nonbinary³ individuals within the population is unknown. Information about nonbinary and transgender populations should be forthcoming following the 2021 Census.

²**Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

³**Gender nonbinary:** Terms used by some people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman. They may define their gender as falling somewhere in between man and woman, or they may define it as wholly different from these terms. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as nonbinary and/or genderqueer.

Many language tests include gender-based pronoun items (e.g., the expected pronoun when referring to a girl is she). However, binary gender classifications are not familiar to, or comfortable for, all examinees. How can I respect gender diversity and still maintain a standard administration procedure when administering these items? What is Pearson doing to address this issue?

Pearson Clinical Assessment's current language tests were not standardised to allow for accommodations or modifications for administering and scoring pronoun items. For this reason, revising the administration and scoring procedures for the items is not recommended. If the examiner suspects that an examinee's response to pronoun items is based on cultural or dialectal variation (e.g., parents encourage use of *they* rather than *she/he*) the following steps are recommended:

1. Ask the examinee's parents which pronouns are preferred and taught in the home.
2. Evaluate the examinee's responses on all the test's pronoun items.
3. Determine if the examinee's incorrect pronoun responses are with all pronouns or specifically with gender pronouns.
4. If the examinee has difficulty with all pronouns, items with incorrect pronoun responses should be scored as 0.
5. If the examinee has difficulty specifically with gender pronouns, consider the responses as dialectal variation and score the responses as 1.
6. Note the rationale for the scores in the report.

Pearson Clinical Assessment's language tests are likely to include items that address understanding and use of gender pronouns. Research has shown that difficulty in understanding and using gender pronouns is an important clinical marker for a language disorder. Future editions of Pearson Clinical Assessment's language assessments, like the current editions, will be guided by continued research, and our efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in our products are ongoing.

Concerning the WAB™-R: In the Yes/No Questions task of Auditory Verbal Comprehension, the items require an unambiguous yes/no response to be scored as correct. Item 7 is "Are you a man/woman?" and Item 9 is "Am I a man/woman?" How can I administer these items without assuming that a person is cisgender?

The Western Aphasia Battery – Revised (WAB-R) is an individually administered test designed to evaluate a patient's language function following stroke, dementia, or other acquired neurological disorder. The Yes/No Questions task for the WAB-R Auditory Verbal Comprehension subtest are designed to be short to measure comprehension free from the influence of memory factors. Brief yes/no questions that require only a nod or a one-word reply are powerful tools in discriminating between those who are globally affected and those with residual comprehension and a better prognosis. The questions, however, must be short and personally relevant to the examinee to be effective. If Items 7 and 9 were previously administered as written, score as correct any response that

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indicates gender diversity including identifying as a nonbinary gender or as transgender (Item 7) or if the examinee says they do not know or cannot tell the gender of the examiner (Item 9).

Going forward, examiners are advised not to administer these items as they are written. Instead, change Item 7 to “Are you a person?” and change Item 9 to “Am I a person?” Although changing man/woman to person is a deviation from the standard administration procedure, these wording changes are not expected to alter the validity of this measure.

⁴**cisgender:** *a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with the sex they were assigned at birth.*

Which GFTA™-3 gender-based norms should be used when assessing an examinee who identifies as gender nonbinary?

The Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation™, Third Edition (GFTA-3) is a tool used to assess the speech sound development of examinees ages 2 years 0 months to 21 years 11 months. Currently, the GFTA-3 provides gender-based norms but does not provide combined norms.

When assessing an examinee who identifies as gender nonbinary, it may be appropriate to refer to the examinee’s raw score for the GFTA-3

Sounds-in-Words and Sounds-in-Sentences subtests and look up corresponding standard scores for both the female and male norms.

Note that score ranges for the female and male standard scores overlap at the 90% and 95% confidence intervals. Consider reporting the overlapping range of confidence intervals as a score range rather than reporting a single score.

To help determine whether an examinee presents with a speech sound disorder, consider other sources of information as well. Review the examinee’s phonetic error patterns (consonants and consonant clusters in initial, medial, and final positions of words) and note any atypical patterns regarding emergence and mastery. Ask parents/caregivers and teachers to rate the examinee’s intelligibility and the extent to which the examinee’s speech sound development negatively impacts academic progress. Observe the examinee’s interactions with others to determine if their speech sound development negatively impacts their social interactions.

Resources

American Psychological Association. (2020).
Psychological and neuropsychological assessment with transgender and gender nonbinary adults.
<https://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/transgender-gender-nonbinary>

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. (2016).
GLAAD media reference guide (10th ed.).
<https://www.glaad.org/sites/default/files/GLAAD-Media-Reference-Guide-Tenth-Edition.pdf>

Keo-Meier, C. L., & Fitzgerald, K. M. (2017).
Affirmative psychological testing and neurocognitive assessment with transgender adults. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 40(1), 51–64.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psc.2016.10.011>